

FINANCING THE POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

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ABSTRACT

The financing of political parties did not emerge as a matter of public dispute when the Federal Republic of Germany came into being in 1949. It was in fact regarded as an internal affair of the party and the nation should not intervene. But as the expense of election grew and as it became more and more difficult to raise campaigns funds, some measures of tax reduction for political contributions and national subsidies were introduced.

These measures were originally meant to secure the independence of all political parties in their constitutional mission to construct the political will of the nation. This, however, surprisingly evoked serious disputes. The cope of criticism lay in the fact that the major political parties were able to mobilize resources. This even invited complaints from the general public about party politics.

What are the causes of these changes and disputes? What is the background of these disputes? How is the financial condition of each party? What are the impacts of financial regulations of political parties on German politics? What can we learn from the German experience? These are the main issues to be examined in this paper.