POLITICAL SCIENCES

BIPARTISANSHIP AS A TOOL OF POLITICAL ACCOUNTABILITY: AN ANALYSIS OF THE EXPERIENCES OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

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Annotation. This paper analyzes the bipartite political system and its influence on political accountability. The authors examine the characteristics of bipartisanship using the examples of the United States and the United Kingdom, as well as assess the potential for its adaptation in Ukraine. Particular attention is given to the challenges faced by such systems and the conditions necessary for their effective implementation.

Keywords: bipartite system, political accountability, electoral system, stability, Ukraine.

Bipartisanship is one of the most prevalent forms of political systems that ensures a clear structure of political accountability. It entails the dominance of two primary political parties that compete for control over the government. This system allows voters to more easily evaluate the actions of the ruling party and its opponent, thereby contributing to an increase in political accountability.

According to N. Semenov, the bipartite system is based on a majoritarian electoral system, which creates conditions for the formation of governments without the participation of smaller parties. The main features of such a system include the presence of two dominant parties, ongoing political competition between them, and clear accountability to the electorate [1].

In the context of political accountability, bipartisanship enables citizens to directly assess the performance of governments, as voters have the opportunity to change the ruling party in case of dissatisfaction with its actions.

In the United States of America, the bipartite system emerged as a result of historical events, such as the struggle between Federalists and Anti-Federalists. The Democratic and Republican parties have become the primary political forces dominating the country's political life.

It is noteworthy that bipartisanship in the U.S. ensures political accountability, as voters can clearly evaluate the actions of the ruling party and its opponent. Elections serve as an important mechanism that allows citizens to express their attitudes toward government performance.

Firstly, it provides predictability in political processes. Voters know that the main parties have clear platforms and programs, fostering trust in the political system. This predictability reduces the risk of political crises, as citizens have the option to choose between two stable alternatives.

Secondly, the bipartite system reduces political fragmentation. In countries with multiparty systems, coalition governments often arise, which can be unstable. The example of the U.S. illustrates that, due to the dominance of two parties, the formation of governments occurs more smoothly, allowing for quicker decision-making. This is particularly important during crises when rapid responses to challenges are necessary.

On the other hand, the bipartite system in the U.S. also faces certain challenges. Political polarization observed in recent years can lead to conflicts between parties, complicating the decision-making process. Specifically, during Donald Trump's presidency in 2017, numerous attempts were made by Democrats to

block legislative initiatives, which complicated governance.

Furthermore, in 2018, during budget negotiations, a partial government shutdown occurred as a result of disputes between Republicans and Democrats over funding for a wall on the Mexican border. This shutdown lasted for 35 days and became the longest in U.S. history [2].

However, despite these difficulties, bipartisanship continues to play a crucial role in ensuring political accountability. It creates a clear structure for citizens, who can change the government in case of dissatisfaction. This can be explained by the fact that the electoral system allows voters to directly influence the political course of the country by voting for one of the two major parties.

Another example is the United Kingdom. As one of the first countries to implement a bipartite system, it demonstrates how this type of system can support political stability. The Conservative and Labour parties alternately come to power, ensuring a clear distinction between the ruling and opposition forces.

Firstly, it promotes government stability, as voters know that either of the two main parties that comes to power has clear programs and platforms [3]. This approach allows citizens to build trust in the political system, which, in turn, reduces the risk of political crises.

It is important to note that regular elections serve as a mechanism for controlling government actions. If the ruling party fails to fulfill its promises or does not respond to the needs of the population, voters can opt for an alternative, stimulating political accountability. This, in turn, encourages parties to adhere to their programs and work for the benefit of society.

However, it should be noted that the two-party system in the United Kingdom also has its drawbacks. The limited representation of smaller parties can lead to voter alienation, as constituents may feel that their interests are not adequately represented.

In this context, the results of the 2019 general elections revealed that the Liberal Democrats, despite significant support, secured only 11 seats in Parliament, which sparked outrage among voters seeking greater political representation.

Moreover, political polarization observed in recent years can complicate the

decision-making process. For instance, Brexit has emerged as a complex political challenge that has divided society into pro-European and nationalist sentiments. This division has made it difficult to establish a clear political stance, as both major parties have adopted differing approaches to address the issue. Ultimately, this polarization has resulted in substantial legislative delays and heightened political tension.

It is crucial to emphasize that several conditions may facilitate the establishment of a two-party system. One key factor is the implementation of electoral reform that ensures a majoritarian voting system.

The question of the electoral system has been aptly discussed by Shapovalova A.M. and Hergalo A.I. In their work, the authors analyze how changes in electoral legislation have impacted the party structure of the Ukrainian state and the potential for establishing a two-party model. Accordingly, reforming the electoral system, particularly transitioning to a majoritarian model, may be one of the factors that contribute to the formation of two dominant political forces in Ukraine.

Thus, it is entirely reasonable to conclude that, drawing from the experiences of the United States and the United Kingdom, where the majoritarian system fosters the emergence of two main parties, Ukraine should consider the possibility of implementing similar mechanisms. This may include the introduction of single-member districts, which would complicate competition for smaller parties and promote the establishment of two dominant political forces.

We believe that enhancing political awareness among citizens is also an important aspect. Voter education and the activation of civil society can play a crucial role in stimulating support for stable political forces. For example, campaigns like #StandWithUkraine, which are actively utilized on social media, can strengthen the connection between politicians and voters, fostering greater interest in political processes.

In light of the aforementioned, the two-party system serves as a significant instrument of political responsibility, ensuring stability and clarity within the political process. The experiences of the United States and the United Kingdom demonstrate that an effective two-party system can enhance the level of accountability among

political actors to their constituents.

Finally, in Ukraine, despite existing challenges, there are opportunities for the formation of a two-party system; however, their realization requires a comprehensive approach to reforming the political system and activating civil society.

Given contemporary challenges, Ukraine should examine the experience of two-party systems to adapt it to its realities, thereby enhancing the level of political responsibility and stability within the state.

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