Accountability of Political Party Elites

Intra-party Democratization in
The New Zealand Alliance

by

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Chapter 1.   Introduction

At 8.20am on September 11th 2001 Boston Air Traffic Control decided that American Airlines flight 11 had been hijacked after it veered dramatically off course. Twenty six minutes later, at 8.46 am, flight 11 struck the North tower of the World Trade Center. United Airlines flight 175 stuck the South tower at 9.03 am. New Yorkers watched aghast as people jumped from the burning buildings a thousand feet above ground. That day more than 3000 people were killed.[1]

The terror attacks of September 11th drew immediate sympathy and solidarity with the United States from around the world. In New Zealand a resolution was passed by Parliament on October 3rd expressing full support for the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan. However, the military action had been taken without United Nations backing. On October 3rd New Zealand's acting Prime Minister was Alliance leader Jim Anderton who soon came under pressure from Alliance members to reconsider his support for the resolution.

This dissertation describes research and analysis on the demand for accountability leveled at deputy Prime Minister Jim Anderton in the New Zealand

Alliance party and compares this case with subsequent accountability claims in 2004. In 2004 the new party leader, Matt McCarten led a campaign to subordinate Alliance electoral activity to support for the new Maori Party. Although this initiative was supported by the majority on the leading council of the party, it failed to gain sufficient support to achieve its purpose of preventing the Alliance from running a list and competing with the Maori Party in the 2005 election. Ultimately Mr. McCarten resigned from the party as Jim Anderton had done two years before.

Political Parties and Democracy

Political parties are currently an indispensable part of the fabric of modern democracy. However in order to contribute positively to societal democracy parties must be internally democratic.[2] Much has been written on the decline of the role of parties but reports of the death of the political party have been premature. Analyses of the changing nature of political parties have been more accurate and useful. These changes in the structure and functioning of parties have documented the appearance of the catch-all party, the cartel party and the media party as signposts to the development of increasingly hierarchical power relations in parties.[3]

There are some commentators, however, who are hopeful that the emergence of what has been called the *cyber party* may signal a reversal of the trend away from intra-party democracy toward greater participation by members and activists. If the

identification of this trend is correct it may signify the possibility of halting the

perplexing decline in the quality of democratic politics which has accompanied the

increase in its quantitative expansion.[4]

Although concerted efforts have been made to reform the internal politics of

parties, the consequences were almost always of the unintended variety.[5] However,

since parties remain central to democracy and the institution of democratic process

can fruitfully be sought only within specified limits, the task of democratizing the

existing institution of the political party, though truly difficult, is a more realistic goal

than the creation of an entirely new form of politics.[6]

The principal problem motivating this research is elucidation of the

democratization of political parties. Can party members establish a democratic culture

against the tendencies to elitism and bureaucracy? Can activists make leaders

accountable for unmandated action? More specifically this study investigates whether

innovative use of new communication technology can help political activists build

sufficient authority to prosecute accountability claims.

Political Communication and New Technology

With the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989 and the struggles to democratise the

central and east-European states a flurry of scholarship addressed issues of party

building and party democracy.[7] Initial euphoria has however given way to pessimism

as unemployment, organized crime and corruption have accompanied the expansion

of a neoliberal form of capitalist democracy in the guise of *Globalization*.

Inter-networked social movements (ISMs) have leapt to prominence in the

worldwide resistance to neoliberal globalization.[8] From Chiapas to Seattle and

Cancún social movements activists have been appropriating the internet to organize

for social change compatible with human communities and natural ecosystems.[9]

Howard Rheingold has detailed the revolutionary effects that new technologies of

communication can have on social action:

> Throughout history, new communication technologies and social
> arrangements have enabled people to organize collective action on ever-larger
> scales. When this happens, human civilizations jump to high levels of
> complexity. This has been so since the printing press spread literacy beyond
> the ruling classes and enabled such new forms of collective action as science
> and democracy. [10]

However, it is not the appearance of new technology in itself that produces

social change, but the innovative use made of this technology by early adopters and

the diffusion of the innovation through communication.[11]

Innovative uses of new technology in the struggle for political change have

been studied since cell phones were used in the overthrow of repressive governments

in Senegal and the Philippines.[12] With Howard Dean's bid for the 2004 U.S.

Presidential nomination politics changed forever, turning to the wired activists in far-flung reaches of the electorate to broaden and deepen political participation.[13]

This revolution in political organizing distributed power and decision making in a manner never before possible. In recent years a number of scholars have paid explicit attention to the relationship between intra-party democracy and activists' use of the internet.[14] None, however, has tackled the thorny question of whether this new grassroots empowerment can help to solve the problem of elite accountability.

Studies of Internal Party Democracy

Weber argued that political leaders were accountable to themselves and future generations through the 'ethic of responsibility.' He ruled collectives out of rational politics because of their 'emotional reactiveness.'[15]

In the United States today most party nominations for major public posts are decided in primary elections in which all 'self-designated partisans in the mass electorate' can vote.[16] According to Calvin Mackenzie the revolution in American politics which produced the primary system was unplanned and unintended and was the result of piecemeal reforms since the turn of the century.

Interest groups and individuals who effectively decide nominations and policy operate under no defined 'rules of engagement.' Campaign consultants have become independent entrepreneurs rather than integral members of a party and campaign finance laws have encouraged the raising of funds from non-party sources, especially wealthy individuals and organisations donating to political action committees. Accountability is further undermined by the overwhelming importance of candidates.[17] The constant struggle to reform the nomination process has ultimately weakened the internal democracy of political parties placing candidates above the party and its members.

This problem of hierarchy translates to the issue of parliamentary versus extra-parliamentary power when the party is in government. This parliamentary-extra-parliamentary power nexus in parties in Western Europe and the United States was studied by Rachel Gibson and Robert Harmel. Contrary to the expectations of both Michels and von Beyme, these authors found that parties at the turn of the twenty-first century varied considerably regarding this power nexus according to their ideological roots.

At least formally, socialist parties still tend to give considerable power to the extra-parliamentary wing while non-socialist parties maintain higher official levels of power for the parliamentarians.[18] Dennis Kavanagh, however, argues that the British Labour Party became more elitist due to long periods out of power while the

Conservatives experienced increasing factional division.[19] Ingrid van Biezen's study of the relative power of party officials and public office holders in South and East Central Europe found that, in contrast to most West European examples, party power is concentrated largely in the executive.[20]

According to Marco Lisi there have been few studies on the extent to which democratic ideals are practiced within political parties. He argues that researchers have assumed that Michels' iron law of oligarchy operates universally. But there is also the problem of access to the internal life and documents of parties. Lisi questions whether the trend to increased member participation in some European parties necessarily translates into greater intra-party democracy.[21]

A recent study by Russel Norman addresses the issue of internal democracy in the New Zealand Alliance and argues that greater intra-party democracy enhances the party's effectiveness in electoral terms. However, this work does not thematise accountability and restricts its analysis of the extensive data collected to a comparison of existing with ideal practices.[22]

Intra-party democracy online

Pippa Norris has conducted one of the largest surveys of internet use by political parties. Her *Digital Parties: Civic Engagement & Online Democracy* surveyed the websites of 339 parties in 179 countries and concluded that

... deliberation within parties may be more easily facilitated through more private electronic communications, such as emails circulated among members, rather than public message boards.[23]

Ward, Gibson and Lusoli's *Internet, Political Organisations and Participation* project, at the European Studies Research Institute (ESRI), University of Salford is probably the most comprehensive effort to study online political participation.[24] The research to date has consisted of numerous surveys and analyses of texts with conclusions mainly addressing tendencies in the use of internet communication.

A number of studies by these researchers do, however address the issues around internal party democracy. *Party Democracy On-Line: UK Parties and New ICTs* makes a generally negative assessment of the impact of ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies) on intra-party democracy while their more recent study *Participation, Political Organisations and the Impact of the Internet* provides a more positive assessment.[25]

Two further reports from this group on intra-party democracy are *Digital Rank and File - Party Activist's Perceptions and Use of the Internet* (2003) and *Intra-Party Democracy On-Line: The Politics of the Future?* (1999).[26] In *Digital Rank and File* the authors report on the results of a survey of members of the British Labour Party and the Liberal Democrats. They found that

> … increasing use of the new media is likely to disproportionately increase the more passive elements of membership activity (reading literature, paying subs

etc.). The interactive and networking possibilities of the new media, which have excited the most attention, seem to be of least interest to members.[27]

The research surveyed above has reported on the use of political parties and candidates for communicating to the public and on the use by the public of the internet to find political information. However these studies, from the role of parties in societal democratization to the role of ICTs in party democratization, have generally failed to address the issue of agents efforts to overcome the constraints and power of political structure within parties.

> To date, existing research on the impact of new media on political parties has focused on 'external' functions: the use of [Information and Communication Technologies] as transformational of electoral campaigns, on the structure and functions of national and federal party sites, and on the impact of ICTs on party communication efficiency.[28]

Research Aporia

The use of online resources by party members to pursue elite accountability was not investigated by the ESRI project and to date has not been the subject of similar scholarly research projects elsewhere. It is hoped that the present study into the theory and practice of discursive democracy on transforming internal party structure will identify a set of mechanisms implicated in political agency and thereby help to fill this gap in the research on party democracy.

Research Problem

The principal problem for this research is, then:

Can activists, making innovative use of internet communication for discursive democratic process, transform internal party structure so that leaders can be made accountable?

The principal task of the study is

To identify a set of mechanisms that enables this democratic transformational action by political activists.

Delimitations of Scope

The issues of race and gender are of central importance in the democratization of modern societies and New Zealand is no exception.[29] However the present work has perforce abstracted to a large extent from the ethnic, gender and sexual identities of the actors.[30] Likewise, the socio-historical circumstances of the emergence of the Alliance and the Maori Party are touched on only lightly. The intersection of globalization and new forms of political representation, especially for indigenous peoples, is an important topic in its own right and needs to be treated as such. Furthermore, the geographical and historical scope of the study is strictly circumscribed although some comparison with the experiences of the German Greens and the Democratic Party in the U.S.A. have been made.[31]

The research studies a particular party, the Alliance, in a specific country, New Zealand. It is argued below that one in-depth longitudinal case study can provide greater insight into causal processes and the ways in which activists can make leaders accountable than a more synchronic survey of many parties. [32]

Central to the this research is the use of the internet by party activists. At the time of the study New Zealanders' use of the internet was reported as the highest worldwide.[33] While the choice of the Alliance was determined largely by the special knowledge that could be brought to bear by the researcher, the party and its circumstances give ample reason to base a study of internal party democracy on the Alliance and to conduct the study in New Zealand at the turn of the twenty-first century.

The Alliance initially faced particular difficulties regarding intra-party democracy due to its five-party structure. Such a coalition is by no means unique, however the common analogue is factionalism which is an enduring issue for all aspects of party organization.[34] The original Alliance, in which the constituent parties generally acted as factions, could serve as an ideal type for this issue with respect to intra-party democracy.

At the time of the founding of the Alliance the New Zealand polity was considered to be as pure an example of Westminster-style democracy as could be found anywhere because there were none of the checks and balances seen in the British system of government. Since 1950 there was no upper house, the small size of parliament gave cabinet a monopoly of decision making over parliament and its committees and the enforcing of backbench loyalty to the parliamentary party leadership meant that parliament could do no more than debate cabinet edicts. [35] This 'purity' meant that there was relatively little agency loss between party and government thereby facilitating the study of the role of parties in the polity. [36]

With the introduction of proportional representation New Zealand took on some aspects of political systems in Europe. [37] The major part of this study took place under this new electoral regime which led to the formation of the Labour-Alliance coalition government and consequent friction between the parliamentary party and the party organization and activists. Analysis of the effects of these changes can provide insight into the problems faced by parties in plurality systems, in proportional systems and in transition from one electoral system to another.

The period covered by the research proper is from 2002 to 2004 although informal observations and interviews have been conducted since June 1988, over three years before the founding of the Alliance in December 1991. The researcher has

personally observed many of the central events studied but the periods during which intensive participant observation and most of the formal interviews were conducted were February 2002 and July 2004.

Outline of the Dissertation

This dissertation will attempt to explain an example of human agency in the transformation of power structures in a political party.[38] In accordance with Weber's assertion that causal explanation of social action is the "primary object of interpretive sociology" an effort is made here to contribute to an understanding of the dynamics of causation which can be useful to political activists.[39] To this end the dissertation proposes an analysis of the interplay of mechanisms of change that allow political action to transform social structure.[40]

Positional power and relational power

Michels' Iron Law of Oligarchy states that large-scale organizations such as political parties will inevitably develop bureaucratic and hierarchical structures with leaders and experts becoming indispensable and unaccountable.[41] This claim is compatible with, but does not follow from, our understanding that structures develop largely out of unintended consequences of action, are relatively intractable to intentional modification and tend to dominate agents.[42]

In the traditional view of political parties agency is ascribed to leaders while members are seen as virtually part of the environment of the organization. Leaders are understood to exercise agency due to their occupying positions which give them the power to act as, for example, in promoting party policy in Parliament. Party members are seen as influencing decision makers rather than being decision makers.[43] However, research on political parties in recent decades has turned increasingly to the tension inherent in the power nexus between the leaders and the led.[44]

In this dissertation I investigate the change in power relations between leaders and members as the authority of activists is enhanced through the development of networks in the Alliance and communicative action online in the Alliance e-group. The first example involved demands for the accountability of the party caucus which voted to support the U.S. war in Afghanistan against party policy. In the second instance party members questioned the legitimacy of the leader as he undertook campaign work for the new Maori Party.

The two cases are instructive in that the temporal sequence indicates the causal efficacy of the growing use of online communication to develop solidarity, conviction and authority. The original hypothesis proposed for the dissertation related to the efficacy of these networks. Subsequent events during the course of the research

confirmed the hypothesis on the role of networks and led to a new focus on internet communication.

The argument presented follows two main strands:

1.   The development of network capital by activists enhances
2.   The ability of activists to bring about structural change through transformational action for greater accountability and internal democracy.[45]

These strands are tied together by the themes of communication of knowledge through the networks leading to a new regime of communication and fundamental change (phase transition) in the organizational structure.[46]

Outline of the Methodology

In order to describe and explain the dynamics of transformational action for intra-party democracy the analysis of the research data takes a multi-level approach. This effort to capture a transient and changing reality casts a net which is 'both sensitive to and liable to change.'[47] The aspects of the analysis range along five dimensions:

1. Empirical description of events and practices
2. Analysis of intersubjective communicative practices
3. Analysis of the relational interaction of agents in circles and networks
4. Identification of the mechanisms of transformational action
5. Analysis of the interaction of mechanisms

This methodological approach is described further in Chapter 4.

Summary

Chapter 1 sets the scene or sociohistorical and research setting of the case study and introduces the research problem. Chapter 2 deals with the major theoretical bases of the approach taken in the research. Chapter 3 presents the questions to be answered and the hypotheses formulated for the dissertation. The methodology, methods and procedures are delineated in Chapter 4 while Chapter 5 presents a narrative account of the disputes within the Alliance over elite accountability. Chapter 6 deals with the analysis of results and preliminary findings. In Chapter 7 some conclusions that may be drawn from the study and suggestions for further research are presented. The statement of permissions and ethics comprises Appendix 3. In parts of the Dissertation adaptations have been made from sections of my conference papers and M.A. thesis.

Notes to Introduction

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[1] Ruppert, 2004.

[2] See MICHELS, 1962. Seyd and Whiteley note that the proposition 'that democratic politics in advanced industrial societies cannot operate without political parties' is one of the rare examples in social science of a 'law-like' generalization See SEYD ET AL., 1992, p.3 and compare NORRIS, 2005, p.20.

[3] On the cartel party see KATZ and MAIR, 1995; On the catch-all party see KIRCHHEIMER, 1969. Both cited in DIAMOND and GUNTHER, 2003 who provide an overview and critique of party types. On the Media party see LÖSCHE, 1999.

[4] See, for example, SKOCPOL, 2003 and PUTNAM, 2002. On the cyber party see BONCHEK, 1995, MARGETTS, 2001, WARD and VOERMAN, 2000.

[5] LeDuc, 2001.

[6] Michael Froomkin argues for a new way of conducting politics through citizen groups interacting spontaneously in 'Technologies for Democracy' - SHANE, 2004. Compare p.305-307, HABERMAS, 1996.

[7] See Lewis, 2001.

[8] LANGMAN, 2005, 71.

[9] SURMAN ET AL., 2003.

[10] Rheingold, 2003.

[11] On the adoption of policy innovations by political parties see WAGEMANS, 2001; On the diffusion of innovations see ROGERS, 2003 .

[12] Rheingold, 2002.

[13] Trippi, 2004.

[14] See especially *Party Politics*, Volume 5 Issue 3, July 1999 *Special Issue: Party Democracy and Direct Democracy*.

[15] Breiner, 1996, 122. Emotion is, however, often the main motivation for action. Compare Nussbaum 2001, p.135f.; Goodwin 2001, p.9 and passim.

[16] John H. Aldrich in KERNELL ET AL., 2000.

[17] Mackenzie, 1996, pp.35-43.

[18] GIBSON ET AL., 1998.

[19] KAVANAGH, 1998.

[20] VAN BIEZEN, 2000.

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[21] MARCO LISI, 2004.

[22] Norman, 2001.

[23] NORRIS, 2001, p.11

[24] The study is based in Britain and has produced a number of reports of internet use by citizens and politicians accessible online at http://www.esri.salford.ac.uk/ESRCResearchproject/summary.php

[25] GIBSON ET AL., 1999 and GIBSON ET AL., 2003.

[26] Lusoli and Ward, 2003 and 1999.

[27] LUSOLI ET AL., 2003, p.15.

[28] LUSOLI ET AL., 2003, p.5.

[29] See ATKINSON, 2003, BELICH, 2001a and BELICH, 2001b.

[30] Compare LEE, 1998.

[31] Compare Arato's research on the problem of simultaneous transformation of regime from authoritarian to democratic in the East and Central European post-communist states: ARATO, 2000.

[32] Compare Skocpol's critique of survey-based research: pp.16-17, SKOCPOL, 2003.

[33] *New Zealand Herald*, 09.12.2003.

[34] See JANDA, 1980.

[35] McCully, M., pp. 109-110, in MCROBIE ET AL., 1993.

[36] On agency loss see STROM ET AL., 2003.

[37] See LIJPHART, 1984, p.152.

[38] While sociologists and historians have identified causal mechanisms enabling radical social change, social theory also seeks to uncover the hidden and the counter-intuitive nature of social mechanisms, structures and systems. (Bhaskar, 1989, pp.68-69). We also aim to uncover the productive features of social structures along with their coercive and alienating aspects. For understanding of these productive features we seek generative mechanisms.

[39] See Weber, 1978, p. 1375.

[40] This dynamic of causality is codified in my concept of *socio-ontological flux* which follows from the critical realist argument that tendential laws of society are mutable. See POOR, 2005 and BHASKAR, 1986, p.99.

[41] MICHELS, 1962.

[42] On unintended consequences see JERVIS, 1997 and DÖRNER, 1996.

[43] See, for example, PANEBIANCO, 1988, p.14.

[44] See for example, LEDUC, 2001, GALLAGHER ET AL., 1988, KITSCHELT, 1988, LISI, 2004.

[45] These two strands correspond to the 'actual' and the 'real' in the critical realist model of transformational action. See Poor, 1992, p.139 and compare Bhaskar, 1979; Tooley, 1987; Humphreys, 1989; and Mandelbaum, 1987 esp. p136ff.

[46] Phase transition also takes place in events such as the storming of the Bastille or the Greensboro civil rights sit-in. See *Transformative Events*: pp.102ff. AMINZADE, 2001. My use of the term 'phase transition' (after Talcott Parsons and others) is intended to emphasize the process of feedback between the mechanisms of change leading to a qualitatively different situation. This term is borrowed from physics where it describes the change from ice to water, for example. I also emphasize the malleability of realist ontology (causality as directional from base to superstructure) in terms of this 'tipping point' kind of change from politics as usual to a 'revolutionary situation' (compare Kuhn's notions of 'normal' and 'revolutionary' science).

[47] See pp.158-159, BHASKAR, 1986 where Bhaskar refers to the methodological insights of C. Wright Mills (note 68).

Chapter 2. Theory and Concepts

In this dissertation the overall research approach is guided primarily by the theoretical concepts of democratic theory.[48] In this chapter the theoretical foundations of the dissertation are outlined and research specific to political parties is discussed. In particular, the connections between our conceptions of democracy per se and intra-party democracy are made with the notions of public sphere and internal public sphere, participation and representation and bureaucracy and oligarchy being particularly apposite to the present study.

[48] The ontological orientation is derived from the critical realist philosophy of science. See Bhaskar, 1978, 1986 and 1989; Collier, 1989; Lloyd, 1989; New, 2001; Outhwaite, 1987; Poor, 1992; Putnam, 1990; Tooley, 1987 and Trigg, 1980.

Background Theory

Defining Democracy

There are perhaps as many definitions as there are theorists of democracy. In this section the threads of a theory of participatory democracy applicable to the study of political parties are drawn together.

The right considered most fundamental to the modern conception of democracy is the right to freedom of speech. However, this ideal is intrinsically bound up with the notion of equality. In ancient Greek democratic thought *isegoria*, or equality of speaking rights in the governing assembly was equal in importance to *isonomia*, or equality before the law. It was assumed that no great disparities of wealth and power would exist to divide citizens and that genuine participation in the *polis* would be possible only by democratic and honest means.[49]

The ancient Greeks believed that in a democratic social order one would not need to 'act wrongly in order to be a good citizen' or to be a bad citizen in order to act rightly. The Greek ideal of democracy, therefore, specifically excluded the notion of upholding democracy by undemocratic means.[50]

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[49] DAHL, 1989, 14ff.

[50] Compare Thomas Jefferson: 'The whole art of government consists in the art of being honest' quoted in BARBER and WATSON, p.170.

This ancient Greek conception of democracy is often assumed to be the basis of current understandings of democracy. Pericles, however, considered that a state can be democratic if 'the administration is in the hands of the many and not of the few' while Aristotle writes in the *Politics* that 'a system which does not allow every citizen to share is oligarchical and that one which does so is democratic.'[51]

Such concepts clearly refer to a society far different in complexity and scale from the modern nation-state. Only in the sense of voting in public elections do today's citizens generally share in government and only a small proportion could conceivably participate in administration as we understand it.[52]

Participation in Parties

However, in the critically important aspect of democracy that is internal to political parties, these basic beliefs that still condition most of our understandings of democracy are often relevant and applicable. Even parties which measure their membership in the hundreds of thousands have generally provided for regular and binding membership input into policy making and selection of candidates and officers.

Indeed, Carl Cohen argues that the essential feature of democracy is participation and he analyses democracy in terms of the core concepts of 'participation' and 'community.'[53] As members of a community we are entitled to

participate in its governance. The concept of popular, as opposed to elite, decision

making is central to our notion of a democratic polity.[54]

In the case of a one-party state the struggle for participation by members in

the party's functioning makes the importance of this aspect of democratic practice

clear. Hahn describes the formation in the Polish United Workers Party of 'horizontal

units' which brought the units' ordinary members into conflict with many of the

regular organs of the party.[55] Hahn details the successes and ultimate failure of this

reform movement. Notable victories in the areas of election rules, rank-and-file

representation at leadership level and a breaking down of the centralist hierarchy were

gained by the efforts of Solidarity and the 'horizontal ties movement' before the

imposition of martial law in 1981.[56]

The similarities between the case of the Polish communist party, the German

Greens and the Alliance are not coincidental since changes in communication regimes

and organizational change, even social change, depend primarily on a discrete set of

mechanisms of change. The action of such mechanisms is explored in Chapter 6.

Participation and Representation

Christiano identifies as two fundamentals of democracy the concepts of

popular sovereignty and *political equality*. The first requires that all 'minimally

competent adults' jointly decide on the policies and laws for their society. The

decision-making process is assumed to include all in deliberation and be decided by the principle of one vote per citizen. Political equality also assumes the principle of majority rule.

However, two further ideals of democracy are identified with the concept of political equality: That each citizen exercises an equal degree of control over the decision-making process and that each has the opportunity to fully participate in wide-ranging and open debate on matters of public import. Christiano argues that the ability as well as the right to participate fully in such debates is essential to our ideal of democracy.[57] Developments in the application of computer-mediated communication have shown that the use of this technology in political parties can go some way toward addressing some existing inequalities in participation.[58]

Parties and Linkage

The link between citizen and state is seen as the means by which citizens may translate their values and beliefs into government policy through the election and accountability of representatives.[59] Developments in e-democracy attempt to address the issue of linkage but have largely ignored problems of accountability.

Social Capital

It may be argued that the success or failure of a movement for democratic reform in a political party depends largely on activists bringing social capital to bear

on behalf of the movement. While social capital has been analysed from a variety of perspectives, Lang and Hornburg, quoting Coleman, Putnam and others, see social capital as a set of resources available to agents in search of solutions to shared problems. [60] Wellman, however, points out that the concept can refer to 'individual' advantage as well as the collective benefit to a community from network connections while Skocpol has alerted us to the dangers of an ahistorical approach to the study of social capital.[61]

Lin argues for an individualist theory of social capital following the lead of Burt, Marsden and Flap. [62] However empirical studies have approached social capital as a collective good as well as an individual gain.[63] The conception of social capital that will be utilized in this dissertation is that put forward by Stone and Hughes in *Measuring Social Capital*. In their view social capital is 'a resource [for collective action] available to either individuals or groups.'[64]

Although Putnam recognizes the recent role and future potential of the internet in building social capital, he argues that connecting online has not replaced 'bowling together' since the decline of social capital in the US preceded the advent of the internet by decades. [65] Questions are raised as to the benefits of online communication since email is totally inadequate for conveying the rich nuances of non-verbal communication we rely on in face-to-face meetings and conversations. [66]

Social capital theory has largely eschewed the issue of structural formation and transformation in society but the process of democratization which depends largely on social capital also requires the transformation of social structures. The theorization of such transformational action has been undertaken from a variety of perspectives. Here I shall make use primarily of the work of the critical realists.

Transformational Action

The concept of transformational action adopted in this dissertation derives from a critical realist understanding of social science and social action which recognizes that

> ... What is required in a time of change then, is reflexive or transformational action ... to generate new approaches, and in turn formulate new problems.[67]

The realist notion of social science derives from the conceptions of the founders of the discipline, including those of Karl Marx, and proposes a reflexive reworking of the classical theories of social change including historical materialism. Historical materialism is a theory of the causal ontology of the social in which changes in the means of production result in new social relations and economic relations produce consciousness.

This one-sided version of the theory, however, is the 'official Marxism' propagated after Marx's death. In his Theses on Feuerbach and The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, Marx's dialectical conception of causality is clear.[68] The several critiques of 'official Marxism' included those by the Frankfurt School theorists, Marcuse and Habermas. Habermas' contribution was the move to the paradigm of language in which he developed a theory of communicative action in keeping with Marx's concept of praxis.[69]

The critical realist approach recognizes that social structures are real, that is basically existing independently of our thinking of them. The concept *critical* acknowledges (among other things) that social structures do depend on human action to maintain and change them even though they are 'relatively enduring.' My notion of *socio-ontological flux* is simply a term to describe the conditions under which agents can effectively overcome the power of structure - or in which political action can become the primary causal factor rather than the economic determinants of (capitalist or other) social relations - as for example in a revolutionary situation.

Communicative Action

Discourse Theory

The institution of democratic process within parties has been notoriously fraught and elite accountability has been at the center of the issue.[70] Various models have been proposed to address these questions.[71] Arguably the most sophisticated is

the discourse theory of communicative action developed by Jürgen Habermas which begins with the analysis of the public sphere. [72]

The Public Sphere

Habermas recognizes the fundamental change in the concept of civil society from Hegel and Marx's time - It now no longer includes the economy but can be seen, centrally, as a 'network of associations' comprising a grassroots, egalitarian public sphere in contrast with the official 'public opinion' of the mass media.[73]

Internal Public Spheres

Through the transformation of the public sphere, the public of 'private people dealing with each other individually' has now been replaced by a 'public of organized private people' in political parties and interest groups. These associations also have their own 'internal public spheres.'[74] Habermas insists on the dependence of the deliberative democracy of the political system on the 'initiatives of opinion-building associations' of civil society.[75]

Parties as Institutions

Political parties are surely among the most important of these 'opinion-building associations.' At the same time they are one of the clearest examples of 'social things,' having structures at the same time both readily identifiable and amorphous producing difficulties for analysts.[76] Parties are a mix of Weber's ideal types of organisations and are more amenable to analysis under the 'New

Institutionalism' than either Weber's theory or modern variants such as Etzioni's analysis of organisations under the rubric of *power*.[77] Institutionalism as developed by theorists such as Philip Selznick provides insights into political parties as 'interest aggregators' whereas the 'New Institutionalism' emphasizes the ways in which institutions can subvert the action or understanding of actors regarding their own interests.[78]

Panebianco points us to the useful theory developed by Alessandro Pizzorno which describes participation in the early stages of a party's life as 'a *social movement* type of participation (corresponding to the party *qua* system of solidarity).'[79] Combining the approaches of social movement theory and institutional analysis allows the development of an explanation of both the party and the member as social actors which are similarly concerned with issues of identity, goals and internal and external constraints.[80] Overcoming the limitations of existing institutions is the raison d'être of the 'new politics.' Democracy activists also strive to develop new structures that enhance the creative powers of people and minimize relations of hierarchy, dominance and control. These issues were addressed by the Alliance activists who are the subjects of this study. There have also been ongoing discussions on the potential conflict between intra-party democratic reform and concentration on electoral goals.

Bureaucracy and Oligarchy

Weber's typology of types of democracy includes direct democracy which pushes for greater equity by 'constant resistance to routine forms of domination and discipline.' But Weber argues that direct democrats cannot escape the logic of power and domination by bureaucracy. [81]

Weber understood bureaucracy to be characterized by a number of typical features inherent in hierarchical organization including the fact that

> Bureaucratic organizations are normally led by individuals
> rather than committees i.e. they are 'monocratic.'[82]

Complementary to Weber's theory of politics Michels developed his theory of intra-party democracy. He argued that, due to the requirements of large-scale organization, parliamentary rules, and the exigencies of national policy making and public presentation, modern parties invariably become hierarchical and undemocratic according to his 'Iron Law of Oligarchy.'[83]

'Who says organization says oligarchy.' This, in effect, is the famous Iron Law. Michels disputed claims that social inequality or deficiencies such as lack of education or economic resources give rise to aberrations of democracy culminating in oligarchy. He argued rather that the major institutions indispensable to modern society are inevitably bureaucratic and intrinsically oligarchic. For political parties, the norm is that the more extensive a party's organization, the less democracy is possible. [84]

Michels' argument for a law of oligarchy depends on a number of claims around circumstances that tend to undermine the control of the party by the membership. One of these claims is that members of the bourgeoisie will bring their class interests into the party. While this claim may be borne out by studies of such class influences, it is doubtful whether one can generalize from such studies.[85] Causal direction in such cases is contingent on many factors and arguably is not amenable to nomothetic pronouncements. Assertions regarding the 'incompetence' of the masses, while also possibly finding some empirical support, are of a similarly contingent nature. [86]

A similar argument is made for the claim that 'every organ of the collectivity, brought into existence though the need for the division of labor, creates for itself, as soon as it becomes consolidated, interests peculiar to itself.' Institutional sociologists argue, against such interest seeking anthropomorphism, that the usual piecemeal evolution of institutions means that they are characterized by inertia rather than instrumental rationality. In sum, the provocative and sometimes penetrating insights of Michels into the nature of party bureaucracies do not constitute grounds for a universal law.[87]

Key Concepts

Accountability

Accountability implies contested authority and power. According to Richard Mulgan, 'Accountability implies not only giving an account but also accepting direction.' The representatives or officials concerned and their actions must in principle be subject to effective remedial action by those represented.[88]

Both political and legal theory are concerned with issues of accountability. Colin Scott points out that the issue of accountability is intimately related to that of autonomy. Arguments in constitutional law and theory have revolved around the need for compromise over restraints on political power and the freedom of action required by representatives and officers of the state. [89]

The concept 'accountable' involves the threat of real sanctions even in the weak form of 'subject to giving an account' (Webster's 1983) since it is assumed that the account will be given and that it will be acceptable. If not, then the person(s) concerned will presumably be 'made accountable.' Accountability should not be confused with responsibility, since the former is necessarily interpersonal but the latter is not.[90] One who is accountable is subject to another's authority.

Democratization requires 'downwards accountability.'[91] Although dictionary definitions of accountability are close to the legal concept of 'dialogic accountability'

the common usage in political practice refers mainly to mechanisms for dismissal from office of leaders found wanting. [92]

Similarly, the contractualist notion of 'upward accountability' is better described as 'compliance' since the concept of accountability implies considerable autonomy not generally enjoyed by those subject to 'upward accountability.'[93] In reality, there can be no genuine accountability without some degree of autonomy.

Those who have very little freedom of action or who are micro-managed cannot act of their own accord to the extent that they could be said to be accountable for their actions or the outcomes to those who determine their scope of action.[94] This is fundamentally because accountability depends on ties to other *plural subjects* to whom *mechanisms* are available to enforce accountability through the threat or imposition of *consequences*.[95]

Authority

Authority in this case study should be contrasted with *counter-authority*. *Counter-authority* is the developing authority of those normally subject to the authority of leaders, rulers or established institutions. This *counter-authority* is required to prosecute claims of downwards accountability.[96]

Authority to act[97] depends on

1. The perception of others (also depends on 3-6)
2. The perception (often largely unconscious) of that perception
3. Connectedness
4. Institutional position
5. Rules and mores
6. Historical precedent

Pareto's insights into the dynamics of authority, co-optation and control contrast with the tendency in political theory to theorise these issues as static rather than dynamic.[98] His theory presents us with a realistic view of the darker side of democratic politics. The discussion below attempts to analyse the dynamics of intra-party democracy in light of the insights of Pareto and Weber.

Autonomy

Democratic autonomy is described by David Held in *Models of Democracy*.[99] This ideal of democracy is based on the belief that every person should have the right and the opportunity to participate in the political life of society. This ideal of participation is central to the concept of autonomy utilized in the present work. The drive for autonomy (both as freedom and capacity) can be seen in activists and elites. Activists may be said to be following the 'developmental model' of democracy which can help to explain the process of institutional learning.[100]

Organizational Learning

The notion of organizational learning includes the process of developing values and norms and the means of transmitting them. While the ultimate goal is the dissemination of these values and beliefs outside of the organization the iterative

process of debate over basic values inside and outside the party aids in the process of organizational learning.[101]

Learning by an organization involves more than the gaining of knowledge and understanding by individuals. Although new rules may be promulgated by individuals a new arrangement of relations and new channels of communication in the organization are necessary for new knowledge and rules to be developed from entrenched norms and understandings. [102] These processes within the Alliance and other parties are discussed in Chapter 6.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the theoretical and philosophical background of the research for the dissertation and highlighted the key concepts investigated. Issues in the literature specific to the internal organization of political parties have been emphasized to set the scene for more detailed exposition. In the following chapter the principal questions, hypotheses and assumptions are explained.

Notes to Chapter 2

Chapter 3 Questions and Hypotheses

The preceding chapter has set out the groundwork of this research by defining the participatory and discursive conception of democracy, the problems of internal democracy in political parties and the key concepts investigated in the research.

This chapter details the approach taken here to the problem of intra-party democracy through the research project on elite accountability. The specific questions asked in the research are intended to elicit an understanding of the empirical reality of political activists in struggle to achieve such accountability. The theoretically informed research process led to the formulation of the hypotheses on semi-autonomous networks and innovative use of computer-mediated communication.

Principal Question

What are the causes that can produce a shift from causal primacy of positional power within a structure to the emergent power of a relational network of political activists?[103]

To put the question in terms of mechanisms of social change: Under what conditions will those mechanisms amenable to activist control exhibit enhanced causal efficacy?[104]

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[103] See Weissman, 2000, esp. pp. 222ff.

[104] What is proposed is a dynamic form of prime implicant analysis - compare RAGIN, 1987, pp.95ff. and MacAdam et al, 2001. Compare also the concept of 'deep causes' in geological research on subsidence versus Crozier and Friedberg's denial of any hierarchy of variables in social systems - p. 213f. CROZIER ET AL., 1980.

Ancillary Questions

1. How are activists' networks created and what is their relation to other networks in the organization?
2. How does the relationship of activist networks to the wider organization effect activists' authority and effectiveness with regard to accountability?

Given a propitious alignment of social forces and conditions, the importance of the monopoly of organizational resources by officials may be reduced and the importance of the social capital of activists enhanced. In this situation power can effectively shift from the elite to the grassroots.[105]

In the first case study undertaken for this research, activists built relatively autonomous networks in an effort to overcome the colonization of their party by the dominant political culture. The culture of the New Zealand Parliament and establishment politics in that country arguably influenced the leaders of the Alliance once they found themselves in positions of power as Members of Parliament, Cabinet Ministers, party Whip, deputy Prime Minister and acting Prime Minister.

Here the development and temporal contingency of these networks is foregrounded, as opposed to the notion of fixed networks as seen in the study of interlocking directorships, for example. This emphasis on the flux of relations in

networks allows us to analyze nascent and developing networks in terms of their qualitative dynamics.

Few efforts have been made to elucidate the relationship between the organizational mechanisms and the adoption of computer-mediated communication (CMC) to enable internal party democracy. The study analyses the way in which CMC can flatten hierarchy and enhance the power of interpersonal relations over the positional power of organizational structure. By examining the development of networks of party members we are able to observe an example of the self-organization of human agency. [106]

Principal Hypothesis

1.   The principal hypothesis is that innovative use of party computer-mediated-communication (CMC) can allow activists to expand their relational power and effectively overcome the positional power of the party leadership in prosecuting accountability claims.

2.   By combining the power of network organization and online communication activists are able to enhance intra-party democracy and make leaders accountable. Party activists assert their autonomy through communicative action and are able to maintain the identity of the party, ultimately increasing the authority and the longevity of the organization.[107]

Sub-hypotheses

Authority of Activists Increases Elite Accountability

Central to the pursuit of accountability claims is the development of authority by the activists. As they develop greater authority vis-à-vis leaders, their likelihood of pursuing and chances of prosecuting accountability claims are increased. Both the process and results of accountability mechanisms are improved when activists have increased authority. There is a conflict between higher authority of activists and the power to extract accountability from leaders, on the one hand, and the reaction of leaders to the challenge this poses to their authority, on the other.

Authority of Activists Enhanced by Network Capital

Authority of activists is strengthened and accountability is more likely to be achieved when activists are supported by networks which are either not integral with the party structure or are based on independent cohesion.

Accountability Improved by Relatively Autonomous Networks

If activists participate in networks that extend outside of the party membership, the relationship can assist in preventing reinforcement of unrealistic beliefs sometimes fostered in highly cohesive organizations or groups. [108]

Causal Mechanisms

The three principal causal mechanisms[109] postulated in this research are

1. Transformation of intra-party communication from vertical to horizontal by use of CMC and appropriation of the party e-group by activists.

2. Growing recognition of opposition to leaders and the reaction to this perception leading to attacks on the use of e-mail and e-groups.[110]

3. The enhancement of activists' authority by the development of ties with relatively autonomous networks.

This study is particularly concerned with discovering causal relations rather than hypothesis testing as emphasized by traditional quantitative methodology.[111] Furthermore, the cases have been chosen for their theoretical relevance rather than according to statistical requirements.[112]

This chapter has outlined the questions addressed in the research. The following chapter sets out the methodology employed and the research procedures used to elicit information to answer the questions and the research problem.

Notes to Chapter 3

Chapter 4.   Methodology

Introduction

  This chapter delineates the methodological approach taken and details of the

research. Because the research needs to study the development of individual,

interpersonal, institutional and legal bases of political action, the methods used are

multi-disciplinary, combining qualitative forms of multi-level and dynamic

analysis.[113]

To help guard against reductionism of any sort, Jack Katz in *Social Ontology and*

Research Strategy, promotes the use of a variety of methodologies, theories and

ontologies in order to fully explain the innovative, intentional project-like, embodied

interaction of agents.[114]

Multi-method Research and Multi-level Analysis

  The primary focus of this study is on the dynamic relations between activists,

their networks and accountability processes. In this respect the research design is

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[113] Formal Dynamic Network Analysis and Multi-Level Analysis involve mathematical modelling and computer simulation. These approaches could be used in future research. Compare the work of Christopher J. Mackie which studies 'social complexity via computational modeling, and in particular for the study of psychological and institutional aspects of politics as complex, adaptive (evolutionary) processes.' http://www.princeton.edu/~cjmackie/research.html - accessed March 16, 2005.

[114] Jack Katz, 2004.

similar to that of case-tracking research as described by Tomison and Goddard. Also similar to Tomison's research design is the use here of multiple methods in a single study. Such an 'integrated mixed methods approach' has a number of advantages including the testing of conclusions in a form of 'simultaneous triangulation.'[115]

A multi-level analysis of relations between actors and organizations involves research into the characteristics of the individuals, their ties and the nature of the networks thus constituted. Wellman and Frank analyze the effect of the size and quality of an individual's immediate social network and the ascriptive and social characteristics of the individual ('ego') and those of others in the network ('alters') on the degree of support the individual gains from the network.[116]

Closely related factors are the nature and origins of the connections in the networks and the way in which the attributes of ego and alters mediate the relationship.[117] Note that the 'social characteristics of alters' can be related to the degree of independent cohesion, and hence, autonomy of the supporting network.

The complex nature of actors' efforts to achieve accountability in organizations can be fully analyzed only by combining methods appropriate to psychological, group interaction and organizational analysis. These issues are explored further below.[118] An interdisciplinary approach is also required to obtain the

different perspectives necessary to capture the process of change in which causal primacy shifts from political structure to individual/group motivation, demonstrated in this case by the change in power relations in the Alliance Council.

Case Study research

A case study approach has been adopted in order to take advantage of the capacity of this method to follow processes as they unfold, to take the measure of qualitative changes in the subject matter and to provide genetic and dynamic explanations of these processes.[119]

Ethnography and Participant Observation

Burawoy subdivides participant observation into four major categories characterized by their treatment of the micro-macro nexus. This project intervenes in the theory and practice of political action following a version of Burawoy's extended case method. In the analysis of the first case studied (involving opposition to the New Zealand government's support for the U.S. war in Afghanistan) the project also shares elements of 'global ethnography.' [120]

The Extended Case Method

In Burawoy's extended case method (ECA), while research is understood as dependent on theory, analysis of historically specific causality in a particular case can

lead to generalizations. This is achieved by using the observations in the case study to

critique a chosen theoretical approach which may be a 'standard' theoretical approach for

this kind of case, or a theory the researcher considers valuable in general.[121]

Validity and Reliability

On the issue of whether valid generalization from a single case is feasible,

Tomison and Goddard refer to the arguments for 'analytical generalisability' made by

Robert K. Yin in Case Study Research: Design and Methods.

> In purely statistical terms, the generalisability of case study designs is not
> high. Yet Yin (1984b) argues that generalisability is analytical not only
> statistical. That is, the goal of such research is often to generalize the results to
> a specific theory rather than a particular population. Taking this approach, the
> results of case studies either support or refute theoretical assumptions and are
> useful in this regard (Yin, 1984b). The use of multiple case studies, or cross
> case study designs also increases external validity and generalisability (Yin,
> 1984b).[122]

Participant-Observer Problem

The participant-observer problem can to some extent be overcome with the

use of an interdisciplinary approach and triangulation.[123] I have faced special

problems as a researcher particularly close to the subject matter, being a founding

member of the party in question. There has been no simple way around this problem.

While I do not agree that one should avoid research on topics that one feels strongly

about, it is necessary to take precautions to minimize bias in one's observation and

reporting.[124]

Comparability of Cases

Following the method of 'triangulation,' I used a variety of sources for data to develop, confirm or disconfirm my hypotheses. These hypotheses were drawn from the literature and from other cases studying congruent issues (see above). Theory construction is conducted to the extent that an explanation is offered for the observed relationship between authority, networks and accountability. However, as I have combined in-depth longitudinal observation with close attention to the theoretical underpinnings of the sociological approach my approach cannot be seen as an example of 'Grounded Theory.'[125] Testing of the theory relies on comparison with similar cases studied by other researchers.[126]

Interdisciplinary Methodological Approach

Although it is true that different methodologies may be used to answer different questions, an interdisciplinary methodological approach stems from addressing a particular problem and using the appropriate methodological tools to find answers to the questions raised by the problem.[127] The research and analytical methods used in this dissertation are informed by approaches developed in a number of disciplines.[128]

Figure 1   The interdisciplinary research approach
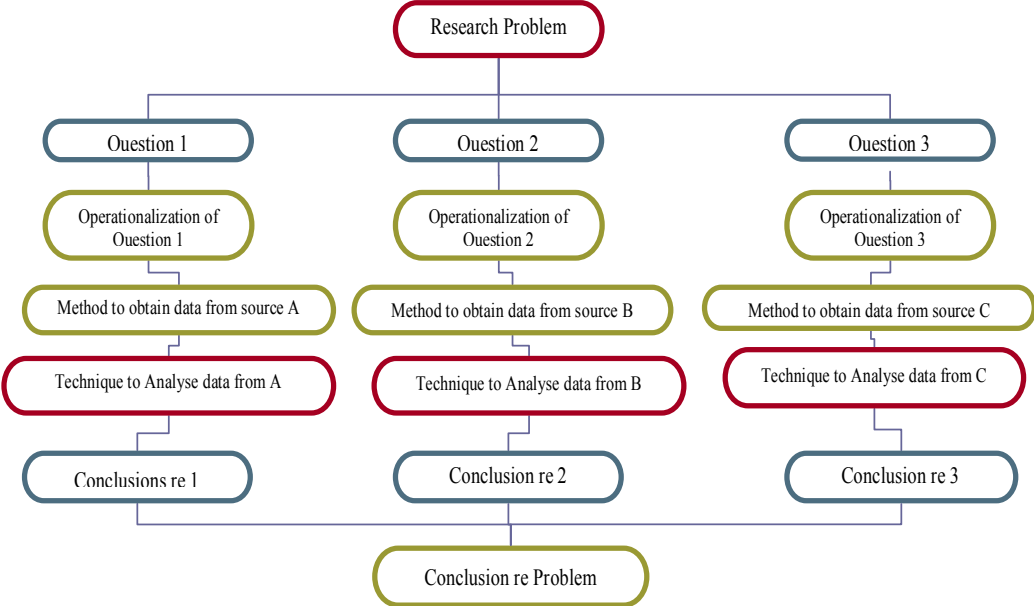
Table 1 Concepts, Methods and Sources in Contributing (Sub)Disciplines

Anthropology	Ethnography	Participant Observation (PO)
Communication Studies	Content Analysis	Computer-Mediated Communication
Complexity	Phase change	Contingent Causality, Interaction (I)[129]
Critical Theory	Discourse Ethics	Communicative Action
Economics	Game Theory	Tipping[130]
Legal Studies	Electoral law	Constitutions
Organizational Analysis	Institutionalism	Social Facts, Compliance
Philosophy	Ontology, Causality	Ethics, Pragmatics, Speech-act theory
Planning	Risk, Failure[131]	Functional Ignorance[132]
Political Psychology	Entativity	Authoritarian Personality (AP)
Political Science	Attitude Analysis	Social Movement Studies
Political Sociology	Power Relations	Class Conflict
Probability	Causal Analysis[133]	Venn Diagrams, Compound Events[134]
Social Network Analysis	Interviews, PO	Document analysis, Questionnaires
Social Psychology	AP	Collective Action[135]
Sociology	Realist, Mechanisms	Social Capital; PO
Social Movement theory	Framing	Transformative event
Statistics	I,[136] Sampling	Populations
Systems Theory	Adaptation[137]	Environment[138]

Research Procedures

The principal research procedures employed were

1. Participant observation of
   a. Formal and informal meetings and discussions
   b. The campaign e-group
2. Archival research on
   a. Party documents
   b. Newspaper articles
   c. E-group archive
3. Interviews
   a. Formal, in-depth and
   b. Informal.

Observations

NewLabour Party (NLP) and Alliance conferences and meetings

Observations here provided material for the formulation of the problem and the initial analysis of activist efforts to achieve accountability.[139] These observations included one disciplinary hearing, regional and national NLP and Alliance conferences, Alliance Council meetings and some informal and semi-formal strategy meetings of Alliance activists. Intensive participant observation was conducted during February 2002 and July 2004 while most of the formal interviews were conducted in February 2002.

Interviews

Interviews were conducted with a number of key figures including Members of Parliament and party leaders and presidents. Although no sampling technique was used to obtain a representative cross-section for interview the researcher's knowledge of the actors in the cases under study and a version of 'snowballing' were used. Interviewees known to the researcher to have specific knowledge of key events were interviewed and these informants advised on the next round of informants.

The format of all interviews, formal and informal, was open-ended in approach to elicit expert knowledge and background information. The data gained from interviews was cross-checked against that obtained through observation.

Table 2 List of Interviews

Interviewee	Position	Date
Barnard Trevor	Leading Democrat	25/11/02
Evans Audrey	Auckland Central Activist	13/02/02
Fairey Julie	Youth organizer	10/12/01
Gay Maxine	Union rep for parliamentary workers	21/02/02
Ghaemmaghamy R.	Regional organizer	18/02/02
Harré Laila	MP and Minister	15/02/02
Hehir Gerard	Alliance Party secretary	20/02/02
Jackson Willie	Mana Motuhake leader and MP	20/02/02
Jesson Joce	Widow of Bruce Jesson	24/11/02
Lawler Moira	Was pres. of NLP Mana branch chair	21/02/02
Locke Keith	Green MP	3/12/01
McCarten Matt	Alliance President	30/11/02
Martin, Dion	Activist	19/02/02
Mechen, Mary Anne	Activist	19/02/02
Muir Alex	Organizer for Laila Harré	15/02/02
O'Connell Kane	Student member	29/11/04
Ovens Jill	Women's network organizer	15/02/02
Reid Robert	Workers' network organizer president UNITE	21/02/02
Richards Len	Activist	09/03/02
Robson Matt	MP and Minister	15/02/02
Shield Joseph	Regional agent	08/02/02
Treen Mike	Parliamentary organizer	30/11/02

Permissions and ethics

Although the research ethics requirements of Universities in New Zealand are very strict following the 'Unfortunate Affair,'[140] my study was governed by the ethics rules of the New School for Social Research.[141] However, I was not officially conducting "human subjects research" because the information I was seeking was about a public organisation and the kind of information I sought was regularly made public through interviews and other reporting by the press.

My concern for the privacy of my subjects was nonetheless paramount and I maintained confidentiality of information throughout the study. [142] The observation was conducted with the knowledge of those present and interviewees were given the option of anonymity, though none asked for it. [143]

Reporting Back to the Research Community

Reporting the research back to the Alliance membership has been an integral part of the project. Documents such as the statement of permissions and ethics have been posted on the e-group which has also facilitated feedback and discussion on the research. A verbal report was given to the Alliance national conference in November 2004 (see Appendix 2) and a conference paper on the research has been made available to the membership.[144]

Notes to Chapter 4

Chapter 5.   The Case Study

The previous chapter detailed the methodology and research procedures of the

study. This chapter details activists' efforts to assert accountability claims against leaders

who disregard norms of intra-party democracy. The first example deals with

accountability of parliamentarians who contravened party policy in voting to support the

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[51] COHEN, 1971, p.3.

[52] Positions of public office in ancient Greece, however, were filled by ballot rather than competitive election to ensure wide distribution of the experience of office-holding. MAYO pp.37-8.

[53] See pp. 8-27. However, according to Dahl, the ancient Greeks were aware of the limits of 'face-to-face' democracy and would not consider democracy workable in a state with a population of millions. (1989 pp.14ff.).

[54] cf. Benn who assumes the existence of rich and poor and gives the Greek definition of democracy as 'the rule of the poor over the rich'. p.338.

[55] See pp. 30-33: Hahn, 1987. cf. D. MACSHANE, 1981 and George SAUNDERS (ed.), 1974.

[56] See Hahn: pp.18-41 and compare Arato's (2000) argument against the judgment of failure.

[57] Christiano, 1996, pp.3-8.

[58] There are also problems inherent to the use of computer-mediated communication for political participation including the cost and inequality of access to the internet. See Mossberger 2003,

[59] See pp. 13-14, LAWSON, K. and P. MERKL eds., 1988. Kay Lawson combines the conceptions of 'linkage' introduced by Key, for whom 'the interconnections between mass opinion and public decision' were the issue, and Eulau and Prewitt, for whom participation in the decision making of representatives was central. She examines the failure of major parties in 'providing adequate and acceptable means of linking the citizen to the state.'

[60] LANg and Hornburg, 1998.

[61] Wellman and Frank, 2000 and SKOCPOL, 2003.

[62] LIN,1999.

[63] Putnam's work uses the collective good concept. See PUTNAM ET AL.,1993, PUTNAM, 2000 and PUTNAM, 2002. For an example of an individualist approach see GREEN ET AL., 2005.

[64] See STONE ET AL., 2002.

U.S. war in Afghanistan. The second is concerned with accountability of the party

leadership over support for the new Maori Party.[145]

The Alliance party of New Zealand

The Alliance was formed in December 1991 on the initiative of leaders of the

NewLabour Party (NLP) and the indigenous people's party, Mana Motuhake who were

later joined by the Greens and the Democrats. [146] The two establishment parties, National

and Labour, had continued to privatise and deregulate the economy and restructure the

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[67] See p.5, European Commission Directorate-General. 2004. Accessed on February 8th 2005.

[68] Compare Marcuse's understanding of Marx's recognition that 'The determination of existence is historical.' - quoted in McCarthy, 1991, p.89.

[69] See McCarthy, p.ix introduction to HABERMAS 1984-c1987.

[72] DELANTY, 1999, pp.73ff. and Habermas, 1989.

[73] HABERMAS, 1996, 367. Compare FROOMKIN, 2004.

[74] See pp. 232-233, HABERMAS, 1989.

[75] HABERMAS, 1996, p.302.

[77] q.v. Worsley, 1978, pp.372-5. Habermas points out that both Max Weber and Talcott Parsons conflate two different kinds of power which Habermas calls 'the power of unifying discourse' and 'instrumentally exercised violence.' The former he says, cannot be subverted by the latter.

[78] See Powell and DiMaggio, 1991, p.12.

[79] COHEN and ARATO, 1992, p.18. However, Panebianco assumes that such participation is typical only of the developmental stage and believes that the freedom of movement of leaders becomes more restricted as the party consolidates. My research indicates that some parties continue to retain aspects of their movement origins even though they may participate in governing coalitions.

[80] Compare the critique by Cohen and Arato of political theory's neglect of the dynamic between parties and social movements. COHEN and ARATO, 1992, pp.560-562.

[81] pp.21f., BREINER, 1996.

[82] See Weber, 1978, pp.220 and 956-957.

[83] See Michels, 1968 and cf. M. Ostrogorski 1902, and 1910.

state. Growing dissatisfaction with the two party system produced significant support for the new third party and for change in the electoral system. In 1992 eighty five percent of those voting in the referendum on electoral reform favoured change.[147] In opinion polling during 1991 and 1992 the Alliance outpolled both establishment parties indicating that, with the advent of proportional representation at the next election, many abstaining voters would find a reason to cast their ballots.

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[85] See ibid. p.352 and cf. Minkin's argument that the values of Parliament shape those of new members: Minkin 1978, p.383 (notes 42 & 43).

[86]   See Michels, 1968, p.111 where the argument is made that the masses are universally incompetent to decide in favor of their own interests: i.e. to act 'rationally.'

[88] Mulgan, 1999; 2000; 2002, Mulgan and Uhr. 2000.

[89] Scott, 2000.

[90] See Abelmann et al, 1999.

[92] Held 1987.

[93] 'Upward accountability' is the conception of accountability taken as given in much of the educational literature. See Lashway, 2003.

[94] Clearly, the same cannot be said of individual responsibility or even culpability in cases of gross criminality, since these rest on the individual's own moral sense. See p.104 Bianchi, 1999. There has also been considerable debate over the supposed erosion of government accountability due to loss of state autonomy in the age of globalization. Held, 2000.

[95] Here the issue of political craft or skill or brinksmanship comes up. Punishment is, after all, an endgame option. Compare Mulgan, 1999; 2000; 2002, Mulgan and Uhr. 2000. Also compare HARMON, 1995.

[96] The notion of *counter-authority* introduced here extends Weber's typology. Compare Gramsci's notion of *counter-hegemony* (see Adamson, 1980). Max Weber categorized authority according to his three ideal types: traditional, charismatic and rational-legal. See Weber, 1978.

[97] Compare dialogic authority. See Mian, 2002 and Carter, 1990.

[98] Pareto is referring not only to Italy in 1919-20, but to all democracies and the fragility of their character, whatever the time and place:
   1. The greater the demands on central authority for democratic representation (6), then the greater the use of co-optation as a means of control.

A referendum held in 1993 enabled the electors of New Zealand to change their

electoral system to one of mixed member proportional representation (MMP). The result

for the Alliance was that the party went from gaining 2 seats in Parliament in 1993 when

they polled 18% of the popular vote to gaining 13 seats with 10% of the party vote in

2. When central authority is eroded, the more co-optation is relied upon as a means of control (1), then the more problematic control from the centre becomes, in part because the proliferation of representatives of various groups engaged in autonomous and/or self-seeking activities inhibits the freedom of movement of the leadership.
3. When central authority is eroded, the more problematic control over minority groups, factions and dissidents becomes (2), then the more pressure builds for consolidation of central authority.
4. The greater the consolidation of central authority (3), then the greater the use of administrative repression as a means of control over the membership.
5. When central authority is consolidated, the more repression is relied upon as an instrument of control (4), then the more problematic central authority becomes, in part because the increased use of administrative measures to stifle debate and reduce the power of autonomous groups generates resentment.
6. When central authority is consolidated, the more problematic central control becomes (5), then the more pressure for decentralization builds, with centrifugal forces tending to lead to dislocation unless authority is devolved.

Pareto's final work was published in 1921 as *The Transformation of Democracy.* cf. Kitschelt's argument that conventional political theory cannot explain 'variability over time' or 'dynamic change' in parties: Kitschelt, 1989, p. 404.

[99] HELD, 1987.

[100] See Gharajedaghi 1983.

[101] COOK ET AL., 1993.

[102] See pp. 14 & 15 Klaus Eder, 1999.

[105] This is the situation of changing structural power relations that I have called *socio-ontological flux*.

[106] See Weissman, 2000 esp. pp. 222ff.

[107] cf Barber and Held.

[108] Compare Cohen and Prusak, 2001, pp.14-15.

[109] For a discussion of causal mechanisms in middle-range theory see Hedström, 1998 and compare BENNET, 1999.

[110] The growing consciousness that party leaders had of the formation of network of anti-war activist within and extending outside the Alliance is an example of entativity. On entativity see CASTANO ET AL., 2003. In the case of the withdrawal of tithes by the Alliance MPs we see how entativity perception becomes something of a self-fulfilling prophesy as opposition to the MPs was hardened by their own reaction to the perceived threat of the 'left.'

1996. MMP also meant that coalition governments would now be the norm since no one party would be likely to gain an absolute majority.[148]

The Alliance enters Government

In 1999 Labour formed a coalition government with the Alliance and the privatization juggernaut was brought to a halt.[149] However, the years of 1999-2002 saw the growth of considerable stress within the Alliance as the party struggled to define itself

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[111] Compare xiv, Ragin, 2000.

[112] Ragin, 2000, p.31.

[115] Tomison, AIFS, and Goddard 1999.

[116] Wellman and Frank 2000. Compare LIN ET AL., 2001.

[117] Page 6, Wellman and Frank, 2000.

[118] Compare Hutcheon on the role of interdisciplinary research in producing cumulative knowledge in the social sciences. See Hutcheon, 1997.

[119] BENNET, 1999. An online survey of members was considered but not pursued as survey techniques are not optimal for providing insight into the dynamics of causes. Cf. SKOCPOL 2003, p.16.

[120] Burawoy et al,1991; Burawoy 2000.

[121] Burawoy et al, 1991 p. 279.

[122] Tomison, AIFS, and Goddard 1999.

[123] Ibid.

[124] I have attempted to avoid the problems of biased transcription and interpretation, overemphasis of positive cases or ignoring negative cases. I have tried to give clear definitions of concepts and to apply those concepts consistently.

[125] Cf. STRAUSS, 1987.

[126] Ultimately, the value of the theory is to be judged on the observed probability of its predicted outcomes, rather than submitting to a Popperian test of validity. Compare Burawoy, 1991 and Ragin, 2000.

[127] Compare Bottomore, 1993, p.7: Commitment to a method may effect the choice of problem.

[128] These include anthropology, political science, sociology, psychology, economics, philosophy and law as well as the explicitly interdisciplinary fields of social psychology, critical theory, complexity, systems and organizational studies and network analysis.

independently of its relationship with Labour which was able to portray its involvement with neoliberal economics as a thing of the past.

Meanwhile, some leading members of Alliance party had apparently been maneuvering for position. On June 2ⁿᵈ Alliance deputy leader Sandra Lee was deposed as Mana Motuhake leader by Willie Jackson, a close ally of party president Matt McCarten. At the party Council meeting on June 17ᵗʰ leading party member and cabinet minister Laila Harré quarreled with party leader Jim Anderton over his insistence that she cease meeting with striking newspaper workers.

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[65] See PUTNAM, 2000 p.170 - compare Lin 1999.

[66] ibid. pp.175-6

[70] Schattschneider concluded that it would be better to stop thinking of parties as 'parties' so as to avoid the 'nightmarish' task of democratising them. q.v. RANNEY, 1954 and POOR, 1999. On accountability see MULGAN ET AL., 2000, PRZEWORSKI ET AL., 1999, SCOTT, 2000, SMULOVITZ ET AL., 2000 and STROM ET AL., 2003.

[71] See, for example, HELD, 1987.

[76] See Stinchcombe: pp.364-6 in Worsley, 1978; and Powell and DiMaggio, 1991, p.1.

[84] Michels, 1968, pp.15-16 and p.71.

[87] Compare Michels, 1968, p.353 and Powell and DiMaggio, 1991, pp.9-11.

[91] Scott, 2000 cites H. Elcock, 'What Price Citizenship? Public Management and the Citizen's Charter' in The Citizen's Charter, ed. J. Chandler, 1997 33-7. Compare RIBOT, 1999.

[145] Although the participant observer research has covered a period of ten years the cases discussed here are from 2001 and 2004.

[146] See Electoral Act 1993.

[147] For his stand against Labour's privatization programme former party president Jim Anderton was banished from caucus (the meeting of the Party's MPs) and threatened with expulsion. He later resigned, along with many supporters, to found the NewLabour Party. See Mulgan, 1994, pp.240 & 304.

In August Laila Harré and fellow cabinet minister Matt Robson were reported as being likely contenders for the deputy leadership of the party at the upcoming conference and Matt McCarten announced that he would contest the Auckland mayoralty election as the Alliance candidate. [150] Some time later Alliance members discovered that party leader Anderton was angered by the fact that McCarten made this announcement without consulting him.

However, these tensions simmering within the Alliance erupted with the government's decision to give uncritical support the U.S. 'war on terrorism.' The Alliance parliamentary party voted on October 3rd in favor of the New Zealand Parliament's motion of support, but the party membership was clearly irate over this vote.[151]

Alliance activist Len Richards circulated a document entitled "The Alliance at War" which stated:

> On October 3, the New Zealand parliament voted to support a motion committing SAS troops to the US-led military action against 'terrorism', against Afghanistan; a motion that gave "total support to the United States' approach to the crisis" ….[152]

The majority of members were "outraged" by their caucus' support of this vote.[153] Party officials immediately began receiving email from members who were amazed to hear that "we supported sending SAS troops and that we supported everything the United States had done up to that point." One message said that "the decision was outrageous

and contradicted all Alliance policy and practice."[154] Members also passed resolutions in

their branches and sent their concerns directly to the party leader and other MPs.

However, party representatives also began forwarding branch resolutions on the war vote

to other branches, breaking the official lines of communication. Suddenly, with members,

branches and representatives emailing to each other all over the country, an intra-party

anti-war network had formed.

The Parliamentary leaders were soon aware of this network's existence and took

steps to counter it. As Len Richards continues in his paper:

> But the insult added to the injury, as far as the Alliance members are concerned,
> was yet to come. In face of the rising opposition to the caucus support for the
> deployment of troops and the US-led attack on Afghanistan, the leadership of the
> Alliance went into damage control mode. A letter from Jim Anderton, along with
> his relevant speeches and media statements, was mailed to every member. This
> letter seeks to justify the 'military option' that he and his caucus supported [by
> reference to U.N. resolutions].

But as Richards pointed out no resolutions by the U.N. ever sanctioned the

military action taken by the United States and its allies.

Next Jim Anderton called party meetings in an effort to pull the party together

behind his leadership. The meeting in Auckland was well attended but the leader was

interrupted in his praise of the party's record by a request to hear an accounting on the

Afghan war vote. The interruption was met with cheering and applause while the leader's

prevaricating response was met with heckling and interjections that the "U.S. response

wasn't proportionate."[155] The Wellington meeting showed similar outrage over the war vote. [156]

The following month the leaders had to face up to the party's annual conference. Political commentator, Chris Trotter described the anti-war activists at the November 2001 conference at "the young, the smart, and the principled." Anderton attempted to project the achievements of the Alliance-Labour coalition with glossy leaflets headed "New Zealand Works Together" and display boards listing the thirty-two achievements of the coalition government. In vociferous opposition to the media-friendly Anderton presentation were the "truly inspirational orators like the Wairarapa's Dennis Rockell, and former Robson staffer, Mike Treen," supported by 42% of the delegates.

Although Anderton won the vote he lost the ideological high ground as anti-war activists won support throughout the debate and were voted onto the Alliance council in greater numbers.[157] For Anderton, the writing was on the wall.

Parliamentary Service asked to intervene

Unable to douse the flames of discontent in the party, the leadership took more drastic action. The Parliamentary Service was asked to intervene in the matter of activists working in Parliament using their computers to conduct an extra-Parliamentary political campaign.[158] The Parliamentary Service is the parliamentary office charged with enforcing rules governing the jobs of those who work for MPs whether in Parliament or

in electorate offices around the country. Leading members of the Alliance Parliamentary party appealed to the Parliamentary Service to act against the party activists even though

…. there is not a single other party that operates according to those rules.[159]

The Parliament officials made a selective purge of the Alliance anti-war activists. When they attempted to lock the party workers out of their offices their union representative stalled the process. Meanwhile the party membership and mailing lists were hidden until the National Secretary removed them from the premises and the Parliament computers.[160]

However party regional offices were closed, equipment confiscated and activists working in Parliamentary offices were fired. Suddenly, also, a large part of the party's funding was removed. Seven of the ten Alliance MPs pulled their tithes (10% of their salaries pledged to the party upon nomination) from the Council-controlled account.

At the Alliance Council meeting of December 9th the Anderton and McCarten factions reached a truce with Council confirming Anderton's right to access the membership files. There was also a directive from Council for Anderton and McCarten to reach an agreement over the reinstatement of MPs' tithes.[161]

However, at the Council meeting on the 16th and 17th of February 2002 Jim Anderton did not appear but proposed in a message that the President, party officers and

the Alliance National Council should step down and that the party constitution be 'set aside.'[162] The majority of councilors were in no mood to accept this ultimatum. Instead a resolution was put to the Council instructing MPs to reinstate their tithes. Peter Kane, president of the Democrats asked what the implications of this resolution were? The mover, Jill Ovens, referred to the party rules on entry to the candidate pool.

Kane asked: "You're going to deselect the deputy Prime Minister?" Another councilor interjected: "No. He hasn't put his nomination in yet."

In the debate that followed one of the three MPs remaining loyal to the party said "The tithe removers are setting up a new fund to set up a new party." A youth representative stated: "We're the Alliance. Not seven individuals who happen to be in Parliament."

Matt Robson, Minister for corrections and Jim Anderton's right hand man, told the Council meeting that he would not abide by a Council instruction to reinstate his tithes. He was then accused of "conducting sabotage against the party" and "preaching a perverted view of what leadership is about." He was told that ".. the members are very bloody angry at the theft of the party's money."

The resolution requesting the reinstitution of tithes was passed. When Matt Robson's nomination for the candidate pool came up for consideration the Council resolved to let it "lie on the table" which was interpreted as rejection of his nomination.

With this act the formalizing of the split became inevitable and Anderton and his supporters went ahead with setting up their new party. However they refused to relinquish their status and funding in Parliament as Alliance MPs. Jim Anderton even refused to relinquish his official Parliamentary position as leader of the Alliance although the party had elected Laila Harré as its new leader.[163]

Ultimately Jim Anderton's supporters, including three Alliance MPs announced the formation of *Jim Anderton's Progressive Coalition Party.*

On May 3rd the political bulletin *Wellington Watch* reported

> The pressure on the Alliance continued this week, with both the Opposition and the media pushing the line that the situation in Parliament is a "farce" and reflects not only on Alliance credibility but also on Labour. Registration of Jim Anderton's new party, the Progressive Coalition, gave the story a further lease of life and led to some very heated exchanges in Parliament, including pressure on the Speaker to rule on a range of issues about Mr Anderton and his status.

> Mr Anderton has, however, been careful to minimise the political and legal risks by standing back from the management of the new party. He has said he will not become a member of PCP until after the House has been dissolved.

In the following election Jim Anderton held his electorate of Wigram but without the backing of the Alliance party he did not regain his position as deputy Prime Minister. Similarly, Matt Robson, the only other former Alliance MP to enter Parliament in 2002, did not return to the front benches as a cabinet minister.

28 July 2002
LABOUR WINS SECOND TERM
The result of yesterday's General Election will most likely be a second Labour-lead minority government.
Labour won 41.3% of the vote and 52 seats - three more than in the old parliament. Labour will be able to govern in coalition with Jim Anderton's Progressive Coalition, which won two seats, and the support of either the Greens (eight seats) or United Future (nine seats).
United Future was one of the big winners on the night, together with New Zealand First. United Future, which as United won only one seat at the last election, garnered 6.8% of the vote in a remarkable run in the last week of the campaign. New Zealand First more than doubled its vote to 10.6%, winning 13 seats against only five last time.
The big losers were the National Party and the Alliance. National, as the major party of the right, suffered the worst election defeat in its history, crashing to just over 21% of the vote and returning only 27 MPs, against 39 in the outgoing parliament. The left-wing Alliance paid the price for its pre-Election split, failing to win any seats, while the split away Progressive Coalition won two seats (together as the Alliance they had 10 seats in the outgoing parliament.[164]

What caused the split in the Alliance?

To the anti-war activists the primary cause of the split was the caucus vote to support the U.S. "war on terror." Anderton and his supporters saw the main issue as a power grab by McCarten and Harré.[165] According to one of the leading Democrats, "The war issue was an excuse to have a fight with Jim." Undoubtedly there were a multitude of causal factors ranging from the psychological to the geo-political.[166] As Allison and

Zelikow note, the political or social analyst must choose which causal factors to consider when faced with the usual situation of complex causality.[167]

In this dissertation the principal theoretical concern is with the processes of internal party democracy and accountability in particular. The decision to treat the war vote episode as an issue of accountability is also justified by

i. Recognition that while accountability claims will invariably be used opportunistically by rivals to leaders, attempts to oust leaders do not necessarily involve accountability claims.
ii. The accountability aspect of the dispute was clearly seen as paramount by the majority of activists at the party conference and meetings.

The dispute in the Alliance which arose over support for the new Maori Party in 2004 was ostensibly between Matt McCarten, the new party leader, and party president Jill Ovens. This struggle also involved a number of causal factors, perhaps including the fact that McCarten is of Maori descent. However the primacy of the accountability aspect was arguably more clear cut in this case than in that of the war vote.

Launch of The Maori Party

After the Alliance failed to win Parliamentary representation in the 2002 election members began to search for alternative paths to political relevance.[168] For some the emergence of the Maori Party was seen as an historic opportunity to be part of a major force in New Zealand politics.

Although plans for the Maori Party had been maturing for many years it was to become a political reality with the government proposed legislation in August of 2003 to preempt Maori claims to ownership of New Zealand's seabed and foreshore and legally establish the public ownership of these assets. Maori opposition to the proposal would be most dramatically expressed in the hīkoi (march) to from the top of the North Island to Parliament in May 2004.

As the launch of the hīkoi approached Tariana Turia, Minister for the Community and Voluntary Sector and Associate Minister of Maori Affairs announced that she would vote against the government on the seabed and foreshore legislation.[169] Once the thousands of hīkoi marchers were on the road Turia announced her resignation from Parliament and her intention to contest a by-election.[170]

At least 20,000 marchers, many dressed as Maori warriors, descended on Parliament on May 5th.

> It was a spectacular arrival as feathered cloaks, flags, banners,
> flax skirts, Maori sovereignty flags mingled with the grey
> business suits of Parliament.
> The grounds echoed to the noise of a haka that stretched from the
> forecourt, out to the main gates.[171]
> Mrs Turia told the crowd "we must have meaningful Maori
> political representation and we must have it now".
> "I think we are going to see a clean sweep of the seats in the next
> election."[172]

The By-Election

On May 21st the Alliance Council met to discuss a request from the Maori Party for Matt McCarten to assist in the by-election in Tariana Turia's electorate of Te Tai Hauauru. The long discussion and the measured resolution that ensued reflected the ambivalence in the party over Maori claims to ownership of the seabed and foreshore and over Turia's refusal to rule out the possibility of a coalition with the conservative National Party:

> The Alliance regards the formation of the new Maori Party as having positive potential and fully supports the Alliance Leader and the Alliance party in working to achieve this. The Alliance Council authorises the officers to approve expenditure within the existing travel budget to support Matt and Gerard's involvement in the founding of the party and by-election and seeks funding from Alliance members to support these activities. The Alliance Council seeks the endorsement of the membership for continuing involvement.

It was at this Council meeting that the question of whether the Alliance should run a list (that is contest the party vote) in the next election was formally mooted.[173] The Alliance members debated the wisdom of involvement with the Maori Party at great length on the e-group during May and June of 2004.

Following Matt McCarten's easy success in managing Tariana Turia's by-election victory, a request was made by the Maori Party for McCarten to run its election campaign in the forthcoming general election

> The Maori Party has asked Alliance leader Matt McCarten to lead its general election campaign next year. Mr McCarten said he was taken by surprise when the party's conference unanimously called on him to repeat his performance as Tariana Turia's by-election organiser, but this time on a national scale.
> Mr McCarten told the 500 delegates at the Wanganui Memorial Hall that he would have to consult his own whanau - the Alliance.[174]

Rumors of a Merger

Rumors immediately began circulating that the Alliance was considering merging with the Maori Party. Party General Secretary, Gerard Hehir, circulated to members a statement denying the substance of a report on the Stuff (Fairfax) news website by Tracy Watkins, which said:

> Mr. McCarten confirmed yesterday that the Alliance would discuss a possible merger with the Maori Party, but said it was premature to comment further.

However members repeatedly called for strongly worded public statements from McCarten that there was no plan to merge with the Maori Party. The leader of the party did not respond to these demands from members. However he was quoted as saying in the press that

> "the Alliance is past its use by date"
> and that
> "the Alliance has not decided whether to contest the next election."

Following reports of these quotations from Matt McCarten being released in the media the president, Jill Ovens, issued a press statement on July 13th that the talks of a merger with the Maori Party were a 'beat-up.'

> John Pagani's announcement on National Radio today that the Alliance is merging with the Maori Party is nothing more than a politically motivated beat-up, says Alliance President Jill Ovens.
> Pagani, who features on National Radio as a commentator "of the Left", is a former Alliance press secretary now with the Progressives.[175]

Alliance President Resigns

Despite repeated in-house assurances from Matt McCarten that he had tried to scotch the rumors of a merger, McCarten's majority on the party executive committee expressed displeasure at president Ovens' efforts to put an end to the rumors. Following tense debate the executive passed a 'gagging' motion against Jill Ovens on the 15th of July, at which point she resigned as president.

The New Zealand Herald quoted a leaked email from her as saying: "I have been finding it increasingly difficult to work with the leadership of the party, which operates as a clique and has been hostile to me personally." McCarten and his supporters poured scorn on these claims.

The party's Yahoo e-group was used to let members know about the machinations which were taking place within the leadership group. One member of the executive meeting posted his summary of the proceedings in which he made it clear that the 'gagging' motion "was intended as censure." [176] On the party Council conference call of July 17th the issue was raised as to whether the e-group should be discontinued.

Members in Auckland outraged at the treatment of the president got together at a meeting billed as 'What's left of the Left' where they persuaded Jill Ovens to withdraw her resignation. Mr. McCarten however was having none of this withdrawal and relayed

to the press the fact that the president had resigned.[177] By this time there were already

calls on the e-group for McCarten to stand down as leader while he continued to act as

Maori Party campaign manager.

To Stand or not to Stand

The party Council agreed that regional party conferences, scheduled for the

following month, would vote on the issue of whether to stand a party list in the upcoming

general election. Although the debate continued around the standing of a list the

substance of the options being discussed at this stage were outlined in a circulated

discussion document:

1. The Alliance continues as an independent Left Party and stands in its own right in the 2005 election.
2. The Alliance throws its lot in with the Maori Party and actively supports it in the election.
3. The Alliance throws its lot in with the Greens and supports them in the election.

The options voted on at the regional conference held in August were however:

Option 1: Keep the Alliance going as a registered party and stand a list in the next election.
Option 2: Negotiate to support Maori and Green Parties and do not stand an Alliance list in the next election.
Option 3: Dissolve the Alliance and go our own way as members of other Parties.

Throughout the country exactly 50% voted for Option 1 and 50% voted for

Option 2 even though party leaders McCarten and Harré argued for Option 2. It appeared

that the dispute would be carried forward to the annual conference.

However, the Council majority attempted to preempt the annual conference by

conducting a postal ballot on winding up the Alliance. This effort was forestalled by the

threat of legal action. Ultimately, Matt McCarten and his supporters bowed out of active Alliance politics and party activists went ahead with the national conference in November 2004, re-elected Jill Ovens as party president and confirmed the intention to stand a party list in 2005.[178]

Conclusion

These two episodes, in each case leading to a split in the Alliance, were both brought about by several factors. In the case of the Afghan war vote the external factors were the 'war on terror' and the NZ Parliament's vote to send troops in support. In the second case the environmental cause was the emergence of the Maori Party and its popular support.

These factors by themselves however do not explain the course of events leading to a split. In order to explain, particularly the tenacious demands for accountability of leaders, the combination of external, organizational and subjective factors must be analyzed as causal processes. The next chapter lays out an attempt to understand the combination of these causal mechanisms drawing on social movement theory, political psychology and communication dynamics.

Notes to Chapter 5

Chapter 6 Analysis and Discussion of Results

This chapter sets out the analysis of results and findings. The case-study approach has been used to discover explanations for the relative success of activists in pursuit of elite accountability. The longitudinal form of the research has allowed identification of the temporal order of processes and events, thus helping in the task of causal inference.[179] In the future it may be possible to extend the longitudinal, dynamic analysis described here to the study of parties and movements in other national settings.[180] Nonetheless, it is contended here that the specific instances of claim assertion studied in this research constitute a range of cases comparable with many of the cases discussed in the literature.

The development of networks in the Alliance is analyzed using a qualitative approach which emphasizes their temporality and causal efficacy. [181] The identification of mechanisms of change from a hierarchical communication structure to more horizontal relationships demonstrates the occurrence of phase transition and change in the relative efficacy of structural causal factors.

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[179] The present research project is perhaps best described as a case study with a longitudinal orientation: pp.46 ff. Bryman, 2001.

[180] Compare Desai's historical study of the role of the Communist Party of India in Kerala. Desai, 2002.

[181] With respect to networks versus hierarchy the causal effects have been identified by proponents of networks as promoting equality, deliberation and communicative action. Compare Boudourides, 2002, p.20.

Analytical Concepts

Complexity Theory and Agency

Complexity theory explicitly integrates the notion of structure with reflexive agency by recognizing the crucial effect of changes in information flow within systems.[182] Nicolis and Prigogine note that "It is more natural, or at least less ambiguous, to speak of complex behavior rather than complex systems." [183]

> One does not lose knowledge by sharing it with others. On the contrary, its dissemination increases the knowledge level of the entire social system. This important capability - the creation of knowledge - will be shown to enable a social system to constantly recreate its structure, and makes it possible for a change of phase to occur in a social system without a [catastrophic result].[184]

Talcott Parsons made a distinction similar to that of Kuhn between 'normal' and 'revolutionary' science.[185] Parsons' analysis is explained by Crooke et al in terms of 'evolutionary processes' versus 'phase-shift processes.'

> … phase-shift processes are fundamental or differential leaps or evolutionary breakthroughs …[186]

Identification of the mechanisms of change tells us only one side of the story. The other side requires us to understand whether agents can and do act strategically on the basis of the changing constellation of social forces that suggests the recognition of the necessity of more or less appropriate mechanisms for the circumstances.

Complex causality

The concept of multiple or complex causality is highly relevant for this study.

In the case of the decision by 7 MPs to withdraw their tithes it is appropriate to look at the following antecedent conditions:

1. The overall push by NLP and Alliance members for one party and one-person-one-vote constitutional changes.
2. McCarten's organizational push for control of the Council accelerated following his ousting from position as Anderton's right-hand man (confirm).
3. The stated intention (withdrawn?) of Harré and Robson to challenge for the deputy leadership at the previous conference and Harré's (unstated?) intention at the coming conference.
4. Conference's taking Anderton to task and the subsequent similar reception given at the Auckland meeting.
5. The proposed strategy including the targeting of 'key seats' and the suspicion that Anderton would target Gillon's.
6. McCarten's Mayoral campaign run without prior consultation with Anderton and Anderton's perception that McCarten had amassed a secret fund for the purpose.

Compare this list with Audrey Young's arguments in her NZ Herald article on the 23rd of February 2001 in which she claims that the real cause of the split was over the scramble for places on the list for MPs hoping to return to Parliament for a second term: "The mad scrap now is all about who gets the diminishing places next time."

Power struggles will always be present in political parties and jockeying for position on the list was clearly causing tension. To interpret these as personal ambition getting in the way of policy delivery is, however, to lose sight of the nature of the Alliance as an historical formation and the structural and systemic problems being manifested in the form of apparent internecine strife.

Development of e-loops in Alliance

In this project my analysis has moved from perception of networks and their importance to developing typologies of networks such as leader-invoked networks as 'star' or 'hub' networks with one central node and democratic networks as 'all-channel' networks in which all are connected to all.[187] Researching the development and use of networks led to the focus on e-mail lists and loops. My typology was refined by relating this quasi-model to theories of social networks. Finally I compared the resulting construct to theories of electronic networks and e-democracy.
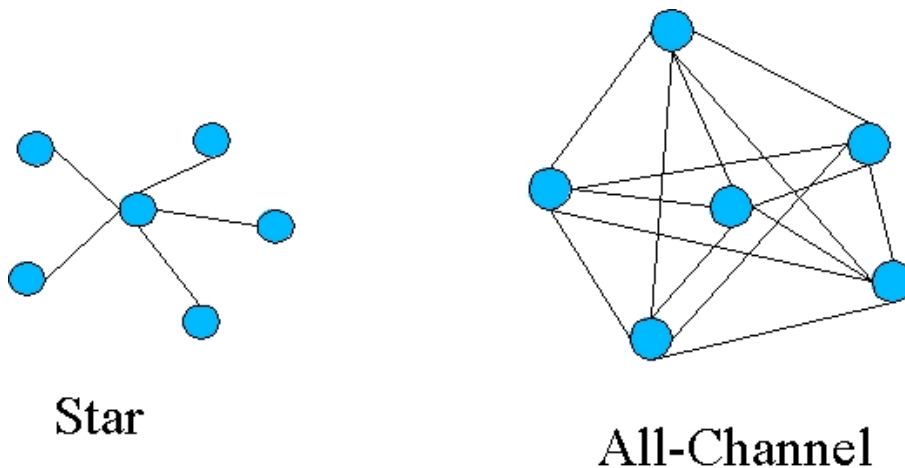
Star

All-Channel

Figure 2.   **Star and All-Channel Networks.**

Two examples are the women's network which grew from an e-mail list (one to many) to an e-group (many to many), and the campaign e-group originally set up as an organizing tool for electoral campaigns which is now used as a forum for internal

democracy and accountability, having been appropriated by the activists for these purposes.

I characterize this appropriation as an innovation but it did not involve a decision to change the purpose of the forum.[188] The transformation flowed from the changes that the party had undergone during and following the struggle with Anderton et al.

Advantages and Disadvantages of On-line Deliberation

A number of claims have been made for advantages of internet communication based on the nature of the medium. It is argued that, due to the asynchronous nature of email and most online fora, deliberation will be encouraged.[189] Studies of online discussion, however, indicate that considerable progress has yet to be made in the institution of a deliberative online public sphere.[190]

From the observation of the operation of collaborative circles in the Alliance the value of asynchronous communication in allowing face-to-face debate to complement online discussion can be confirmed. The deliberative nature of this debate depends on the habits of those concerned. As Dahlberg notes, the participants in discussions, whether online or off, could benefit from reflexivity on the norms of democratic deliberation.[191] We need to recognize also the likelihood of strategic perlocutionary use of e-group

communication. Some evidence for this was found in analysis of the Alliance campaign e-group discussions. [192]

However, an argument can also be made for decentralization in decision-making in political parties. Accountability mechanisms, if centralized, must be infallible, and this is clearly not the case. If a range of options are available for members to pursue accountability issues, one avenue will probably produce success. Similarly, Dryzek argues against reliance on the administrative state to solve environmental problems because, among other things, hierarchical organization means that a breakdown somewhere in the chain of command can be catastrophic.[193]

Collaborative Circles

Horizontal networks (HNs) are usually based on the shared values of members, for example, grass-roots democracy, anti-imperialism, environmentalism, feminism. Their strength comes from the autonomy of individuals and groups to form collaborative circles, leading to creative initiatives. Networks in which the members are bound by formal relations are less likely to encourage autonomous collaboration due to organizational mores. [194] However, when collaborative circles do not have 'managers' members can end up undermining instead of supporting each other.[195]

Network capital and emotional resources

Accountability invariably involves conflict. Political leaders, having high status and authority, are not generally amenable to routine accounting for their actions and are

often able to exact a very high price for involuntary subjection to an accountability process. Activists challenge the authority and overcome the positional power of leaders using their own relational power, authority and legitimacy, helped by the emotional resources of their collaborative circles and networks.[196]

In pursuing accountability claims against leaders, activists make use of network capital for a number of purposes. These include information gathering and dissemination, organizing for votes and manifestations of numerical strength and access to individuals in positions of influence over the leaders. However, unless the activists concerned are also able to call upon these resources for emotional strength, they lack the feeling and appearance of authority needed to challenge leaders and prosecute accountability claims.[197]

Observation of the importance of networks as an emotional resource in the Alliance also produced two ancillary insights:

1. Of comparable importance to intra-party networks are those which extend outside of the party structure. Connection to these networks gives activists the sense of an 'independent base' and can increase the subjective sense of authority needed to undertake risky action.
2. Similarly important are the collaborative or friendship circles which can increase one's feelings of self-worth and confidence in the justness of one's stance. [198]

Relatively Autonomous Networks

High social capital in an organization does not necessarily encourage questioning of decisions and directions and may actually have the opposite effect in cases where the cohesiveness of members tends to produce a 'closed society.' When activists maintain networks that include a considerable proportion of members outside of the party membership and/or the networks are relatively autonomous of party hierarchy, the relationship is likely to help the pursuit of accountability claims by strengthening the authority/autonomy of activists vis-à-vis the party leadership and structure.

Cohen and Arato argue that a pragmatic interaction and dialogue between movements and parties can allow a critique of both democratic fundamentalism and elitism leading to the development of social movement actors who are self-reflective and capable of influencing the direction of political discussion.' This dialogue can also help political parties 'maintain a high degree of openness to civil society without surrendering the prerequisites of effective strategic action.'[199]

The semi-autonomous networks in the Alliance were correctly identified by the elite of the party as a threat to their authority. The legitimacy of these networks was repeatedly questioned by supporters of Anderton when they failed in attempts to gain control of them. At the Council meeting in February 2002 the youth representatives came

under especially strong pressure concerning their legitimate authority on the ruling body of the party.

Identification of Trends

A number of *dominant trends* have been identified regarding

1. The relationship between activists' networks and their success in prosecuting accountability demands[200] and

2. The correlation between the growing perception of an opposition to the leading MPs (entativity) and the development of activists' networks.[201]

3. Corresponding attribution of threat (activists see MPs withdraw tithes, MPs see opposition form) and opportunity (activists recognize their cohesiveness, authority and constitutional legitimacy).[202]

Counterbalancing the authority of leaders is necessary to achieve accountability. The traditional party organization of 'cells' is hierarchical and militates against organization and initiative among members.[203] Absent the community organizing model[204] the horizontal organizing power of email networks etc. gives members a counterbalancing means of horizontal communication and activists a counterbalancing authority based on 'representation' of a broad stratum of members.[205]

These networks are similar to the 'thematic networks' introduced in some Norwegian parties[206] and are not liable to control by elites of the organization due to

1. Their separation from the area of authority of leaders (according to formal or informal rules of the organization)[207]
2. Their cohesiveness being largely independent of the organization[208] and
3. The practicalities of the communication within the network (email loops tend to be non-hierarchical).[209]
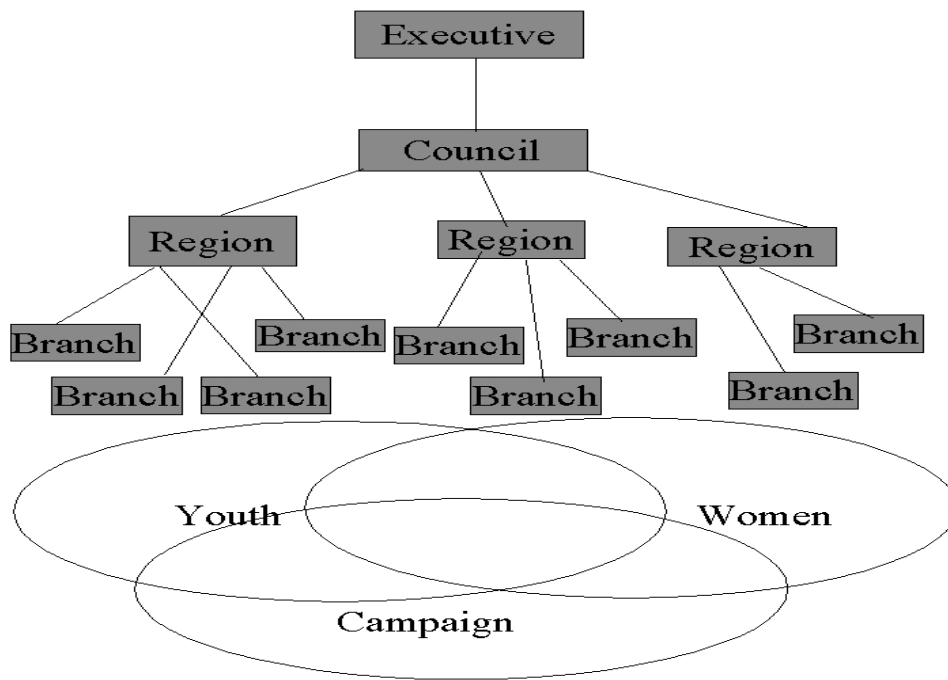
Alliance Structure and Networks

Figure 3.   Hierarchical Structure vs. Horizontal Networks

While the networks are more horizontal than the traditional hierarchy they are neither flat nor uniform. Some members are clearly more connected than others and may represent a 'hub' around which others 'cluster.'[210]

Some political theorists have also argued that, far from being oligarchical, the traditional hierarchical structure of the mass party encourages internal democracy by discouraging clientelism and maintaining dense networks that connect party, state and society.[211] Others argue that networks are inherently problematic vis-à-vis governance. Networks tend to be exclusive in membership, self-selected and require iterative agreement formation. These difficulties indicate problems for efficiency and accountability.[212]

Keeping the membership of such networks open to all members and ensuring that their deliberations are transparent helps to overcome the well-grounded concerns regarding the problematic accountability and accessibility of these relatively informal networks.[213] While the problems of access to the internet are well researched, the tendency is for online participation in a in a geographically dispersed polity to become more accessible than face-to-face participation.[214]

Temporal and Resource Constraints on Communication

Apart from the problem of gatekeepers at each level of the hierarchy in the traditional party communication model, party members are faced with time and resource constraints compared with leaders in communicating with other members or leaders. In the traditional format members may communicate directly with close associates but for wider dissemination of their concerns they must wait for regular meetings from which delegates take forward messages to a further round of regular meetings and so on.[215]

Furthermore, leaders have centralized resources, provided by membership dues and donations. These may include regular and special mailings or one-to-many email lists. The imbalance is further exacerbated by the recognition of these central communications as 'official' and thereby somehow sanctioned by the majority of members. On the internet e-groups, in contrast, everyone is an individual and the importance of position is denied by the medium. The only real strategy open to leaders in this new situation is to refuse to participate.[216]
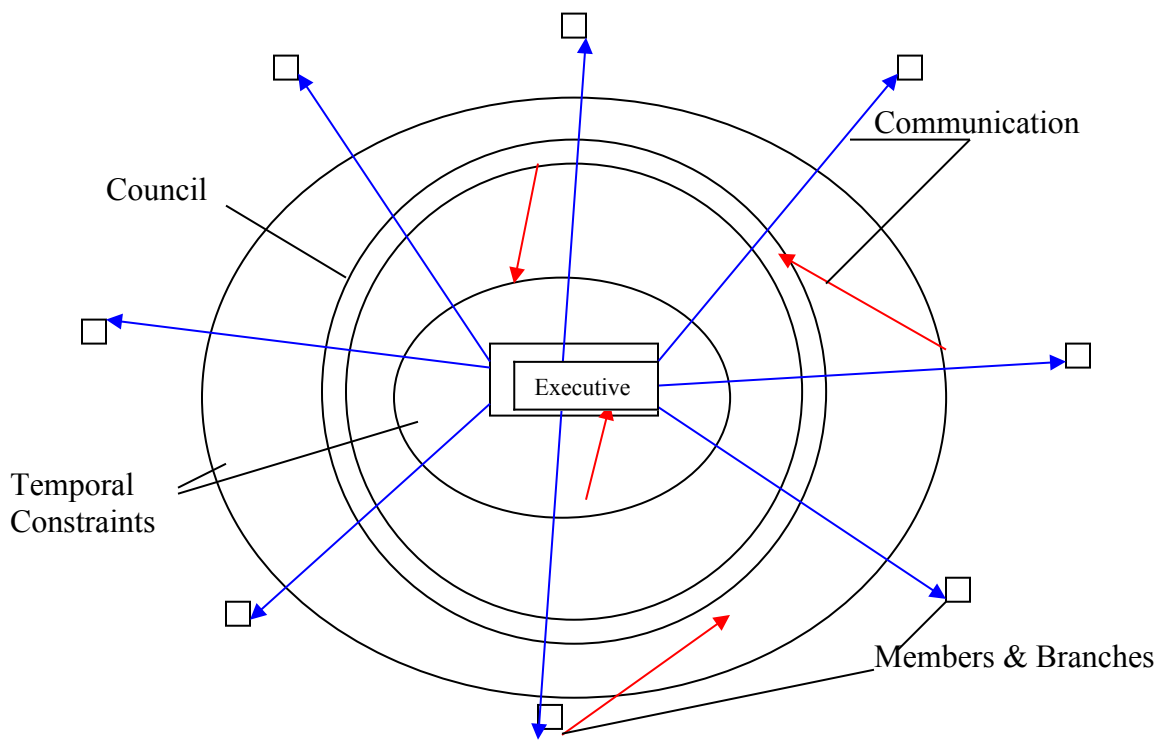
Figure 4.   Temporal constraints on communication.

In order to get an idea of the importance of these constraints on communication the reader may compare figure 4[217] with the official Alliance structure chart (in the appendix of this paper).[218] The official chart promotes the Council to primacy which obfuscates its subordinate role in day-to-day operations.

Mechanisms in the Alliance

Apart from external events there are a number of initial factors desirable to produce the situation that allows a break to be made from 'politics as usual' as, for example, in achieving some form of accountability of elites. These are:

1: The Collaborative Circle coming together
2: Members of the Circle being supported by relatively autonomous networks

It is likely that activists are more in need of the above conditions than leaders. This is partly due to different psychology (many leaders are relative loners)[219] and partly due to activists' more strongly held belief in the principle of collective action as more democratic and legitimate than individual action.[220]

These mechanisms are listed in a roughly chronological order but because the development of many of the mechanisms themselves and the interaction between mechanisms involve feedback loops the process should be visualized as a series of spirals.

Table 3   Mechanisms in the Alliance

Collaborative Circle comes together   Network formation
Horizontal shift in communication   Circle supported by networks
Entativity   Repression
Maneuver/deception   Perception of deception
Denunciation   Attribution of threat and opportunity
Identity shift [221]   Framing [222]
Elite defection   Collaborative circle reinforcement
Emotional confirmation   Authority development

Feedback loops act to reinforce the effects of various combinations of the factors in the list above. For example, as a subaltern group begins to see an elite as illegitimate and a frame develops through which to view the other, consequent actions will tend to be interpreted so as to reinforce the attribution. Typically, the action of the feedback can be analyzed within the group of activists - attribution and framing of leaders as illegitimate and activists as the new authority - and within the elite group (activist opposition seen as 'challenge' to leader - attempted putsch; leaders perceive themselves as victims of conspiracy.

The combination of relations between leaders and led or activists and elite constitutes a structure in which similar mechanisms operate normally to maintain the structure. However, with the feedback between antagonistic frames and attributions cycling through both groups, a 'paradigm shift' occurs in which the activists come to see themselves as the legitimate bearers of the interests of the party and leaders cease to identify with the party. There is now established what Gramsci would call an new hegemony.[223]

This is comparable to Habermas' analysis of the situation in legal and political institutions where the normal routine of bureaucratic procedure is disrupted by a process of problematization when conflict arises. Constitutionally legitimized methods of scrutiny, normative judgment and communication flow then come to the fore as sharpened public attention is focused on the conflict problem. [224]

The dynamic of mechanisms within the activists network leads to the push for accountability. Feedback loops produce escalation. The dynamic of mechanisms within the elite network leads to a push for control, centralization and separation. The dynamic of these combined processes led to the split with unresolved issues of accountability to the extent that the main leaders did not recant.

Entativity is a *psychological* or *cognitive mechanism*.[225] In both cases the recognition of a party-wide "left opposition" was the example of entativity for the activists and the elite. In the Maori Party dispute the activists responded by setting up a mini-loop on which leading pro-list activists emailed each other. The mini-loop is an example of a *relational mechanism*. Interaction and feedback between these two mechanisms produce combativity, authority and organizing power. When these reach a certain threshold the "paradigm shift" occurs with activists prepared to take control and, if necessary, split with the leaders. [226]

In the war-vote case the environmental mechanism of the "war on terror" combined with a psychological mechanism of entativity and a relational mechanism of the e-mail lists. In the Maori party case the environmental mechanism was nationwide debate over the foreshore and sea bed legislation. In the struggle with Jim Anderton and his supporters there were additional external influences in creating alternative legitimacy. These were: John Pilger's refusal to speak at the alliance conference once he knew of the pro war vote by Caucus; the gathering anti-war movement; and the Labour traditions of anti-war and anti-capitalist struggle (the latter being internalized). In the struggle with McCarten and his supporters over the Maori Party the crucial element in building the alternative legitimacy was the discussion network.

I characterize the situation of feedback and reinforcement of changing perceptions and balance of power as a process of *socio-ontological flux* in which agency can successfully challenge the power of structure. More fine-grained and dialectical than the explanations of diffusion, repression and radicalization offered by social movement theorists, this analysis provides an understanding of the transformative capacity of communicative action rather than simply explaining the trajectory of an episode.[227]

Complex Causes

It is probable that a small set of causal factors have the dominant role in determining the state of a social system and changes in some of these factors can have non-linear transformative effects on the system.[228] We need to assess causal sufficiency since a cause can be 'sufficient' when counter-causes are relatively weak. [229]

When the multi-party structure of the Alliance was replaced by a unitary structure one could have been forgiven for thinking that things would become simpler. However the number of effective actors changed from four to at least twenty-two. McCarten as numbers man believed he could maintain control over the majority of these members of Council. In the normal course of events that had been the case because these representatives had hardly communicated with each other independently.

When the Afghan war issue blew up, email networks which had been in formation grew and became highly active. Even those who had no official position could now influence outcomes though their contribution to the discussion. Furthermore, knowledge of the state of play, though imperfect, was now spread throughout the party.

By the time McCarten began his relationship with the Maori Party the all-channel communication exemplified by the Yahoo e-group had practically become the norm. The attempt to maintain secrecy over the outcome of the Auckland Regional conference vote was delegitimized by discussion on the e-group. In effect, the leadership had lost the ability to control the membership through the tried and true methods of monopoly of (dis)information and divide and rule. The maintenance of legitimacy was now dependent on the discursive democratic judgment of the members. A democratic revolution had pushed the party to 'the edge of chaos.'

Ironically it had been Laila Harré who had told members that they had to create 'a culture of democracy.' They had taken her at her word and taken control of the party. For Harré it was the straw that broke the camel's back. She sided with the McCarten faction in attempting to shut down the party. The party became a more robust organization with regions and volunteers taking responsibility for matters such as maintenance of membership lists. The party is not so amenable to central direction but also not so vulnerable to defection from the centre.

The interaction of complex causes is the norm in the social world. This interaction is itself complex and non-linear with both reinforcing and negating effects coming into play.[230] Compare the concept of 'tipping point' or 'threshold' which describe the way in which qualitative change is produced by the interplay of many factors.[231] We may also note that virtually the same phenomenon of revolutionary communicative action could be observed in the 'velvet revolutions' and in the 'smart mobs' of Senegal and the Philippines.[232]

Further to the mechanisms identified by social movement theorists, we need to postulate mechanisms of reasoned communication and, in particular, deliberative mechanisms. For the outcome of such deliberations to have lasting effect also requires learning mechanisms, the successful operation of which require conditions not usually encountered in circumstances of political action.[233]

> It seems that societies learn only under specific social conditions, namely when a basic uncertainty permeates society that destroys the basic ordering of experiences with the natural, the social and the psychic world.[234]

Organizational learning

Self-Organization

> In some organizations the people are working coherently, energetically, and effectively. Information flows freely and the parts are well connected. These organizations are self-organizing and have many of the characteristics of living systems. In other organizations, the people struggle with mixed messages and incoherence. The information flow is blocked and the parts are disconnected. Confusion, cynicism, and burnout hamper the organization's effectiveness. These organizations are treated by their leaders as if they are machines to control and manipulate; these are command-and-control organizations.[235]

Cook and Yanow take issue with both the systems approach and what they describe as the 'cognitive perspective' to organizational learning. They argue for a cultural approach to learning by organizations to improve our understanding of organizational action. This conception of organizational learning involves the development of "values, beliefs, and meanings, together with the artifacts of their expression and transmission (such as myths, symbols, metaphors, rituals and ritual objects), that are created, inherited, shared, and transmitted" within and outside of the organization.[236]

Learning and Democracy

Parties and polities need to be self-democratizing. This can only be achieved if they are capable of learning and learning, for any person or organization, requires autonomy to allow discussion or debate of the kind referred to in conceptions of the public sphere above.[237]

Deliberative democracy may allow the group to benefit from the in-depth and iterative nature of conversation while encouraging participation of all members in the process of self-education of the organization.[238] The initiatives of the Workers' Party in Brazil come closest to combining the power of deliberative democracy with a grassroots movement.

> Their most substantial reform measure, called "Participatory Budgeting" (PB), attempts to transform clientelistic, vote-for-money budgeting arrangements into a publicly accountable, bottom-up, deliberative system driven by expressed needs of city residents. [239]

A decentralized decision-making process may allow better institutional learning. The New Zealand Alliance prior to 2002 had a rigidly centralized structure which prevented institutional learning while favoring the status quo. A more or less conscious process of decision-making regarding compromises on ideals of participatory democracy takes place within modern parties. In some parties, such as the Greens and the post-2001 Alliance, serious attention is given to making this process itself democratic. What is generally missing however is any provision for members to 'take stock' of the overall process and direction. This 'self-accounting' is required for the organization to learn and develop collective memory.

The self-education of the party, allowing, inter alia, the development of competent party representatives, requires that members are able to take a quasi-experimental approach to decision making. This implies the need for fora where the processes of

change, of policy and constitutional change, and structural and cultural change in the party are thematized. Such fora can help promote the legitimacy of party decisions and allow the debate of radical proposals without putting pressure on leaders to defeat their protagonists.

Similarly, the existence of 'organization' itself is necessary for the development of new leaders who develop their skills at 'lower' (peripheral) levels of party organization before presenting themselves as replacements for those who may be growing stale at 'upper' levels. This depends inter alia on the organization being 'flatter' rather than hierarchical.[240]

Distributed organization is to democracy what centralized organization is to oligarchy. Aspects of decentered network governance, online communication and deliberative democracy may be combined in a democratized version of the political party to provide a more practicable solution to the problems of democratic participation in the twenty-first century.[241] Mechanisms of accountability and replaceability can be enhanced by means of dense multi-level networks both within the organization and in the environment/wider society.

Here I have attempted to explicate the role of political activism and new communication technology in facilitating learning.[242] In the first case study, the clash

between Anderton and the Council is an example of the societal learning taking place on a global scale. This involves the displacement of the belief in the trustworthiness and good intentions of state and corporate actors by belief in the ethical need for civil society actors to steer society away from ecological or other disasters. Similar examples can be seen in the anti-GE movement and WTO protests.[243]

Rebellion against the elitist assumption of the duty of tutelage is seen in the 'hard' version of accountability as opposed to 'dialogic' notions.[244] My argument for accountability as necessary for learning refers to social learning whereas elites tend to believe that it is only individuals who learn. In reality, however, they are pliable to outside influence from corporations, think tanks and the like.[245]

Klaus Eder emphasizes the role of communication in societal learning:

'What happens then is not that individuals simply learn and provide new meanings and new rules for going ahead, but rather that social relations have to be reorganized in order to open spaces of communication that allow the creation of new forms of knowledge or the reconstruction of old forms of knowledge. In this process social relations are themselves redefined. Rules of social relations of communication have to be found in order to: (1) acquire new knowledge; (2) store such knowledge; and (3) transmit such knowledge given the natural and/or social turnover of actors in communication settings.'[246]

Autonomy and learning

The traditional hierarchical party structure connects the leadership to the members through lines of control and communication. The hierarchical relationship is not only ordained in the constitution but is also reinforced through a central monopoly on the distribution of information. The contrasting autonomy of the sector networks is important because they do not owe primary allegiance to the party as an organization. The pools of members in the Youth, Women's and Workers' networks and their freedom of discussion facilitate learning through a form of deliberation.

Talk and Learning

The ability of a group or organization to learn depends on the kind of talk that is encouraged within the group. Conversation between individuals can be the source of deep questioning and assessment of ideas, old and new but is limited to participation by a few agents at a time. Announcements, pronouncements and declaratory speech are one-way communications which limit learning to the dissemination of information and opinions from the few (usually elite) to the many. This is typical of many old-style conferences. Discussion or debate of the kind referred to in conceptions of the public sphere and deliberative democracy may allow the group to benefit from the in-depth and iterative nature of conversation while encouraging participation of all members in the process of self-education of the organization.

New Technology and Communication

In the Alliance issues of accountability and autonomy were raised by Members of Parliament over issues concerning the use of email communication. This form of communication had been used to undermine the hierarchical structures of the traditional party through the creation of 'horizontal units' and 'loops.'

Party leaders had less control over the sector-based women's and youth networks than over party officials. Whereas, in a vertical organization, peripheral units must be activated from the top, email discussion groups tend to take on a life of their own (partly because of the *sustained* nature of email discussion). Similarly, peer-to-peer communication is distributed and less amenable to control than server-based communication. On e-group, participants are relatively equal. There is little effect of a person's 'presence' or authoritative way of speaking, or of deferential silence from others.

Social Capital

The collective benefits of social capital rely on elements of shared values and trust in one another that go to make up the 'glue that holds communities together.'[247] More important for individual advantage is the 'bridging' that joins more intimate groups into networks.

These links are vital because they not only connect groups to one another but also give members in any one group access to the larger world outside their social circle through a chain of affiliations. [248]

However, the network aspect of social capital, which refers to the connections between a set of agents, is an essential ingredient from both the individual and the collective point of view. In *Measuring Social Capital* Stone and Hughes present guidelines which emphasize the measurement of connections to, quality of and size of networks. For the purposes of the present study the measurement of social capital and network capital will be simplified to the analysis of the essential aspects identified by Stone and Hughes. [249]

Trust

Trust is recognized as the key to social capital. Cohen and Prusak give the example of the New York diamond merchants who do not need to enforce compliance because they have total trust in one another's' word. [250] The issue of accountability only arises when trust has either broken down (as happened between Alliance leaders and members) or hasn't developed (as has been the case between Alliance members and leaders of other parties).

There has been a culture of distrust in the Alliance which is now being overcome by the influence of new networks and probably also by the fact that there are now no parliamentarians. This lack of trust would be a major reason for the need of activists to have the support of relatively autonomous networks.

Network Analysis

The species of network analysis harnessed for the present work is qualitative

rather than quantitative or mathematical.[251] However, unlike the analysis of social

networks common to much of social science, the concern here is primarily with the

creation and development of networks which may be invoked and perlocutionary,

dormant or latent, consciously constructed or 'natural' or identity networks.[252]

Network Identification

The processes of network identification in this research have mainly followed standard

procedures as outlined in the literature.[253]

1: Ego-centered - actors are questioned on their relations with others
2: Snowball - follows from 1 - each circle of actors identifies a new one for inclusion
3: Investigate email lists as 'affiliations' [254]
4: Treat small network as a collaborative circle [255]

The use of qualitative network analysis follows from the need to investigate

relations between *sets* of actors which correlates well with the realist use of the concept

of *positions* and the analysis of social structure in terms of the *relations between*

positions.[256] Network analysis here refers to analysis of networks according to their

temporal contingency.

Established networks with relatively fixed topology are distinguished from

nascent networks and networks which may be temporarily invoked by *star* agents are

distinguished from networks in transition from one form to another. In this study

networks are found to belong to one or more of the categories:

Invoked; Perlocutionary; Dormant; Latent; Planned; Natural; Identity.

Such networks are identified according to

a. temporal analysis of network activation
b. the role of Ego as activator and the Snowball effect
c. implications for authority and accountability of actors plural and singular

The Strength of Semi-autonomous Networks

Autonomy is strengthened and accountability is more likely to be achieved when

activists are supported by networks which are either not integral with the party structure

or are based on independent cohesion. Examples are the women's network and the youth

network. Another, contrasting example, is the network of MPs which is a semi-

autonomous network formed by the common holding of positions in a structure

autonomous from the party. The youth network was described as a loop. This is a

horizontal form of network in that it does not derive from the positions held by members.

Here such horizontal networks are designated by the term HN.

Qualitative Dynamic Network Analysis

Contrasting with the horizontal network is that which is invoked by the individual

at the hub of the network whom we shall refer to as the *star*. For added clarity, such *star*

networks are referred to here as *perlocutionary*. For brevity we shall use the term PN.

Perlocutionary networks cannot normally be invoked by others in the network because they do not regularly communicate with each other. Questions of discourse and organizational ethics are raised with the relatively conscious suppression of networks and autonomy when the *stars* are not invoking them. Plural actors in this case are normally passive and are called into play, but in the Alliance we can see the process of these actors becoming agents as these networks are transformed into semi-autonomous networks.

Those semi-autonomous networks which are in the process of forming (becoming) may be designated as nascent networks (NNs). In the process of transition, an NN may take on characteristics of both a HN and a PN, with the possibility of forming either or both ideal types of network. The transitional HN may be described as a semi-autonomous phase transition network (SPTN).

Under propitious circumstances, the importance of the monopoly of organizational resources by officials may be reduced and the importance of the social capital of activists enhanced. In this situation of flux, power can effectively shift from the elite to the grass-roots. The conditions that can lead to this shift and the conditions that encourage the formation to HNs have been detailed above. [257]

Parliament serves to break down the ties that bind MPs to their parties by allowing the creation of new networks and promoting different values. These networks were researched by interviewing activists and leaders, analyzing their communications, observing their interactions.

Phase Transition

Semi-autonomous phase transition networks (SPTNs) are a transitional form of HN. During the process of phase transition change analogous to a paradigm shift takes place in the consciousness of a considerable proportion of party members. The transformative events of the war vote by caucus coupled with Pilger's cancellation, the raid on party offices by the Parliamentary Service, the 2001 Alliance national conference and the deselection of a sitting Cabinet Minister overthrew the previous regime and enabled members to instigate a new internal party culture.[258]

There are multiple negative cases both within the Alliance and in other parties studied by other researchers. In These negative cases either the technology was not available for the kind of horizontal communication or it has not been used for this purpose.[259] One relatively dissimilar positive case is that of Solidarity.[260] In this instance horizontal communication was facilitated by the masses of workers on each site, especially the Gdansk and Lenin shipyards.[261] Similarly, the autonomous horizontal communication occurring in revolutionary situations, velvet and otherwise, provide examples of temporary network formation and crystallization.[262]

Complexity and Socio-ontological Flux

Innovative use of communicative action by activists in the Alliance has been analyzed as an example of what I have called socio-ontological flux. The formation of networks in identity sectors of the party separate from hierarchical control and the appropriation of the election campaign organizing e-group for discussion issues of intra-party democracy and accountability produced a new internally democratic regime. This virtual overthrow of the structure of positional power by relationally connected activists in networks was characterized as a phase transition reached through positive feedback between causal mechanisms in several dimensions.

Boundary conditions of the old 'command and control' organization were exceeded initially when activists emailed their independently organized lists of members and supporters over the caucus vote supporting sending troops to Afghanistan. This transformational action was an example of the activists protecting the identity of the party by rupturing the pre-existing form. [263] Chaos or complexity theory was used to explain how small changes at certain junctures in a system's development led to qualitative change through activists' innovative use of new technology.

Discursive Democracy Online?

In light of the claims for internet communication to democratize political discourse, one question that should be addressed to the data from this study is:

To what extent does the online discursive practice developed in the Alliance conform to expectations for discursive democracy?

Arguments can be made for *institutional* learning Through decentralized democratic decision-making. Thus, paradoxically, the only way to ensure discursive decision-making 'unbound' by power relations is by imposing clear-cut constraints on the intrusion of power relations into decision-making processes. A party's constitution requires the backing of law and/or strong ethical traditions to ensure the maintenance of these kinds of constraints and guarantees on equal participation. [264]

Lincoln Dahlberg has developed a set of six conditions to test the approximation of online discourse to the standard of rational communication elaborated in Habermas' theoretical work. Among Dahlberg's criteria are

- *ii. Exchange and critique of criticizable moral-practical validity claims.* Rational-critical discourse involves engaging in reciprocal critique of normative positions that are provided with reasons and thus are criticizable, that is, open to critique rather than dogmatically asserted.
- iv. Ideal role-taking. Participants must attempt to understand the argument from the other's perspective. This requires a commitment to an ongoing dialogue with difference in which interlocutors respectfully listen to each other.
- *v. Sincerity.* Each participant must make a sincere effort to make known all information, including their true intentions, interests, needs, and desires, as relevant to the particular problem under consideration.

- *vi. Discursive inclusion and equality.* Every participant affected by the validity claims under consideration is equally entitled to introduce and question any

assertion whatsoever. Inclusion can be limited by inequalities from outside of discourse - by formal or informal restrictions to access. It can also be limited by inequalities within discourse, where some dominate discourse and others struggle to get their voices heard. [265]

The Alliance Campaign e-group discussions tended to be dominated by a few members as found in studies of online fora in general. Contributions varied widely from some which came close to the standards proposed by Dahlberg to many which more closely resembled the 'flaming' that is all too familiar on the internet. Some notable positive developments were the absence of domination by the leader and little use of the technique of 'death by a thousand cuts' through petty denigration of other participants.

Sarcasm, irony and a certain amount of bullying were all present in the online discussion but the latter was very mild by comparison with the face-to-face dressing down suffered by party members who crossed the leader under Jim Anderton's regime. However, the danger of escalating rhetoric needs to be addressed through reflexivity as identified by Dahlberg.

Where strategic goals are in play the ideal of sincerity is simply an ideal. Months after the accusation was first raised on the e-group and vociferously denied, the anti-list faction proposed the winding up of the party. This development suggests deception at a number of levels.

The issue of equal access to the discussion is of concern to the Alliance activists. The members without internet access are usually apprised of developments in the

discussion in face-to-face meetings. However, distance and time restrict the timeliness of these updates and diminish the opportunity for participation.

Under the present circumstances of growing economic inequality equal access will remain a problem. The ideals of online communication derived by Dahlberg from the work of Habermas cannot serve as practical guidelines for internal discussion in a political party. The Alliance activists will themselves continue to address these issues and seek workable solutions.[266]

Parties in Comparison - Germany and the U.S.

The 1980 federal program of the Greens specified as the essential feature of the party the control of all party and public officeholders by the *Basis.* According to the program it is this *Basis Democratie* that distinguishes the Greens from the oligarchical nature of the major parties.[267]

When they first entered the Bundestag in l983, the Green Party had in place several principles to retain membership control over parliamentary representatives. From the 'imperative mandate' to the rotation of elected officials; from tithing of half the parliamentary salary to the 'separation of office from mandate' the Greens had thematized and institutionalized internal democracy more consciously than any other elected party.[268]

However, because of their far greater resources and media coverage the Parliamentary *Fraktion* became the de facto leadership of the party. In most areas of policy development the part-time working groups of the federal party activists and extra-parliamentary experts (Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaften) were displaced by the full-time working groups (Arbeitskreise) of the *Fraktion.* [269]

Latterly the German Greens have been painted as 'abandoning movement ties, accountability structures, and programmatic principles.'[270] Their leader has evolved from radical firebrand to professional politician.[271] This metamorphosis has not occurred without a struggle. At the 1995 Green Party annual conference in Bremen delegates were split 60-40 against sending troops to Bosnia. However, Joschka Fischer and the majority of parliamentarians were in favor of troop deployment and went over the heads of the party whom Fischer accused of 'fleeing from reality.' In a supreme irony, the *Fundi* majority out-maneuvered the leaders on the floor of the congress by using the voting procedures while the *Realo* Fischer trumped the membership vote by appeal to the *Basis* in the wider movement. [272]

The split between the *Fundis* and *Realos* had been growing wider since the coalition talks between the Greens and the SPD. Coalition-making was from the outset viewed with great suspicion by many members who recognized the deal-making as undercutting accountability and party principles. The SPD was also widely regarded as hopelessly bureaucratic and pro-NATO, which was a primary motivation for the

formation of the Green Party.[273] Coalitions were, however, formed throughout Germany

with the final blow to the *Fundis* coming in Hamburg in 1991. With an appeal to the

Basis for party unity the *Realos* ousted the left-wing leadership in the city and prepared

for coalition with the SPD. Mass resignations followed.[274]

The *Realos* continued to remake the Green Party at the Neumünster congress in

April 1991 where all but one of the fundamental anti-bureaucratic provisions of the

constitution were removed. Led by Jutta Ditfurth the majority of the *Funids* left and a

new party, Ecological Left was formed.[275]

Lessons from Die Grünen

Why did the leftist majority in the German Greens become a minority which felt

obliged to leave rather than support what had become a "*stinknormal*" party? External

factors may provide a large part of the explanation. German reunification was perceived

as a great achievement for Kohl and the West-German Greens were left out in the cold

after the 1990 elections. The Greens in the West failed to pass the 5% threshold and

gained no seats while the Alliance 90/Greens (B'90/Gr) in the East won 6% of the vote.[276]

After 1990 the independence of the *Bündnis'90/Grüne* parliamentary *Fraktion* was a

legal fact since the Green Party charter did not cover the deputies of the new *Länder* and,

at least until September 1991, the electoral alliance in the East did not legally constitute a

party. This may partly explain the preference amongst B'90/Gr deputies for contact with

party organisations and officials at the state rather than federal level. [277]

However, anxiety over the loss of parliamentary representation does not explain the inability of those on the left for whom this was not an issue to effectively organize against the *Realos*. Neither was it the case that *Fundis* showed less ability in the use of party rules to gain advantage - as noted above.

Two organizational factors appear to have given the leaders an advantage over the members in a classic example of the unintended consequences of political decisions. Firstly, because the Greens grew out of the anti-war and environmental movements and saw the bureaucratic Social Democratic Party as deeply mired in the imperialist camp, the Green Party was designed as and 'anti-party' party. This meant, among other things, that there was a loose concept of membership with the *Basis* of the party being the movements from which it sprang and with which it initially maintained close links.

One effect of this loose membership was that leaders could effectively ignore activists even when they secured a majority at conferences. Joschka Fischer has made a career of appealing to the *Basis* as a firmer ground for authority than the party organization. Another factor which arises largely from contingent historical circumstances but could also be partly attributed to the aversion for traditional organization forms is the phenomenon of „taz."

The German national daily newspaper „die tageszeitung" or simply „taz" is

the only daily newspaper in Germany that does not belong to one of the big media companies. … It was founded in 1979 with nothing more but the prepayment from some 10.000 subscribers from the „alternative" movement in Germany. .. Later on it became the forum for the debates in and around the German green party.[278]

The Greens came to rely upon „taz" for information about internal party matters. Although the first German newspaper to provide an on-line edition (through which party members could contact each other) this did not appear until 1995.[279] Party leaders, with their own press agents and parliamentary resources, retained crucial communication as well as organizational advantages over activists. Combined with the legitimating force of appeals to the *Basis*, this relational, or communicative, mechanism would have had profound consequences for the outcome of the struggles between the *Fundis* and *Realos*.

In the New Zealand Alliance the membership rules and party structure were progressively steered by party president Matt McCarten toward the social democratic model of a unitary membership party with conference as the supreme decision making body. Between annual conferences the Council was empowered to decide all major questions.[280] The only appeal to the membership was at national conference. Furthermore, in contrast to the German Basic Law provision requiring that parties' 'internal organization shall conform to democratic principles,' British law required a party to 'act strictly within its own rules..'[281]

In the dispute in the Alliance over the Afghan war vote activists on the Council

held the majority and were able to hold the leaders accountable. In 2004, at the time of

the dispute over support for the Maori Party, the new leader Matt McCarten had the

support of the majority of the Council. Activists demanding accountability for McCarten

taking a dual role as Maori Party campaign manager and Alliance leader were able to

utilize the party's e-group to communicate and organize effectively. This technology was

not available to the German Greens in 1990.[282]

Dean and the Democrats

Following the 1968 National Convention the Democratic Party's 'Commission on

Delegate Selection and Party Structure' was meant to improve participation in the party.

The rules adopted would reduce the power of party regulars and tie party delegates to

national candidates. Ex-officio delegates were also banned under the new rules. With

Mikulski in the chair, the Commission further reduced the influence of party leaders in

1972 and the Winograd Commission of 1975-80 bound delegates even closer to

candidates. The 1980-82 Hunt Commission reinstated ex-officio delegates as unpledged

'superdelegates.' The Hunt commission also initiated a move back to caucus

nominations.[283] Since the emergence of the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC) as the

real powerhouse behind the nomination of candidates and policy-making the influence of

rank-and-file members in caucuses and conventions has been severely limited.[284]

Following two hardly believable defeats by the supporters of George W. Bush, the Democrats have undergone what appears to be a sea-change. The Democratic party in the previous 35 years had consistently moved away from its activist base as too ideological. The Democratic National Committee has sweeping and almost absolute decision making powers and the candidates, usually very wealthy, set the agenda in campaigns.

As we know, the Dean campaign was different. Dean and his supporters turned out to the grassroots, partly because they had to, and partly because the technology was there to make it possible. On February 12th 2005 the Democratic National Committee elected Howard Dean, the outsider, as chairman and Harry Reid has replaced Senate minority leader Tom Daschle after the latter's defeat in the 2004 election.

Democratic senators have united behind Reid and are now coordinating their output to the media through a centralized communications 'war room.' The communications center has staff dedicated to reaching potential supporters in the *Blogoshpere* and has its own website.

> … in terms of organizing the caucus and whiping [sic] it up into
> fighting shape, [Reid has] far eclipsed Daschle.[285]

Led by Senator Dean the Democrats are also *reframing* their message in line with the writings of linguistic theorist George Lakoff of the Rockridge Institute. Lakoff has

spoken to enthusiastic meetings of Democrats and progressives eager to practise the *reframing* approach to getting progressive values across to voters.[286]

Institutional Learning in the U.S. Democrats

The election of Howard Dean as chairman of the Democratic National Committee may be more a pragmatic move to co-opt his following of hundreds of thousands of online activists than an example of organizational learning in the sense that I have analyzed this process in the Alliance. However the creation by the Democratic senators of new lines of communication, though largely uni-directional, are part of the change in communication relations necessary for institutional learning. This process has clearly begun at the grassroots level with activists taking on board the *reframing* message and spreading it throughout the movement.[287] Whether there will be any improvement in the accountability of leaders in the Democratic party will have to wait for further research.

Conclusion

In the analysis of research results mechanisms of transformational action have been identified as aligned to the process of semi-autonomous network formation. In a condition of crisis, the rapid expansion of the use of these networks and internet communication was identified with the phase transition in the party's command and communication structure.

It is argued that this phase change process is an example of socio-ontological flux that enabled activists to use relational power to overcome the positional power entrenched in a hierarchical organization. This situation of flux was compared with the power of *transformative events* identified by MacAdam and Sewell.[288]

The identification of these mechanisms and their combination in a compressed time-frame to produce a qualitatively new basis for action provides part of the answer to the questions posed for this research. The extent to which the outcomes were unintended suggests the need for further research to more fully answer the research problem.

However, the innovative use of internet communication by the Alliance activists was shown to be a major factor in changing the power relations in the party. As one informant reported in reference to the pro-list/anti-list struggle, the horizontal member to member communication proved to be "crucial in the present stoush."[289] Although the unplanned consequences of the accountability processes studied above have proved very costly for the Alliance as a party they have been ground breaking in definitively overcoming the power of leaders to dictate the outcome of such struggles.

Greens, Democrats and Alliance

The efforts by the German Greens to maintain strong links with the social movements from which they sprang and the attempt to avoid organizational oligarchy meant that the grassroots of the party was considered to be the wider movement rather

than only the members. This had the unintended effect of allowing the popular leader

Joschka Fischer to appeal over the heads of the membership to the wider base thus

legitimizing his ignoring conference decisions.

Although the five party structure of the original Alliance allowed somewhat

similar obfuscation of lines of authority and accountability by the time of the 'war on

terror' dispute this was not possible. The veto power of individual parties had been

removed and the party council passed resolutions on a simple majority. Membership was

still somewhat complicated by the Democrats and Mana Motuhake having separate

structures from the Alliance but there was no amorphous grassroots beyond the

membership as defined in the constitution.

For the German Greens the lack of an effective means of horizontal intra-party

communication compounded the already preponderant advantage of the parliamentary

leadership in terms of resources and access to the media. Alliance members benefited

from entering into coalition government many years after the German Greens so that,

when the need was greatest, the ability to set up email networks and use horizontal

internet communication greatly offset the power of the leaders.

Similarly, the Dean campaign, with few prospects of large donations, turned to

the internet activists and raised 40 million dollars mostly in donations of $100 or less. By

the end of his campaign Dean claimed to have 500,000 email addresses on his list. Many of these supporters were driving the fundraising campaign on their own blogs relatively independently of the central website.[290] The Alliance and the Greens could both learn a thing or two from Dean and Trippi.

Notes to Chapter 6

Chapter 7.   Conclusions and Implications

Democratization: To the Edge of Chaos

Democratization is necessarily unpredictable. While we require stable systems at

the 'center' of the polity, democratic input is needed from the relatively chaotic

'periphery.'[291] Political practitioners and theorists recognize that parties 'manage' this

[182] BYRNE, 1998, p.6.

[183] NICOLIS ET AL., 1989, p.8.

[184] Gharajedaghi ,1983.

[185] KUHN, 1970.

[186] Crooke, S., Pakulski, J. and Waters, M., 1992, *Postmodernization*, London, Sage, p.5 - quoted in BYRNE, 1998, p.18.

[187] See http://www.firstmonday.dk/issues/issue6_10/ronfeldt/
Collaborative circles are similar to 'affinity groups' identified here as central to the Direct Action Network strategy.

[188] Compare theories of innovation as surveyed in WAGEMANS, 2001.

[189] See Fishkin, 2003.

[190] See, for example, DAHLBERG, 2001a.

[191] See DAHLBERG, 2001b.

[192] cf PAPADOPOULOS, 2002.

[193] pp. 400-1, Dryzek, 1992.

[194] Compare the concept of *Hot Groups* - see pp.69ff. KELLEY 2001.

[195] Farrell, 2001.

[196] Here it is the analysis of emotional resources in supporting communicative action that is of interest rather than the extent to which action is emotional-expressive (instead of goal-oriented) cf. FUREDI, 2004.

complexity and the conflict that it entails.[292] Systems theory provides insights into this

management provided by those political parties that are democratic 'complex systems.'

> Full-blown Chaotic Systems flit a bit too readily from novelty to novelty; living systems need to consolidate gains. Predictable, stable systems, by contrast, possess none of the panache needed to create new order or even to respond adaptively to creative environments. Complex Systems lie between these poles, at the Edge of Chaos, and they have both panache and stability sufficient to serve life.[293]

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[197] One emotion that had an influence on the course of events in the Alliance was outrage. For example, outrage at MPs voting for War was expressed at Wellington and Auckland regional meetings and at the national conference in November 2001.

[198] cf. WILSON, 1993.

[199] pp. 560-562, COHEN AND ARATO, 1992.

[200] See Lewins, 1992, p.77 and Becker, 1958.

[201] The pull on MPs from the environment of Parliament and the capitalist elite is complimented by the push by the perception of growing entativity of an opposition, even conspiracy, against the leader and his coterie of MPs. Compare entativity in international relations. See Castano et al 2003.

[202] Compare Snow and Benford who argue that causal attribution of blame, for example, depends on the frame (operating at the time and place) through which attribution is viewed. (SNOW ET AL., 1992, 138-139); See also the discussion of attribution of threat and opportunity in the formation of identities in the French revolution MCADAM ET AL., 2001, 58-63.

[203] These are emergent properties of structure. Compare Scarrow's reference to Ostrogorski's reaction to the 'permanent local structures' he observed in America. These, he thought, would 'stifle initiative.' - p.4 SCARROW ET AL., 1996.

[204] e.g. The Workers' Party in Brazil.

[205] If networks are built, activated and maintained through communication, then they may be said to represent 'lines of communication.' Although the concept of 'communication' here is broad, the analyses made by Austin, Habermas and others points to crucial aspects of communicative action such as the 'illocutionary' force of statements intended to move others to action.

[206] See HEIDAR ET AL, 2003, p.225.

[207] Compare the cross-denominational networks of Protestant women in the United States of the 1800s. SKOCPOL, 2003, p.38.

[208] compare Wellman and Frank's analysis of the effect of characteristics (especially relevant to the Women's and Youth networks) of alters on ties and compare the concepts of 'trust' and 'glue' in 'social capital.'

[209] Cf. GIBSON ET AL, 1999, p.345.

In our current socio-historical regime it is argued, the best available means for furthering the well being of humanity is the democratic direction of government by competing political parties. Parties have the problems of complex organizations, such as bureaucracy, but also the advantages, such as longevity and a range of skills available for the solution of problems.[294]

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[210] Compare pp.67-78 BARABÁSI, 2003.

[211] NORRIS, 2005, p.16. Norris refers to Duverger, 1964.

[212] Q.v. p.33, BEVIR ET AL, 2001. Claims by leaders over the 'abuse' of email technology and the supposed lack of accountability within sector groups (for example, women and youth) organized with the help of email and e-groups signal recognition of inherent accountability problems as well as the subversive power of these methods of communication and organization.

[213] For example, see Bevir and Rhodes p. 23.

[214] See MOSSBERGER ET AL, 2003.

[215] In most political parties Congress is the official gate-keeper, with power to reverse decisions at all other levels. In practice, the Council, or Executive, has ultimate power, wither by setting the agenda for Congress, or through the ability to make an interim decision which presents Congress with a *fait accompli*. Compare the data for Norwegian and Danish parties presented by Bobin T. Pettitt in PETTITT, 2004.

[216] This is in fact the option chosen by Matt McCarten in the dispute over his dual role as Maori Party organizer and Alliance party leader.

[217] When party activists communicate using email and e-groups the picture above would look more like a random-access hard-disk with each branch or member having its own read-write head.

[218] Static network graphs do not adequately show such process elements.

[219] Compare p.226, LIPMAN-BLUMEN, 2005.

[220] Compare disparate views on the 'trustee role' versus the 'delegate role' of MPs in VOWLES, 1995, p.125.

[223] Social movement theorists may refer to this dialectic as an 'opportunity/threat spiral' - MCADAM ET AL, 2001, p.330.

[224] HABERMAS, 1996, 357.

[225] On cognitive, relational and environmental mechanisms see MCADAM ET AL, 2001, pp.25-26. These analysts use the term 'cognitive' to describe what I see as distinctly psychological mechanisms as opposed to rational-communicative mechanisms.

Political parties, with all their well-known human and structural shortcomings, are the only devices thus far invented by the wit of Western man which with some effectiveness can generate countervailing collective power on behalf of the many individually powerless against the relatively few who are individually - or organizationally - powerful. [295]

Furthermore, it is demonstrated in this study that, pace Michels, parties can be democratized.[296] The members of the New Zealand Alliance have shown how the

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[226] While a similar shift in perception also takes place within the elite it tends to be framed in terms of maintaining their own autonomy.

[227] In McAdam et al 2001 the driving forces of social change are portrayed as primarily non-rational. Compare MISCHE, 2003.

[228] BYRNE, 1998, 21. Complexity theory had its origins in the study of weather patterns. The mathematical representation of the non-periodic flow and unpredictability of the weather led to the discovery of 'deterministic chaos.' For the study of multiple and contingent causality, which is to be expected in the social sciences, David Byrne recommends such tools as cluster analysis to model the strength of relations between elements in a set, and iconological modelling, which allows 'quantitatively founded qualitative representations of relations.' See Byrne, 1998, pp.80-81 and 85-86 and compare Pagels, 1988.
[229] RAGIN, 1999.

[230] See BYRNE, 1998, 20.

[231] TAYLOR, 2001, FRIEDMANN, 1987 and SCHELLING, 2003.

[232] See ARATO, 2000 and RHEINGOLD, 2002.

[233] See LUPIA, 2003 and compare EDER, 1999 and Friedmann who refers to the Delphi method which the Rand Corporation used to pool 'expert' opinions through an iterative process resulting in a convergence of views on projected outcomes. FRIEDMANN, 1987, p. 42 (fn) and p.114.

[234] Klaus Eder, p.8.

[235] Knowles, 2001, 113.

[236] COOK ET AL, 1993.

[237] See the idea of Democratic Autonomy (versus the heteronomy of leaders and led) in Held, 1987, and compare Macpherson and Saward.

[238] Chantal Mouffe's criticism of deliberative democracy which correctly highlights the incompatible standpoints of some groups or classes in society need not apply to deliberative debate within an association or party of generally like-minded members. However, the antagonism which Mouffe warns is an inescapable aspect of politics, asserts itself when trust breaks down between groups of members. MOUFFE, 2002.

hierarchy typical of political parties can be flattened when members are willing to take

the serious risks of insisting on the accountability of leaders.

This is no mean feat. In Germany, Green Party activists struggled unsuccessfully

for decades to achieve the internal democracy that was mandated by their party

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[239] FUNG ET AL, 2003, p.11.

[240] A curvilinear relationship can be seen to exist between organizational complexity and internal democracy. Due to the operation of the principle of autonomy the intuitively apparent 'small-group' democracy tends to be improved in dispersed, horizontally organized parties and organizations.

[241] Arguments for a decentered analysis of governance which includes political contest in the production of outcomes are made in BEVIR ET AL, 2001. See pp.4 & 18ff. and figure 2, p.40. (compare MOUFFE, 2002). Beth Simone Noveck enumerates the conditions for democratic online deliberation: 'Unchat: Democratic Solution for a Wired World' in SHANE, 2004.

[242] Cf Klaus Eder, Dörner, and the use of the Delphi method to generate collective decisions and compare open source software and Trippi's emphasis on the collective intelligence of supporters in the Dean campaign.

[243] A more long-term example is the spread of environmental consciousness and the rise of the Green parties.

[244] Compare Eder p.7.

[245] This is an example of the 'environment' to which elites 'adapt' while activists try to maintain the 'identity' of the movement/party. cf. Luhmann, 1995.

[246] See pp. 14 & 15 Klaus Eder, 1999. Note also that positional power conflicts with the 'modernist' ideal of equality and relates to clientelism. cf Eder, p.12 and compare Lendler, 1997 and Klaus Eder, p.8.
'It seems that societies learn only under specific social conditions, namely when a basic uncertainty permeates society that destroys the basic ordering of experiences with the natural, the social and the psychic world.'

[247] Stone and Hughes, 2002.

[248] Lang and Hornburg 1998.

[249] Stone and Hughes, 2002.

[250] COHEN AND ARATO, 2001. See pp. 27ff.

[251] Compare, for example, BURT ET AL., 1983.

[252] Compare the analysis of the relationship between networks and social movements by the authors in DIANI ET AL., 2003.

constitution. Invariably it was the democratic *Fundis* who left the party.[297] In the Alliance

the party elite left to set up a new party when they could not overcome the determination

of members to institute a genuinely democratic culture.

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[253] See SCOTT, 1991.

[254] See Scott on *Relations*.

[255] This conception follows from an adaptation of the research on collaborative circles by FARRELL, 2001.

[256] Cf Ragin 2000 pp.10-11 and compare Bhaskar.

[257] Conditions in the wider social environment, overall internal party structure and the history of individuals need to be analyzed in future research.

[258] On transformative events compare pp. 102-112, AMINZADE, 2001.

[259] Poguntke; Minkin; Gibson et al.

[260] TOURAINE, 1983.

[261] 12,000 workers at the latter - see Post-Communist Polish Economic Reform: A Class Analysis; Dissertation Proposal by Jaeryong Rie http://www.eco.utexas.edu/facstaff/Cleaver/rieprop.html accessed March 30th 2005.

[262] The crowds gathering daily to protest against repressive regimes provide the ideal opportunity for such communication. For examples see AMINZADE, 2001, pp.101ff. and RHEINGOLD, 2002, pp.157f.

[263] The studies of organizational learning e.g. HAGE, 1999 and the 'living systems' theory of FORD ET AL., 1987 and MILLER, 1978 focus on how to bring about such change through planned intervention.

[264] Cf p. 23-24, INGRAM, 1987.

[265] DAHLBERG, 2001b.

[266] See *Further Research* below.

[267] See p. 153, Frankland, 1992.

[268] Biehl, 1995. Compare Weber's 'Anti-Authoritarian Forms of Government' Weber, 1957, p.412 which presents an almost identical list of measures.

[269] Frankland, 1992, p. 163.

[270] Biehl, 1995.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Digital Divide

As new technologies become increasingly important for access to information, the

convergence between the issues of access to political power and access to the new

technologies is highlighted. Equitable access to the resources offered by the Internet

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271 BBC News online: Tuesday, 9 January, 2001, 08:53 GMT, Profile: Joschka Fischer's three lives. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/1107628.stm accessed May 3rd 2005.

272 Author's observations and informal interview with Green Party member. Attempts by the federal steering committee to oversee the work of the *Fraktion* with 'binding' resolutions or by setting up a watchdog committee had previously been finessed by Parliamentary leaders through appeals to the greater legitimacy of the 'base'. See p.163, Frankland ,1992.

273 Asendorpf, 2000.

274 Ibid.

275 Ibid.

276 Frankland, 1992, p.222.

277 Ibid. p. 167.

278 Asendorpf, 2000.

279 Ibid.

280 Although the Alliance began as a federation of five parties all five either left the Alliance or, in the case of the NewLabour Party, dissolve. While the Executive was in existence the day to day running of the party was in its hands. Officially all decision had to be ratified by Council (Alliance Constitution as amended by the Alliance Council 30th May 2002, p.11).

281 See Germany, 1995. Chapter II Article 21(Parties) (1) and the Court of Appeals judgment under Lord Denning in 1978 cited in Shaw, 1988, pp. 238-9.

282 Although electronic mail was first made available to University researchers in the U.S. in 1977 with access becoming wider in the U.S. and Europe in 1981 commercial dial-up access to the Internet first became available in 1990 and the World Wide Web was released in 1991. The first browser, Mosaic, became available in 1993. See Robert H. Zakon's *Hobbes' Internet Timeline v8.0* http://www.zakon.org/robert/internet/timeline/.

283 Busch and Ceaser, 336-39 (they quote David Price on the effect of the Mikulski Commission). cf. Polsby and Wildavsky, 209.

284 The DLC is an unofficial party organization of elected Democrats brought together in 1985. By 1990 the DLC had institutionalized itself as an quasi-official party organization. Originally built around the

requires that the monopoly of corporations over the last mile to each household be addressed. Similarly, for all citizens to have the opportunity to participate effectively in the political life of society, the key to decode the enigma of intra-party democracy is required. To traverse the path of internal party democratization is to cover the last mile of the journey of societal democratization.

The recent adoption of democratic forms of rule by many less developed nations and the introduction of proportional representation in others converge with the continuing aspirations for internal party democracy among members and supporters of political parties. In the new millennium political organizations and movements continue to depend on representation for the practice of democracy. Ideally, this practice requires that representatives engage in continual, two-way communication with their constituents. Applications of computer mediated communication (CMC) are being developed to enhance the capabilities for this communication in e-democracy.[298] Proponents of this

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personal influence of Nunn, Robb and others it had become a much more formal entity, taking on a life of its own, assisted by professional staff and with funding by an broad range of sources. q.v. Hale, 1995.

[285] *Daily Kos* Blog: Tue Jan 25th, 2005.

[286] See Lakoff, 2002 and 2004. Approximately 1000 people listened to Lakoff's message in San Jose, CA on April 22nd 2005.

[287] For example, the Dean Democratic Club of Silicon Valley voted unanimously to adopt Lakoff's reframing techniques.

[288] AMINZADE et al 2001, pp.102ff.

[289] Email communication to author, 8/1/2004.

[290] Trippi, 2004.

technology argue that with such developments the 'information society' will become

genuinely participatory and democratic.[299]

Efforts by many local authorities to bridge the last mile of Internet access for

unconnected sectors of their communities converge with attempts to institute various

forms of e-democracy. However, while some governance organizations are promoting the

use of the internet for the participation of citizens, others are denying the advantages

offered by the new technology to marginalized groups.[300]

A major challenge for political leaders, theorists and those in the scientific

community seeking to operationalize these aspirations is to extend grassroots conceptions

and practices of participation and deliberation upwards into state-sponsored e-democracy

and to extend the capacities for civic engagement offered by the Internet outwards to all.

The emergent effects of such qualitatively enhanced participation can have the beneficial

outcome of changing social ontology in favor of citizen agency against colonizing

systems.

Electoral Reform

I have argued elsewhere that the introduction of proportional representation in

New Zealand in 1993-1996 lacked the necessary requirements for internal party

democracy.[301] The issue of who decides strategy, policy and candidate selection has

always been central to party politics and parties in coalition are no exception. The issue

does, however, have wider implications for New Zealand democracy and western democracy generally.

It is a classic argument of political science that society cannot be democratic without democratic parties. It has also been argued that parties cannot possibly be democratic and that one major cause of this 'oligarchy' is the inevitable tendency for leaders to assert and gain independence from their own members' control. Theorists have argued that the environment of Parliament engenders major problems for internal democracy with the Parliamentary Party tending to procure a high degree of independence from the Party as a whole. Others argue that leaders, party activists and voters have 'necessarily divergent political ideologies' and that this systematic divergence is due to the constraints of party competition on leaders conflicting with the motivations of activists.

Intra-party democracy, just as societal democracy, depends on a dialectical interaction of institutional and normative bases. The culture of democracy is necessary to both bring about and sustain the working of a genuinely democratic organization. The arrangement of rules and structure to encourage participation and initiative from below is needful for the furtherance of democratic values within an organization.

In New Zealand the electoral commission, alongside electoral reform activists, should be pressed to advocate the adoption of electoral laws which

1. Stipulate democratic internal party processes

2. Recognize the delegate role of list MPs

3. Strengthen the anti-party-hopping legislation.

These changes would lead to more stable coalition governments and improve the confidence of electors in the institutions of democracy.

The Alliance

At their 2004 annual conference the Alliance delegates introduced some measures to increase internal democracy. The executive was abolished and replace by a secretariat of volunteers to perform the administrative tasks originally expected of the executive. The spreading of institutional knowledge over a group of members rather than concentrating it in the person of the general secretary was recognized as desirable.

The conference decided to have two co-leaders who would be decided on the outcome of the party list selection process. This would shift the role of leader into the electoral-parliamentary area and allow clearer definition of the respective roles of leader and president. Not electing the leader at conference would have the (unintended) consequence of reducing the chance of leaders claiming greater legitimacy or mandate. In the past Jim Anderton had nearly always been elected leader by acclamation.[302]

Internal communication was recognized as an important area requiring improvement. It was proposed to expand the use of e-groups to increase members' input

into policy making. A system of regular communication between members online and those without internet connection was also proposed. In my report back to the members at the conference I emphasized the need for ongoing two-way communication between leading members and the membership in general. The president has been using the e-group for this purpose.

From Media Party to Cyber Party?

When Jim Anderton was leader and Matt McCarten was president the Alliance took on some aspects of a *media party*. Party conferences were arranged primarily for the effect they would have on television and policy could be announced to the media before any party members knew of it. McCarten learned from Anderton to play the Alliance as a media party. He often bypassed party process in making statements to the press. Many of these media releases were actually more like 'leaks' than announcements, since he was often at pains to make sure his 'fingerprints' were not found.

Matt McCarten reveled in his reputation as master of spin and appeared to massage the media skillfully in an effort to build support for the idea of a 'merger' between the Alliance and the Maori Party. The announcement to the press on the preferred option of not running a list in the 2005 election trumped the agreement which had been made to allow the party conference to decide the issue. This is reminiscent of

Joschka Fischer's overriding of the Green Party conference decision not to support the sending of troops to Bosnia.

In moving to more democratic and horizontal power relations in the party, the Alliance activists made considerable use of the communication capabilities of the internet in the form of email lists and the party e-group. The latter became a forum for holding the actions of the leadership up to scrutiny and overcoming the monopoly of information that had previously advantaged the party center. In the run up to the 2005 general elections the Alliance has a blog devoted to the election. This blog is by Victor Billot, the candidate for the Alliance Party in Dunedin North electorate and communications manager for the Maritime Union of New Zealand.

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[139] I also observed one Green Party of Aotearoa conference and a German Green Party conference in Bremen. Here the left (Fundi) faction used procedural maneuvers to outflank the Parliamentary fraktion, although the latter (in the person of Joschka Fischer) subsequently ignored the conference decision. While in Bremen I met with two leading members of the local Green party: Helga Trupel and Hermann Kuhn. They both offered their support for my research although Dr. Kuhn expressed doubts about the feasibility of (a) obtaining a random sample of the national membership and (b) getting a good response rate to a questionnaire. The net result of my discussions with the German Greens was a decision not to continue field research in Germany for the Ph.D.

[140] See Paul, 1998.

[141] Now the New School University.

[142] Spradley, 1980.

[143] pp. 207 ff. Johnson and Joslyn, 1995.

[144] See Poor, 2004a.

[148] Vowles et al analyzed the election of 1996 in Vowles et al, 1998.

However the Alliance is far from becoming the kind of *cyber party* described by

Margetts, for example:

> Cyber parties are organisations rather than institutions, to which
> voters with multiple preferences offer support according to
> context. They are characterised by technologically-aided
> relationships between party and voters rather than formal
> membership. [303]

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[149] Alliance party website: http://www.alliance.org.nz/menu.php3?target=historyofthealliance-full.php3

[150] Herald article by Audrey Young, Tuesday February 26, 2002.

[151] They repeatedly expressed opposition to any military action which was not led by the United Nations. See the paper by Bob van Ruyssevelt, *Looking for an Endpoint* (Fri 19 Oct 2001 - Alliance website) which spells out the historically anti-war position of the Alliance and compare the motion passed at the Alliance national conference on 10 November 2001 confirming this position: http://www.alliance.org.nz/info.php3?Type=Events&ID=850 .

[152] The article was published on http://www.indymedia.org.nz/. An edited version was published on http://www.pl.net/9politics/kbul.html - accessed May 10, 2005.

[153] Interview with Jill Ovens.

[154] Interview with Alliance regional agent.

[155] Interview with Alliance regional agent. The argument that the U.S. response to the attacks of September 11th 2001 was not proportionate appears to be vindicated by reports from Afghanistan and Iraq. In 2002 the Guardian newspaper reported that Afghan civilians killed as a direct result of the fighting were estimated at between 1,300 and 8,000 while "As many as 20,000 Afghans may have lost their lives as an indirect consequence of the US intervention." See "Forgotten victims," Jonathan Steele, Monday May 20, 2002, The Guardian, http://www.guardian.co.uk/afghanistan/comment/story/0,11447,718647,00.html . Accessed May 26 2005. In May 2005 CNN reported that estimated civilian deaths from the war in Iraq were between 21,000 and 25,000. Monday, May 9, 2005 Posted: 0009 GMT (0809 HKT) CNN.com http://edition.cnn.com/2005/WORLD/meast/05/08/iraq.main/ Accessed May 26 2005.

[156] Interview with Jill Ovens.

[157] Chris Trotter, "Time For Anderton To Step Down?" on MSN news 22/11/2001 syndicated from *The Independent* newspaper.

[158] Interview with Laila Harré, Associate Minister of Labour.

[159] Laila Harré speaking at Alliance Council meeting 17th February 2002.

[160] Casey, 2002.

[161] Herald article by Audrey Young, Tuesday February 26, 2002.

Such a party is a version of the media party rather than a new type. Howard

Dean's bid for the presidential nomination had definite elements of the cyber party in

action although the extent to which the bloggers took over the campaign, and especially

the fund raising made this a uniquely grassroots effort. [304]

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[162] Observation. Compare article by Audrey Young , *The New Zealand Herald*, Tuesday February 26, 2002.

[163] Harré demurred on using the "party-hopping" rule which could have forced the deserting MPs to resign and seek re-election. This caused much criticism as Anderton had previously supported the "anti-party-hopping" legislation to prevent MPs distorting MMP by switching parties in mid-term. The controversy helped to push the Labour Prime Minister Helen Clark to call an early election in July 2002.

[164] From Government Directory Online
http://www.nzgovtdirectory.com/visitors/Elect_News.htm

[165] Audrey Young opined that the "civil war" in the Alliance was largely driven by the party's fall in opinion polls to within the margin of error, indicating that only one or two Alliance MPs would regain their seats in the coming election. *Herald* article November 23 2001.

[166] Bevir and Rhodes argue that while institutionalists and network analysts often have recourse to external factors to explain change, individual beliefs and desires are necessarily implicated in social causation and need to be analyzed alongside those categories such as 'economic, ideological, knowledge, and institutional' change identified by network theorists. These authors refer specifically to the work of David Marsh and Rod Rhodes. See pp. 31 & 37, BEVIR ET AL., 2001.

[167] See pp. 4 & 8, ALLISON & ZELIKOW, 1999.

[168] The first mooting of dissolution of the Alliance on the Yahoo Group came four days after the 2002 election. The following day a suggestion of merging with the Green Party was floated.

[169] *New Zealand Herald*, 27 April 2004.

[170] *New Zealand Herald*, 30 April 2004. According to the Alliance General Secretary it was partly due to his advice on her electoral chances that Turia made the decision to resign.

[171] *New Zealand Herald*, 5 May 2004.

[172] *New Zealand Herald*, 6 May 2004.

[173] Matt McCarten presented a paper to the Council outlining five options:
  1. Stand in every seat with a full list as we have been doing in the past.
  2. Stand with a list only.
  3. Stand in a limited number of seats (eg 10-12) and run a list as well.
  4. Stand in a limited number of seats and do not run a list.

The Alliance is a membership party very much based on the social democratic model. Internet communication has thus far mainly been used internally and as such has helped to make the power relations far more horizontal and assisted the process of institutional learning. The use made of computer-mediated communication to hold leaders to account in an open forum is a considerable advance on the uses made of CMC by other parties as studied by the *Internet, Political Organisations and Participation* project in Salford, U.K. and the *Digital Parties: Civic Engagement & Online Democracy* survey at Harvard.

Ward and Voerman's study of European Green parties suggested that some progress had been made toward using CMC for elite accountability but these authors saw elite domination of the discussions and agenda setting as limiting this potential.[305] Further research is needed to determine whether the innovative use of internet communication demonstrated by the Alliance activists is the precursor of a new type of party characterized by the horizontal communication regime made possible by the new technology.

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5. Wait out the 2005 election and rebuild towards the following one.

[174] Quoted on the Alliance Yahoo group.

[175] July 13th press statement from Jill Ovens.

[176] Alliance Yahoo Group.

[177] Stuff (Fairfax) article *Alliance party president resigns after row* - 17 July 2004.

[178] Matt McCarten and supporters announced that they would set up 'broad Left' group. McCarten then officially became the Maori Party's campaign manager but left after a short period saying that he was forming the Aotearoa Party although this party has not materialized.

Limitations

It may be argued that a critical mass of combative activists in organizationally important positions and able to communicate to the bulk of the members is necessary for the kind of action that could count as 'calling to account.' Furthermore, these activists must be willing to pay the price of no parliamentary representation.

On the Alliance Council the critical majority was often not much more than a simple majority but the willingness to act was conditioned by knowledge that they did constitute a majority. Both here and at conferences and public meetings, the display and functioning of *leadership* was pivotal. A highly vocal minority was not shouted down by a 'moral majority' at conference, perhaps because those activists were actually expressing the majority point of view.

Similarly, the combativeness of the activists is crucial to the outcome of accountability claims against leaders. Jill Ovens was no doubt emboldened by her experience as a union organizer but networks clearly increased the combativeness of the anti-war and regional activists due to ongoing positive feedback from members.

However, the transition from a hierarchical to a network regime of communication was partially reversed after the situation of organizational flux subsided with the replacement of the delegitimized leadership. As critics of the network

governance model have noted, representative governance requires the tempering of

network organization with identifiable structure with clear lines of accountability. The

desirable combination of these organizational forms is currently a matter of

experimentation and speculation.

This research does not provide answers to such questions of governance but only

claims to explain one representative process by which accountability claims may be

prosecuted by party members. The comparison with the Green Party of Germany, with

the U.S. Democrats and with social movements can only be illustrative at this stage

pending further empirical research and analysis of data.

Further Research

This research illustrates the ways in which activists use email and make

innovative use of party internet resources to undermine hierarchical structures and break

down traditional communication barriers in their quest for intra-party democracy and

accountability. The heightened potential for communicative action across class, identity

and national borders is giving increased validity to the assertion that 'knowledge is

power.'[306]

It is proposed to continue the relationship already developed with the Alliance

with specifically formulated action research projects. One of these would be the piloting

of face-to-face and online deliberative processes as developed by researchers at Carnegie

Mellon University (Delibera), MIT (open governance environment) and Bodies Electric

(Unchat).[307]

In the examples of 'swarming' and 'netwars' we have seen the subversive

implications of computer mediated communication (CMC) technology.[308] The innovative

use of this technology is being used by activists to pursue forms of social action which

can promote voluntary political action by citizens to causal primacy over the emergent

powers of economic and bureaucratic structures.[309]

In order to fulfill the potential of the approach outlined here further research

involving comparison of broadly similar parties is envisaged. This will allow the use of

quantitative methods to establish more soundly the causal effects of network formation

and online discursive democracy.

> Because case study methods are superior at making use of the sources of
> inference regarding causal mechanisms, including contiguity and temporal
> sequencing, and statistical methods are superior at assessing covariation and
> hence causal effects, each method has comparative advantages in assessing one of
> the essential dimensions of causal explanation.[310]

Perhaps more technically ambitious would be a proposal to extend the analysis

above to formal Dynamic Network Analysis and Multi-Level Analysis which involves

mathematical modelling and computer simulation.[311] A similar approach has been used by

Christopher J. Mackie whose work studies 'social complexity via computational

modeling, and in particular for the study of psychological and institutional aspects of politics as complex, adaptive (evolutionary) processes.' [312]

A theoretically ambitious extension of this dissertation would address the desirability but relative scarcity of social theory able adequately to capture the dynamic between the relations connecting actors and social structures. Emergent effects of combined individual action are more complex than the aggregate effects described by collective or game theory models.[313] The tendency to reductionism besets many efforts to represent the nexus between structure, culture and individual and collective action.[314]

The research presented here has been an example of transformation of a communication regime in an organization producing the effect of a flattened hierarchy. This process was analyzed as a *phase transition* in organizational structure from hierarchy to network. The transition was produced through the positive feedback of environmental, relational and psychological mechanisms and the critical conjunction of transformative events.

In a comparison with other examples of collective action producing and building on the transformation of the communication regime, it was proposed that this process of phase transition may be understood as a case of *socio-ontological flux* in which agents are enabled to overcome the constraints of a power structure. The conception of social

ontology in flux, with agency and structure in contention, attempts to come to grips with the problems of analysis identified by Renate Mayntz and Mustafa Emirbayer among others.

While the utility of mechanisms of social change is recognized so too is the danger of reification of those mechanisms and reduction from the emergent powers of complex structures. The identification of mechanisms needs to be followed up by structural models that can explain these powers. Further research on the dynamics of social ontology related to the dynamics of communication regimes may point the way toward a possible answer to the agency-structure problem in social theory.[315]

One further productive avenue for research is the changing nature of political parties in their relationship with mass media, new communication technology and intra-party democracy. The dependence by current day politicians on the corporate controlled mass media does not bode well for the future of democracy. The extensive use of the internet by the Howard Dean campaign to connect with hundreds of thousands of members and activists signals a shift from this ubiquitous dependence.

The success of the Alliance members in defeating the power plays of an arch spin doctor depended greatly on the members' ability to communicate without temporal or geographic restrictions. This was only possible with the use of computer-mediated

communication. As suggested above, the question of whether the grassroots appropriation of party computer-mediated communication indicates the emergence of a new politics or even a new party type based on horizontal intra-party discursive will formation would be another fruitful area for further research.

Notes to Chapter 7

Figure 5.   **Official Alliance Structure Chart**

Alliance Organisational Chart
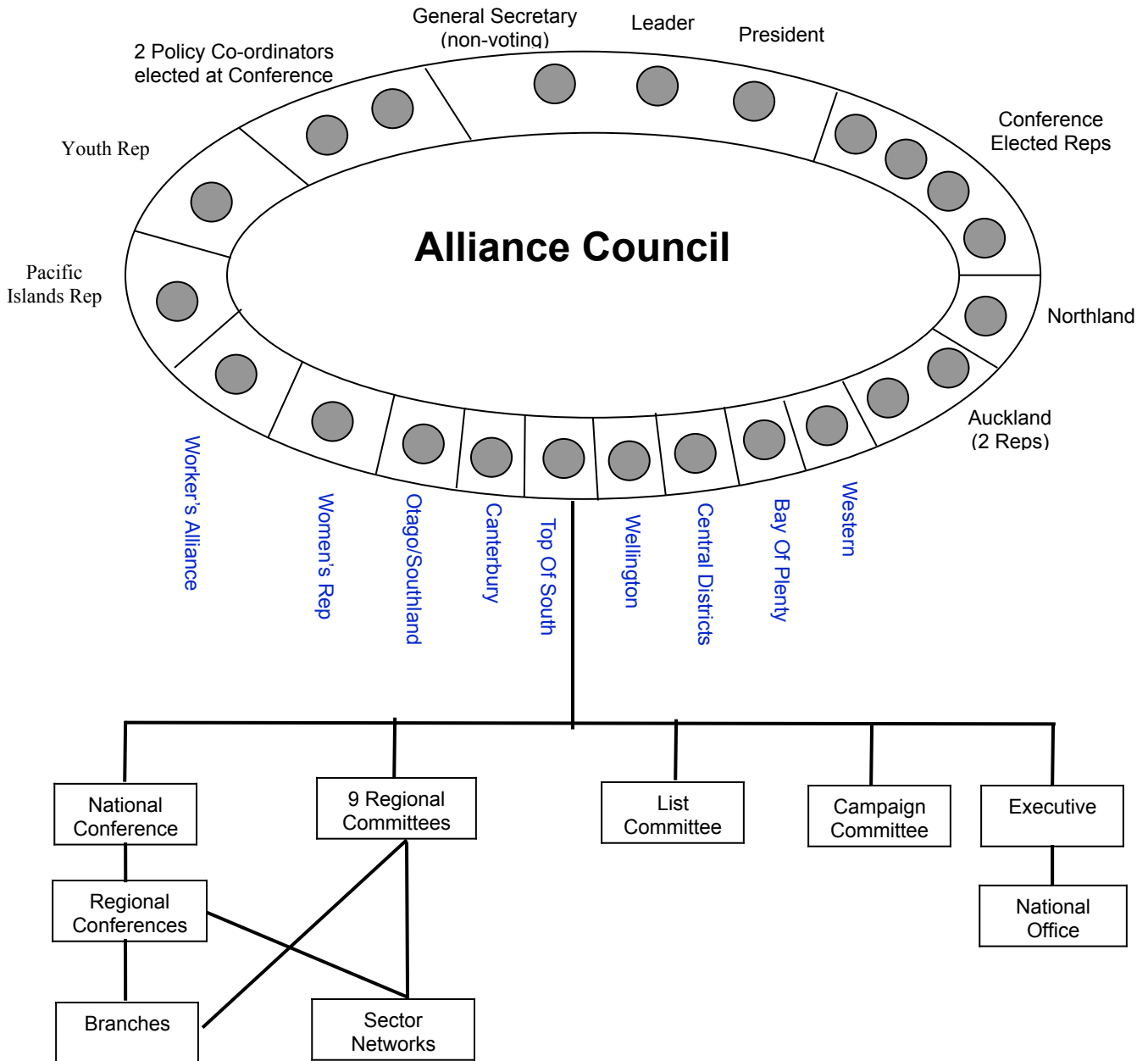
Notes for talk at Alliance 2004 Annual Conference[316]

> The harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph.
>
> - Thomas Paine[317]

First I would like to congratulate everyone on the survival of the Alliance. And more than survive, the Alliance has again overcome the threat posed by dictatorial 'leaders' who attempted to subvert the democratic culture that has been developed in this party.

This development is one of world-historic importance. Ever since Chartism democratic activists have struggled to make democracy universal. The one obstacle that has seemed truly insurmountable has been the power imbalance between political elites and members of political parties.

In the U.S. theorists have described the task of democratizing political parties as 'nightmarish.' Green Party activists in Germany struggled for decades to achieve the internal democracy that was mandated by their party constitution.

In the Greens it was the democratic 'fundis' who ended up leaving the party. In the Alliance the party elite left when they could not overcome the determination of the members to institute a genuinely democratic culture.

New Zealand's Labour caved in to Prebble's stand-over tactics in Auckland Central rather than enforce the democratic rights of the party. Now the members of the Alliance have shown how the hierarchy typical of political parties can be flattened when members are willing to take the serious risks of insisting on the accountability of leaders.

I decided to conduct this research on internal democracy within the Alliance because I believe it is important for the Alliance and for the wider movement to understand how we can promote intra-party democracy and what can constrain or undermine it.

I am certainly less knowledgeable than many of you here on the history of the Alliance. But my observation of some of the events in and around that history led me to concentrate my research on the issue of accountability of leaders. Some of these events were:

a. The deselection struggle against Prebble in Auckland Central
b. Alamein Kopu selection and defection
c. The Split with the Greens (who cited 'process' as the main cause)
d. Entering the coalition with Labour (announced by Anderton)
e. Caucus voting for support of US war in Afghanistan
f. Conference and Auckland meeting – Anderton heckled
g. MPs withholding tithes
h. Raid on Alliance offices over use of email to organise the Left
i. Matt Robson defies Council on tithes (16th February 2002)
j. Jill Ovens' motion calling for Robson's list nomination to 'lie on the table.'
k. Splitting the party - Anderton and Robson begin to set up 'Progressives' while refusing to relinquish Alliance 'leadership.'
l. Jill Ovens states Maori Party merger talks a 'beat-up' – Executive moves to silence her, she resigns (15th July, 2004).318
m. Julie Fairey calls together 'what's left of the Left' for strategy meeting.
n. Regional conferences vote on standing list – split 50-50
o. Council agrees to put issue to vote at national conference.
p. McCarten makes press statement giving no list as official Council position
q. Debate in e-loop over McCarten's continued role as leader of Alliance while publicly taking role of Maori Party organizer.
r. Council majority votes for postal ballot on 'winding up' party – withdrawn
s. Alliance pro-list activists take on organizing of conference – approach Gerard Hehir to hand over as secretary
t. McCarten & co. announce they will not seek re-election – later announce that they will set up 'broad Left' group after Alliance national conference.

Clearly, the actions of leaders and of activists have highlighted the issue of accountability, which has always been a central question in politics.

Therefore my research became an investigation of how activists make leaders accountable for flouting party policy and process. Eventually I recognised the importance of three main factors assisting activists in this struggle:

1. **Collaborative** (or friendship) circles or 'clusters.' These may be the source of creative initiatives and motivation for action such as when people talk to each other about their outrage at the illegitimate actions of leaders.

2. **Networks** - that are formed, expanded or contacted in reaching out to others to make leaders accountable. My two main examples are the women's network which grew from an e-mail list (one to many) to an e-group (many to many), and the campaign e-group originally set up as an organizing tool for electoral campaigns which was used as a forum for internal democracy and accountability, having been appropriated by the activists for these purposes.

3. **Emotional** motivation for (a) initial accountability demands and (b) belief in the legitimacy and authority of activists vs. leaders. Collaborative circles and networks can provide emotional support for action in the face of uncertainty and serious risk.

In pursuing accountability claims against leaders, activists use networks for a variety of purposes. These include gathering and disseminating information, organizing for votes and demonstrating numerical strength and also to reach those who may be able to influence the decisions of leaders.

But accountability invariably involves conflict. Political leaders usually have high opinions of themselves and are usually held in high esteem by others. They are not generally accustomed to accounting for their actions and can often exact a high price for their forced compliance.

So, unless the activists concerned are also able to call upon their resources for emotional strength, they will lack the feeling and appearance of authority needed to challenge leaders and prosecute accountability claims.

I saw the split with Anderton and others as the outcome of an accountability process that necessarily focused on punishing the MPs for wrongdoing. I think the Alliance was surprisingly successful in exacting punishment. The legitimacy that the party gave to the MPs was withdrawn and there would be no question of Anderton regaining his position as deputy Prime-Minister.

Initially I saw the struggle with Matt McCarten and others over the question of support for the Maori Party in the same way. But in looking at this last episode I had the advantage of being on the Yahoo e-loop and I could see that a lot of members were more concerned with peacemaking than with punishing.

Many of the contributors on the loop were attempting to have a dialogue between the two sides in the dispute, although, of course, a lot were more belligerent. Some of us were both. Ultimately, McCarten and his supporters were determined to go their own way.

I see the debate on the Yahoo group as a form of 'discursive democracy' in practice. Despite the current limitations of this form of communication including issues of access, argument of a sustained nature persisted on the e-group allowing activists all over the country to communicate their ideas and let each other know how the struggle was developing. The establishment of this democratic forum is an achievement comparable with the victories over unaccountable leaders.

However, when Jill and Len approached me about giving this talk, Len said something like "We can't just go on splitting with Anderton, then McCarten and so on. We need to learn the lessons of these splits."

Generally leaders are called to account when a crisis has developed following unmandated action by those leaders. In Anderton's case the lack of mandate was clear. McCarten, however, just kept on pushing the envelope and arguing that he had majority support for what he was doing (or others argued the case for him).

The question arises, though:

> "How is it that party leaders develop a vision of where they want to go that contradicts the decisions of conference, the party manifesto and the whole trajectory of the party to date?"

This was not some decision forced upon them by circumstances beyond their control, as John Wright claimed concerning the caucus vote in support of sending troops to Afghanistan. A disconnect between the thinking of McCarten, Harré and Treen on the one hand, and most of the members on the other, must have been developing for some time.

No doubt this was part of the explanation why Matt McCarten and Laila Harré hardly contributed to the debate on the loop even though several contributions attempted to draw them into the discussion.

So, in conclusion, I want to focus on the need for continuous dialogue between activists and leaders. That is: An emphasis on Accountability as Dialogue rather than Accountability and Punishment.

I would like to suggest that regular dialogue between the leaders and activists, in which an accounting for action or inaction is called for, might be more productive of achieving the aims of the party. In these conditions a kind of trust tempered by (historically justified) scepticism could develop. And when questioning of the leadership occurs fairly

regularly, neither side would rush to see the other as its opposition during an episode of more pointed questioning.

This dialogue, however, need not concentrate on issues of accountability unless they arise. More fundamentally the dialogue would build a shared vision of what the aims of the party are and how to get there.

In political parties generally, the vision or identity of the party is usually kept to the fore and protected by activists, while leaders and organisers concentrate on the practical demands of building support, getting elected and getting policy adopted. To some extent, this involves adaptation to environment. There is often a trade-off between principles and pragmatism. But if the principles seem unclear, then pragmatism will easily take over.

The Alliance has a vision of an egalitarian, pluralistic society in which the conditions exist for all members to develop their full potential. Serious debate on the means of achieving this vision took place following the last election before it was side-tracked by the Maori Party affair. Those hard questions need to be asked again and again, without the easy answers.

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[316] These differ from the talk given since I spoke from brief notes at the conference

[317] From *The American Crisis*. Full text at http://www.ku.edu/carrie/docs/texts/crisis1.html

[318] Refer to Message 3770 on Campaign Group.

Appendix 3. Permissions and Ethics Statement

This statement was posted to the Alliance Campaign e-group on March 12, 2005

Alliance research permissions and ethics

March 2005   Christopher J. Poor   kiwichrispoor@yahoo.com

Activist as Researcher

Regarding my role as 'participant-observer' in the Alliance: I have not attempted to play the role of a scientifically 'objective' observer since that was never possible. I am an Alliance activist first and a social scientist second. I argue that this relationship enhances the value of the research, both to my 'research community' - that is the Alliance membership - and to social science.

I would like to stress that I am doing this research because I believe in the importance of internal party democracy. That is why I returned to University to study the matter after twenty-something years in the workforce. Only recently did it strike me that I need to finish the Ph.D. (it has been going on a long time) and start looking for a new career (no doubt connected to becoming a father).

Ethical Standards

As a researcher I strive to adhere to ethical standards which are stricter than those that would apply to most observers.

However, I am not officially conducting "human subjects research" because the information I am seeking is about a public organisation and the kind of information I seek is regularly made public through interviews and other reporting by the press. In fact my research is far less intrusive than the activity of reporters. I have not been looking for sensation or gossip. I am primarily interested in how activists organise to hold leaders accountable.

In the ten years or so that my research has been going on I have got permission or agreement from the individuals or groups involved in the research, but in the case of the Yahoo Group this permission has necessarily been tacit.

When I started to participate on the Yahoo 'campaign' Group in July 2004 I said that "I am writing my dissertation .. on internal democracy in the Alliance" and I made the assumption that members of the group would recognise that I would make some use of information I gained on the Group for purposes of this research.

The Yahoo Group is a special case since members are entitled to expect that their contributions on the Group will not be made public. I believe that is a rule of the Group, whether written or unwritten and I abide by that rule. Nonetheless, ethical behaviour requires that I do more than

simply adhere to general rules of participation; it requires that I use discretion and judgment. Essentially, I impose rules of conduct on myself.

Rules of Conduct
The rules that I have been following in this research are:

(i)   For all interviews I have obtained informed consent.
(ii) In cases where explicit personal consent is not given but general agreement has been obtained (such as observation of closed meetings - this has always been either unanimous or without dissent) I exercise a high standard of discretion to limit personally identifiable information.
(iii) I do not make use of any personal communication if the information can be clearly linked back to the person communicating with me unless (a) I have obtained their explicit permission or (b) they are public figures - e.g. leader of the Alliance or an MP; But
(iv) When I am explicitly asked to keep certain information confidential I take precautions to protect the confidentiality of that information (this includes encrypting files on my computer, using firewalls etc).

With specific reference to the Yahoo Group these are the rules that I have been following and that I propose to continue with:

(i)   I will not refer to anyone by name unless (a) I have obtained their explicit permission or (b) they are public figures - e.g. leader of the Alliance or an MP (but I will still try to get permission).
(iii) I will not make quotes (more than a couple of words) that could be personally identifiable unless I have obtained explicit permission.

I would welcome any suggestions (am I being too cautious - not cautious enough?) from members of the Alliance that could provide guidance for me in terms of these ethical considerations.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity (among others) to thank the members of the Alliance for participating in what I believe is a very valuable piece of research. I hope it will make a contribution to one ongoing project of the Alliance: To revolutionise democratic politics by demonstrating that internal democracy is not only desirable but is a superior way of doing politics.

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[291] See pp.380-381 HABERMAS, 1996; Compare WEISSMAN, 2000, p.220.

[292] See p.69 IMD, 2001 and compare Torbjörrn Bergman et al in STROM ET AL., 2003, p.207.

[293] p. xiv, Russ Marion, 1999, The Edge of Organization: Chaos and Complexity Theories of Formal Social Systems, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA: See the review by Mario Paolucci at http://jasss.soc.surrey.ac.uk/5/4/reviews/paolucci.html .

[294] See BOVENS, 1998, pp.15-18

[295] Walter Dean Burnham quoted in MACKENZIE, 1996.

[296] MICHELS, 1962.

[297] See The Christian Science Monitor October 09, 1998:

> "By becoming foreign minister, Fischer can discipline the party," says Mr. Poguntke, the political scientist. "He can force his party to toe the line."
>
> http://csmonitor.com/cgi-bin/durableRedirect.pl?/durable/1998/10/09/p6s2.htm

[298] See, for example, DAHLBERG, 2001.

[299] Critics argue against this "technological utopianism" as blind to the history of such innovations and their effects on civil society. Compare: THORNTON, 2002. http://www.zip.com.au/~athornto//

[300] See the efforts by Republican Attorneys General to prevent vote-swapping and online registration in US DAVIS ET AL., 2002. Provision of inaccurate and inadequate numbers of electronic voting machines in black districts in the 2004 U.S. general election – see UC Data: UC Berkeley's principal archive of computerized social science and health statistics information: http://ucdata.berkeley.edu:7101/

[301] See POOR, 1996.

[302] As I make the final changes to this dissertation the Alliance has just completed selection of their party list at a conference in Christchurch. Jill Ovens and Paul Piesse were placed in the top two positions and thus become co-leaders of the party. Hopefully a new president will be elected at the annual conference later this year.

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