

CHAPTER 2

Concepts and Definitions

The Boston Tea Party . . . the Committees of Correspondence . . . the Fourth of July and the Declaration of Independence . . . Thomas Jefferson's words: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights and that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" . . . the shot heard round the world . . . the Continental Congress . . . the winter at Valley Forge . . . George Washington and the Marquis de Lafayette . . . the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Every schoolchild in the United States has heard these names and phrases, so familiar and timeworn that it is difficult to think about them with surprise and curiosity. But repeat them to yourself slowly and ask yourself about the story behind each one. Why did a group of Bostonians dress up as Indians and dump tea in the harbor? What was in the letters of the Committees of Correspondence? Why would a wealthy slaveowner like Thomas Jefferson write such stirring words about equality? Who fired the "shot heard round the world" and why did the conflict between England and the colonists become violent—could it have been otherwise? Why did the French king send help to antiroyalist insurgents? What values, interests, and compromises are packaged into the Constitution?

As we try to answer these questions, we discover that the simple stories of our elementary school days are events and incidents of a complex process—the making of a revolution and the establishment of a nation based on the ideals of the revolutionaries. As we think about these questions, we begin to look at all the elements of a movement—its ideas, its supporters, its organization and strategies. We begin to see the powerful opposition that movements face and the way movement activists attempt to beat the odds to change the reality that everyone else believes is unchangeable.

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I will define **movement** and introduce terms that social scientists use to analyze the ideas, organization, and strategies of movements. These terms refer to parts or elements of movements and to the processes in which movements are involved. The terms are shared by most of the theories discussed in the next chapter.

MOVEMENTS

Noninstitutionalized Discourses and Practices of Change

What is a movement? A movement is constituted by human beings engaged in discourses and practices designed to challenge and change society as they define it. It is formed by people who, over the course of time, are involved in non-institutionalized discourses and practices of change.

It is important to recognize that, like many terms in the social sciences, "movement" is an abstraction from reality. A movement is not really a "thing"—a physical object like a desk or a loaf of bread. All that really exists in society are human beings engaged in **practices and discourses**. To put it a little differently, what we call society, institutions, and movements are always human beings engaged in actions, interacting with each other, and using the human capacity for language and symbol (Blumer, 1951).

Practices means *doing*; this doing includes talking, writing, engaging in physical violence, and many other kinds of interactions. Practices can also involve physical objects—flags, guns, desks, books.

Discourses means *saying* something, so a discourse is really one specific type of practice. Discourses can be written, spoken, or electronically recorded. Discourse is usually taken to mean a cluster of statements, not just isolated utterances of everyday life (like "please pass the biscuits"); a discourse puts together statements about what is construed to be reality. A discourse often includes an explicit or implicit rule about what can or cannot be said.

Discourses and Practices of Change A movement is really a number of people engaged in specific practices and discourses. The discourses are about changing society and/or individuals, about bringing into being a state of affairs that is in some way different from the existing one. The discourse of a movement always says something negative about the existing situation as it is defined by the movement. Even a movement that seeks to preserve the status quo is reacting to fears of impending change. The practices of a movement are those actions that the actors believe will bring about the changes considered desirable.

Noninstitutionalized Practices and Discourses A movement is people engaged in activities that are not institutionalized. *Institution* is another social sciences term that appears to refer to a thing but really refers to **human beings engaged in practices and discourses**. To say that practices and discourses are **institutionalized** means that they recur on a regular basis, persist over time, are to be found throughout a society, and encounter relatively few social controls to prevent them from taking place. Institutions are supported by **legitimizing discourses**, discourses that support the institution by saying it is legal, moral, good for society, and so on; for example, one could say that, in the United States in the 1990s, capitalism—private enterprise and free markets—is pretty well institutionalized. Its practices are recurrent and found everywhere; a discourse of opposition to it is not widely found. Other established practices, like the legal system, support it.

Other practices are widely found, but not institutionalized. Acts like rape and robbery may take place frequently, but there are strong discourses and practices opposed to such acts. In the United States, the practices of the law treat robbery and rape as crimes, while they do not treat capitalist property claims as a crime or as a problem.

These examples highlight some of the meaning of **institutionalized and noninstitutionalized practices**, although the reader can see that this definition is not a simple matter, since many practices fall in the middle. These practices are the subject of ongoing negotiations between those who want to institutionalize them and those who oppose their institutionalization. Movements are involved in conflict over what is or is not institutionalized and legitimated. This conflict and negotiation over institutionalization applies both to the goals of movements and to the means they use.

Movement goals are often focused precisely on these practices in the middle, like the formation of churches by cult groups, the legalization of marijuana by libertarians, the establishment of domestic partnership benefits for gays and lesbians, or the extension of rights to publish and circulate information in a society with government censorship of the media.

Although movements are not themselves institutionalized, they often use institutionalized means for attaining their goals; for example, forming political parties or winning court cases. These examples show that institutionalized or noninstitutionalized is not a sharp distinction, but a difference that is itself the subject of dispute and negotiation.

Movements are noninstitutionalized in several ways Not all movements share all of the following characteristics, which merely suggest some of the ways in which movements fall outside institutions—the routine, time-tested, widespread, and fully legitimated activities of a society.

- ① **First**, movement discourses and practices may *not be widely shared*. Thus, there is little that is widely diffused or commonplace about them. Compared to the number of people engaged in jobs and families, the number of people engaged in social movements is rather small. Movements range in size from mass movements involving millions of people who may actually form a majority of a country's population—like some of the mass socialist parties in Europe—to small sectlike groups numbering in the hundreds—like the Branch Davidians. But even the mass movements do not include everyone.
- ② **Second**, movement discourses and practices may be *generally opposed or opposed by people in power*, groups that sociologists call **agents of social control**. Such groups have the ability to restrict movement activity through a set of practices, for instance through the legal system. These opposing forces are often, but not always, concentrated in the institution of the state, in the political system. For example, in the spring of 1993, the FBI and other agencies of the federal government decided to put an end to the activities of the Branch Davidian cult, which had retreated to a bunker near Waco, Texas, and stockpiled arms. The government's siege of the bunker is an example of social control, of efforts to limit or halt movement actions and define such actions as dangerous or disruptive.

Third, insofar as their discourses refer to bringing about a situation that does not exist, the movement ideologies are *not well embedded in the practices of everyday life*. They thus have something ethereal or unrealistic about them. They are disconnected from practices that people have to engage in to survive on a daily basis and to satisfy physical needs. It is usually much more difficult to "live" one's movement attachment than to "live" one's occupation or conventional gender roles. This difficulty is also inherent in institutionalized religious discourse, but organized religion has developed rituals and relationships that connect teachings to everyday life. Being a physician or a practicing Catholic are identities that are guided by existing rules, roles, and relationships. Living as a socialist in the United States or preparing for the Rapture as a Christian fundamentalist are identities and practices that have to be invented in opposition to prevailing discourses and practices.

Fourth, movement practices and discourses are often newly invented or are new reformulations of other discourses; they are *not yet recurrent and seem not to have "stood the test of time."*

It is important to realize that the distinction between institutionalized and noninstitutionalized is not clear-cut and rigid. The lines are constantly renegotiated among movement adherents, social control agents, sympathizers, the media, and so on. Many movements exist in a disputed area between institutionalized and noninstitutionalized behavior.

Within a movement, some organizations may engage in institutionalized actions, while others do not. For example, some organizations in the environmental movement in the United States lobby Congress, an institutionalized practice. Others (like Greenpeace or local antinuclear power groups) use sit-ins and other forms of direct action, which are usually considered noninstitutionalized.

Movements themselves may be quite conflicted about whether they want to become more institutionalized or not. If they do become institutionalized, they probably expand their resources and their support bases and become more likely to accomplish some reforms. But institutionalization may also make them too routinized or inclined to compromise, and thereby reduce their ability to challenge the status quo.

For example, for many years the NAACP had been seen as rather institutionalized by the media, much of its support base among African Americans and white supporters of civil rights, and the public at large. Its primary focus was on civil rights court cases, which were generally handled by professional staffers and attorneys. In the early 1990s, the organization organized more meetings with radical black groups like the Nation of Islam ("Black Muslims") and participated in gang summits in some cities. These new activities reduced its perceived institutionalization and led to the disaffection of some of its previous supporters, but perhaps gained it new supporters and expanded its challenge to the racial status quo in the United States (Muwakkil, 1994).

In other words, institutionalized and noninstitutionalized are terms whose meanings are negotiated by movements, media, movement organizations, and

external supporters and opponents. They involve constant shifts and redefinitions of actions, rather than fixed characteristics. Let me reformulate my definition. A key characteristic of social movements is that they blur and challenge the distinction between institutionalized and noninstitutionalized practices.

Reform and Revolution At this point, many texts on movements proceed to classify movements, often distinguishing revolutionary movements that seek total change from reform movements that seek only partial changes in society. Reform movements also tend to use institutionalized means, while revolutionary movements do not and are more inclined toward violence and other extralegal strategies. I am going to be cautious about classifying movements in this way or any other, because these differences are often quite fluid. Movement participants themselves are usually too shrewd to treat the difference between reform and revolution as permanent. All the societal-political movements look toward a major transformation of society and in this sense are revolutionary; reform is often seen more as a cautious first step or an expedient strategy than a final outcome.

Having defined movements as people engaged in noninstitutionalized discourses and practices aimed at changing society, I am now going to define elements of movement practice.

IDEOLOGY

Discourse

Ideology refers to the discourses of the movement, to what people think and say. The ideology is the ideas held by people who see themselves as connected to the movement. A little more specifically, the ideology is the set of ideas expressed by the most active participants (Greene, 1990).

Usually, an ideology has some degree of coherence; the ideas hang together in some way. The discourses are interconnected. The discourses specify some way of looking at reality. They specify what is *really important*. They are a way of making sense of life experiences and situations. The discourses spell out what the current situation is and why it should be changed. They identify some preferable state of affairs that becomes the goal of the movement. For example, Operation Rescue identifies conception as the starting point of life and specifies the overriding importance of protecting the fetus; this goal is central to the movement's understanding of what *really matters* and brings with it the practice of stopping abortion by a large variety of legal and illegal means.

Notice how ideologies carry with them a certain language, a set of rules about how to talk, about how to say things, and about what can and cannot be said. For Operation Rescue, the fetus is an unborn child. Of course, this concern for words is an essential feature of all discourses, not just movement discourses. The choice of words is inherent in the human capacity for language. In this respect, movements are not different from institutionalized discourses. Many in

institutionalized discourses also carefully specify ways of talking: The use of a Latin- and Greek-based vocabulary in medicine or of a special terminology in law are good examples of very structured and specialized institutional discourses that participants learn and use in highly self-conscious ways. But, in movements, the participants underline the tension in the difference between their discourse and that of others.

Let's look in a little more detail at ideological discourses. We can say that attention is focused on representations of reality. A discourse presents a certain view of what "reality" is. It attempts to capture the nearly infinite complexity of the world in a number of key images and key terms. It highlights some aspects of reality and ignores or specifically dismisses others.

For example, Operation Rescue focuses attention on the first 9 months of human life and on the relationship of women to their children; fetuses are represented as unborn children and women are represented largely as actual or potential mothers. Pregnancies are represented as unexpected rather than as unwanted. In contrast, the movement to keep abortion legal represents itself as standing for *choice*; women are represented as people with a range of roles. The unborn child of Operation Rescue is a fetus to those who participate in the movement to keep abortions legal. Both movements tend to highlight the issue of the first weeks or months of human life and fetal development. Both recognize that the quality of life of (born) children and adults is an important issue, yet the problems of child care, education, health care, and so on, are not the primary focus of either movement's discourse. Operation Rescue gives little—and largely negative—attention to contraception.

Movement discourses speak about some elements of reality, not others, and this selection of a sphere of discourse contains the *why* of the movement.

Symbols

Differences in representation are easily concentrated and compressed into **symbols** and slogans: *Life* and *choice* have become dramatic shorthand ways of referring to the legality of abortion. Some current movement theorists prefer to use the term **framing** for the way in which movements organize their discourses and align them with the values, ideas, and discourses they believe to be prevalent in society; I will return to this concept in the next chapter (Snow and Benford, 1988).

Sometimes, institutionalized discourses set limits to movement representations and a movement ideology has to use "code words." For instance, when former Ku Klux Klan leader David Duke ran for public office in Louisiana, he used words like "welfare" to appeal to some white voters' sentiment against poor black people, since direct racial remarks have become off-limits in U.S. electoral campaigns.

Representations are also translated from words to visual images and symbols. A swastika refers to the Nazis and is a way of calling up all they stood for—the Führer, ethnic genocide, anti-semitism, the "Aryan race" and racialist ideas, and so on. The Virgin of Guadalupe—the Madonna represented as an Indian

woman—was a powerful symbol in Cesar Chavez' organization of Catholic Mexican American farmworkers. Her image as a dark-complexioned woman in a blue cloak lined with roses refers to a Mexican tradition that dates back to the sixteenth century, when her apparition gave value to the hopes of the oppressed and conquered Native Americans who had been recently and forcibly converted to the Christian faith. The gay rights movement has used a pink triangle as its symbol, in an ironic gesture; the Nazis imprisoned homosexuals, and just as they made Jews wear a yellow star, they made homosexuals wear a pink triangle. The gay rights movement adopted this symbol, turning its negative meaning into an affirming symbol of solidarity and defiance. An "X" is associated with Malcolm X, who selected this letter to replace the English surname (Little) that linked his family to slave owners; the letter X stands for a break with Eurocentrism and the burden of having been someone else's property.

Some symbols are **condensation symbols** that stand for everything that the movement is "about"; they are a shorthand for its discourses and practices, ideas and goals. Sometimes a leader, an individual, may serve as such a symbol. Martin Luther King was not only an actual leader and organizer of the Civil Rights Movement, but also a symbol of nonviolent opposition to injustice. The Ayatollah Khomeini became a symbol of the Islamic revolution in Iran; millions of people came to his funeral to express not only their reverence for him as an individual but also their unity with all the goals and hopes of the movement.

In some cases, the leader as a condensation symbol can be said to become the object of a **cult of personality** or cult of the individual. The term was first used in communist and socialist movements to refer to a worshipful attitude toward Joseph Stalin and, later, Mao Zedong. Socialism in the Soviet Union and China was distorted by an uncritical obedience to powerful party leaders (Deutscher, 1966). This expression always has a negative connotation and implies that movement participants have lost sight of the distinction between the values of the movement and the accomplishments of any individual human being, no matter how talented or important to the organization. It implies that the movement participants have come to worship the individual leader.

Negative Symbols: Scapegoats and Folk Devils

Movements also deal extensively in **negative symbols**. Some movements **scapegoat** specific groups in society, identifying them as the source of all evil and calling for their suppression, expulsion, or even extermination in order to begin cleansing and revitalizing the society. When a movement comes to power it may begin its program of change by attacking such groups. Ethnoracist movements like the Nazis and neo-Nazis point to ethnic groups (for example, Jews and Gypsies) in this way.

Scapegoating is also closely related to identifying **folk devils**, groups that are defined as a threat to vital values and interests (Cohen, 1973). Movements may use folk devils to frame their definition of the current condition of society as one that is evil, threatening, or inadequate. The schools are being taken over by secular humanists, according to parts of the New Christian Right. Jews run

Wall Street or Washington, according to the neo-Nazis. Some populist movements may talk about shadowy "elites" whose machinations threaten ordinary citizens.

Not surprisingly, movements engage in scapegoating and identifying folk devils and are often stereotyped and targeted as folk devils by nonmembers, social control agents, the media, and countermovements. "Islamic terrorists," for instance, are folk devils in the United States, probably out of proportion to their actual operations in the west. The "femi-Nazi" is a folk devil that conveniently blends two rather different movements; it is a folk devil used to create loathing for feminism by linking it with a movement that most Americans find repugnant (Nazism). The New Christian Right, on the one hand, and left and libertarian groups, on the other, portray each other as threats to core American values. We will return to some of these processes when we look at movements and countermovements.

Sometimes movements are largely invented, especially by local media, in order to provide folk devils and scapegoats who can be blamed for youthful misconduct, alienation among teens, and other social problems--satanic cults are a prime example (Gaines, 1992).

Practices

An ideology is not only a set of words or visual images. It is also lived in practices. Rituals and routines embody the ideas of the movement. Going to demonstrations, selling movement newspapers, and dressing in a certain style all convey to oneself and others a solidarity with the ideas of the movement. Engagement in these activities is not just "going through the motions." It is an affirmation that the movement is meaningful.

Before leaving the topic of ideologies and symbols, let us note that many movements are not totally consistent in their ideologies. They recognize that their discourses need to be nuanced for different actual and potential supporters. Some theorists use the term **constituencies** for these different categories of supporters. For example, when the Nazis were trying to gain influence with conservative German political and industrial elites, they represented themselves as anti-Communist and pro law and order. When they addressed crowds of young, unemployed, and uprooted followers they highlighted their "action" orientation, their street fighting ways, and their opposition to the institutions of capitalism.

Movements also shift their ideologies in order to respond to changing environments or correct mistakes in their earlier "line." For example, the Comintern (an international network of Communist parties and movements) realized in the mid-1930s that the policy of opposition to moderate socialists and centrist democratic parties had inadvertently made it easier for the Nazis to come to power; the Comintern shifted to a "popular front" discourse that emphasized common interests among socialist, communist, and centrist forces and laid the groundwork for a Soviet-western alliance against the Axis (Germany, Japan, and Italy) in World War II (Abendroth, 1972).

Ideologies as Universalizing Discourses

Ideologies often make claims that their discourse is good for everyone (or at the very least, for a wide range of people); this claim is what is meant by **universalizing the discourse** of the movement. Within the ideology there may be goals that reflect the self-interest of some category of people. For example the value of free enterprise may be greater for a business owner than for a worker. The value that feminism places on expanded rights for women is more immediately in the interest of women than of men. But, ideologies have to package these narrower goals in terms that make the ideology appealing to a broad range of people. Historically, free enterprise has been packaged together with freedom in general, which may appeal as strongly to the worker as the business owner. Feminism offers more than an end to male domination; it offers everyone—men as well as women—a society with less hierarchy and less violence.

As specific ideologies are discussed, ways in which appeals to a core support base are broadened and universalized to attract a larger range of participants will be indicated. Only movements with broad-based appeals can put together a **bloc** of diverse supporters (Gramsci, 1971; Garner and Garner, 1981).

Ideologies and Lies

The term ideology is often used to mean a *false* representation of reality, a false consciousness that is distinct from a scientific one. In addition, it is used to mean a false consciousness that is propagated by the classes that dominate a society economically, culturally, and politically. Here I am not using the term this way; when I speak of a movement's ideology I am not implying that its ideas are false, only that they are coherent and interconnected. A movement that is not in power can be said to have an ideology, just as the ruling classes of a society propagate an ideology that supports their dominance. Here I am using *ideology* in the most general way as a system of discourses, without reference to truth or falsity. Be aware that the term has several different meanings to social scientists.

Can Movement Ideologies Be Classified?

Fluidity in discourse, over time or for different audiences, makes it difficult to classify movements into rigid typologies. Two major typologies are commonly used, however.

Reform or Revolution One typology distinguishes reform movements from revolutionary movements. The former seek to change some aspect of society, some specific institution; in other words, some specific set of practices. The latter seek to change the totality of practices; their goal is to change all institutions, and in their discourse they view "society" as a system that has to be changed completely if it is to be changed at all. Some scholars prefer to use terms like **reformative** to refer to movements with a limited scope and **transformative** for movements with the goal of changing the whole social order (Aberle, 1966).

For instance, the Chicago Recycling Coalition is a reform movement; it seeks to change the way individual citizens dispose of trash and the way the city of Chicago handles waste disposal. Its goals are fairly limited, not only in its geographic scope, but also in the set of practices it targets for change. In contrast, revolutionary socialism or Islamic integralism have broad goals of change; in the view of their ideologies, everything in a society should be different—law, politics, the economy, the family. Most important, not only should each of these institutions be changed, but the way in which the institutions are put together—the very form of the whole society—should change.

Sometimes it is not so easy to tell reform movements from revolutionary movements. A movement may appear to target a specific set of practices for change, when, in fact, its goal is a much larger vision of change. For instance, Operation Rescue appears to be a single-issue movement focused on abolishing legal abortions. Is that really all there is to it? Or is that goal only part of a larger goal of transforming family life, gender relations, and the relationship between church and state in American life (Luker, 1984)? Some individual participants might talk about a specific concern—abortion—but others, including leaders, might refer to a vision of society that challenges the individualism and secularism they believe currently prevails. Thus, we will use the reform/revolution dichotomy very cautiously, keeping in mind that a movement may have elements of both, shifting back and forth in different situations or for different types of supporters.

Left and Right? A second major typology that is often used in the study of political movements is the distinction between the **left** and the **right**. This spatial metaphor derived from seating in the Assembly, a parliamentary body that was part of the government of France during the period of the French Revolution. The further left a person sat the more he favored radical measures of redistributing property to poorer people and undoing the power of the monarchy and the nobility. The right was the area of the conservatives, who favored protecting existing property rights and undertaking only limited changes in the political system.

Since then, the core of the left has come to be associated with socialist and communist movements; more generally, it stands for an emphasis on human equality and takes the view that rights to survival and physical well-being supersede property rights. The left is more inclined to make systemic changes. The right is more conservative, less inclined to challenge existing institutions, more convinced that hierarchy and continuity of traditions, rather than equality, are essential in human society, and more sympathetic toward property rights.

Rather than think about left-right as a dichotomy, it is more useful to think of it as a spectrum. Socialists and communists are clearly left; Reagan and Thatcher conservatives (and their successors) are fairly clearly right. There is also a center, somewhere between these two positions. Movements, parties, and points of view can be placed along the spectrum. For example, in the United States, the Democratic Party is left of the Republicans, but not very far left on the spectrum as a whole.

This distinction breaks down at times, however. Left/right really covers several dimensions: One is the attitude toward economic equality—the left is more strongly for it, the right does not give it high priority. So far, the distinction is fairly clear, but the spectrum becomes more complicated when we add other dimensions of ideology to the issue of economic equality. The second dimension is government control over individual behavior. The third dimension is the attitude toward the power of the state in general. Once we add these last two dimensions the spectrum becomes less clear.

The left includes forces that would strengthen state power, especially in the economic sphere, and forces that would reduce it, especially in the sphere of personal liberties. Traditionally, the left has been willing to use the power of the state to promote more economic equality. However, there are substantial parts of the left that would like to reduce the power of the state, and especially the power of the state to regulate personal behavior. This libertarian left, which was quite a strong current in the New Left of the 1960s, would like to eliminate or reduce laws like antisodomy laws or harsh penalties for drug use.

The right is generally opposed to having the state do things like regulate business or redistribute tax revenues to equalize economic standing; but some parts of the right are not opposed to having the state regulate personal behavior, so it cannot really be said that all of the right is consistently for less government. Examples of the right's willingness to use government to regulate personal behavior include the Reagan-Bush war on drugs and the passing of laws restricting access to abortions, a policy supported by the right wing of the Republican Party.

In Latin America, right-wing military dictatorships have intervened deeply in their societies, restricting civil rights and using the power of the state to suppress dissent and prevent political organization. Movements and regimes described as "far right"—like the Italian Fascists and the Nazis—were active in regulating and directing the economy. They left enterprises in private ownership but did not shy away from interfering with the market mechanism.

As you can see, the left/right distinction holds up fairly well in the middle of the spectrum. For example, in the United States, we might place Reagan conservatives on the right; next are moderate Republicans and conservative Democrats; then, a bit further to the left, liberal Democrats; and leftmost, moderate socialists. In the middle of the spectrum the terms *progressive* and *conservative* are often used to refer to the left and right positions. Progressives see themselves as working for progress toward more social and economic equality and a more democratic political system. Conservatives see themselves as preserving a more laissez-faire type of economy and more traditional forms of family life.

The problems of the left/right distinction are more serious near the ends of the spectrum. Both ends tend to split over questions of state power; the split separates libertarians from proponents of the strong state, on both the left and the right. At the far left, we can find anarchists and left-wing libertarians (pro-economic equality, anti-state power) as well as supporters of centralized redistribution (extensive state involvement in society in the name of a vision of social equality in the future) (Polanyi, 1957). At the far right, we can find right-

wing libertarians (pro-free market, anti-state power) as well as fascists and right-wing authoritarians (extensive state involvement in society and economy, support for a strong state, little concern for socioeconomic equality, and explicit opposition to equality), and right-wing anarchists.

Alliances and coalitions can form at each end of the spectrum, but these alliances may be unstable or unable to agree on policies. For example, in the elections in the spring of 1994 in Italy, the neofascist sectors of the right that supported a strong centralized state and extensive state enterprise entered into an electoral alliance with right-wing political groups that called for a weaker state, cuts in spending, extensive tax cuts, privatization of state-run services and enterprises, and a federal structure in place of a centralized one. Although all the forces in this electoral alliance are considered right wing, they had difficulty in agreeing on a single program for a governing coalition (Leonardi, 1994).

"Post" Left and Right? Theorists of the postmodern often imply that part of postmodernity is that the left/right distinction no longer makes much sense. The left/right dimension has run into problems with the collapse of the political systems headed by Communist parties in eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. The disappearance of such a powerfully institutionalized left position has made it more difficult to define "leftness."

Surveying the scene in Moscow or Warsaw, journalists and social scientists have trouble deciding who is left or right, and find it easier to use the terms liberal and conservative. Liberals favor more market mechanisms and western-style democracy; conservatives favor a return to central planning and a stronger state. This usage of terms is quite different from the standard U.S. usage, but closer to the original meaning of liberal and conservative in the nineteenth century. It is difficult to match the liberals and conservatives with a left or right position in this case.

Movements like religious fundamentalism and ethnic nationalism that have emerged with great vigor after the end of the cold war often do not seem to fall very neatly on the left/right spectrum. Therefore, the left/right typology has to be used with great caution and precision, and with full recognition of shifting ideologies in the post-cold war world. I believe it is still useful in many contexts.

STOP

THE SUPPORT BASE

A second major characteristic of a movement is the support base; this term refers to categories of people likely to agree with the movement's ideology and participate in its practices. Usually, social scientists identify the support base in terms of certain demographic characteristics: social class, ethnicity, religion, gender, age, occupation, region of residence, and so on. Of course, these characterizations of the support base do not apply to every single individual. They are just statements about relatively higher rates of involvement. For example, historians studying the composition of the Nazi Party in the 1930s found that proportionately more lower-middle-class than working-class people were