

CHAPTER – FOUR

COALITION EXPERIMENT IN OTHER COUNTRIES: A Survey

If we make a cursory glance over the world, it is seen that the countries that often have a coalition cabinet include: the Nordic countries, the Benelux countries, Germany, Italy, Turkey, Israel and India. Switzerland has been ruled by a loose coalition of the four strongest parties in parliament since 1959, called the "Magic Formula". Sometimes a coalition government is also created in times of national difficulties or crises, for example during wartime, to give the government a high degree of political legitimacy and acceptability whilst also diminishing internal political strife to a significant extent. In such a situation, it is the only alternative.(1)

To deal with a situation where no clear majorities appear, parties either form coalition cabinets, supported by a parliamentary majority, or minority cabinets which can consist of one or several parties. There remains no other alternative open.(2)

In this regard, the case of Germany may be referred for example. In Germany, for instance, coalitions are the norm as it is rare for either the CDU/CSU or SPD to win a majority of their own. Thus coalitions are formed

with at least one of the smaller parties. Helmut Kohl's CDU governed for years in coalition with the FDP. From 1998 to 2005, Gerhard Schröder's SPD was in a coalition with the Greens. If a coalition collapses, a confidence vote is usually taken in the Parliament or the concerned legislature as the case may be.

It may be mentioned that a similar situation exists in Israel with its dozens of parties. It may be mentioned that the centre-right Likud thus forms coalitions with far right and orthodox groups, while Labour allies itself with more leftist and pacifist parties.(3)

In both countries, grand coalitions of the two large parties also occur, but these are rarer and large parties usually prefer to associate with small ones. But if none of the larger parties can receive enough votes to form their preferred coalition, a grand coalition may be the only choice. In early elections in September 2005, the CDU/CSU did not get enough votes to form a coalition with the FDP; similarly the SPD and Greens did not have enough votes to continue their governing coalition. A grand coalition was formed between the CDU/CSU and the SPD, but partnerships like these usually involve carefully structured cabinets. The CDU/CSU ended up gaining the Chancellory, but the SPD took a majority of cabinet posts.

It may be pointed out that a coalition can consist of any number of parties. In Germany, a coalition rarely consists of more than two parties (where CDU and CSU, two non-competing parties that always form a single caucus, are considered a single party), while in Belgium, where there are separate Dutch language and French language parties for each political group, coalitions of six parties are quite common. India's governing coalition, the United Progressive Alliance, consists of fourteen different parties. Finland experienced its most stable government since the independence with a five-party coalition established as early as in the 1990s.

If we turn to Australia, it is seen that in Australia, the conservative Liberal and National parties are united in an effectively permanent coalition. This coalition became so stable (at least at a Federal level) and so permanent, that in effect Australia had a two-party system.(4)

In the United Kingdom, coalition governments (known as *National Governments*) operated since 1915 only been appointed at times of national crisis. The most prominent was the National Government of 1931-1940. In other circumstances, when no party has had a majority, minority governments have been the rule of the day. However, it may be mentioned that the devolved government in Scotland was run by a coalition

of Scottish Labour and the Scottish Liberal Democrats, as Labour did not have a majority in the Scottish Parliament.(5)

It should be stated that contrary to popular belief, the Coalition is not one large common voice speaking imperatively in total unison. Much like any diverse society, they have a multitude of diverging views and ideas, but the major difference is that there is no outlet for these other views, as a rule. An attempt will be made to examine the nature of the Coalition government and then provide some sample political groups that can be used as a model. (6)

During the Second Dark Ages, Humanity was at best a dust scattered across tempestuous winds. The major instinct for survival grouped together people in the thought that there is more safety in numbers than alone. As these people again came together, a wide variety of methods of leadership were tried on a small scale, and most worked on a smaller scale. However, as the Coalition was forming officially, they realized an important point, that humanity needed a single, strong voice to guide them through these trying times.(7) From a strictly efficiency point of view, dictatorships are very practical to get things done in, and Prosek declared himself Emperor, which is another more grand word for Dictator-For-Life. Even historians at large are forced to admit that at the time it was one of the better moves,

the Coalition did (one of perhaps few). Humanity without direction offered no hope of survival as alien horrors overtook their planet, but with a single, charismatic power to lead them, an empire was forged from the ashes, using rediscovered technology to arm itself and the power of words to justify it. (8)

The Emperor is no puppet nor merely a titular head of state. While the Prosek clan has not necessarily perpetuated this view per se, there is a growing idea with the success of the Coalition that perhaps the Proseks are a family blessed, touched by divinity, fate, or whatever higher force we believe in. While not confirming this, they neither deny it as it serves their interests for the time. That being said, the biggest problem with an Imperial line is that each successive heir must maintain that same strength of character and charisma that their elder had. Another large problem arises if the line of succession is ever even mildly unclear.(9)

It may be mentioned to prelude the discussion of how the CS government works because it is important to understand the hierarchy involved ends absolutely at the Emperor. In a very real way, Prosek was the living, beating heart of the Coalition and wields supreme authority over the entire deal. Now, Prosek learned his history lessons well and like Hitler surrounded himself with experts in their fields and generally listened to

them, and with good reason the Emperor could claim it for his own, and if it failed, a scapegoat for it existed. A problem with any supreme power like that however is that quite often his underlings will tell him what he wants to hear rather than how things actually are (which could be a good game justification for why the Tolkeen attack will go forward). The Emperor need not trust his advisers, only their advice.(10)

Obviously, access to the Emperor dictates importance, as a rule. All laws, edicts, and so forth came from the Emperor himself, although they are often delegated to underlings to carry out. This quite often means that surprising people are caught up in the web of politics that makes the Coalition run. Primary is the Emperor himself, and to catch the eye or ear of the Emperor is considered a great boon. Second to that would be his advisers, or at least his core advisers, including his Military Council, Civil Council and Ministry Heads. All of these top-level people form the advisory panel to the Emperor, although they have no power to enact anything but the most basic parts of their ideas without Imperial approval. Between the Civil Council and the Ministry Heads, existed all the power to literally run the empire, while the Military Council existed for the obvious purpose of preserving the empire. The Civil Council and Ministry Heads wield all of the bureaucratic power that existed outside of the military, which makes up a

sizeable part of the deal in and of itself. Finally, the Senate forms a buffer of sorts between the scores of policy ideas and the Emperor. (11)

The Civil Council is basically a collection of top-level governors from each Coalition state. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the Emperor has little interest in the day-to-day affairs of his empire and delegates that power to state heads, typically referred to as Governor-Generals. The Heads of the Ministries refer to governmental agencies that oversee specific parts of the Coalition, including such things as Education, Foreign Affairs, Finance, and so forth. Both these groups have their own respective bureaucratic hierarchies stretching from the Deputy Minister all the way down to the clerk in the local state building. Any politician worth anything learns very quickly to listen to the bureaucracy, or at least appear to, because they are quite often the literal cogs that turn the wheels of government.(12) The Military Council is understandably considered separate from the rest (i.e. there is no Ministry of Defence) and operates as its own entity, including top-level members from each branch of the armed forces. The military bureaucracy is notorious already and suffice it to say that where civilian agencies are given slight leeway, the military agencies are given little slack except where defensively speaking. But again, very little gets done without the Emperor's seal of approval. (13)

Political Parties

Now, we must understand that the phrase political parties isn't used in the traditional, current context, but in the context of Rifts Earth. The Coalition is essentially a single-party government of the exclusive kind (i.e. no opposition), but its single party is divided into a great deal of camps, and it is these varying groups with like-minded opinions that is labelled as political parties.(14) They are merely collections of citizens with similar outlooks and agendas that they want enacted and they actually resemble more closely a lobby organization of today than an actual literal political party. The methods of doing this are as wide and varied as the arsenal of political methods, but in general word of mouth is the way they spread their ideas the most, followed by rallies and seminars. On very rare occasions, they will demonstrate or even protest but these are very, very few and far between due to the generally lack of a governmental sense of humour about it all. Membership is usually unofficial but some have created actual headquarters and issued membership cards.(15) Technically anyone can walk around proclaiming to be a member but they better be able to defend their alleged views if confronted. Also, contrary to popular belief, the political parties of the Coalition are no more violent or radical

than our own lobby organizations. We can take as little or as much salt as we wish, but as always, we have the final say on them in our game. (16)

Their primary methodology is, of course, to influence the Senate, which is where many of their ideas are killed prematurely. They act much like an interest group which does today to influence a lawmaker, expect they have to be a little more subtle about it because a great deal of attention could be gained from their activities which are not technically illegal, but are certainly not what the Emperor envisioned. (17)

We can take up a handful of sample political parties that we can use, abuse or discard completely. It should be noted that many of these are what the Coalition would define as "dangerous" but all political parties that survive for any time learn to camouflage their core philosophies. After all, they are all essentially out to improve the Coalition, they just have different visions on how exactly to do that. Considering their net influence is nearly zero, the CS tolerates them as a sort of "venting system" for undemocratized citizens. It makes more sense than it seems when we actually think about it. These are samples and by all means stock your own game with your own parties.(18)

Libertarians:

Freedom is always an issue for any political society and the Coalition is no exception. However, before we get the wrong image in our head, this party believes only in personal freedom -- in the government staying out of its citizens' lives. They have only a little difficulty in dealing with deeds but are in general a human supremacist group in that they believe humans are the most important of the races and therefore need to enjoy the most freedom.(19) They have no issues with the government except where the government interferes with a citizen's freedom to live and they are often the first ones to point out cases .

Democratic Alliance :

Actually a true multistate phenomenon, this quiet group emphasizes the fact that the Imperial system of government has done its duty and got Humanity back on its feet and that now it is time to give the citizens a voice in their own government. (20) They feel the Coalition would be far superior if it were a democracy and try to demonstrate this daily, although as we can imagine they rarely prove just that which is about the only reason the whole party has not "gone missing" in the night. They are actually well organized but given their lack of a single, solitary leader, they are often

caught in squabbles of their own, which just seems to prove the Coalition's point.

Neo-Americans:

A surprisingly misunderstood party, most educated people who hear the name, assume they want a return to the pre-Rifts American style of government, which would seem to make them an offshoot. However, the Neo-Americans are something of a grassroots organization, which is to say, rather uneducated, and they actually preach a release to an anarchic society. They labour under the belief that America before the Coming of the Rifts was essentially a "might makes right freedom fest" and they seek a 'return' to that. They have some radical ideas about decentralization of power however that make some wonder if they are actually as harmlessly ignorant as they appear.(21)

Order of Progressive Might:

This party is what would traditionally be called ultra-right, even for the Coalition. They seek a totally militaristic society (not totally unlike Heinlein's Starship Troopers society) where those who fight have the rights. While observers from the outside of the Coalition wonder how it could get

possibly MORE militaristic, OPM is serious when it calls for radical policy changes regarding the elimination of civilian police for military patrols, elimination of civil rights for all but soldiers and other ideas that are more scary to ponder than anything.(22) They feel -- honestly -- that the Coalition has softened up and seek a return to the good old days of the mass purges and lusty battle of the Federation of Magic war.

Society for Social Equality:

The SSE is a surprisingly reasonable party which seeks to revive the old socialist traditions of pre-Rifts Germany and Japan, where the state takes care of the (productive) citizen from cradle to grave.(23) They feel that corporations should be nationalized and that a high rate of employment is possible under that nationalized system, along with a healthy social benefits package and a generous welfare package if unemployment was to actually occur. They are also for additional support to the often-ignored hinterlands of the Coalition and rural areas to equalize all social conditions. (24)

Humanist Alliance:

While the name suggests, they would be in line with the Libertarians. They are in fact another extreme right group who believe that Humans are the chosen race of the Megaverse -- the rest of the Megaverse just doesn't know it yet. They firmly support and unapologetically push for policies of genocide of nonhuman races except those that can be made to serve.(25) In their vision, the Coalition lords over the Earth as the master race with a whole pile of slave underlings to serve their whim. As we can imagine, this group is a little radical for most citizens although it has been known to shack up with them from time to time. (26)

Green Party:

They are popularly known as the environmentalists. During the Second Dark Ages, there was a small percentage of the population who actively enjoyed this seemingly poetic justice of nature and were equipped to live off the land again. While the majority of these kooks are still out in the distant wilderness hills of Rifts Earth, some joined up with the forming society of the Coalition with their self-mandated purpose of making sure that humans don't screw up Earth a second time. With the environmental damage repaired over 300+ years, the Green Party acts as a watchdog on

the Coalition government, ensuring that no gross environmental disasters happen. The Coalition actually tolerates this party as long as they don't get too curious and to some degree Prosek actually sympathizes with them, as he feels Earth is a birthright and they shouldn't mess it up.(27)

Theocratic Assembly:

This curious party doesn't promote a theocratic society as one might suspect but pushes for religious freedom within the CS while maintaining the precept of separation of Church and State. Recently a small faction of this party has started to refer to the position of Emperor as a divinely appointed servant and a minor civil war is brewing in the party. (28)Those who venerate Prosek will probably eventually leave and form their own party.

Utopia Alliance:

Quite often taken as a joke, this party preaches the usual fact that humans have a second chance at existence, but their twist is that they should take this chance to create the perfect society, which they just happen to have a blueprint of. (29)Their society would involve benevolent

castes all in harmony with lots of parks and generally a sacchrine sweet view of the world.

Worker's Union:

This party on the other hand is taken fairly seriously, and with good reason. While not a union in the traditional sense (that would be far too much power in the hands of CS citizens), it does represent the working class and brings their requests (they never demand, of course) to various Ministers. (30)They push for typical union things (better wages, better working conditions, more days off, etc.) and generally speaking they have the unique power to seriously negotiate with the CS government. The Union is aware of their special status and take their position seriously, sparing the government the more foolish and silly requests while allowing the government to address the working class without actively campaigning for them.(31)

Société pour Quebec Libre:

The Society for Free Quebec used to push for Quebecois rights in the Coalition. As one can guess, they spend a lot of time on the run these days as the CS hunts down active members, but the Free Quebec party continues

to exist as a mostly illegal political organization which quietly lobbies politicians to fight the strange order about Quebec being traitors.

Politics in Your Rifts Game

Ever since the Rifts Main Manual came out, we were given so very little information on the Coalition except what was clearly needed for Palladium's vision of them, which is to say, lots of evil devices and locations that we could go purge them from. A contributor to the Inconsistencies said that Palladium seems to draw cool looking power armor first and then give it statistics to fit the cool picture, and we can get the idea that this must be how they handled the Coalition -- created a vision of this evil empire and created the details to fit it without considering the actual logic of their creations. Without getting into a huge politics debate, it may be said that an Imperial system of government would not exist in a highly technological society, but it exists in Rifts because of the external horrors that batter the world and require strong leadership. But worse is the fact that Palladium continues to issue orders, ostensibly from CS High Command, which boggle the mind as well as generally ignoring the logistics of running the Coalition.

(32)

Politics gives the Coalition a context to be used in. This is even more true when the Coalition is forced to work outside of Palladium's vacuum it created for the CS -- which is to say, the politics of the CS are best used in a game which has contact with other kingdoms, such as Quebec. Interactions between the CS and other kingdoms can be as easy as countries interacting today in our own world. The absolute best source for political ideas for Rifts is the daily newspaper. The fact is that politics provides the REASON behind the Coalition's actions. (33)

Let's say that Ishpeming is having a really bad day and they request a little garrison in town by the Coalition to help them out. Ishpeming maintains an open-sale policy on its Juicer technology and the CS unsurprisingly doesn't like this. The CS responds with a negative answer noting that their Juicer equipment could handle it easily. Wise Ishpeming politicians realize this is a play by the CS to make them get rid of their Juicer technology, or at least limit its sales, in return for a garrison of CS troops. Ishpeming responds by saying it will dismantle its Juicer bands but will continue to sell the conversion.(34) The CS reply will be that they can't trust the safety of their precious troops to such a dangerous potential for a crazy Juicer going nuts. Ishpeming realizes it is caught and can either petition another empire or comply with the CS's wishes. This sounds much

better than the GM saying, "Ishpeming doesn't sell Juicer conversions anymore. This opens up a whole variety of options for the PCs involved. Perhaps they are contracted by Ishpeming to go out and try to find a mercenary band to fight it, or are sent to a garrison for a lesser political cost.

Politics can also retroactively explain some of the most bizarre decisions Palladium has ever made. The declaration of Quebec as traitors boggles but irregardless, if we assume that Quebec was politically speaking getting too dangerous , then it makes a lot more sense as well as adds an interesting backdrop to the PC's stories. If we ask a CS troop why they aren't attacking Tolkeen and we might get a spit and the answer, "Pah, politics." Skelebot divisions? Politics. Even some of Palladium's bizarre technologies can be explained if the cousin to a General happened to run a factory that made Skelebot chips and wanted his contract in full, the program continues despite reservations.(35)

The Senate is a powerful entity and entire political campaigns could be done about PC Senators, or PCs who wish to become Senators. Dancing the corridors of CS power is not as easy as we might imagine, nor they for that matter. An interesting game might be to try to infiltrate the Senate as a non-CS citizen, either as a Senate aide or perhaps even trying for a full

Senatorial seat. This also opens up the upper echelons of the Coalition to game play and could lead to more of a strategic sort of game as opposed to our face tactical game. Or to be more straightforward, to play on the decision making side, rather than the carrying through side.(36) Playing bodyguard or Senate guard would be interesting too, as it would give both a dose of politics and a dose of action at the same time. Senate allies would help immensely for PCs who find themselves in hot water, although what they might have to do afterwards to repay the debt would be interesting. On a similar note, the Senate is not a homogenous body and PCs could be hired for "darker" operations against each other, including scare tactics, blackmail, thuggery, or even assassination. All of these games would take place in the corridors of power and be very difficult but extremely rewarding at the same time. (37)

On a more practical note, the Senate may explain why many so-called great ideas don't get through to the Emperor. Sure, it sounds good to get a CS space program going again, but the Senators probably decided it was too impractical and would waste money, so it got voted down. A lot of the common sense and practical ideas we as players have for the CS probably wouldn't make it through the Senate, either due to outside influencing on them or by their own simple *attitude*. Those folks can fall to pride like crazy

because of their self-important positions, and many frequently do, acting shortsighted and foolish over issues of pride.(38)

The Masquerade where no one can look at something without getting paranoid but when dealing with a technical game like Rifts it helps to have a number of political levels (municipal, state, national) in mind to provoke game ideas or to explain errors or to just create a lush world that Palladium failed to give.

The classical paradigm of parliamentary democracy consists of an elected representative Parliament which is supreme, a Cabinet collectively responsible to Parliament, a Prime Minister who is supreme within the Cabinet and an organised opposition within the Parliament. Usually, the majority form the government and the minority function as the opposition(39) But the problems arise when no party can secure enough majority to form a single-party government after the election results are declared, and in such a situation the alternative is the coalition or multi-party government. This situation invariably leads to some changes in the traditional paradigm of parliamentary democracy. The composition of Cabinet, the nature of its working, the style of the Prime Minister/Chief Minister, the character of electoral politics

and the party system, and even the composition of the legislature to a limited extent are likely to be affected by the nature of coalition politics.(40) Although the UK had brief spells of coalition governments, they did not last long enough to change the institutional character. It is left to other countries that are compelled to work continuous coalitions to modify the parliamentary institutions.

So far as Coalition Politics is concerned, legislatures and political parties all demand a fresh appraisal in the light of the exigencies of coalition politics. The processes of government formation and dissolution, the role of the Head of State and the working of the Cabinet are all likely to be affected by the coalitions, and the conventions regulating these processes may well differ from those operative in countries enjoying single-party government.(41)

It must be pointed out that the strategies of political parties are likely to be affected by the knowledge that they will be unlikely to will power oil their own but will have to share power with like-minded allies.(42) The dynamics of a multi-party system in which coalition is the norm will, therefore, inevitably prove more

complex than those in a system of the Westminster type with its presumption of two parties alternating in office, each in turn enjoying the full plenitude of power and patronage.(43)

It is pertinent to make a focus to foreign countries with regard to the experiences of coalition. Coalition building between two or more parties has been frequent in Europe. Between 1990 and 1995 there were no less than 91 Cabinets in office, of which 19 were single-party governments, 68 multi-party governments and 4 caretaker governments.' Nevertheless they have not institutionalised coalition politics apart from the parliamentary system. The only exception is perhaps Switzerland with a permanent coalition government by means of its seven-member Federal Council, elected for a fixed four-year term by the Federal Assembly on a party proportional basis. Once the election results are known in Switzerland, it is a question of simple arithmetic as to how the Cabinet seats will be distributed among the parties. The process of Cabinet formation here does not create clear winners and losers.' As a result stability is very high in the Swiss case, especially since there exists no vote of non-confidence. This is one

of the important factors which is perhaps a factor of a longer period of existence of a coalition.(44)

It is well known that Parliamentarianism reigns in Europe but varies from Country to country as regards some basic structures and practices. According to Jan-Erik Lane and Svante O. Ersson, the institutions of parliamentarianism may vary in relation to the legal requirements for: (i) Cabinet investiture or the procedure for appointing a Premier or government; (ii) a vote of no-confidence by Parliament in relation to the government; (iii) the request for a vote of confidence by the Premier; and (iv) the dissolution of Parliament in order that new elections be held .In the UK there are few restrictions on how these four mechanisms of parliamentarianism may be employed, whereas in other countries they are more regulated.(45) The German requirement for a 'constructive vote of non-confidence' is one example which is practised also in Spain where Parliament is restricted to bringing down a government only if it can support a new one. Another instance is the French institution of the block vote, where the Premier may demand that a bill be voted on its entirety, and its rejection by Parliament entails that the Cabinet will step down.

Finally, the prerogative of the Premier to dissolve Parliament may be restricted by rules that either stipulate specific circumstances, such as a successful motion of non-confidence, or place the final decision with someone else such as the President in countries with strong presidentialism.(46)

It may be pointed out that Lane and Ersson have distinguished between three types of coalition governments depending on how large the parliamentary support is.'

They are:

(1) minority or less than 50 per cent support;

(2) small majority or more than 50 per cent and less than 60 per cent support;

(3) grand coalitions or oversized governments with more than 60 per cent support. The cut off point of 60 per cent in this classification is arbitrary. In the Indian situation, this may be raised to 67 per cent or two-third majority, as two-third majority is required for passing constitutional amendments. The minority model tends to prevail in the Scandinavian countries, whereas grand coalitions are to be found in the so-called consociational countries in Central Europe on the one hand and in the new

democracies in Eastern Europe on the other. Minority governments have existed in India both at the Centre and in some States, but majority governments have been the rule rather than the exception.

The level of political stability achieved in the post-1949 European democracies can be measured by the average life-span of governments. According to an estimate, most of the elected Cabinets have survived for periods of considerable length.(47) The mean survival score in Germany has been 37 months and has been significantly higher than in Italy (13 months), Belgium (22 months) and the Netherlands (27 months). In most cases in Germany, the elected government remained in office throughout the period, but there have been exceptions to the rule, as in 1972 and in 1982 when a vote of confidence made way for the dissolution of Parliament before the full term.

Lawrence C. Dodd examines in his *Coalitions vs. Government*, the arguments of eminent scholars from Lowell to Blonde) who have asserted that coalition governments are bound to be short-lived.’(48) A. Lawrence Lowell had argued in his *Governments and Parties in Continental Europe* (1896) that “the parliamentary system will give a country strong and

efficient government only in case the majority consists of a single-party". This thesis has been reaffirmed subsequently by several political scientists in their works. Lord Bryce says in *Modern Democracies* (1921) that a government formed by a coalition of parties is bound to be weak because of the unstable and conflicting character of the compromise involved. Harold J. Laski upholds, in *Parliamentary Government in England* (1938), that durable government requires a majority party system and argues that the multi-party system either results in a coalition with its "inherent erosion of principles" or provides a minority government which is likely to be weak. Maurice Duverger, in his *Political Parties* (1951) asserts that multipartyism weakens the government and a parliamentary regime. The absence of a majority party necessitates the creation of heterogeneous Cabinets with "limited objectives" and "lukewarm measures". Jean Blondel says that the duration of Cabinet governments is always influenced by the type of party system prevailing in the country and that one-party government is the factor contributing most decisively to the stability of coalition. As pointed out by Lee Chen that coalition, small or large, appears directly antagonistic to stability. Scholars from Bryce to present day upheld Lowell's thesis by comparing the parliamentary experiences of France and Weimar Germany to those of the UK, implicitly accepting that the former were typical multi-

party regimes while the latter was typical of a majority party system. Jean Blonde and Hans Daalder made all advancement by bringing more countries under examination. Blondel analysed the behaviour in seventeen Western parliamentary democracies from 1946 to 1966, focusing on the average differences in Cabinet durability between party systems. Daalder analysed ten smaller "European democracies from 1918 to 1969. Several others too have contributed to the analysis of multi-partyism resulting in what Dodd calls "the myth of multi-partyism" which implies:

(i) governments in multi-party Parliaments must be minority Cabinets, coalition Cabinets, or both;

(ii) minority and coalition Cabinets are, by their very nature, bound to be transient; and

(iii) multi-party systems are undesirable as they produce only transient governments. O. Dodd himself analysed the politics of seventeen European countries from 1919 to 1974 and observed: "While the durability of cabinets may be low for all multi-party parliaments, a large number of durable cabinet survived in multi-party regimes." He further says that some multi-party Parliaments produce durable Cabinets, the multi-party Parliaments produce transient Cabinets. This implies that durability depends not merely on the number of factors but on a variety of factors.

These factors are what constitute the political culture of a country. So whether a coalition government will be durable in a multi-party system or not depends on the political culture of the country concerned.(49)

It should further be stated that a coalition is an alliance of parties formed for the purpose of contesting elections jointly and/or forming a government and managing the governance by a process of sharing power. So coalition implies co-operation between political parties and this operation may take place at one or more of three different levels —electoral, parliamentary and governmental. Parliamentary coalitions occur, according to Bogdanor, when no single-party gains a majority and the party asked to form the government prefers to rule as a minority government on an understanding with another for external support. Such an arrangement may be for a long period or for a limited period till a definite date of termination as with the Lib-Lab pact in Great Britain in 1977-78. It is also possible when a government seeks support from different parties for different items of legislation—a method much used in Denmark where it is known as government by ‘jumping majorities’. Finally, a minority government might survive without support on a basis of toleration

by the opposition parties which do not vote it out for tactical reasons. This was in general the situation of the three Labour minority governments in Britain in 1924, 1929-31 and 1974. In Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany, majority coalition rather than minority government is the invariable rule.(50) In Denmark and to a lesser extent in the other Scandinavian countries, minorities may result from the process of government formation. In Italy also single-party governments have been formed and sustained by support from outside. Nevertheless in both Scandinavia and Italy, majority coalition is almost always the preferred type. Japan too has experimented with coalition governments since 1993 and in spite of frequent changes of government, majority coalition has been the order." In India the governments led by Charan Singh, Chandrasekhar and Deve Gowda had been sustained by Congress support from outside and that of V.P. Singh supported by BJP. In these cases the Support had been issue-based, as they claimed.(51)

The governmental coalition is a "power sharing" coalition and it occurs when two or more parties, none of which is able to win a majority of its own, combine to form a majority government.

(52)The parties comprising such coalitions need not necessarily join together in an electoral pact; they may continue to compete electorally with their own coalition partners. This sort of power sharing coalitions are generally familiar to continental Europe, but comparatively unknown to British politics. In fact, power sharing is the end of all coalitions and, therefore, it is the ultimate stage to be achieved in the election process. Any arrangement that stops short of the ultimate stage lacks commitment. Finally, there are what may be called integral coalitions that link parties through the election process, parliamentary performance and governance.(53) Continuous collaboration and cohesion of allies through the above stages of the political process make them constitute stable coalitions while preserving separate identity of the parties.

Vernon Bogdanor likes to look at coalition government as “a particular form of executive rule separate from both presidential government and from the classical model of Cabinet government as adumbrated by authorities such as Bagehot and Morley. He asserts that a coalition government is more than a modified form of parliamentary government, having its own conventions and rules, all emerging from the fundamental principle of power

sharing. According to him, the impact of coalition government will be apparent throughout the whole of the political system, so that “the working of institutions such as the Cabinet and the legislature will prove very different from that of their counterparts in systems dominated by the Westminster model.” It points out some areas of government wherein coalition politics has made significant deviation from the Westminster model. These relate to the following:

i) The role of the Head of State :

In a coalitional system, the Head of State is always liable to find himself playing a more active role in government formation than is customary in Britain or in other countries where single-party majority government is the rule.

(ii) Political homogeneity :

In a coalitional government ministers are invariably drawn from different political parties and hence they represent different and even contradictory viewpoints.

(iii) Collective responsibility :

It is possible to maintain collective responsibility within a coalition Cabinet with the Prime Minister as the keystone. But it is

harder to achieve this ideal in a coalition government than in a single party government.

(iv) The role of the Prime Minister :

The Prime Minister a coalition government is neither able to select his colleagues nor exercise control over them.

(v) The need for party discipline:

A coalition government is likely to be less able to afford rules of party discipline than a single-party government. The coalition partners are bound by all agreement, tacit or open, on policy and performance, and dissenting votes by any backbencher may threaten the government's majority as well as the very basis of the coalition.(54)

Many countries today have accepted coalition politics, but their constitutions are conspicuously silent on coalition governments which are derived from the exigencies of multiparty politics.(55) Some constitutions, however, contain provisions which facilitate the formation of coalition governments. Germany is the most notable example which indirectly promotes coalition building by the constitutional provisions for a powerful Chancellor, constructive vote of no-confidence, regulation of parties,

possibility of outlawing a disloyal opposition, etc. Coalition building in the Federal Republic of Germany was influenced by factors such as the political culture, the geopolitical situation of the country, the functioning of federalism and the development of large catch-all parties." The Belgian Constitution provides for the equal representation in government, with the exception of the Prime Minister, of the French speaking and Dutch speaking members of Parliament. The Constitution further says that on issues related to the language, legislation must be passed with a majority vote within each linguistic group of both Houses, provided the majority of members of each group are present and the total votes in favour of the two linguistic groups attain two-thirds of the votes cast. Apart from constitutional provisions, there are a number of other statutory and institutional factors in European States that might influence the formation of coalition politics, like the electoral system and rules relating to the formation and defeat of governments. A number of West European constitutions, for example, require that an incoming government should survive an investiture vote. This may be sometimes an informal convention,

still it makes a major difference to the politics of coalition in a given system.(56)

Coalitions may be classified as :

- (i) policy pursuit models, and
 - (ii) office seeking models based on objectives, and as
 - (iii) minimum winning models,
- and.

(iv) large size models based on strategy. Policy pursuit models are those formed by like-minded parties, i.e. parties that have a common policy orientation or ideological background. It is often presumed that coalitions are easily formed to make a government when parties are not at a policy distance from each other. Examples are right wing coalitions and left wing coalitions. A coalition which combines leftist parties and rightist parties is a difficult proposition. But sometimes parties and individual legislators may be interested in the pursuit of power or office in total disregard of ideological considerations. They may argue that as power is an instrument for pursuing policies, power or office is what matters most in politics. Minor parties or uncommitted legislators may play truant and jump from the left front to the right front and vice versa, but they tend finally to settle down to a front that is more congenial to them.

It is widely known that William Riker's coalition model is office seeking and purely pragmatic. It involves two profound ideas. First, coalitions tend to be as small as is strictly necessary for winning a simple majority to form a government. A minimum winning coalition stands on the brink so much so that the defection of a single member will make the coalition no longer extant. One advantage of a minimum winning coalition is that the total gains won by the coalition can be distributed in larger shares for each partner participating in the coalition. Hence it is a matter of maximum pay off for the minimum number possible. Second, minimum winning coalitions are less vulnerable to opinion shifts than grand coalitions or minority governments and therefore more durable than the latter. Probably being on the brink, a minimum winning coalition realises the necessity of discipline and cohesion among its ranks. However, the office seeking minimum winning model is more theoretical than practical and it precludes the consideration of political reality or circumstances. In societies with sharp ethnic or other divisions and with innumerable groups and parties representing them, grand or large sized coalitions seem to be in order. In the Indian situation, both at the Centre and in the States, the tendency is to make coalitions large and broad based and therefore the leading parties try to entice into their fold even feeble parties that are not

sure of their post-election survival. Probably this is facilitated by three factors. One, the leading parties want to ensure such a large majority as to be representative of vast sections of people in the country. Two, the lack of discipline and cohesion among party legislators fail to assure the continuance of a minimum winning coalition. Three, the factional character of all parties, including the major parties, does not rule out the possibility of defection of members in spite of anti-defection laws that may exist in the country.(57)

Most theoretical models of coalitional behaviour applied in Western Europe have tended to assume a bargaining environment more or less free from constraints. They tend to assume that every arithmetically possible combination has a chance of becoming real, other things being equal. Little or no attention is paid to the specific local circumstances or to the institutional, legal and personal constraints involved. Some constraints are products of very specific local circumstances like personality clashes, ethnic group identities or similar conflicts that deter groups or parties from coming together. In most political systems of Western Europe, certain political parties have been treated as political untouchables, being excluded from the bargaining process by all

other parties.(58) All such phenomena are available in the Indian society too, having a large and diverse population as in the whole of Europe taken together. Hence these constraints influence the character of coalitional politics in the national political system as well as in each State political system in the country.

It may be pointed out that in the light of the various studies conducted about the coalition governments of Europe, the Indian experience in coalition politics deserves to be examined. The Indian political system has similarities and differences with the European political systems in general, but the political culture and people being different, the political outputs may also be different. Being the largest Parliamentary democracy in the world, India's experiments are of vital importance to the political world.(59)

However, it must be said that no comprehensive and scientific analysis of coalition politics in India as a whole has attempted so far and the present work is a humble attempt in this regard.

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