

## **After the “End of History” – the “Vanishing” of Opposition? The Case of Australian Labor<sup>1</sup>**

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union two years later were widely viewed together as a triumph for free market capitalism. Although Francis Fukuyama’s “end of history” prognosis attracted the most attention, the idea that there was no alternative to the market was widely held and it influenced politicians of many shades. Together with perceptions about the negative impact of globalisation on political choices, the almost universal support amongst political elites for the free market gives rise to a “vanishing” of Opposition similar to that described by Otto Kirchheimer in post-war Germany. In the absence of major political and ideological differences between mainstream parties, politics has become more stage-managed and superficial, with Oppositions reduced to trying to win power through the unpopularity of governments rather than the merits of their alternative policies. Although this paper focuses on the case of the Australian Labor Party, there is evidence of a similar process at work elsewhere.

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Francis Fukuyama first outlined his famous “end of history” thesis at the end of the 1980s. According to Fukuyama, the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Bloc represented victories for economic and political liberalism, which had triumphed over all alternative systems. Many other intellectuals shared Fukuyama’s general prognosis, and the sense of an end to socialist or social democratic rivals to liberal capitalism was widely felt by elites on different sides of the political spectrum.

One characteristic of the post-Cold War era therefore is the lack of fundamental ideological disagreement between mainstream political parties. Social democrats in particular felt the impact of these events, because the post-war successes of the Soviet economy seemed to suggest the viability of planning and state ownership as alternatives to market forces. Social democratic parties now largely accept that there is no substitute for neo-liberal policies. A striking case of a social democratic party affected in this way is the Australian Labor Party (ALP), whose agreement with its conservative opponents on the efficacy of neo-liberalism and globalisation has prevented it from properly fulfilling the key Opposition functions of opposing and providing alternative policies since losing power at the federal level in 1996. The absence of fundamental points of dispute between Labor and the conservative Coalition parties led Labor to adopt a “small-target” strategy between 1996-2001. This effectively meant hoping that disenchantment with the government would return it to office, rather than seeking to regain power with different policies. The failure of this strategy saw it replaced eventually with a populist strategy when Mark Latham was elected federal leader in 2003. Because this was largely a stylistic shift, it too was borne of the post-Cold War ideological consensus where parties pay increasing attention to issues of personality and presentation rather than politics.

This reduction in ideological competition between the major parties has a further consequence, similar to that identified in post-war Germany by Otto Kirchheimer, who lamented the “vanishing” of Opposition wrought by the ideological convergence of Germany’s major parties and the rise of a white-collar based middle-class. In Labor’s case, there has been a “vanishing” of Opposition after the “end of history” in the sense that on major and controversial policy issues it has not opposed the government, or it has failed to offer alternative choices.

The paper concludes that the experience of the ALP is not entirely unique. There is evidence of a “vanishing” of Opposition in other parts of the world, consequences of which are likely to include increased support for radical minor parties, and greater resort to extra-parliamentary opposition in the form of social movements and interest groups.

### THE “END OF HISTORY”

At the end of the 1980s, Francis Fukuyama developed his famous “end of history” thesis, declaring that the decade had witnessed “an unabashed victory of economic and political liberalism” and the “total exhaustion of viable systematic alternatives to Western liberalism”. Liberal democracy, he suggested, might be the “end point of mankind’s ideological evolution” and the “final form of human government”.<sup>2</sup> After the collapse of the Soviet Union, liberal democracy faced no more “ideological competitors”.<sup>3</sup> Though not entirely triumphal about this himself – he lamented politics’ likely degeneration into technocratic management devoid of the ideals and abstract goals that characterised the past, engendering “centuries of boredom” – Fukuyama’s message was received in this fashion.<sup>4</sup>

Fukuyama was not the first to make grand “endist” claims.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, he was only the most famous of a number of intellectuals to score a victory for market liberalism and a defeat for social democracy and socialism at the end of the Cold War.<sup>6</sup> Acceptance of elements of this thesis was not confined to the right of politics.<sup>7</sup> One reflection of this was the greater currency of market socialism, which although not conceived after 1989, enjoyed revived interest.<sup>8</sup> The market socialism debate itself had reached a new stage, whereby it was now accepted that public ownership was largely a dead letter.<sup>9</sup> In any future models of market socialism, one advocate suggested, “markets are likely to have an extremely prominent role” in an effort “to rid socialism of its pejorative association with an overweening and ineffective state”.<sup>10</sup>

This provides some indication of the profound ideological effects wrought by the end of the Cold War. One problem with the obituaries of ‘socialism’ was the assumption that what was dying really embodied socialism. The regimes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union can be more accurately characterized as state capitalist. Capitalism has historically evolved in different forms. In the case of the Soviet Union, rather than individual capitalists exercising control and ownership over the production process, here it was in the hands of a giant bureaucracy whose exploitative relationship to working people was akin to that between owners and employees in the market economies of the West.<sup>11</sup> While the immediate effect of the collapse of the Soviet Union was an ideological boost for the market, in the long-term it provided an opportunity for the re-emergence of genuine alternatives to capitalism. This occurred in some respects with the rise of an anti-capitalist (or “anti-globalisation”, as it is often simplistically described) movement in the late-1990s. Along with the demonstrations on the streets came the resurgence of intellectual critiques of global capitalism and liberal

democracy, and the positing of alternatives.<sup>12</sup> It is too early to say whether this movement will go on to pose a real challenge to the legitimacy of liberal capitalism. But, as Burgmann argues, it has been “the most successful response” to Fukuyama’s thesis yet.<sup>13</sup>

The widespread antipathy to free-market globalisation reflected in the rise of this movement has not, however, penetrated the walls of mainstream political parties, who overlooked the more sombre moments of Fukuyama’s thesis to trumpet the virtues of the market as opposed to “big government”.<sup>14</sup> The widespread acceptance of the market has led to the erosion of significant ideological and policy differences between major political players: parties engage in brand differentiation along the lines of “Pepsi or Coke”.<sup>15</sup> This partly explains why politics has become, in Colin Crouch’s words, “a tightly controlled spectacle, managed by rival teams of professionals expert in the techniques of persuasion, and considering a small range of issues as selected by those teams”.<sup>16</sup>

This appears to vindicate Fukuyama’s stance. While one can disagree with his argument that liberal democracy is the best form of political arrangement people can strive to achieve, or that it will be the “final form of human government”, mainstream political players’ belief that there is no alternative gives rise to a state of politics not unlike that which Fukuyama prognosed.

## SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AFTER THE “END OF HISTORY”

Social democratic parties have been particularly affected by the events surrounding the end of the Cold War, and the consequent ideological impetus to market policies. Whereas they might once have mounted ideological opposition to neo-liberalism, they now largely accept that there is no alternative.<sup>17</sup> By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there had “never been such widespread questioning of what social democracy stands for and whether it still offers distinctive policies and goals”.<sup>18</sup>

Different explanations exist for why social democrats have gone down the neo-liberal path. One important factor has been the collapse of the post-war boom, which deprived them of the economic base to redistributive policies.<sup>19</sup> If nothing else, it is clear that the neo-liberal trajectory commenced earlier than 1989. Yet, while social democratic parties may not have modelled their policies on the Soviet Union, in many places they have been buffeted by the ideological repercussions of its demise, for its post-war high rates of uninterrupted growth seemed to represent a viable alternative to laissez-faire capitalism.<sup>20</sup> When that model collapsed, the political impact was to leave “reformist parties with a critical shortage of ideas with which to oppose the rise of neo-classical liberalism... The general problem on the Left is to know what will succeed socialism: on what to ground the critique of capitalism, and what reformist strategies to adopt”.<sup>21</sup>

The ALP in Opposition represents a striking case of a social democratic party affected in this way. Former Labor foreign minister and Deputy Opposition leader Gareth Evans described Fukuyama's thesis as "genuinely brilliant" and "compelling".<sup>22</sup> According to federal Labor MP Duncan Kerr, it was during the 1980s that the party's left-wing faction "finally accepted that soviet style socialism was a dead end".<sup>23</sup> In a debate with a trade union official, former federal ALP leader Mark Latham argued: "With the fall of the Berlin Wall, your alternative, your so-called 'socialist objective', was lost. The market is here to stay".<sup>24</sup> ALP politicians may not have directly held up the Soviet Union as a model, but the ideological consensus on markets in the wake of its demise has made it difficult for the ALP to develop alternative policies to its conservative competitors. The result is that the ALP now largely accepts that there is no alternative to free-market liberalism and globalisation.<sup>25</sup>

This is certainly not just a post-1991 development in the ALP.<sup>26</sup> Yet, there has been a shift in the 1990s. Whereas the ALP might once have taken office and pragmatically implemented pro-market policies under economic and other constraints, today its support for market policies is more explicit and ideological.<sup>27</sup> This ideological support for neo-liberalism has had significant consequences for the ALP since it returned to Opposition in 1996.

## THE ALP IN OPPOSITION

At the March 1996 Australian federal election, Labor suffered one of its worst ever defeats. The party lost 31 seats in the 150-seat House of Representatives, and its first preference vote fell to its lowest level (38.75 percent) since 1931.<sup>28</sup> The scale of the defeat after 13 years in office prompted much debate about its causes. Empirical data revealed that a key factor was

Labor's loss of support amongst the party's traditional working class voters, who felt betrayed by the implementation of neo-liberal policies such as financial deregulation, privatisation, freer trade, and labour market deregulation.<sup>29</sup>

In Opposition Labor confronted a strategic dilemma: it could reject its neo-liberal path and chart a new direction at the cost of alienating business groups and economic commentators, or it could continue in the neo-liberal vein, reducing its ability to put forward alternative policies and criticise the new government. In the event, it tried to have its cake and eat it. It sought to regain some of the lost electoral support with an emphasis on economic security, job growth, and an attack on the neo-liberal bent of the new Liberal-National conservative Coalition government.<sup>30</sup> Yet, these were rhetorical shifts accompanied by the retention of the neo-liberal agenda, evident in a landmark speech in 1998 by newly-elected federal party leader Kim Beazley. Beazley pledged to deliver three balanced budgets during Labor's first term of government. Labor would preside over neither "large public sectors nor high-handed centralism", and he ridiculed suggestions that Labor stood for 'some antipodean version of the Supreme Soviet'; rather, the ALP offered "parsimonious social democracy".<sup>31</sup> He later emphasized Labor's bipartisan support for "fiscal discipline, an independent monetary policy, deregulation of financial markets, the floating of the dollar, low inflation and a more open economy".<sup>32</sup> He also insisted that globalisation was "inevitable".<sup>33</sup> The party's general position that globalisation is overwhelmingly beneficial to the majority of people mirrored the Coalition's stance.<sup>34</sup>

This convergence between the major parties on free market globalisation post-Berlin Wall reduced drastically the policy differences between them.<sup>35</sup> One commentator predicted that because of the absence of ideological debate post-Cold War, Beazley would thus be forced to

pin his hopes on incompetent administration by the Howard Government to get him elected as Prime Minister.<sup>36</sup> This ideological bipartisanship, and the fact that the new government was often merely continuing where the ALP left off, meant that its policy choices were limited and that Labor was unable to present a distinctive political program.

This led Labor to adopt a “small-target” strategy. Although conceived prior to the 1998 federal election,<sup>37</sup> which saw Labor claw back a number of the seats lost in 1996, it was used to fullest effect in the lead-up to the 2001 federal election. It entailed Labor minimising its differences with the government and making few political promises in the hope that attention would centre on the failings of the incumbent, rather than on the proposals of the Opposition. This strategy was evident in Labor’s support for the government – both in terms of providing political justification as well as backing legislative measures – when it came to major issues such as the political exploitation of asylum-seekers arriving by boat in Australia, and the decision to contribute troops to the US-led war on Afghanistan after September 11.<sup>38</sup> When the government in August 2001 prevented the Norwegian freighter, the *Tampa*, from bringing rescued asylum-seekers to Australian shores in a pre-election stunt, Labor supported the move. Beazley stated that the situation demanded not a “carping opposition”, but an Opposition “understanding a difficult circumstance in which the government finds itself”.<sup>39</sup> On the issues of health and education spending there were minor differences between the parties, but Labor’s funding commitment was too meagre to have much impact.<sup>40</sup> Similarly, the Opposition pledged if elected to moderate slightly the Government’s introduction of a consumption tax in 2000, not reverse it, despite Kim Beazley describing it as “the most unfair thing I’ve seen handed down by any government in the history of this country”.<sup>41</sup> Labor would also not disband the employment services provider established by the government, the “hopeless” Job Network.<sup>42</sup> Thus when it came to government policies that the Opposition did

oppose, they usually pledged to retain them. This is not simply an instance of the perennial problem that Oppositions experience of inheriting policies implemented long ago, since Labor had lost power only a few years previously.<sup>43</sup>

The adoption of a “small-target” strategy seemed to contradict Opposition theory, which has generally seen Oppositions in legislatures – particularly those majoritarian two-party systems in Britain and Australia – as having two main functions: opposing the government, and providing an alternative.<sup>44</sup> Historically, Oppositions have focused on the former, with the latter being a fairly recent historical development in the aforementioned two-party systems.<sup>45</sup> Such systems pit “government” and “Opposition” against each other in an adversarial arrangement, each striving to win sufficient seats to form government in their own right.<sup>46</sup> In contrast to the emphasis on bargaining and coalition-building in multi-party systems where no party independently can form a majority, in the two-party Westminster system it is a zero-sum game. The strategy Oppositions use to regain power will vary between opposing government initiatives and putting forward alternative policies. Labor frontbencher Bob McMullan suggests that an Opposition should, *inter alia*, “develop a coherent program of policies and communicate them to the electorate as the basis for [a] viable choice”.<sup>47</sup> There has been evidence of soul-searching debate and detailed policy development during previous Labor stints in Opposition.<sup>48</sup> Maddox comments that the ALP has typically used its time in Opposition for “renewal and preparation for eras of reform after its return to the government benches”.<sup>49</sup>

Yet, there was a marked lack of “renewal and preparation for eras of reform” during 1996-2001.<sup>50</sup> To an extent Oppositions in the British system have always relied on governments’ losing popularity in their bid to regain power, and they have tended not to contest most

government bills.<sup>51</sup> However, this does not explain, for example, the variations in the strength of the British Conservative Party Opposition's criticism of the government at different points in time (see below). Similarly, in the case of Labor in Opposition from 1996-2001, it appeared that there was less disagreement with the government, less emphasis on developing alternative policies, and generally less strategic direction, than there had been in previous periods of Labor Opposition.<sup>52</sup>

A central factor in Labor's failure to oppose government policies and provide alternatives has been bipartisanship. Although it could be argued that ideological convergence is a recurring feature of two-party systems operating along the lines suggested by Anthony Downs,<sup>53</sup> this does not explain the narrowing of cleavages at particular points in time, and it often ignores the particular factors working to reduce party differences other than a simple "move to the centre". In the case of the ALP in the 1990s, higher agreement between the parties is largely, though not exclusively, a product of the post-Cold War consensus on market liberalism.<sup>54</sup> A further consequence of this is an effect similar to the "vanishing" of Opposition observed by Otto Kirchheimer in Germany in the post-war years. Key factors in this included the German Social Democratic Party's (SPD) embrace of the market economy and its retreat from policies such as socialisation of the means of production, as well as the development of the welfare state, which allowed parties to appeal to certain sectors of the electorate without alienating others. The resulting differences between parties' policy solutions to society's troubles were reduced to "variations in emphasis": "The candidates' fights may be more in the nature of a collision between people obliged to squeeze through the same narrow thoroughfare to punch the clock before 8:45".<sup>55</sup> Given the SPD's recent further shift towards neo-liberal economics,<sup>56</sup> Kirchheimer's comment that it had become "nearly indistinguishable from its main domestic competitor, the CDU [Christian Democratic Union]" in its embrace of the

market economy, might in hindsight be considered an overstatement.<sup>57</sup> Then mainstream parties might at least have had the option of either opposing or supporting market forces, something which seems not to be true today. Nonetheless, Kirchheimer's proposition that historical developments and ideological trends can lead to a "vanishing" of Opposition has relevance for understanding the ALP in Opposition in the 1990s. Its consistent support for key government measures, and its promise to make only token changes to legislation it inherited, led commentators to lament the "absence of an effective Opposition", and to refer to Beazley as the "Leader of the Supposed Opposition".<sup>58</sup>

#### ALP STRATEGY AFTER 2001: FROM "SMALL TARGET" TO POPULIST STYLE

When former trade union official Simon Crean took over the party leadership from Kim Beazley after the 2001 election loss, he formally acknowledged the failure of the 'small-target' and the need for Labor to provide positive alternative policies.<sup>59</sup> Yet, because Crean retained his predecessor's commitment to neo-liberalism and globalisation he struggled to replace the "small-target" strategy with anything substantive. Crean had previously defended Labor's neo-liberal policies in government as necessary and irreversible.<sup>60</sup> In a speech in 2002 he called for a further "modernizing" of the economy.<sup>61</sup> It was partly because of Crean's inability to find a replacement for the "small-target" strategy that he was constantly dogged by concerns about his low public opinion poll ratings, which were eventually quelled only by his resignation as leader in November 2003.

Mark Latham was the surprise victor of the leadership ballot between himself and former leader Kim Beazley that followed Crean's resignation. A one-time mayor of Liverpool

council in Sydney, Latham had been a vocal supporter of the “Third Way” since being elected to federal parliament in 1994. Like many Third Way supporters, Latham exhibited more the characteristics of a free-market liberal than a traditional social democrat.<sup>62</sup> As leader Latham promised a trifecta of neo-liberal austerity – reducing both government spending and tax as a proportion of the economy, and budget surpluses over the government’s first term in office. He declared in early 2004 that “for every dollar we invest we have to cut a dollar from the existing budget”.<sup>63</sup> One aspect of Latham’s leadership thus was the retention of the neo-liberal, pro-globalisation framework.<sup>64</sup>

However, another notable feature of Latham’s leadership was the de-prioritisation of his Third Way politics. While retaining the neo-liberal economic agenda, he largely struck a populist style of leadership aimed at tapping into voter discontent with politics by promising a “new politics”, which involves “governing for the people, not the powerful”.<sup>65</sup> A populist style appeared to be Latham’s solution to the problem confronted by his recent leadership predecessors: how to differentiate Labor from its conservative opponents in the context of bipartisanship on markets and globalisation.<sup>66</sup> Because it is a strategy that pitches a different political *style* to that of the Coalition, it is borne of the post-Berlin Wall ideological consensus, which has taken “the politics out of politics...political debate [can] only centre around minor technical issues and the presentation of personality”.<sup>67</sup> The bipartisanship explains not just the populism, but also Latham’s venturing into strange areas such as the “crisis of masculinity”, the reading habits of pre-school children, and youth mentoring in an effort to deflect attention from what he had in common with the government on economic issues.<sup>68</sup>

This emphasis on style means that the seeming absence of Opposition characteristic of 1996-2001 continued under Latham's leadership. A prominent example was Labor's support in 2004 for a Free-Trade Agreement (FTA) with the United States. The Opposition's minor and symbolic amendments to the government's legislation did little to satisfy concerns that the FTA would prevent future Australian policy-makers from implementing government regulation in the public interest, because it could be deemed as a "barrier" to trade and ordered to be overturned or recompensed by an un-elected three-person panel.<sup>69</sup> As the anti-FTA One Nation Party Senator Len Harris put it at the time: "We are at the point where, on major issues, there is no opposition in this parliament".<sup>70</sup> Even allowing for the issue of partisanship, Harris's comments are not without substance.

Another instance of this was the Latham Opposition's siding with the government over the question of whether budget surpluses should be spent on improving run-down public services such as health and education, or on delivering tax cuts to people in the top twenty percent income earning bracket announced in the May 2004 federal budget. Only the minor party, the Australian Greens, was bold enough to promise to use the funds for services rather than tax cuts. The party's federal Senator Bob Brown commented on research revealing public sentiment in favour of services rather than tax cuts: "[T]he big parties aren't listening [to the public]".<sup>71</sup>

Thus, Labor under Latham continued the trend commenced in 1996 of permitting a safe passage – sometimes with only minor amendments – through the parliament for key aspects of the government's legislative program. The Australian parliament may not provide the non-government parties with the veto powers of the German system,<sup>72</sup> but non-government control

of the constitutionally powerful Senate did allow the ALP Opposition to play at times a crucial role in the outcome of government legislation.<sup>73</sup>

Whatever analysis we might make of Labor's strategy under Latham, it suffered a resounding blow at the November 2004 federal election, which saw the ALP lose a further five seats, and its primary vote rise only marginally.<sup>74</sup> The poor result predictably provoked criticism of the ALP's strategy. One sample of this is party president-elect Barry Jones' claim that Labor had presented to voters a choice between "McDonalds or Kentucky Fried Chicken".<sup>75</sup> Any renewed Labor attempts to develop a new strategy to win back government will confront the problems created by this absence of fundamental differences between the parties.<sup>76</sup>

#### LABOR IN OPPOSITION EXPLAINED

Both the "small-target" and populist strategies are not merely a product of autonomous choices made by party leaders and officials but reflect the accelerating depletion of ideological differences since the end of the Cold War. The support for neo-liberalism and globalisation impeded the ALP's capacity to develop an alternative politics to that of the Coalition, since this imposes limits on policy options in other areas such as health, education, and tax. This, in turn, meant that the ALP did not present a real alternative, and that it appeared to function as an Opposition only in the purely competitive sense of seeking office. This was true also of Latham's populist approach, which offered a different style, but not a different policy agenda.

However, it is not just Fukuyama's "end of history" thesis – or at least Labor's acceptance of its kernel – which explains the Opposition's failure to offer an alternative. There are two other important structural factors worth mentioning, which are of special relevance to social democratic Oppositions. One is the collapse of the post-war boom and the consequent low economic growth levels experienced in recent years both in Australia, and internationally.<sup>77</sup> These matter because social democrats have traditionally relied on high levels of output to fund their expansionist policies.<sup>78</sup> Therefore, Labor's reliance on a negative, defensive strategy (the "small-target"), and later a populist approach, must be seen in the context of an economic environment that militates against expansive programs.

Another important factor is the impact of globalisation. Parry asks whether globalisation, if it has curtailed economic options available to states, "may it also have reduced the ability of oppositions to come up with viable alternatives for their electorates".<sup>79</sup> Yet, there is little evidence that globalisation, as distinct from the general constraints posed by capitalist economies to which social democrats have long been subject, has been a major factor in the retreat from social democratic policies.<sup>80</sup> However, what is important is that the ALP, like its European counterparts,<sup>81</sup> believes that globalisation does prevent many social democratic reforms. One federal Labor MP's comment that, "many choices that used to be open to national governments are...no longer realistically available" because of globalisation, and that in "large areas...national legislators can be little more than mere spectators", is representative of wider Labor thinking on this issue.<sup>82</sup> Whether this is a genuinely-held opinion by Labor parliamentarians or represents an excuse for implementing pro-globalisation policies to which they are committed, the effect is the same: it impedes the development of alternative policies.

It is, of course, true that not every social democratic party experiences the same problems as the ALP. Tony Blair's New Labour in Britain, for instance, has enjoyed large majorities in the British Parliament at the same time as the ALP has been in Opposition. Yet, Blair's continuation of the neo-liberal Thatcherite "modernisation" of British society after his election in 1997 – accepting the notion that there is no alternative to the market – has created its own set of problems.<sup>83</sup> New Labour has suffered a series of election defeats at the local level, and in Europe in 2004 the party's drop in support compared with the previous election in 1999 (19 percent) was larger than that experienced by any of the other 15 EU countries.<sup>84</sup> New Labour has lost close to half its members since the time of its 1997 election victory.<sup>85</sup> Although it was returned to power at the 2001 election, the decline in the party's "membership, social roots, and voting base" saw New Labour returned with fewer votes than those with which former Labour leader Neil Kinnock lost the 1992 election.<sup>86</sup> Defeat at the national level for Labour would see it face many of the problems that now engulf the ALP.

#### THE "VANISHING" OF OPPOSITION?

The recent experience of the Labor Opposition in Australia will not be relevant everywhere. Institutional and political-cultural diversities lead to considerable variations in Opposition in different countries.<sup>87</sup> Yet, there are reasons for thinking that the "vanishing" of Opposition is not peculiar to Australia. Parry writes that the impact of globalisation and the post-Cold War syndrome "have affected the bases of oppositions and governments in various parts of the world":

The allegation that democracies offer little real choice between parties is a recurrent one and may be in the course of another resurrection. The centrist dynamics of democratic party competition along with the supposed inhibitions on innovation stemming from international pressures may result in some dissenting voices being left unrepresented by any of the major competing parties.<sup>88</sup>

Although not the sole reason behind the British Tory Opposition's (1997-2001) experiencing of its "most futile period in Opposition in the last one hundred years",<sup>89</sup> one important factor in its weakness in spite of public disquiet about some of Labour's neo-liberal policies and the 2003 Iraq war, is surely the fact that it either agrees with many government policies, or that it did similar things when it was in office.<sup>90</sup> In response to electoral defeat in 1997, the Tories were thrown into ideological confusion, forced to resort to beat-ups over crime and asylum-seekers.<sup>91</sup> It could be argued in fact that the New Labour backbench acts more like an Opposition – in terms of presenting alternative policies and acting as a check on the executive – than does the Conservative Party. This experience may not in fact be entirely novel. According to Potter, the Conservative Oppositions' more strident resistance to the Liberal government prior to World War One than to the Labour government after World War Two was a result of the post-war Keynesian consensus on key areas such as economic planning, tax, full employment and inflation.<sup>92</sup>

South Africa seems to be another case of the "vanishing" of Opposition, which is not wholly attributable to the Opposition-diluting effects of a Proportional Representation electoral system and hybrid federal/unitary arrangements. As Spence has noted, the numerous Opposition parties' ability to pose as a viable alternative government to that of the dominant African National Congress (ANC) has been severely damaged by the absence of ideological and policy disagreements with the latter:

[A] high degree of consensus unites both government and opposition, not only on what needs to be done in day-to-day terms, but also with respect to preserving and enhancing what has been achieved by a constitutional settlement which involved all the major actors. The debate, therefore, centres on the means to be adopted to achieved agreed ends...<sup>93</sup>

The absence of Opposition was also laid bare in the United States in the wake of September 11, and over the 2003 Iraq invasion in particular, where Congress authorised the use of military action.<sup>94</sup> The Bush Administration's unilateralist "war on terror" is part of the broader neo-liberal Washington Consensus to which both major American parties are committed.<sup>95</sup> While it is true that the major US parties have always shared important ideological beliefs,<sup>96</sup> in the aftermath of the Cold War the Democrats rejected "big government" and the left-right divide, and embraced the Third Way.<sup>97</sup> Although it might be objected that the Democrats' support for the Republic Administration's actions on Iraq does not strengthen the argument about the weakness of Oppositions because of the US's less rigid party system and the lack of a clear-cut Opposition,<sup>98</sup> the federal legislature's renowned independence from the executive arguably makes the "blank cheque" provided to the President all the more egregious. Furthermore, as Helms argues, most observers view the relationship between Congress and the President as the American equivalent of the Government-Opposition relationship in parliamentary systems, even if this is sometimes too simplistic.<sup>99</sup>

A sense that Oppositions do not represent alternatives is also evident in Colin Crouch's conclusion that, so much has modern politics been corrupted and gentrified that perhaps only upheaval and disruption of the kind threatened by "anti-globalisation" demonstrators is likely to address the burning issues of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>100</sup> Many will not accept such radical prescriptions, but just as Kirchheimer was led by the venality of Opposition to inquire into the

scope for “extraparliamentary opposition”, it is perhaps the weakness of Oppositions that has prompted some to take direct action as part of the anti-capitalist movement.<sup>101</sup>

Arguably a consequence of the failure of Oppositions to offer distinctive policies is the rise in support for minor parties in many countries, on both the left and right.<sup>102</sup> In September 2004, both the far-right National Democratic Party (NDP) and the (formerly Communist) Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS) saw major gains in State elections to Saxony and Brandenburg in East Germany. The results were seen as a backlash against the SPD national government’s neo-liberal Agenda 2010 policy first announced in March 2003, which constituted the “most dramatic cuts in social welfare programs since World War II”.<sup>103</sup> Because Agenda 2010 received the backing of the CDU Opposition both parties lost votes in the State elections. As a BBC correspondent commented, “East Germans are fed-up with the mainstream political parties and are looking for alternatives”.<sup>104</sup> As is the case in Australia, there is evidence that German voters are pressed to distinguish between the government and Opposition parties, whose differences “in their programs and legislation, such as social welfare, have shrunk considerably”.<sup>105</sup>

The parlous state of many contemporary Oppositions does not mean that parties such as the British Conservatives will not yet again win back office, but it does make it much more difficult for them to put forward a different policy agenda to win in their own right, and it makes it less likely that such victories will reflect the electorate’s endorsement of their policies. As Collings and Seldon comment, hope for the Tories after the 2001 election loss “would have little or nothing to do with what goes on in the Tory Party, and almost everything to do with whether New Labour can hold together or whether it will implode”.<sup>106</sup> Undoubtedly there have been previous instances where Opposition has been in decline, and

one should not hark back to some halcyon era where Oppositions opposed government policies and put forward clear alternative platforms. However, what seems different now is the near universal nature of the problem, which largely relates to the collapse of alternative perspectives in mainstream politics. Kirchheimer's post-war lament of the "vanishing" of Opposition might have been somewhat premature then, but all the signs are that it is true today.

## CONCLUSION

The post-Cold War consensus on market liberalism poses significant strategic difficulties for Oppositions aiming to defeat governments. Because there is an absence of fundamental political differences between mainstream parties, there has been increased emphasis on opinion polling, spin-doctoring and marketing. Oppositions will still attack governments over particular issues, expose scandals, and force ministerial resignations; and there will occasionally be disputes over single (sometimes major) issues. Oppositions may continue to win elections, but this will be less and less because they have put forward a distinctive political platform that has won the support of the electorate.

This analysis has particular relevance to social democratic parties such as the ALP, who since the fall of the Berlin Wall have abandoned any hope of an alternative to market liberalism. The post-Cold War consensus has led Labor to adopt a "small-target" approach, and later under Mark Latham a populist strategy. How much choice the ALP has in supporting neo-liberalism and globalisation is not a question that can be dealt with here.<sup>107</sup> What can be said for certain is that so long as Labor remains convinced that there is no alternative to liberal

capitalism, its strategic choices are severely limited, and the sentiment that there is no effective Opposition on crucial issues is likely to linger.

This analysis will also have special relevance for majoritarian systems where there is a clear delineation between Government and Opposition, and where the latter stands as the executive-in-waiting. Despite these qualifications, the sense that there is an absence of Opposition is widespread. In the near future, the vacuum created by the lack of Opposition is likely to be filled by social movements, or by the increased influence of minor parties with more radical ideas.

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<sup>1</sup> The author thanks Patrick Bishop for constructive comments and suggestions.

<sup>2</sup> F. Fukuyama, "The End of History?", *National Interest*, 16, Summer, 1989, pp 3, 4, 14.

<sup>3</sup> F. Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, Penguin, New York, 1992, pp xi, xii, xxi, 211.

<sup>4</sup> Fukuyama, "The End of History?", p.18.

<sup>5</sup> See K. Minogue, "Ideology after the Collapse of Communism", *Political Studies*, XLI, Special Issue, *The End of "Isms"*, 1993, p.4.

<sup>6</sup> See J.A. Ortiz, "Deconstructing the Death of the Left: the End of Ideology Revisited", in C. Derber, et al, *What's Left? Radical Politics in the Postcommunist Era*, University of Massachusetts Press, 1995.

<sup>7</sup> R. Blackburn, "Fin de Siecle: Socialism after the Crash", *New Left Review*, No. 185, January/February 1991, pp 5, 28-39. For a rebuttal of the argument that the collapse of the Soviet Union constituted a defeat for socialism, see A. Callinicos, *The Revenge of History: Marxism and the East European Revolutions*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1991.

- <sup>8</sup> C. Pierson, *Socialism after Communism: the New Market Socialism*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1995, p.3.
- <sup>9</sup> J. Roemer, *A Future for Socialism*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1994, pp 1, 6, 7, 33.
- <sup>10</sup> Pierson, *Socialism after Communism*, pp 213, 214.
- <sup>11</sup> T. Cliff, *State Capitalism in Russia*, London, Bookmarks, 1988.
- <sup>12</sup> Some recent contributions to the debate about alternatives to liberal democracy and capitalism include: M. Albert, *Parecon: Life After Capitalism*, London, Verso, 2003; G. Monbiot, *The Age of Consent: a Manifesto for a New Global Order*, HarperCollins, London, 2004; K. Danaher and R. Burbach, Eds, *Globalise This! The Battle Against the World Trade Organization and Corporate Rule*, Common Courage Press, 2000; W. Bello, *Deglobalisation: Ideas for a New World Economy*, Zed, London, 2002.
- <sup>13</sup> V. Burgmann, "APSA Presidential Address 2003: The Beginning of Politics and the First Human", *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 39 (1), March, 2004, p.203.
- <sup>14</sup> C. Derber, et al, *What's Left*, p.1.
- <sup>15</sup> Friedman, cited in R.J. Antonio, "Introduction: Marx and Modernity", in R.J. Antonio, Ed, *Marx and Modernity: Key Readings and Commentary*, Blackwell, Oxford University Press, 2003, p.48.
- <sup>16</sup> C. Crouch, *Post-Democracy*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2004, p.4.
- <sup>17</sup> O. Lafontaine, *The Heart Beats on the Left*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2000, p.25.
- <sup>18</sup> A. Gamble and T. Wright, "Introduction: the New Social Democracy", *Political Quarterly*, 70 (1), January, 1999, p.1.
- <sup>19</sup> G. Eley, *Forging Democracy: the History of the Left in Europe, 1850-2000*, Oxford University Press, 2002, p.7.
- <sup>20</sup> C. Harman, *A People's History of the World*, Bookmarks, London, 1999, p.560.
- <sup>21</sup> H.V. Emy, "A Political Overview: From Social Democracy to the Social Market Economy", in H.V. Emy, O. Hughes, and R. Mathews, Eds, *Whitlam Re-Visited: Policy Development, Policies and Outcomes*, Leichardt, Pluto Press, 1993, p.18.
- <sup>22</sup> Cited in K. Scott, *Gareth Evans*, Allen and Unwin, St Leonards, 1999, p. 217.
- <sup>23</sup> D. Kerr, "Foreword", in D. Kerr (Ed), *Reinventing Socialism*, Pluto Press, Leichardt, 1992, p.9.
- <sup>24</sup> Cited in A. Ramsey, "Great Trade Debate: Fair, Free and Fixed", *Sydney Morning Herald*, August 5, 2000, p.42.
- <sup>25</sup> A pro-globalisation stance goes hand-in-hand with supporting neo-liberal policies, which as many have noted have made globalisation possible. J. Weeks, "Globalise, Globa-lise, Global Lies: Myths of the World Economy

in the 1990s”, in R. Albritton, M. Itoh, R. Westra, and A. Zuege, Eds, *Phases of Capitalist Development: Booms, Crises and Globalization*, Hampshire, Palgrave, 2001, p. 281.

<sup>26</sup> M. Pusey, *Economic Rationalism in Canberra: a Nation-State Changes its Mind*, Cambridge University Press, 1991; M. Robinson, “Labor and Market Forces: Labor Party Views on the Economic Role of Government from the 1940s to 1970s”, *Journal of Australian Studies*, No.20, May 1987.

<sup>27</sup> C. Scanlon, “A Step to the Left? Or Just a Jump to the Right? Making Sense of the Third Way on Government and Governance”, *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 36 (3), 2001, pp491, 492. The more ideological nature of Labor’s attitude to neo-liberalism is brought out by current federal ALP leader Mark Latham, who has declared as truisms of Australian politics: “That market forces work better than planned economies; that free trade works better than tariffs and industry welfare; that competition policy works better than monopolies, public and private; that governments need to be fiscally responsible, delivering surplus budgets and low interest rates...that, increasingly, people see themselves as economic owners and consumers, not just as workers”. Latham, cited in C. McGregor, *Australian Son: Inside Mark Latham*, North Melbourne, Pluto Press, 2004, pp7, 8.

<sup>28</sup> A. Ramsey, “Winners, Losers, Best and Worst”, *Sydney Morning Herald*, March 23, 1996, p.37.

<sup>29</sup> J. Singleton, P. Martyn, and I. Ward, “Did the 1996 Federal Election See a Blue-Collar Revolt Against Labor? A Queensland Case-Study”, *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 33 (1), March, 1998; C. Bean, “Who Now Votes Labor?”, in J. Warhurst and A. Parkin, Eds, *The Machine: Labor Confronts the Future*, St Leonards, Allen & Unwin, 2000.

<sup>30</sup> A. Lavelle, *The Wilderness Years: Federal Labor in Opposition*, PhD Thesis, Griffith University, 2003, pp190-201.

<sup>31</sup> K.C. Beazley, Address to Committee for Economic Development of Australia, Regent Hotel, Sydney, February 18, 1998.

<sup>32</sup> D. Clark, “Latham and the Third Way: Radicalising Neo-liberalism?” *Journal of Australian Political Economy*, 51, June, 2003, pp58, 59.

<sup>33</sup> K.C. Beazley, Address to the Life, Investment and Superannuation Association of Australia, Hyatt Hotel, Canberra, May 22, 1997.

<sup>34</sup> A. Lavelle, “Labor and Globalisation – from Keating to Latham”, forthcoming, *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 40 (1), March, 2005.

<sup>35</sup> Whether the major parties have converged ideologically has been the subject of some debate recently. See M. Goot, "Party Convergence Reconsidered", *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 39 (1), 2004; A. Lavelle, "A Critique of Murray Goot on Party Convergence", *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 39 (3), 2004.

<sup>36</sup> G. Milne, "Will Howard Be Newted?", *Independent Monthly*, June, 1996, p.23.

<sup>37</sup> See J. Quiggin, "ALP Needs a Clear Message", *Australian Financial Review*, September 10, 1998; P. Botsman, "Out-of-Date Labor has to Fill its Policy Vacuum", *Sydney Morning Herald*, October 16, 1998.

<sup>38</sup> Lavelle, *The Wilderness Years*, pp231-243.

<sup>39</sup> Beazley, HRH, Commonwealth Parliament of Australia, 29 August 2001, pp30518, 30519.

<sup>40</sup> E. Yaman, "Kemp Hands Beazley Strategy Lesson", *The Australian*, January 24, 2001, p.4; K. Davidson, "Clever? No, Just Pathetic", *The Age*, May 31, 2001, p.19.

<sup>41</sup> L. Taylor, "GST Panders to Rich at Poor's Expense: Beazley", *Australian Financial Review*, August 14, 1998, p.5.

<sup>42</sup> Beazley, quoted in M. Grattan, "Beazley Promises to Revamp Jobs Scheme", *Australian Financial Review*, August 11, 1998, p.3.

<sup>43</sup> L. Helms, "Five Ways of Institutionalizing Political Opposition: Lessons from the Advanced Democracies", *Government and Opposition*, 39 (1), January, 2004, p. 29.

<sup>44</sup> G. Parry, "Opposition Questions", *Government and Opposition*, 32 (4), 1997, p.460. For a discussion of the different types of Opposition in different parts of the world, see Helms, "Five Ways of Institutionalizing Opposition".

<sup>45</sup> H.J. Hanham, "Opposition Techniques in British Politics (1867-1914)", *Government and Opposition*, 2 (1), 1967, p.38. G.S. Reid and M. Forrest, *Australia's Commonwealth Parliament 1901-1988: Ten Perspectives*, Melbourne University Press, 1989, pp63, 64.

<sup>46</sup> N. Johnson, "Opposition in the British Political System", *Government and Opposition*, 32 (4), 1997, p.491.

<sup>47</sup> B. McMullan, "The Responsibilities of Opposition", *Democratic Governance: Improving the Institutions of Accountability*, Discussion Paper No.64, May, 1999, cited at:

[http://www.anu.edu.au/pubpol/Discussion%20Papers/dp\\_64.html](http://www.anu.edu.au/pubpol/Discussion%20Papers/dp_64.html)

<sup>48</sup> Lavelle, *The Wilderness Years*, Ch.11.

<sup>49</sup> G. Maddox, *The Hawke Government and Labor Tradition*, Ringwood, Penguin, 1989, p.82.

<sup>50</sup> Lavelle, *The Wilderness Years*, pp 231-246.

- <sup>51</sup> A.H. Birch, and Van Mechelen and Rose, cited in L. Helms, “Five Ways of Institutionalizing Political Opposition: Lessons from the Advanced Democracies”, *Government and Opposition*, 39 (1), January, 2004, pp27, 28.
- <sup>52</sup> See Lavelle, *The Wilderness Years*.
- <sup>53</sup> Cited in J. Blondel, “Political Opposition in the Contemporary World”, *Government and Opposition*, 32 (4), 1997, pp478-79.
- <sup>54</sup> Lavelle, “Labor and Globalisation”.
- <sup>55</sup> O. Kirchheimer, “Germany: The Vanishing Opposition”, in R.A. Dahl, Ed., *Political Oppositions in Western Democracies*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1966, pp244-248.
- <sup>56</sup> T. Meyer, “From Godesberg to the *Neue Mitte*: the New Social Democracy in Germany”, in A. Giddens, Ed, *The Global Third Way Debate*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2001.
- <sup>57</sup> Kirchheimer, “Germany”, p.249.
- <sup>58</sup> J. Singer, “Rollback? No, Rollover”, *Herald Sun*, 28 September, 2001, cited at: <http://members.optus.home.com.au/thesquiz/singer.htm>; R. Manne, “Voting for Labor But With a Heavy Heart”, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 October, 2001, cited at: [http://global.factiva.com/en/arch/print\\_results.asp](http://global.factiva.com/en/arch/print_results.asp)
- <sup>59</sup> A. Scott, “Meanings of “Modernisation”: the Distinctiveness of the Whitlam Government in the History of Labour Parties”, in J. Hocking, and C. Lewis, Eds, *It’s Time Again: Whitlam and Modern Labor*, Melbourne Publishing Group, Armadale, 2003, p.461.
- <sup>60</sup> S. Crean, “Economic Growth for Leadership and Development”, *The Sydney Papers*, 11 (2), Autumn, 1999, p.96.
- <sup>61</sup> S. Crean, Speech by the Leader of the Opposition, the Hon Simon Crean, *Towards Opportunity and Prosperity Conference*, Melbourne, April 5, 2002, pp5, 6.
- <sup>62</sup> A. Lavelle, “Labor under Mark Latham: “New Politics”, Old Dilemmas”, Refereed Paper presented to the 52<sup>nd</sup> Conference of the Australasian Political Studies Association, Adelaide, 29 September – 1 October 2004.
- <sup>63</sup> M. Latham, “Opportunity for All,” Address by Leader of the Opposition, Mark Latham, to the ALP National Conference, Sydney, January 29, 2004, viewed at <http://www.australianpolitics.com/news/2004/01/04-01-29.shtml>
- <sup>64</sup> Lavelle, “Labor and Globalisation”.
- <sup>65</sup> Latham, “Opportunity for All”.

<sup>66</sup> For an examination of Latham's strategy and the extent to which it is populist, see Lavelle, "Labor under Mark Latham".

<sup>67</sup> A. Callinicos, *An Anti-Capitalist Manifesto*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2003, p.3.

<sup>68</sup> D. Burchell, "Labor May Have Lost the Battle But it can Still Win the War", *Australian Policy Online*, 13 October, 2004, [http://www.apo.org.au/webboard/results.chtml?filename\\_num=00912](http://www.apo.org.au/webboard/results.chtml?filename_num=00912)

<sup>69</sup> AFTINET, *Submission to the Senate Select Committee on the Australia US Free Trade Agreement (USFTA)*, April, 2004, p.6, cited at: <http://www.aftinet.org.au/campaigns/USFTA.Senatesub.pdf> Labor's two amendments to the legislation, which the Government eventually agreed to, were aimed at protecting the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, which involves government subsidisation of medicine, and local content on free-to-air television, pay television and radio.

<sup>70</sup> L. Harris, Senate Hansard, Commonwealth Parliament of Australia, 12 August, 2004, p.26064.

<sup>71</sup> B. Brown, Interview with Laurie Oakes on Channel Nine's *Sunday* program, 16 May, 2004: [http://sunday.ninensn.com.au/sunday/political\\_transcripts/article\\_1556.asp](http://sunday.ninensn.com.au/sunday/political_transcripts/article_1556.asp)

<sup>72</sup> Helms, "Five Ways of Institutionalizing Political Opposition", p.32.

<sup>73</sup> This role is set to end in July 2005, however, when the re-elected Coalition government regains a majority in the Senate.

<sup>74</sup> Australian Electoral Commission, "Virtual Tally Room: 2004 Election Facts and Figures", 2004, <http://vtr.aec.gov.au/>

<sup>75</sup> B. Jones, "Jones Blasts Labor's "Cancerous" Factions", *The Australian*, October 22, 2004, p.4.

<sup>76</sup> In January 2005, Latham resigned both as Labor leader and as a parliamentarian, citing personal illness. Kim Beazley was later re-elected uncontested as the new leader.

<sup>77</sup> The performance of the Australian economy in the 1990s was on average only marginally superior to that of the 1980s, and equal to the recessionary 1970s, while largely the same can be said for the world economy. For comparative data on Australia's performance, see D. Gruen, and G. Stevens, "Australian Macroeconomic Performance and Policies in the 1990s", *The Australian Economy in the 1990s*, HC Coombs Centre for Financial Studies, Kirribilli, July 24-25, 2000, p.3; for the world economy and developed countries, see IMF, *The World Economic Outlook WEO. Database May 2001*, 'selected World Aggregates', 2001, <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2001/01/data/index.htm#2>

<sup>78</sup> C. Pierson, *Hard Choices: Social Democracy in the Twenty-First Century*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2001, P.116.

<sup>79</sup> Parry, "Opposition Questions", p.460.

<sup>80</sup> J. Callaghan, 'social Democracy and Globalisation: the Limits of Social Democracy in Historical Perspective', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 4 (3), October, 2002.

<sup>81</sup> Callaghan, 'social Democracy and Globalisation', p.430.

<sup>82</sup> D. Kerr, *Elect the Ambassador! Building Democracy in a Globalised World*, Pluto Press, Annandale, 2001, pp6, vii. See also Lavelle, "Labor and Globalisation".

<sup>83</sup> John Gray, 'Blair's Project in Retrospect', *International Affairs*, Vol. 80, No.1, (2004), p.39.

<sup>84</sup> John Curtice, 'EU Result Shows Labour Can be Defeated but Tories Remain Unlikely Government Successors', *The Scotsman*, (15 June 2004), <http://news.scotsman.com/topics.cfm?tid=478&id=678942004>

<sup>85</sup> James Kirkup, 'Big Guns Boost Labour's War Chest, but the Rank-and-File Desert in Droves', *The Scotsman*, (27 July 2004), [http://global.factiva.com/en/arch/print\\_results.asp](http://global.factiva.com/en/arch/print_results.asp)

<sup>86</sup> Alex Callinicos, "The European Radical Left Tested Electorally", *International Socialist Tendency Discussion Bulletin*, No.5, (July 2004), p.4.

<sup>87</sup> See Dahl, *Oppositions in Western Democracies*.

<sup>88</sup> Parry, "Opposition Questions", p.460.

<sup>89</sup> D. Collings and A. Seldon, "Conservatives in Opposition", *Parliamentary Affairs*, 54, 2001, p.624.

<sup>90</sup> S. Kennedy, "New Labour and the Reorganization of British Politics", *Monthly Review*, 49 (9), February, 1998, cited at: [http://web3.infotrac.galegroup.com/itw/infomark/27/699/82098454w3/purl=rc1\\_EAIM...](http://web3.infotrac.galegroup.com/itw/infomark/27/699/82098454w3/purl=rc1_EAIM...); A. Russell, "Parties and Party Systems: Realignment or Readjustment?", *Parliamentary Affairs*, 57 (2), 2004, p.399.

<sup>91</sup> Collings and Seldon, "Conservatives in Opposition", pp628, 632, 633.

<sup>92</sup> A. Potter, "Great Britain: Opposition with a Capital "O"," in Dahl, *Political Oppositions in Western Democracies*, p.29.

<sup>93</sup> J. E. Spence, "Opposition in South Africa", *Government and Opposition*, 32 (4), 1997, pp531, 525.

<sup>94</sup> The Senate voted 77-23 in favour of authorising Bush to use military force against Iraq, while the House of Representatives voted 296-133 in favour. In the Senate, the Democrats were divided, with 29 voting for the resolution authorising force, and 21 voting against it. See *Roll Call Vote on Iraq Resolution*, October 11, 2002, <http://www.clw.org/control/iraqvote.html>

<sup>95</sup> D. Held, *Global Covenant: the Social Democratic Alternative to the Washington Consensus*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2004, ppxiv, xv.

<sup>96</sup> R.A. Dahl, "The American Oppositions: Affirmation and Denial", in Dahl, *Political Oppositions in Western Democracies*.

<sup>97</sup> R. Pear, "In a Final Draft, Democrats Reject a Part of Their Past", *The New York Times*, June 26, 1992, p.A13.

<sup>98</sup> N.W. Polsby, "Opposition in the United States", *Government and Opposition*, 32 (4), 1997, p.516.

<sup>99</sup> Helms, "Five Ways of Institutionalizing Political Opposition", p.40.

<sup>100</sup> Crouch, *Post-Democracy*, p.123.

<sup>101</sup> Kirchheimer, "Germany", p.257.

<sup>102</sup> See J. Petras, "Right/left Polarization: the Ballot Box and the Street", *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 33 (2), May, 2003.

<sup>103</sup> G. Braunthal, "The SPD, the Welfare State, and Agenda 2010", *German Politics and Society*, Issue 69, 21(4), Winter, 2003, p.2.

<sup>104</sup> R. Furlong, "Analysis: East German Discontent", *BBC News*, 19 September, 2004,  
<http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/367149...>

<sup>105</sup> Braunthal, "The SPD, the Welfare State, and Agenda 2010", pp3, 24.

<sup>106</sup> Collings and Seldon, "Conservatives in Opposition", p.636.

<sup>107</sup> See Lavelle, "Labor and Globalisation".