

SUMMARIES

New Challenges to Governance Theory

by Renate Mayntz

The subject of this article is the development, and the successive modifications of a theory of political governance. The term «governance», which, being long equated with «governing» – the process aspect of government – was originally intended in the narrow sense of «steering», has recently acquired different meanings, referring to non-hierarchical modes of coordination and basic forms of social order. The author traces the successive paradigm shifts of governance theory, which has gradually extended its analytical framework to adjust to the empirical challenges advanced by the Europeanization and globalization processes, and discusses an important issue about the (cumulative *vs.* contingent) nature of theory development in political science.

On the Concept of Political Generation

by Gianfranco Bettin Lattes

A systematic analysis of the concept of political generation as a tool to highlight continuities and ruptures in social and political history is proposed starting from Ortega y Gasset's and Mannheim's seminal contributions. In order to operationalize the political generation concept, three types of factors which influence generational identities must be taken into account: age, cohort, and period effects. Some contemporary approaches referring to these dimensions are critically assessed, in view of a comparative analysis of the impact of different political generations on the political culture of today's Europe. In conclusion, macrosocial processes – such as new forms of political communication and mass unemployment – on the persistent cycle of political disaffection of the younger generations of Europeans are in-

licated as elements which affect a particularly problematic new political generation.

The Role of the Northern League in the Transformation of the Italian Political System

by Roberto Biorcio

The Northern League has played a fundamental role in the transformation of the Italian political system. The action of the new party had effects on different levels. First and foremost the Northern League contributed decisively to the crisis of the government parties in the years from 1989 to 1993, undermining their electoral consensus in the regions of Northern Italy. The Northern League deeply transformed the language, themes, issues and alliances which had characterized Italian political life in the previous thirty years. So the new party made a decisive contribution to the change in Italian political culture, which marked the birth of the so-called «Second Republic». In very few years the Northern League has succeeded in becoming the largest party in the regions of Northern Italy. The new party has gradually built an organisation with a capillary network of branches throughout the area, and a system of support organizations. In the process it has radically changed politics in Northern Italy by acting as a third pole ready to exploit every opportunity to feed popular protest. This essay analyzes both the fundamental characteristics of the new political subject and the ways the League's political initiatives have influenced changes in the Italian political system.

Forza Italia's Local Political Class

by Alessandro Tonarelli

In this article the author discusses the results of a survey carried out on a sample of Forza Italia's (FI) members elected in the municipal, provincial and regional councils in the 1995 local elections. Two issues are investigated: the recruitment pattern of FI local *élite* and its offer of political representation. The article shows that the new center-right party does not maintain a tight rein on the candidate selection process, allowing alternative actors such as economic interest groups, local associations, friendship and other social networks to propose candidates. Another important, though not predominant, feature of FI recruitment pattern is the enrollment of politicians who had minor roles, without executive responsibilities, in the governing parties of the First Republic. FI seems to have combined these two different

strategies in a «syncretic pattern». The final result is a local *élite* characterized by professional politicians but also a new significant role for candidates from the private sector, particularly small employers, craftsmen, shopkeepers and professionals. Regarding the second question – the type of representation offer – the three indicators adopted in the survey – the local administrators' affiliation with interest groups, their professional background, and their ranking of preferred social groups – show that FI has adopted a clear pro-business profile both at the national and local level.

Why Policies Change: The Case of Transports

by Mauro Tebaldi

Most theoretical reflections on policy change are connected to the weak generalisation that policy network stability deeply affects the stability of the policy process and its outcomes as a whole. As a result we could expect policy inertia when inter-organisational relations are principally characterised by strong ties among consolidated and stable sets of actors. Changes of the policy paradigm could eventually intervene when exogenous factors alter the inner balances of the policy network. This analysis focused on transport policy in five nations shows that the paradigm shift from the nationalisation to the liberalisation of collective transports represented a shared governmental priority during the '90s. Nevertheless, changes of the policy paradigm happened only in those countries where transport policies were highly institutionalised while they were less evident or totally ineffective in cases of low policy institutionalisation. This finding strengthens the hypothesis which considers endogenous factors, rather than exogenous ones, as key variables for policy change and the institutionalisation of public policies as a crucial process to understand their variance.