Forms of Democratic Government: Presidentialism vs. Parliamentarism

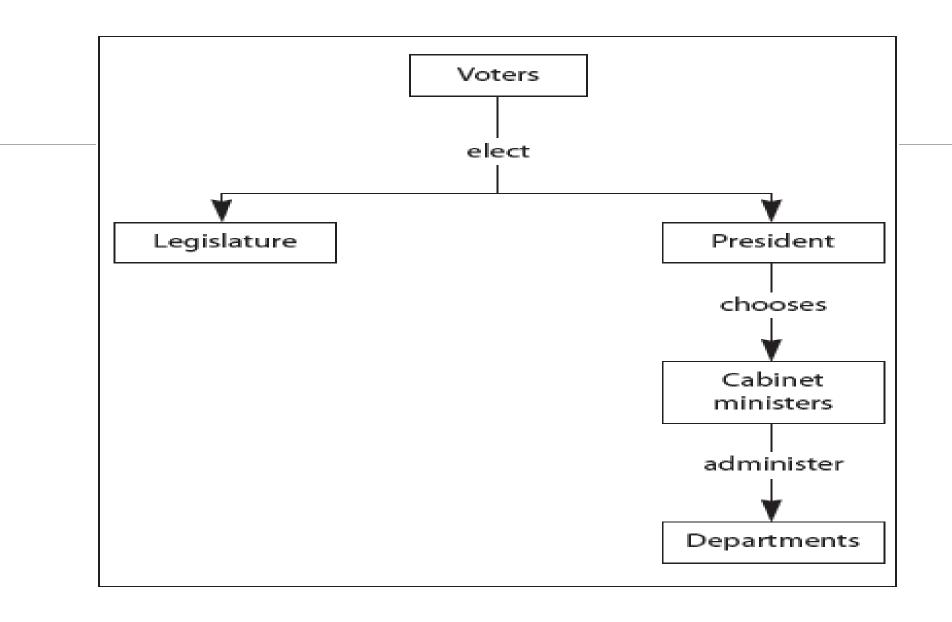
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Presidentialism

Presidential government consists of three features:

- popular election of the president who directs the government and makes appointments to it
- fixed terms of offices for the president and the assembly, neither of which can bring down the other
- no overlap in membership between the executive and the legislature.



THE PRESIDENT



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Council of Economic Advisers
Council on Environmental Quality
Domestic Policy Council
National Economic Council
National Security Council
Office of Administration
Office of Management and Budget
Office of National Drug Control Policy

Office of Science and Technology Policy
Office of the United States Trade
Representative
President's Intelligence Advisory Board
and Intelligence Oversight Board
White House Military Office
White House Office

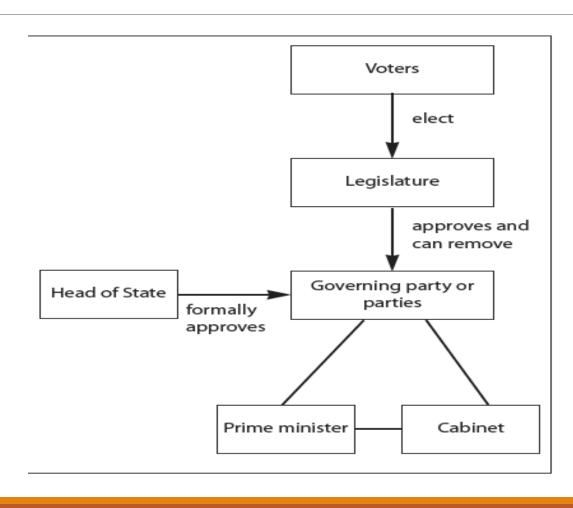
THE CABINET Department Department Department of Defense of Justice of State Department Department of Health Department of Department of of Homeland and Human the Treasury Agriculture Security Services: Department of Housing Department of Department of Department and Urban the Interior Commerce of Labor Development **Department** Department of Department Department of Veterans of Education Transportation of Energy Affaire

INDEPENDENT ESTABLISHMENTS AND GOVERNMENT CORPORATIONS

Parliamentarism

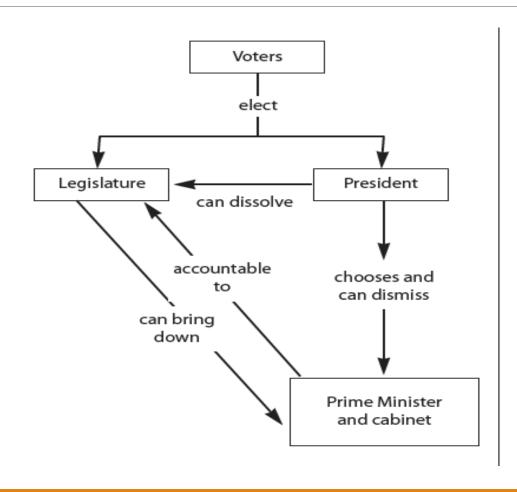
Parliamentary government has three main features:

- The governing parties emerge from the assembly. Government ministers are usually drawn from, and remain members of, the legislature.
- The head of the government (called prime minister, premier or chancellor) and the council of ministers (usually called the cabinet) can be dismissed from office through a vote of no confidence by parliament. The post of prime minister is normally separate from that of a ceremonial head of state.
- The executive is collegial, taking the form of a cabinet in which the prime minister is traditionally just first among equals. This plural executive contrasts with the focus in presidential government on a single chief executive.



Semi-presidentialism

Semi-presidential government, sometimes called the dual executive or premier-presidentialism, combines an elected president performing political tasks with a prime minister who heads a cabinet accountable to parliament. The prime minister, usually appointed by the president, is responsible for day-to-day domestic government but the president retains an oversight role, responsibility for foreign affairs and can usually take emergency powers. The Fifth French Republic is the leading example (Shugart and Carey, 1992).



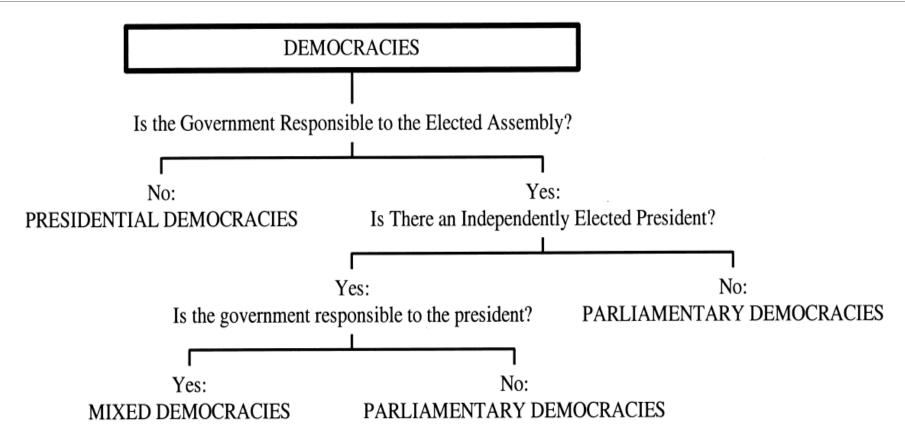


Figure 2.1 Classifying Forms of Democratic Government.

| | Presidential | Parliamentary |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Plurality Elections | United States Philippines | United Kingdom Old Commonwealth India Malaysia Jamaica |
| Proportional Representation | Latin America | Western Europe |