Contents

PART ONE. THE MODE OF ANALYSIS

1. The Form of Theoretical Anaylsis 3

The Changing Image of Political Theory, 3
The Properties of General Theories, 6
Strategies in Theorizing, 9
The Invention of Conceptual Structures, 10
The Central Problem of General Theory, 13

2. Some Fundamental Categories of Analysis 17

Political Life as an Open and Adaptive System, 17
Equilibrium Analysis and Its Shortcomings, 19
Minimal Concepts for a Systems Analysis, 21
The Linkage Variables between Systems, 25
Demands and Support as Input Indicators, 26
Outputs and Feedback, 27
A Flow Model of the Political System, 29

PART TWO. THE INPUT OF DEMANDS

3. Demands as the Inputs of a System 37

The Concept Defined, 38
Exclusions from the Category of Demands, 41
Demands as the Major Informational Input, 47
The Relationship of Demands to Support, 50
The Meaning of the "Input" of a Demand, 52
The Sources Stimulating Inputs of Demands, 54

4. Demands as Source of Stress 57

Types of Demand Stress, 57
Volume Stress, 60
Content Stress, 66
Time and Stress, 67

5. Conversion of Wants to Demands 70

The Flow of Demands, 70
The Flow Model, 73
The Voicing of Demands, 80
The Conversion of Wants to Demands, 81

6. Regulation of Want Conversion: Structural Mechanisms 85

Types of Structural Regulators, 86
Gatekeeping, 87
The Effects of Structural Differentiation, 92

7. Regulation of Want Conversion: Cultural Mechanisms 100

The Significance of Cultural Norms as Regulators, 101
Content Sensitivity: Central Values, 106
Regulation under Conditions of Popular Involvement, 108

8. Regulation of the Flow of Demands: The Communication Channels 117

The Flow Channels of Demands, 117
Channel Capacity, 119
Responses to Channel Failure, 123

9. Regulation of the Flow of Demands: Reduction Processes 128

The Function of Demand Reduction, 128
Reduction through Collection and Combination, 130
Reduction through Intrasystem Gatekeeping, 133
Reduction through Issue Formulation, 140

PART THREE. THE INPUT OF SUPPORT

10. Support as an Input of Systems 153

The Significance of Support, 154
The Domain of Support, 157
Meaning of Support, 159
Measurement of Support, 161
Additional Dimensions, 164

11. Objects of Support: The Political Community 171

The Basic Political Objects, 171
Alternative Uses of the Concept "Community," 172

The Political Community: Definition, 177
Systemic and Community Changes, 179
Levels of Political Communities, 180
Society, Community, and Political Community, 182
The Sense of Political Community, 184

12. Objects of Support: The Regime 190

The Function of the Regime, 191
The Components of the Regime, 193
Regime Values and Principles, 194
Regime Norms, 200
Regime Structure, 204

13. Objects of Support: The Authorities 212

The Concept "Authorities," 212
The Power of the Authorities, 214
The Function of Political Authorities, 215
The Existing Empirical Base, 217

14. Stress Through the Erosion of Support 220

Decline in Support—Its Meaning, 221
The Mediation of Support, 225

15. Cleavage as a Source of Stress 230

Output Failure, 230
The Meaning of Cleavage, 233
The Consequences of Cleavages, 236

PART FOUR. RESPONSES TO STRESS ON SUPPORT

16. Structural Regulation of Support 247

Regulation of Support: Introduction, 247
Homogenization, 249
Expressive Structures, 250
Representative Structures as a Response, 251
The Intersection of Political Structures, 256
Modifications in Regime Norms, 259

17. The Generation of Diffuse Support 267

Outputs and Specific Support, 267
The Insufficiency of Specific Support, 269

The Validation of Compromise, 271
Diffuse Support, 273
General Types of Responses to Stress, 275

18. Diffuse Support for Authorities and Regime: The Belief in Legitimacy 278

The Need for Legitimacy, 278
The Universality of a Belief in Legitimacy, 281
The Objects and Types of Legitimacy, 286

19. Sources of Legitimacy 289

Ideological Sources of Legitimacy, 289
The Objects of Legitimating Ideologies, 292
The Mobilizing Potential of Ideologies, 293
Structural Sources of Legitimacy, 298
The Personal Basis of Legitimacy, 302
Omnibus Legitimating Responses, 307
The Psychological Need to Believe, 309

20. Diffuse Support for Authorities and Regime: The Belief in a Common Interest 311

The Idea of a Common Interest, 311
Its Solidary Effects, 312
The Common Good as an Internalized Norm, 315
Instrumental Structural Responses, 316
Limitations on the Authorities, 317

21. Diffuse Support for the Political Community 320

Modifications in the Regime as a Response, 320
The Inadequacy of Regime Changes, 323
The Sense of Political Community, 325
Stimulation of a Sense of Political Community: Parameters as Responses, 327
Stimulation of a Sense of Political Community: Political Variables as Responses, 331
A Note on Ideologies and Diffuse Support, 334

PART FIVE. OUTPUTS AS REGULATORS OF SPECIFIC SUPPORT

22. The Nature of Outputs 343

Transactions between a System and Its Environment, 344

General Properties of Outputs, 348
Types of Outputs, 352
Authoritative Outputs, 354
Associated Outputs, 357

23. The Feedback Loop 363

Basic Assumptions, 363
Information Feedback about Outputs, 364
The General Functions of Feedback, 367
Feedback and the Political System, 372
Varieties of Feedback Loops, 372
The Systemic Feedback Loop, 376

24. The Feedback Stimuli 382

Outputs as Stimuli, 382
Circumstantial Feedback Stimuli, 383
Perceived Feedback Stimuli, 387
Conditions of False Perception, 391
Reality Testing of Outputs, 395
Mediation of Output Stimuli, 397
Particularity and Patterning of Output Stimuli, 399

25. The Feedback Response 401

The Responders to Feedback Stimuli, 401
Assessment of Feedback Response, 402
Output Success and Output Failure, 403

26. The Communication of Feedback Response 411

Information about Responses, 411
Accuracy and Distortion of Information, 413
Time Lags and Delays, 415
Determinants of Delay: The Feedback Channels, 417
Determinants of Delay: Number of Receptors of Feedback Response, 420
Determinants of Delay: Storage and Release of Feedback Response, 421

27. Output Reaction—I 430

The Authorities as the Output Units, 431
Responsiveness to Feedback, 433
Output Lag, 441

28. Output Reaction—II 448

External Resources, 448
Internal Resources: Talent of the Authorities, 451
Internal Resources: Decision Rules, 454
Outputs and Diffuse Support, 464
Reprise of the Function of Support, 466

PART SIX. CONCLUSION

29. The Goals of Systems Analysis 471

Criteria of Theoretical Adequacy, 472
An Alternative Theoretical Question, 473
The Dynamic Character of Systems Analysis, 477
General Theory and the Long View, 479
Illusions about Theory, 482

Index 491

DIAGRAMS

1 *A Dynamic Response Model of a Political System, 30*
2 *A Simplified Model of a Political System, 32*
3 *Types of Demand Flow Patterns, 74*
4 *Support Scale, 163*
5 *Multiple Feedback Loops of a Political System, 374*
6 *The Systemic Feedback Loop, 378*
7 *The Four Phases of the Systemic Feedback Loop, 381*

TABLES

1 *Components of the Total Environment of a Political System, 23*
2 *Logical Types of Flow Channels, 77*
3 *Types of Legitimacy, 287*
4 *Omnibus Ideologies and Diffuse Support, 338*
5 *Types of Outputs, 353*