

Foreword

This eleventh volume of *Scandinavian Political Studies* in a sense marks a milestone in the development of political science in the Nordic area. For the first time the yearbook is sponsored by the newly formed Nordic Political Science Association (NPSA). Comprised of representatives from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden, it will be charged with formally promoting the discipline in the region. In a short article in the review section, Kjell Eliassen, secretary of the Association, summarizes the history of cooperative efforts in Scandinavian political science and outlines the future plans of NPSA.

This first volume under our new sponsor reflects the richness of diverse research topics and approaches found in our region. The first article by Ólafur Grímsson provides the reader with several important insights into Icelandic social structure. He traces through two centuries the interrelations and familial ties of the ruling elites on the island and attempts a prediction of future development. The scope of material and depth of analysis draw attention to the chief areas of political science research at the University of Iceland and are symbolic of the rapid development of social science in general in Iceland over the past five years.

The next two articles in the volume deal with a topic which has attracted the attention of an increasing number of social scientists in recent years: political mobilization in rural areas. To gain a better understanding of the peculiarities of peasant societies, Øyvind Østerud presents a conceptual exploration of the class quality of peasantry. After looking at this group as a mode of production, as a social organization, and through interconnections to the wider social order, he cautions against accepting too rigid formal criteria for defining class boundaries. Risto Alapuro's contribution focuses on the political mobilization of the rural population in Finland before the First World War. He introduces a new hypothesis that the penetration of capitalism into the countryside may serve to explain the heavy support for the Social Democratic Party in early elections. Citing data from several regions of the country he presents a convincing argument that in areas where farmers became dependent on sales of timber to timber companies, support for the leftist movement was greatest.

The next two articles center on the topical concern in political science for welfare and the role of the state in allocating certain goods and services. Per Arnt Pettersen focuses on 'inputs' of state involvement in welfare by presenting an interesting framework for studying changing conceptions of social inequality held by members of the Norwegian Parliament. He shows how in early discussions of

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welfare legislation in Norway, party groups determined policy positions and level of participation in welfare debates. Tuomo Martikainen and Risto Yrjönen, on the other hand, are more concerned with the 'output' of policies and control strategies by the central government in Finland in the production and distribution of public services. They introduce the notion of 'invariance' into their theoretical analysis and conclude, on the basis of a case study, that egalitarian control does not remove the effects of local peculiarities in determining service levels.

In our only article touching on the field of international relations, Hans Henrik Bruun poses the question of how the workings of foreign-policy departments influence the capability of political leaders to make foreign-policy decisions. He puts forward the argument that the concepts of information flow and time are crucial aspects impeding or reinforcing this relationship.

Political parties are the focus of the two articles which follow. Henrik Hermerén analyzes cabinet formation in six small European democracies and proposes a model for the assignment of tasks of forming a government in parliamentary multi-party systems. The dramatic rise of the populist Progress Party in Denmark is the subject of two closely related articles by Hans Jørgen Nielsen and Steen Sauerberg. They both suggest that this success constitutes an 'uncivic' political culture of sorts. Nielsen bases his judgment on survey findings that Progress Party supporters are more distrustful and authoritarian than supporters for other parties. This view is corroborated by Sauerberg, who goes on to show that, contrary to expectations, switching to the Progress Party was associated with above-average political interest and communication activity.

The two election review articles are studies in opposites. Henry Valen reports on the municipal elections in Norway in September 1975, and, on the basis of panel-survey data, concludes that major shifts in support from the socialist to non-socialist parties may be taking place in the electorate. Pertti Suhonen, on the other hand, notes in his summary of the parliamentary elections held in Finland in the same month that voting allegiances have changed remarkably little since the 1972 election.

To conclude our volume we include a selected bibliography of major Nordic political science publications which appeared during 1974 and 1975. We thank Helen Aareskjold from Bergen for compiling this considerable material.

Volume 11 brings to a close eleven years of publication of the yearbook and the two year turn at editing SPS in Finland. Next year a special commemorative issue celebrating ten years of publication of the yearbook will appear. Our heartfelt thanks to all colleagues and friends who made volumes 10 and 11 possible: to the political science associations in the respective countries for their support, to the national social science research councils for financial help, to the authors for their wisdom and patience, to the staff at Universitetsforlaget for their counsel and administrative skills, and to many other associates too numerous to mention.

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Erik Allardt

David Matheson