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☆
Chapter Two

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Presidential and Prime Ministerial Selection

HUGH HECLLO

AMERICAN PRESIDENTS and British prime ministers have often been compared in analyses of the presidency, not least by writers who are critical of the selection process in the United States. Lord Bryce, in a chapter entitled "Why Great Men Are Not Chosen President," argued that the method of choice naturally tends to exclude "great" men from reaching the top. To support this view, he cited seven or eight prime ministers and only four presidents whom he considered "of the first rank," along with eight presidents and six prime ministers who were "personally insignificant." Building upon Bryce's analysis, Ostrogorski pointed out that even Gladstone would have been excluded from the presidency by residency requirements.¹

By and large, such comparisons have suffered from oversimplifications imported to confirm a distaste for the noisiness, disorganization, and vulgarity of the method of selection used in the United States. Worse, the actual operation of political recruitment in the United States is usually contrasted with the ideal operation of the British system, to the disadvantage of the former. Modern writers have devoted little attention to the comparative study of top leadership choice, and the literature is particularly thin in Britain. Most of the studies are monographic, noncumulative, and belletristic.²

Note. I wish to thank James Douglas, Anthony King, Richard Rose, and Aaron Wildavsky for their helpful comments on this paper.

1. Lord Bryce, *The American Commonwealth*, Vol. 1 (London: Macmillan, 1893), Chap. 8. Chapters 5-9 concern the presidency and still repay rereading. M. Ostrogorski, *Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties*, Vol. 2 (Haskell, 1964).

2. For a review of approaches, see L. Edinger (ed.), *Political Leadership in Industrialized Societies* (Wiley, 1967); Elmer Cornwell (ed.), *The American Presidency* (Scott, Foresman, 1966). Among the more useful books on the prime ministership are Anthony King (ed.), *The British Prime Minister* (London: Macmillan, 1969); Byrum Carter, *The Office of Prime Minister* (London: Faber and Faber, 1956), Chap. 2, "The Selection of Prime Ministers"; *British Prime Ministers* (London: Allan Wingate, 1953), a collection of articles that originally appeared in *History Today*; Lewis Broad, *The Path to Power* (London: Muller, 1965); Lucille Iremonger, *The Fiery Chariot* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1970).

Despite its possible abuses, the comparative technique remains of great value. Viewed as a special case of political socialization and recruitment, presidential selection is susceptible to comparison, if not to one-to-one comparison, with the process of executive selection in Britain. This is in no way to discount social and political differences between the two nations. The formal institutional differences are well known: unitary, parliamentary government with well-organized national parties in Britain, versus federal, presidential government with poorly organized parties in the United States. The challenge is to make such familiar institutional factors speak to the more informal processes, and in particular to the political recruitment of executive leadership. While the essence of parliamentary government, for example, is the election of the executive from within the legislature, the essence of presidential government is his choice by a general electorate. What is not clear is the effect of such institutional differences on informal executive *selection* as well as formal *election*. Far from overlooking political differences, a comparative approach offers the only means of distinguishing unique from more generic phenomena. Like depth perception in optics, political depth perception often depends on a set of partly contrasting, partly overlapping images. Investigation from this bifocal perspective leads one to revise a number of accepted stereotypes concerning the selection of presidents and prime ministers, and perhaps to a clearer view of each.

In the following sections, the American and British selection processes will be compared in five categories: recruitment continuity and timing, selection sites, mobility patterns, selection criteria, and degree of openness to the public. Inasmuch as the United States has no party leaders in the British sense of the term, the comparison will be based on the population of presidential nominees and British party leaders—who are, roughly speaking, nominees to the prime ministership. The analysis will be limited to changes in party leadership since 1900, a period especially significant in British politics since it marks the time of changes in Conservative party selection procedures, the last stages of relevant Liberal party selections, and the beginning of Labour party selections.³ The leader of the Labour party, in the simplest

3. Bonar Law's selection for the Conservative leadership in 1911 was the first "independent" election of the leader by Conservative M.P.s since 1846; in the interim all subsequent Conservative leaders in the House of Commons had begun as the virtual nominees of a peer who was the recognized leader of the party. On general selection procedures in Britain, see R. T. McKenzie, *British Political Parties* (London: Heinemann, 1963).

terms, has always been selected by majority vote of the parliamentary Labour party. Until 1965, the Conservative leaders arose through a less formal process of emergence with the blessing of party elders; on February 25, 1965, a new and complicated procedure was instituted by which the leader is formally elected by the parliamentary party. Throughout this period, selections by both parties in the United States have been made by nominating conventions of state party representatives.

Selection versus Election

In both Britain and the United States the key locus of choice is in the preelection selection process. Though more dramatic and publicized, the election itself is far less important—in the sense of the number of alternatives eliminated—than the selection, when one from a large number of potential candidates is designated. As a systems analyst once said, “If I can set the options, I don’t care who makes the choice.” The distinction requires a careful use of terms. By “selection” I mean the initial picking out from a group (the Latin *seligere*, to separate by culling out); “election” will refer to the effective choosing by vote for office (*eligere*, to choose). Election is thus a clearly delimited public act, defined procedurally by voting, while selection is a vaguer form of private choice that may be carried out by a variety of procedures; selection results in nomination to office, election in the holding of office. One of the most common confusions in the popular conceptions of the presidency and prime ministership is the identification of the election, and its attendant campaign activity, with the prior selection process. The result is usually overemphasis on or misidentification of the differences between the two recruitment patterns.

This distinction may, for example, elucidate the question of continuity in leadership. The British system is usually considered conducive to stability of party leadership, while the United States, with its constitutionally required quadrennial elections, is considered subject to greater fluctuations.⁴ This view is difficult to substantiate. Since 1900, there have been nineteen general elections in Britain and eighteen in the United States, and a total of fifteen prime ministers and thirteen presidents. Average presidential tenure has been six

4. Since 1911, except for wartime emergencies, the legal requirement in Britain is an election at least once every five years.

years (5.4 years if Franklin D. Roosevelt is excluded), that of prime ministers slightly less than five. During the same time, there have been eleven changes of Conservative and thirteen of Labour party leadership in Britain. If one regards the choice of a presidential nominee as roughly equivalent to the choice of a British party leader, there have been eleven changes of Republican and nine of Democratic leadership. If anything, the continuity of executive leadership and of those selected for potential leadership has been not less but greater in the United States than in Britain.

What is the source of the common belief to the contrary? The answer probably lies in the differing relation of the selection process to elections. The difference between the two nations lies not in the absolute length of tenure but in the timing of selection. Selection in the United States is directly and inextricably tied to forthcoming elections, and candidates are chosen for their actual or predicted election performance. As Bryce put it, "Now to a party it is more important that its nominee should be a good candidate than that he should turn out a good President."⁵ The remarkable orientation to "election success" of the American selection process—and the basis for the assumed longevity of British political leadership—is also suggested by surveying the candidates who have been defeated in elections. Since 1900, Richard M. Nixon is the only defeated candidate who has remained sufficiently attractive to be elected president later. On only five other occasions has a defeated presidential candidate been renominated; and only four other defeated candidates have been given the courtesy of a significant number of votes at a subsequent national convention (James M. Cox in 1924, Alfred E. Smith in 1932, Adlai E. Stevenson in 1960, and Hubert H. Humphrey in 1972). By comparison, the beneficiary of selection in Britain seems highly impervious to electoral defeat. During this century, in the Conservative and Labour parties, there have been no fewer than fourteen occasions (seven in each party) on which the designated leaders have continued to lead their parties after electoral defeats. This is not to say that pressures have not arisen following such defeats: Arthur Balfour was virtually pushed out in 1911, but only after three lost elections; Stanley Baldwin had to fight to regain control after the 1923 and 1929 defeats; and Sir Alec Douglas-Home's position was greatly weakened after the

5. Lord Bryce, *American Commonwealth*, Vol. 1, p. 80.

electoral defeat of 1964.⁶ But these cases stand out precisely because of their exceptional nature. Paradoxically, although the American presidential nominee may be far less a party leader than the British prime-minister-designate, he is in effect held far more accountable for electoral defeats.

If the relation of selection to election performance is much less direct in Britain than in the United States, so too is the relative timetable. Without exception, presidential selection is made in the period immediately preceding elections, while British selections generally show little systematic relation to elections. Figure 1 summarizes the electoral intervals at which selections of party leaders have occurred, and illustrates the exceptional and frequently overlooked position of the United States.

There appears to be a tendency in postwar Britain for selections to precede elections more closely than earlier in the century, but there is still a great gap between Britain and the United States.⁷ In no sense is selection in Britain the inescapable prologue to election; a good indicator of the difference is found in the assumptions of election analysts in the two nations. Theodore White's analysis of the 1964 American election, for example, devotes more than half its content to the pre-election selection process in each party, while the standard study of the 1964 British general election devotes two paragraphs to the nine-month struggle over the Conservative leadership in 1963 and only three sentences to the Labour party's selection of Hugh Gaitskell's successor in the same year.⁸

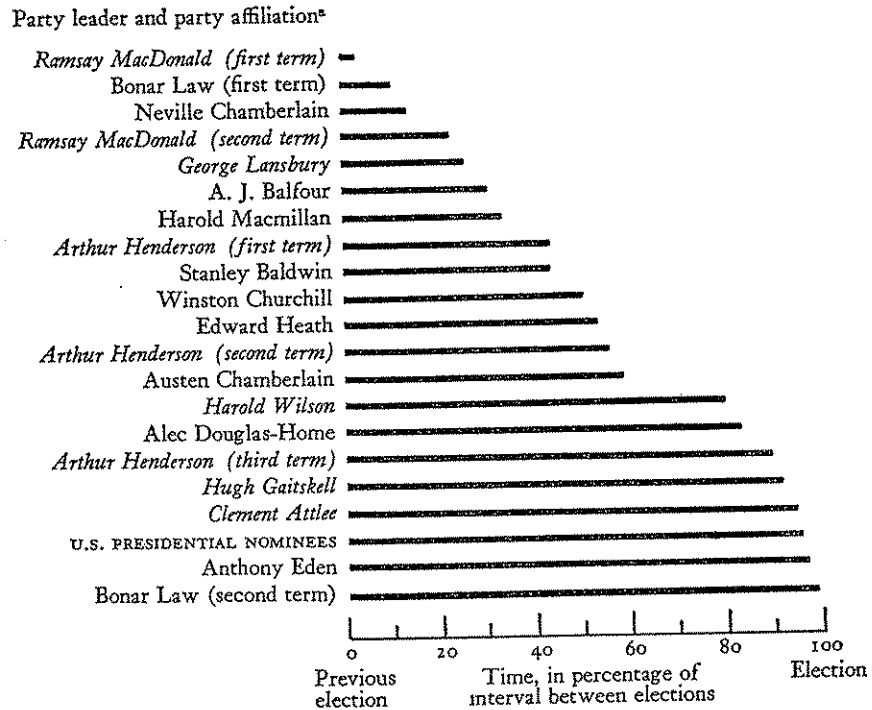
The difference in the relation of selection to electoral performance and timing is derived from the nature of government institutions and party organization. While parties supply the personnel for selection,

6. In general, see Robert Blake, *The Conservative Party from Peel to Churchill* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1970); on Home's selection and replacement, Anthony King, "Britain: The Search for Leadership," in William Andrews (ed.), *European Politics*, Vol. 1 (Van Nostrand, 1966).

7. Attlee was clearly chosen in 1935 with a view to Lansbury's inadequacy to lead the party in the forthcoming election two months away; the timing of Eden's and Gaitskell's successions in 1955 was predetermined, in Eden's case for more than a decade. In the background of Heath's selection in August 1965 was the knowledge that, because of the delicate parliamentary balance, an election could not be too far away—seven months, as it turned out.

8. Theodore H. White, *The Making of the President 1964* (Atheneum, 1965); D. E. Butler and Anthony King, *The British General Election of 1964* (London: Macmillan, 1965).

FIGURE 1. *Time at Which Party Leaders Were Selected in Relation to the Elections Preceding and Following Their Selection, Conservative Party, 1902-65, and Labour Party, 1911-64*



Source: David Butler and Jennie Freeman, *British Political Facts, 1900-1967* (2d ed. London: Macmillan, 1968).

a. Names of Conservative party leaders are in roman type; those of Labour party leaders are in italics.

government institutions determine how this personnel will be structured; personnel and structure together define the nature of the selectorate. By further distinguishing the "selective" from the "elective" operations of these bodies, some of the other accepted truths concerning executive selection can better be questioned, or at least refined.

The Locus of Selection

One can scarcely conceive of a modern political system that does not require some sort of preelection winnowing, no matter how incho-

ate the process. The central characteristic of the executive recruit is that of a "group actor"; designation of a nominee to the highest political office in both Britain and the United States occurs through, and by virtue of, participation in limited political groups. Although designation to the British prime ministership may be far less formal than nomination for the American presidency, identifiable selection procedures in the two countries can be compared in terms of these differing group structures and personnel.

The most important group is of course the political party; the obvious fact, which is nevertheless easily overlooked, is that the personnel of the selectorate are party members. No man in either nation during this century has attained nomination to supreme office without a clear profession of party allegiance. Even the seeming exceptions only serve to emphasize the point. Both Wendell Willkie in 1940 and Dwight Eisenhower in 1952 were required to confirm their party credentials before nomination; the one recent attempt at a nonparty draft—Democratic Senator Claude Pepper's proposal in July 1948 that Eisenhower be adopted as a national candidate and that Democrats confine themselves to subnational elections—was stillborn. In Britain, Winston Churchill suffered several decades of suspicion for his "ratting and reratting" on the Conservative party; the collapse of David Lloyd George's coalition government in 1921 left him a leader without a party, while the creation of a National Government under Ramsay MacDonald in 1931 temporarily left Labour as a party without a leader. By the Second World War, Churchill had learned enough of the importance of party allegiance, even at the height of a struggle for national survival, to insist upon eventually taking up the leadership of the Conservative party.⁹

The parties in each nation shape themselves to the structures of government, both in central institutions and in national-local divisions of power. The well-worn distinction between the unitary British state with a parliamentary-cabinet government and the federal United States with separated powers remains the most useful shorthand expression for the extremely complex differences. Such institutional dif-

9. Winston S. Churchill, *Their Finest Hour* (Houghton Mifflin, 1949), p. 496: "I should have found it impossible to conduct the war if I had to procure the agreement . . . not only of the leaders of the two minority parties, but of the leaders of the Conservative majority. Whoever had been chosen and whatever his self-denying virtues, he would have had the real political power. For me there would have been only executive responsibility."

ferences will be of concern here only insofar as they are molding forces through which the party groups operate to select national leaders.

At risk of oversimplification, one may say that the central-local party structure in the United States is characterized by a disparate confederacy of state and local party organizations, which intermittently coalesce for the specific purpose of nominating a presidential candidate. One of the oldest observations on the subject remains valid: the central task at the nominating convention is the search for an election "winner," for it is only through striving for such victory that the heterogeneous party can be brought together.¹⁰ The national nominating convention is an extreme device used to meet extreme party decentralization, a contrivance which has since its beginning been rather a consequence than a cause of the incoherent nature of America's national parties. The intimate tie between selection and election is thus due not to the unique nature of the presidency but to the decentralization of the parties, which find that the selection of a national election winner is the one common cause in which they can at least temporarily unite. But for this centripetal force, the selection process might well occur long before the elections.

In Britain, on the other hand, the parties are more continuously unified national organizations, without a regular timetable for choosing party leaders and potential prime ministers. When the succession in party leadership has been disputed, local party organizations have made their voices heard, but usually in the negative form of complaints and grumbles rather than in the expression of positive preferences.¹¹ The unified national party selectorate thus aims not so much to create party unity, as in the United States, as to preserve it.

The ease with which, when strong central party leadership is absent, the British selection process can come to resemble the American was demonstrated in 1963. Until this time the Conservative party had been cited as the model of coherent party organization, with a smoothly operating, emergence style of leadership recruitment. From the mo-

10. See, for example, Lord Bryce, *American Commonwealth*, Vol. 1, Chap. 8; Pendleton Herring, *The Politics of Democracy* (Norton, 1965); and Nelson W. Polsby and Aaron B. Wildavsky, *Presidential Elections: Strategies of American Electoral Politics* (Scribner's, 1964), pp. 60 ff.

11. On the independent power of several Northern "bosses," see Randolph Churchill, *Lord Derby, King of Lancashire* (London: Heinemann, 1959); and Stanley Salvidge, *Salvidge of Liverpool* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1934).

ment of the surprise announcement of Prime Minister Harold Macmillan's serious illness and impending retirement, the usually stolid Conservative party conference of local constituency organizations began to resemble an inchoate national nominating convention, with all the attendant intrigues, gossipmongering, and deals. The "candidate" whom many considered the most likely successful election performer, Lord Hailsham, was given warm and rousing receptions. The maneuvering became, as in the United States, heated, public, and exaggerated. *The Times* wrote disdainfully: "The atmosphere there is unhealthy. With all the hob-nobbing in hotel rooms, the gossip, and rumours, the conference is resembling an American nomination convention. The Cabinet is said to have one candidate, the Parliamentary party another, and the constituency associations a third."¹² The point worth noting is the ease with which the question of selection came to dominate an assembly of localists who suddenly felt that they might be allowed to have a say in the designation of the next leader. While the 1963 Conservative controversy demonstrated that a swing in the American direction is possible, its denouement was equally revealing: the choice of a new leader fell neither to the party conference nor to the local constituency organizations. After the hyperthyroid interlude of the conference, a "process of consultation," managed by Macmillan from his hospital room, led to the selection of the modest Home.¹³

Important consequences for executive selection flow from such differences in party structure and centralization. Selection in the United States depends on creating from the large number of local-party power centers the confederal alliances necessary to sway the nominating convention. Yet if the fragmentation is greater in the United States, so too is the room for maneuver, both in the number of potential candidates and in their strategies. The very diversity of party groups in the United States provides a combinatorial richness and a range of choice far wider than that produced through the British party structure. One can predict with a probability approaching certainty that the British leader selected will be an experienced party man with long membership in Parliament and a long career of ascent through junior ministerial, ministerial, and cabinet positions. Of the American candidate one can say only that he will be a figure with "some" position of

12. *The Times* (London), Oct. 11, 1963.

13. A full account is given by King, "Britain: The Search for Leadership."

national prominence.¹⁴ Those who seriously enter into contention sometimes lack long party backgrounds, legislative experience, or tenure in a national executive office. The "strategic environment" of both selection and election is a jungle of voting blocs, interest groups, local leaders, money and information resources, and public appeals. Strategies may range from hoping to win by popular acclaim by running first and hardest in primaries to waiting quietly for a deadlocked convention.

The breadth of competition in the American system is indicated by the number of contenders for office. While the United States since 1900 has held fewer national elections than Britain and has experienced longer executive tenure and slightly fewer changes in party leadership, it has had approximately 50 percent more contenders under serious consideration for selection. A review of the limited literature available shows that for the twenty-four British changes in party leadership roughly thirty-six contenders have been considered, while for the twenty-two changes of presidential nominees there have been fifty-five contenders.¹⁵ This is not to claim an innate superiority for the American process; but on the assumption that there is a reservoir of political talent spread throughout the political system, the American selection process casts the net somewhat more widely than the British.¹⁶

The overall differences may be summarized by saying that the selection process in Britain is an "apprenticeship" system, as contrasted with the "entrepreneurial" system of recruitment in the United States. Apprenticeship may be understood in its usual meaning of "learning a craft," the result of which is gradual advancement into

14. A brief comparison is made in James Douglas, "The Nixon Changeover," *New Society*, Feb. 6, 1969. For one author's difficulty in setting out the U.S. parties' test of a candidate, see Grant McConnell, *The Modern Presidency* (St. Martin's, 1966); on the strategic environment, see Polsby and Wildavsky, *Presidential Elections*.

15. Serious contenders in Britain are counted as those who have received backing for the leadership from some segment of party opinion; in the United States, they are those who have received at least 10 percent of the votes in national conventions or have made significant primary challenges and been eliminated before the convention, such as Willie in 1944 and Kefauver in 1956.

16. Even when he reaches Parliament, the politician is in a very narrow catchment area. Guttsman, for example, can dismiss in one footnote the M.P.'s chance of becoming prime minister; odds against the M.P.'s getting into the cabinet are, historically, fifteen to one, and the "chance of becoming Prime Minister is so absolutely remote as not to come seriously within the purview of calculable chance for the aspiring politician." W. L. Guttsman, *The British Political Elite* (London: MacGibbon, 1964), pp. 198 and 203.

professional ranks under the watchful eye of established masters. "Entrepreneur" has a rather precise meaning in economics that may also be enlightening in politics: one who creates new combinations in the means of production and credit. The entrepreneur's creativity is characterized by innovative rearrangements and the calling forth of new resources rather than by simple "management" of existing combinations; his is not usually a permanent profession but consists in a temporary ad hoc manipulation of the forces at hand. Although the flux and combinatorial richness of forces in the American selection process suggest the label "entrepreneurial," this is not to say that the entrepreneur is an independent, free-standing capitalist; new combinations may be created, and usually are, by those who are part of an organization and draw upon credit and capital other than their own.¹⁷ The distinction between the apprenticeship and entrepreneurial systems is highlighted by a look at the place of political experience in the two nations' selection processes.

Political Experience and Mobility Patterns

Probably the most common generalization is the claim that the prime ministerial system excels because it requires greater governmental experience in the eventual nominee. Bryce, for example, compared the "natural selection" of the English Parliament with the "artificial selection" of American politics.¹⁸

There can be no doubt that greater parliamentary experience is required by a nonfederal system of unified executive and legislative powers than by the American system. The British selection process appears "natural" in the sense that it provides for apprenticeship from parliamentary ranks to cabinet office. Of the eighteen British party leaders and twenty-five presidential nominees of this century (through 1972), all the British had had parliamentary experience—a total of 364 years, for an average of 20.2—at the time of their selection, while only eleven presidential nominees had had congressional experience—a total of 109 years, for an average of 9.9. The facile conclusion that

17. The discussion of entrepreneurial activity is of course based on J. A. Schumpeter's *The Theory of Economic Development* (Harvard University Press, 1961), pp. 74 ff. Unlike the economic entrepreneur, however, the political entrepreneur has involved his own "capital" and is necessarily a "risk-bearer."

18. Lord Bryce, *American Commonwealth*, Vol. 1, p. 85.

British leaders have had more experience in government has always been only a short step away.

Mere membership in Parliament, however, is a poor indicator of real experience in government, especially in view of the limited legislative role of Parliament in comparison both with its role in earlier centuries and with the role of Congress in this century. For a more accurate measure of substantive experience in governing, one might look not at the bare number of years a man has spent in Parliament but at the government offices he has held; such an analysis shows that the relation is the opposite of what is usually assumed. Table 1 compares the government experience of presidents and party leaders. A survey of tenure in offices above the level of parliamentary private secretary shows that the average experience of British party leaders at the time of their selection was 8.4 years, with a high of 20 years for Churchill in 1940 and none for MacDonald in 1924. Rather than being less experienced, presidential nominees at the time of their selection had spent an average of 10.2 years in government offices apart from Congress. (This also disregards Eisenhower's career, which, if not formally political, was also not without experience in a significant area of public affairs.) In the postwar period legislative experience has become as prominent in the United States as in Britain.

The important distinction between the two nations, however, rests not in the length but in the variety of government experience of designated leaders. Almost without exception, potential prime ministers have advanced along the single route from junior minister to minister, from minister to major cabinet figure, but even this rule has not, on occasion, prevented party leadership, and thus potential national leadership, from falling on extremely inexperienced men. MacDonald was not the only leader with little experience in national government; Bonar Law had had three years in an executive government position when he was selected party leader in 1911, and Clement Attlee had had two years at the time of his selection in 1935.¹⁹ In the United States, without a direct legislative-executive link, the presidential selection process has brought forth a set of men with an astonishing range of political experience.

19. In both nations, a party in opposition for extended periods may become long removed from government experience. After thirteen years in opposition, the Labour party in 1964 formed a government of whose members few except Wilson had had previous high-level experience in government. Similarly, recent Republican administrations have been short of experienced national politicians.

TABLE I. *Political Experience of U.S. Presidential Nominees and British Party Leaders at Time of Selection*

Number of years

<i>Nominee or party leader</i>	<i>National legislature</i>	<i>National executive office</i>	<i>State or local assembly</i>	<i>State or local executive office</i>	<i>Administrative appointment</i>	<i>Judicial</i>
<i>Presidential nominee</i>						
Theodore Roosevelt	—	2	2	3	6	—
William Jennings Bryan	4	—	—	—	—	—
Alton B. Parker	—	—	—	8	—	16
William H. Taft	—	8	—	—	2	10
Woodrow Wilson	—	—	—	2	—	—
Charles Evans Hughes	—	—	—	3	—	6
Warren G. Harding	6	—	4	2	—	—
James M. Cox	4	—	—	6	—	—
Calvin Coolidge	—	3	5	6	—	4
John W. Davis	2	—	—	—	8	—
Herbert C. Hoover	—	7	—	—	5	—
Alfred E. Smith	—	—	12	8	—	—
Franklin D. Roosevelt	—	7	2	4	—	—
Alfred M. Landon	—	—	—	4	—	—
Wendell L. Willkie	—	—	—	—	—	—
Thomas E. Dewey	—	—	—	8	—	—
Harry S. Truman	10	2	—	—	10	10
Dwight D. Eisenhower	—	—	—	—	—	—
Adlai E. Stevenson	—	4	—	4	6	—
Richard M. Nixon	6	8	—	—	—	—
John F. Kennedy	13	—	—	—	—	—
Barry M. Goldwater	11	—	3	—	—	—
Lyndon B. Johnson	24	3	—	—	2	—
Hubert H. Humphrey	15	4	—	3	3	—
George McGovern	14	2	—	—	—	—
<i>Party leader</i>						
A. J. Balfour	18	6	—	—	—	—
Henry Campbell-Bannerman	32	12	—	—	—	—
H. H. Asquith	18	4	—	—	—	—
David Lloyd George	26	12	—	—	—	—
Austen Chamberlain	30	16	—	—	—	—
Bonar Law	12	4	—	—	—	—
Stanley Baldwin	16	6	—	—	—	—
Ramsay MacDonald	16	—	4	—	—	—
George Lansbury	12	2	16	2	—	—
Neville Chamberlain	18	12	6	2	2	—

TABLE I (continued)

<i>Nominee or party leader</i>	<i>National legislature</i>	<i>National executive office</i>	<i>State or local assembly</i>	<i>State or local executive office</i>	<i>Administrative appointment</i>	<i>Judicial</i>
Winston Churchill	40	24	—	—	—	—
Clement Attlee	14	2	4	2	—	—
Hugh Gaitskell	10	6	—	—	6	—
Anthony Eden	20	8	—	—	—	—
Harold Macmillan	34	12	—	—	—	—
Alec Douglas-Home	32	14	—	—	—	—
Harold Wilson	18	6	—	—	2	—
Edward Heath	16	10	—	—	—	—

Sources: David Butler and Jennie Freeman, *British Political Facts, 1900-1967* (2d ed. London: Macmillan, 1968); J. N. Kane (ed.), *Facts about the Presidents* (Wilson, 1968).

More than half the presidential nominees have, for example, had some experience in nonelective government office, while in Britain only Neville Chamberlain, Gaitskell, and Harold Wilson meet the criterion. Two-thirds of presidential nominees have had subnational government experience, in contrast with Chamberlain and the three Labour leaders who served on local government councils. Nowhere in Britain is there evidence of anything like the wide catchment area being drawn upon in the United States: governors, administrators, legislators, and the occasional nonprofessional politician. The evidence suggests that those selected for the presidency are not less politically experienced, but that they are less restricted than British leaders to one level—the national—and to one institution—the legislature. One can of course argue that the offices in the two nations are by nature different, and that many of the offices held by presidential nominees cannot be equated with British cabinet posts as sources of political experience. On the other hand, one may rightfully justify subnational political experience as preparation for leadership and point to the parochialism found in the rarefied atmosphere of political capitals. At a time when central government is increasingly criticized for its lack of perspective and responsiveness, alternative career routes and varying political experience are assets to a political system.

The difference in recruitment in apprenticeship and entrepreneur systems is not simply a question of the distinction between ascription

and achievement typically used to describe mobility patterns. Neither nation yields more than a few instances of leaders who have been successfully designated by their predecessors; Balfour and Sir Anthony Eden in Britain and William H. Taft and Nixon (1960) in the United States would be the prime examples. More useful is the distinction between sponsored and contested mobility.²⁰ Roughly speaking, the British apprentice moves upward by ingratiating himself with his guild masters; the American entrepreneur moves through a wide-ranging series of contests against other largely isolated contenders attempting to arrange their own combinations of political resources. For purposes of his own advancement, the apprentice's constituency is largely internal; the scrutineers in his selectorate are his own political superiors in Parliament, while the American entrepreneur looks far more to an outside constituency of disparate party leaders whose self-interest must be mobilized on his behalf. The apprentice's guild operates smoothly by retaining its exclusiveness, but the entrepreneur thrives as his market for potential support becomes more extensive. Thus though the wide-ranging selection process typically serves as a centripetal force in the decentralized American system, it can easily prove centrifugal in a tightly centralized party structure. After the trauma of 1963, the Conservative party was not long in establishing a formal selection procedure, which, as in the Labour party, explicitly lays responsibility on the parliamentary party and seeks to quarantine the disruptive forces of selection.

Selection Criteria and Personality

I have already touched briefly on the question of selection criteria. Although unfortunately there is little direct evidence from which the actual criteria used in either the United States or Britain can be determined, several points stand out. The fact that selection in the British apprenticeship system seeks to preserve rather than to create unity suggests a concern for more cooperative and less openly combative qualities; a capacity not to rock the boat typically takes precedence

20. See, for example, T. Parson and E. Shils (eds.), *Toward a General Theory of Action* (Harvard University Press, 1951); G. A. Almond and J. S. Coleman, *Politics and Developing Areas* (Princeton University Press, 1960); and Ralph H. Turner, "Sponsored and Contest Mobility and the School System," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 25 (December 1960), p. 855.

over ability to rally the troops. Although individual classifications are disputable, there are certain categories into which recruits can be grouped.²¹

In Great Britain, of eighteen party leaders selected,

- seven, or 39 percent, were strong contenders who won a factional fight (Lloyd George, Baldwin, MacDonald, Gaitskell, Macmillan, Wilson, Heath);
- three, or 17 percent, were compromise candidates between strong candidates (Campbell-Bannerman, Law, Home);
- eight, or 44 percent, emerged without a factional fight (Balfour, Asquith, Austen Chamberlain, Lansbury, Neville Chamberlain, Churchill, Attlee, Eden).

In the United States, of twenty-seven nominations (involving twenty-four different nominees),

- fifteen, or 56 percent, were strong contenders who won a factional fight (Parker, Wilson, Cox, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Willkie, Dewey [1944, 1948], Eisenhower, Stevenson [1952, 1956], Kennedy, Goldwater, Nixon [1968], Humphrey, McGovern);
- two, or 7 percent, were compromise candidates between strong candidates (Harding, Davis);
- six, or 22 percent, emerged without a factional fight (Taft [1908], Hughes, Hoover, Landon, Smith, Nixon [1960]);
- four, or 15 percent, came to office as succeeding vice-presidents (Theodore Roosevelt, Coolidge, Truman, Johnson).

The recruit who emerges “peacefully,” or serves as a compromise between factious contenders, appears more frequently in Britain than in the United States.²² In both nations there is a contemporary tendency toward an increase in the number of selection contests, but

21. The U.S. list excludes Bryan's third nomination and the renomination of elected presidents. British figures are for the Conservative party, 1900-65; the Liberal party, 1900-18; and the Labour party, 1921-65. General histories of the struggles for selection are (for Britain) Lewis Broad, *The Path to Power* (London: Muller, 1965); and (for the United States) Herbert Eaton, *Presidential Timber: A History of Nominating Conventions 1868-1960* (Macmillan, 1964).

22. The significant number of selections that have occurred automatically through succeeding vice-presidents should be noted. Little reliable research has been done on the subject, but it is doubtful that qualifications for the presidency have often played an important part in vice-presidential selection.

Britain has not gone as far in this direction as the United States. The details of the Conservative selection procedure established in February 1965 are revealing in this regard. The first draft plan called for a straight election with ranked preferences, but party leaders objected that this would not encourage the emergence of compromise candidates and would involve selectors in hypothetical choices rather than realistic comparisons. The voting rules eventually decided upon deliberately seek to avoid sharp distinctions and to encourage the emergence of a consensus leader.²³

A second criterion is the candidate's electoral appeal. One might reasonably hypothesize that different selectors have different criteria, and that the unified national selectorate of Britain will not necessarily have the same touchstones as a conference of localists. In trying to mobilize the self-interest of decentralized power centers, the American entrepreneur has one common coin in which to deal: the electoral aid he can bring to state and local tickets. Local delegates can more reasonably be expected to respond to this appeal than to the claims of a semiexistent presidential party.

In Britain a comparable force is at work in the selection process, regardless of what champions of the more "natural" British ideal may say. Thus during the 1963 selection controversy, the joint chairman of the Conservative party, and many others, backed Lord Hailsham "as the man to win the election."²⁴ The point is that this admittedly important consideration was only one of the criteria the British guild selectorate could be expected to use. The background against which the apprentice is evaluated includes not only an indefinite future election but also many years' performance as a parliamentary and cabinet colleague. Although a convention in the United States may register the entrepreneur's ability to "deal well" with others, it presumes a great deal on the perspicacity of localists to expect them to judge a

23. Each candidate must indicate on the nomination paper that he is prepared to accept nomination; names of both proposer and seconder remain confidential. The first ballot allows only one choice for each voter, and results in a decision only if the candidate has a majority plus 15 percent over any other candidate. Two to four days are allowed for discussions before the second ballot, on which the candidate must receive an overall majority. If still no decision is reached, a third ballot of the top three candidates of the second ballot is held. Each voter is given two preference votes; the candidate with the lowest number of first preferences is eliminated, his second preferences redistributed among the remaining two candidates, and the majority candidate declared elected.

24. Quoted in Lord Butler's memoirs, *The Art of the Possible* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1972).

man on his ability to cooperate and "work well" with party colleagues. The multidimensional nature of British criteria was reflected in a comment of the Conservative chief whip in the House of Lords during the 1963 polling of preferences for leader. Lord Montgomery had replied by asking what was wanted, the best prime minister or a man to win the election; to which the chief whip replied matter-of-factly, "We want both."²⁵

Perhaps the most frequently cited difference is the part played in the two nations by personal images. Although the deep psychological personality forces at work cannot be probed here, when one notices that more than one-third of the presidents and more than half the prime ministers since the eighteenth century had lost one or both parents before reaching seventeen years,²⁶ the field for investigation certainly appears fertile. Selection of prime ministers is said to be less personality-oriented than the selection of presidents, in the sense that there is less concentration on the leader's public image, its packaging and marketing. When the hoary arguments are advanced that prime ministers are becoming increasingly like presidents, the discussion typically centers on the growing force of the leader's personality as opposed to the supposedly greater anonymity prevailing in the past.²⁷

Again, such distinctions tend to confuse electoral campaign publicity with the more vital preelection selection process. There can be no question that the appeal of a prospective candidate's public image is an important factor in the search for an American presidential nominee. One of the first professional publicity buildups in a selection struggle was given to Wendell Willkie before the 1940 Republican convention—with the now familiar coterie of public relations experts, family magazine profiles, and intimate portraits of the "real" man. This treatment has been used as a tool of persuasion by prospective nominees ever since. Yet compared with the selling job done on behalf of the "Princeton schoolmaster" by Colonel George Harvey of *Harper's Weekly*, and with William Randolph Hearst's efforts to make Alfred M. Landon the "best-loved family man in America," these

25. Quoted in Randolph Churchill, *The Fight for the Tory Leadership* (London: Heinemann, 1964), p. 135.

26. Iremonger, *Fiery Chariot*, Fig. 15; and J. N. Kane (ed.), *Facts about the Presidents* (Wilson, 1968).

27. See, for example, F. W. G. Benemy, *The Elected Monarch* (London: George Harrup, 1965).

later developments amounted to a difference of technique rather than of kind.

Attention to personal images is hardly peculiar to the United States. Butler and Stokes found that although the voters' views of party leaders significantly affected their party choice in the period from 1963 to 1966, attitudes toward the party itself were more important. Yet this did not prevent a general agreement during the 1960s that if a party was to be electorally successful, its leader should be more popular than the opposition party leader and his own party.²⁸ Thus one of the important factors weakening Home's position among party leaders in 1965, and strengthening Wilson's among his own supporters, was Home's consistently low public-image rating. The last poll before Home's resignation showed him trailing Wilson in every favorable characteristic about which opinions were asked ("tough, sincere, straightforward, progressive"). Even more disturbing was the fact that among Conservative supporters Home badly trailed Wilson's ratings for toughness, being in touch with ordinary people, speaking ability, and capacity to deal with the unions. Six months after succeeding Home, Edward Heath was still trailing Wilson among the general population, but among Conservative supporters was rated second only in his capacity to deal with the unions.²⁹

If anything, the monopoly of Parliament as the locus within which British selection takes place ensures that personal acceptability will play a greater part than in the United States; the difference is that while in the open American market attention will be directed at second hand to the entrepreneur as a popular product, the Westminster guild will turn more directly to the candidate's personal qualities as a colleague. In the hothouse atmosphere of Parliament, assessments of the working relationships established over the decades are inescapable. The result in Britain is likely to be an extremely intimate and pervasive attention to the nuances of personality in a selection process aiming to preserve unity. Nor should one confuse a new technology for making this assessment, such as polls, with the fact that such assessments have always been made. The Conservative party in 1911 chose as its leader the little-known Bonar Law, rather than either of

28. D. E. Butler and Donald Stokes, *Political Change in Britain* (London: Macmillan, 1969), pp. 383-88; and Richard Hodder-Williams, *Public Opinion Polls and British Politics* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970), p. 91.

29. National Opinion Polls, July 1965 and January 1966.

the two leading and more illustrious contenders, Austen Chamberlain and Walter Long, because Long and Chamberlain so detested each other that they threatened to split the party in a fight for the leadership. Chamberlain summed up the feeling when he said of Long, "I made a step toward him and had it on my lips to tell him he was a cad and to slap him across the face."³⁰ In comparison with the "pompous," "vain," and "weak" Chamberlain, and the verbose and impetuous Long—and these were the terms of analysis used at the time—Bonar Law was characterized as firm, modest, and straightforward. In the end, rather than give ascendancy to an archenemy, Long and Chamberlain both withdrew in Law's favor.³¹

For much the same reason, Baldwin was chosen as leader in 1923 over the much more formally qualified Lord Curzon. According to one close observer, this selection, now widely given as an example of the disqualification of peers from the leadership, was in fact "made mainly on the issue of the personal acceptability of the two candidates."³² Compared to the brilliant, experienced, but also imperious and arrogant Curzon, Baldwin was a modest but agreeable colleague to promote.

The cases could be multiplied at length—William Harcourt, Lloyd George, Macmillan, Herbert Morrison, Attlee, George Brown, and others providing examples of the strong part played by intimate assessments of personal images. In the United States, the political entrepreneur is relatively free to trade in varying personal images with slightly known local leaders; the British apprentice depends directly on the continued esteem and respect of that small group for and with whom he is serving his apprenticeship. This in turn raises the question of how democratic and open the two systems are.

30. Quoted in Robert Blake, *The Unknown Prime Minister* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1955), p. 78.

31. Sir Charles Petrie, *Walter Long and His Times* (London: Hutchinson, 1936), pp. 170 ff.; Sir Austen Chamberlain, *Politics from the Inside* (London: Cassell, 1936), pp. 345, 373, 387-89; and Blake, *Unknown Prime Minister*, Chap. 4.

32. Leopold Amery, *Thoughts on the Constitution* (Oxford University Press, 1948), p. 22. On Curzon's personality see Harold Nicolson, *Curzon: The Last Phase* (Houghton Mifflin, 1934), Chap. 1. For similar incidents, see Lord Kilmur, *Political Adventure* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1964), p. 286. An admittedly biased source described the exclusion of Butler in 1957 as "the most squalid political maneuver that I have ever been aware of." Lord Lambton, quoted in Anthony Sampson, *Macmillan: A Study in Ambiguity* (London: Allen Lane, 1967), p. 124.

Public Participation

There has been much discussion in Britain and the United States of the degree of democratic openness in the two selection processes. The more public nature of selection in the American system is often considered a counter to its admitted disadvantages, while the lack of public participation in Britain is the one drawback commonly cited in the British system.³³ There is, of course, an unjustified inferential leap in the suggestion that the less public process is necessarily the less democratic; the essential issue is the extent to which public participation effectively enters into the selection of presidential and prime-ministerial candidates.

Evidence of a sort is provided by the proportion of contested selections in each country, on the assumption that a contest is more likely to be amenable to outside public influences than selection by some form of prior understanding in the electorate. By this standard, the British in fact appear more openly competitive, for while about one-half of American convention selections have gone uncontested, only about one-third of the eighteen British selections discussed in this study have occurred without a plurality of "candidates" appealing to various elements of the party. This difference is explained of course by the large number of incumbent presidents renominated, without which the proportion of uncontested selections in the United States drops to 23 percent. One might in fact say that in such cases "selection" is a misnomer for the perfunctory formalities of renomination wrought by the regular election cycle. Still, the near certainty during this century of an incumbent president's renomination should not be neglected by advocates of popular participation.

There are, to be sure, no statistics on the numbers of people consulted on changes of leadership in each country, but if one counts the number who indicate a preference through the medium of American primaries, British experience clearly offers nothing comparable. During this century the linkage between election campaigns and the selection process has been further strengthened by the incorporation of preelection elections, in the form of primaries, into the actual selection process.

Again, one must beware of stereotypes, and of the facile conclusion

33. Louis Koenig, *The Chief Executive* (Harcourt, Brace, 1964); see esp. Chap. 15.

that the use of presidential primaries in the United States automatically ensures a more "democratic" selection process. While the direct public impact in Britain is minimal, there is also little evidence that the *direct* public voice in the United States has been successful in influencing the selection of candidates. In fact, American candidates who have relied largely on a strategy of primaries and popular acclaim have been notably unsuccessful in finally gaining nomination; more often than not, those most successful in primaries have not been selected. In 1912, for example, Theodore Roosevelt won 221 of the 388 delegates elected by primaries to the Republican convention, and Robert M. La Follette won substantially more states than Taft—all to no avail. On the Democratic side in the same year, Champ Clark had won as many contests as Woodrow Wilson and had 413 delegates to Wilson's 274 by the start of the convention. If primaries had been a guide, the 1920 Republican nomination would have gone to Leonard Wood or Hiram Johnson, not to Warren G. Harding, and the Democratic nomination in 1924 to William G. McAdoo, not to John W. Davis. In 1932, primary victories by former Senator Joseph I. France of Maryland demonstrated that almost any Republican leader was more popular than Hoover, but Hoover was renominated. Even Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932, despite a string of primary victories, went on to demonstrate serious popular weakness by losing such weathervane states as Massachusetts and Pennsylvania to Smith, and California to Garner (by 216,000 votes to 170,000). In 1948, Harold E. Stassen assembled impressive primary victories over Thomas E. Dewey in Wisconsin, Nebraska, and Pennsylvania, and lost the supposedly decisive Oregon primary to Dewey by only 9,000 votes. Robert A. Taft in 1952 won five primaries to Eisenhower's four, taking Illinois by seven to one and winning 458 delegates to Eisenhower's 406 by convention time. In 1952, Estes Kefauver beat President Harry S. Truman in the New Hampshire primary, won eight other primaries, and had the largest number of pledged delegates at the convention's opening, only to lose to Stevenson. In the 1964 struggle for the Republican nomination, Henry Cabot Lodge won in New Hampshire; Nelson Rockefeller beat Barry Goldwater by almost two to one in Oregon and fell only 3.2 percent of the vote behind Goldwater in California. Nor was there very much positive direction from the polls: Goldwater was the first choice among Republican voters during most of 1963, trailed Lodge and Nixon during early 1964, and was

virtually even with Nixon and Scranton as the convention assembled. Polls during much of 1968 showed that Rockefeller was clearly preferred to the eventual nominee, Nixon.

While presidential primaries may not be the "eyewash" President Truman called them in 1952, it nevertheless seems that their direct influence on the selection process can easily be overestimated. Their importance has lain not in their direct linkage to selection but in their indirect effect on those making the selection. Campaigns that have most successfully used primaries in the selection process, such as Roosevelt's in 1932 and John F. Kennedy's in 1960, have not relied on the results of the primaries as such, but have used their results as indicators of popular preferences in order to influence party selectors. Arnold Rose, for example, contrasts Kennedy's strategy of appealing to the general public, as an instrumental device in seeking the support of party delegates, with Lyndon B. Johnson's and Stuart Symington's use of the "British technique" of endorsement by party elders.³⁴ Obviously, the importance of the West Virginia primary lay not in the state's convention votes but in its demonstration to party leaders that Kennedy could overcome the religious issue.

If such is the case, it is difficult to substantiate the claim that the *indirect* role of the public is any more decisive in the United States than in Britain. By-elections have always served such purposes, and, particularly within the last twenty years, public opinion polls have occasionally come into play in the deliberations surrounding the choice of new leaders—even in the supposedly undemocratic Conservative party. In the spring of 1931, Baldwin came under heavy pressure to resign the Conservative leadership because of the reports coming in from the Principal Agent concerning opinion at Central Office and among party officials; most other agents were also reporting that poor feeling about the leadership prevailed locally. Baldwin fought back through the indirect use of public preferences. At first he considered standing for an election himself, but eventually instead gave explicit backing to Alfred Duff Cooper in the St. George's by-election; success in this test of public approval was decisive in Baldwin's retaining the leadership.³⁵

The events surrounding Home's resignation as Conservative leader

34. Arnold Rose, *The Power Structure* (Oxford University Press, 1967).

35. See K. Middlemas and J. Barnes, *Baldwin* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1969), Chap. 22.

in July 1965 show a limited but similar indirect responsiveness to public opinion. After the 1964 Conservative election defeat, reports from the constituencies showed a recurring and rising tide of local discontent. In March 1965, an unexpected Conservative by-election defeat at Roxburgh intensified the discontent and, since it took place next door to Home's own constituency, was interpreted as a blow to his leadership. A further report from National Opinion Polls on July 15 showed Labour's lead increasing from 2.0 percent to 4.6 percent and Home trailing even further behind Wilson than before. Amid mounting reports of discontent, and "shaken by the opinion poll," Home retired to his country estate and emerged a few days later to announce his resignation as leader.³⁶

Although indicators of public preference are a limited but important negative force, it is difficult to argue that in either nation they have been decisive positive forces, at least not in the sense of clearly designating the candidate to be selected. We have already referred to the ambiguous or disregarded signals of public preference in America; much the same thing happens in Britain. After Home's resignation, the Conservative leadership went to Heath, who until his selection had at best been a distant second choice for succession of both the general public and Conservative supporters.³⁷ After his selection, the polls shifted back to show that Heath was preferred. The same sequence occurred in the Labour party during 1963 on the occasion of Harold Wilson's selection as successor to Gaitskell. In January, Wilson trailed George Brown with both the general public and Labour supporters; one month later, more than four-fifths of both groups approved of Wilson's selection.³⁸ In the face of such mercurial public guidance, it is not surprising that even those most concerned with the election potential of recruits should hesitate to base their judgments directly on the latest poll or primary result.

Thus although there is no reliable evidence to demonstrate how far by-elections, polls, and constituency reports have influenced leaders

36. D. E. Butler and Anthony King, *The British General Election of 1966* (London: Macmillan, 1966), p. 51; for accounts of the events, see "The Birth of a Campaign to Oust Sir Alec," *The Times* (London), April 5, 1965; "Insight on the Tory Leadership," *Sunday Times* (London), July 25, 1965; and Alan Watkins, "How Heath Pulled It Off," *Spectator*, July 30, 1965.

37. See Gallup polls for January 15-20, 1965; March 5-9, 1965; and National Opinion Polls, February 1965 and July 25-26, 1965.

38. National Opinion Polls, January and February 1963.

in Britain, it would seem rash to suppose that politicians' indirect assessments of public preference have been any more important in the geographically patchy and intermittent American primary system than in Britain. Because of the direct tie between selection and election, indicators of public preference will be given greater publicity by prospective candidates in the United States. But to say that British deliberations are less publicized is not necessarily to say they are less sensitive to public opinion, and there is even less justification in extending this to say that they are therefore less democratic. The distinctiveness of the American selection process lies in the variety and manipulability of such public soundings. As a by-product of the decentralization and diversity of the American electorate, political entrepreneurs find countless opportunities to mobilize or manufacture indications of indirect public impact. What shall be the standard of public preferences—performance in Congress? Governorship? The last margin of victory in the candidate's own constituency? Primary victories in certain parts of the nation? State party convention decisions? Public opinion polls? In a typical contest, all these and other indicators will be cited against each other. By contrast, British assessment of public preference takes on a highly coherent and aggregated form at the hands of a limited number of persons in the party organization assumed to be knowledgeable.

Behavioral Links

I have tried to show that through a comparative approach much of what might otherwise be thought unique in American presidential selection can also be found in Britain. The predominant place of the party as the group within which claims to leadership are advanced, the insulation of selection from direct public influence (but also with considerable indirect influence through anticipation of public response), the extended government experience required of nominees, the attention paid to questions of personal image—all these phenomena may be observed in both countries. At the same time, American selection has been distinguished by its very intimate ties to electoral criteria, by the incoherence of party groups, by its extended areas of recruitment, and by the resulting increase in room for maneuver, coalition-building, and publicity appeals. One of these processes has been described as an "apprenticeship," the other as "entrepreneurial."

This is, however, only the point of departure for any discussion of executive selection in the two countries. Probably the greatest lack at present in the study of executive recruitment is the failure to establish any reliable connection between different selection processes and the winners' subsequent behavior in office. The question is of course not the effect of idiosyncratic recruitment experiences on a particular officeholder, but rather the possible consistent effects of broadly differing selection processes.

The current neglect of this question is curious, in view of its centrality in traditional democratic thought in the last several centuries. Both proponents and opponents of the extension of democratic procedures have identified selection with election and have usually assumed both to have a direct effect on output: the leader was expected to implement the wishes of those who chose him for office; he would at least act consistently with those wishes, and at a very minimum would anticipate what those wishes would be. Since experience has shown that these easy democratic assumptions do not work out as neatly as had been supposed, the hope of identifying behavioral linkages between selection and performance in office seems to have been largely abandoned.

Clearly, the difficulties in tracing such linkages are formidable. Considering the wide varieties of leadership manifest in each of the two countries during this century, one would be justified in concluding that variations in behavior are greater within than between the two political milieus. Yet the imprecision and indeterminacy of the search for more general causal links should not excuse the neglect of an issue of such obvious importance.

Behavior in office is a complex variable that can be disentangled in a variety of ways. One aspect of behavior reflects substantive policy preferences; at present, however, there appears no obvious or easily testable connection between such preferences and methods of selection. Perhaps more amenable to analysis is leadership style. The labels "entrepreneurial" and "apprenticeship" should not be taken to imply that learning takes place in one system and not in the other. In both systems, the nature and constraints of the group interaction leading to selection for leadership play a crucial part in socializing the future executive. Erwin Hargrove has hypothesized that "the styles of leadership seen in the chief political executive are usually learned at lower political levels of the political elite. An important socialization

process for leaders takes place in the years of ascent to the top."³⁹ Learning takes place in both entrepreneurial and apprenticeship systems, the difference being in the type of behavior that is rewarded. The challenge, to which I can offer only a preliminary response here, is to specify the kinds of behavior that are rewarded differently in the two systems.

In the first place, one need not accept Bryce's argument about the natural mediocrity of presidents to appreciate that selections in the United States will give relatively heavy weight to characteristics of palpable public appeal. The extremely close correspondence between the criteria for selection and election suggests a bias in favor of men who are thought of, possibly superficially, as election winners. British leaders have of course been chosen with an eye to winning elections, and the older view that the constraints imposed on presidential selection lead to selection of nullities is clearly wrong. A significant difference between the entrepreneurial and apprenticeship systems is the greater unpredictability in the behavioral characteristics of presidents. Selection by the American process seems more likely than the British to result in the election of unknown quantities, whose appeal lay in their supposed electoral strength and whose operational character apart from this strength was relatively disregarded. Especially if one accepts the view of a more "personalized" politics in the United States, it is paradoxical that so little will be known of the nominee eventually selected, even by those who have selected him. What is likely to prevail, both before and during the election campaign, is a series of campaign images, carefully assessed, to be sure, but assessed largely in terms of a preoccupation with the forthcoming election.

A more predictable aspect of behavior is the officeholder's response to the constraints and supports of his strategic environment. Although it is unlikely that any presidential or prime-ministerial "type" is evolved by the selection processes, distinctive behavioral dispositions are probably learned on the route to office. Thus the close tie between election and selection suggests that a president will have been conditioned to pay greater attention to public preferences in justifying his actions than a prime minister. Presidential actions will quite probably be more heavily influenced by consideration of whether they will receive immediate public approval, the touchstone that was judged so

39. Erwin C. Hargrove, "Popular Leadership in the Anglo-American Democracies," in Edinger, *Political Leadership*, p. 218.

important in securing selection in the first place. The difference may easily be exaggerated; no British prime minister has ever deliberately sought public disfavor. But a president who knows that the justification for his preeminence rests heavily upon past and expected plebiscitary success, rather than upon apprenticeship among colleagues, must have a more consistently populist perspective than is likely in prime ministers.

From the nature of the group struggle, it also seems reasonable to suppose that upon entering office a president will have learned an individualistic rather than a prime minister's collegial perspective. The future prime minister has advanced through a muted, nonzero-sum struggle requiring cooperation with sponsors and colleagues; his fate has been inextricably tied to the collective fate of his electorate, both as government and opposition. Even if the working political life of the future president has been spent in an interdependent group, his selection for the highest office has probably taken place through a zero-sum struggle with other political entrepreneurs trying to mold winning alliances in a disorganized party. The formal constitutional separation of powers is of course consistent with such a view, but even without this separation, the president would have been predisposed by the real-life recruitment struggle to view his actions and those of his staff as independently justified and legitimate rather than as requiring agreement of his colleagues or party. This perspective goes beyond a simple lack of rapport with Congress, which, without the British parliamentary locus of selection, is natural enough. By the time of his arrival in office, a president is likely to have undergone one of the most unusual learning experiences in the world. He is likely to have absorbed not simply an individualistic but a tribunal perspective—a psychological terrain in which the outstanding features are the all-powerful but indeterminate people and himself as their chosen leader. This is a strange and heroic world, an illimitable, misty sea on which the president is the sole argonaut. As he enters the White House, the new president has already gone a long way toward learning to be "the loneliest man in the world."

By the same token, the president, unlike the prime minister, will have learned to seek assistance from fairly wide circles of political and social leadership rather than exclusively from the legislative and civil service fields. Yet no matter what staff is assembled in the executive branch, they will be seen most readily as individualistic cadres

rather than as a working collectivity. While the prime minister is more limited in his top appointments, he will be surer of having a united group which is able to work together. In the United States, staff allegiance, responsibility, and consequently fates will be individual and contingent upon electoral success. While the president will need be much less concerned than the prime minister with maneuverings in cabinet, legislature, and party, he can for this reason allow himself to be isolated from these vital sources of feedback. As long as he is in office, his party's selection process is virtually terminated; there remains only his towering position and the vague, all-powerful voting public. By the same token, the defeated candidate's army of supporters fades away; he is not a party leader in the British sense of the term; no shadow-cabinet position unites the leader and his colleagues in the new tasks of opposition. Nothing remains. If the president is the loneliest officeholder in the world, the defeated candidate is the world's loneliest nonofficeholder. The successful candidate remains supreme with his associates, but they are his placemen and beyond the court there is little but the election and the nothingness attached to electoral defeat.

The behavioral inheritances from the selection process suggest no absolute standards on which to judge one nation's recruitment procedure "better" than that of another. At a minimum, however, the requirements for selection should be consistent with the requirements of the office. Given the separation of national institutions, the federal diffusions of power, and the regularly recurring congressional and presidential elections, entrepreneurial lessons are probably as appropriate and important to the president of the United States as are acquired collegial skills to the British prime minister. There is much force in the argument that the selection process socializes the future president in ways in which he would in any event be socialized by the constitutional structure of the nation. Yet this should not obscure the fact that selection in the United States is heavily weighted toward electoral rather than other performance criteria. In Britain the successful apprentice has advanced through exactly the working relationships by which he will one day govern; this may not always help win the election, but it will help him in office. In the United States, the party coalition that was sufficient to win nomination and the electoral coalition that was sufficient to win office will not necessarily be sufficient to govern. If the president's problems involved simply

building rather than also using a winning coalition, if the likelihood of popular acclaim were a touchstone of sensible action, if policy were susceptible to single, neat, decisive outcomes, then electoral entrepreneurship would suffice. But life is not that simple. The temporary, if dramatic, creation of unity in American presidential selection offers little guidance for the preservation of unity and even less preparation on how to work through the confederation of departments within the executive itself. By fleetingly raising expectations concerning the leader's unifying and governing powers, the selection process in the United States may actually make credible government all the more difficult. In popular conception the president is selected to reign in supreme command; in reality he will often be pulling strings and hoping that something somewhere will jump.