CHAPTER II

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK OF SOVIET ADMINISTRATION
CHAPTER II

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK OF SOVIET ADMINISTRATION

The Soviet regime operated what was probably the World's largest and most complex series of integrated bureaucratic structures. The Soviet administration was run by means of numerous ministries and related agencies, as well as government corporations and state-owned economic enterprises. Soviet society was highly administered and the influence of the centre was felt throughout the country. Each Soviet below the republic level had an executive committee (ispolkom) that, in theory, supervised the administrative departments required by its particular jurisdiction and economy. In practice these departments were also subordinated to the concerned ministry or agency of union republic or All-union jurisdiction. The size and scope of the Soviet administrative apparatus, its responsibility for managing the state owned economy, and its many distinctive features set it apart from the more conventional administrative structures found in liberal constitutional system. Therefore it had two major purposes, that were highly different in nature compared to the liberal constitutional system. The chief purpose was to preserve the integrity and cohesiveness of centralized political control; the secondary purpose was to promote economic growth, measured primarily in
terms of heavy industry directed to its own and to military needs. These two purposes were complimentary, since political control of the economy was the vital means of maintaining the centralized command system of the Soviet Union, where as a strong economy was vital to the Soviet Union’s position in the world. This chapter undertakes the study of institutional framework of Soviet administrative system through which command administrative system run, and which was also to a great extent responsible for the emergence of bureaucratic phenomena. This approach is essential for a clear understanding of administrative evolution, its reformation, its criticism etc. during the whole period of command administrative system.

1. Structure of Administration

There were two parallel structures of administration in Soviet Union, one of them belonged to the Party and the other to the government. Many departments of Secretariat of the Party's Central Committee were exclusively concerned with economic matters, while a number of others, like those for sciences and education and for army and navy general administration, had multiple functions that had economic effects. Those departments had their prototypes at lower territorial levels, as at the centre, with the bureaucratic agencies of the
Theoretical Structure of the Soviet National Government

**USSR SUPREME SOVET**
- **Council of Ministers**
  - The chairman of the Council of Ministers is the premier of the USSR
  - Responsible and accountable to the Supreme Soviet.
  - Coordinates and directs the work of the ministries and other administrative bodies.
  - Ensures execution of the national economic plan and the state budget.
  - Ensures the maintenance of public order and the protection of the interests of the state & the rights of its citizens.
  - Directs the conduct of foreign policy.
  - Directs the general organization of the armed forces.
  - Ministries (All-Union and Union Republic) and chairman of state committees
  - Directs state administration within their jurisdiction.
  - Issues orders and instructions in pursuance of laws in operation and decisions and orders of the Council of Ministers.

**Presidium**
- The chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet is nominal head of state
- Convenes sessions of the Supreme Soviet.
- Issues decrees.
- Interprets laws.
- Dissolves the Supreme Soviet in case of persistent disagreement between the two chambers.
- In intervals between sessions of the Supreme Soviet, subject to subsequent confirmation, releases and appoints ministers of the USSR on the recommendation of the chairman of the Council of Ministers.
- In intervals between sessions of the Supreme Soviet, proclaims a state of war in case of attack or to carry out treaty obligations.
- Annuls decisions and orders of the Council of Ministers which do not conform to law.
- Appoints and removes high military and diplomatic officials.
- Ratifies and denounces treaties.
- Orders mobilization and proclaims martial law.

**Supreme Court**
- Elected by the Supreme Soviet for an eight-year term.
- Supervises the judicial organs of the USSR and the Union republics.

**Public Prosecutor**
- Procurator general
  - Appointed by the Supreme Soviet for a seven-year term.
- Ensures the strict observance of the law by all ministries, officials and citizens of the USSR.

government. These later state agencies were coordinated, at least technically, by the Council of Ministers, in which all economic fields were directly represented.

**Supreme Soviet**

The formal structure within which the Soviet officials worked were complex, intricate and illusory. Constitutionally, the Soviet government was a federal union of Soviet Socialist Republic, with the highest organ of state power being the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, a bicameral legislature made of the Soviet of Union and the Soviet of Nationalities. The first chamber consisted of deputies directly elected and the second of deputies representing units in the federal system. The Supreme Soviet was elected every five years and the constitution required that sessions be held at least twice a year.

Exercising formal authority between the annual sessions of the Supreme Soviet was a thirty-five members Presidium, consisting of the heads of the fifteen Union Republics and twenty members elected by the Supreme Soviet, including the President of the Presidium, who also served as a head of the state. The Article 108 of the 1977 constitution defines the Supreme Soviet as 'the highest organs of state power in the USSR' and has the exclusive effective
legislative power of the USSR. But in actuality, the effective legislative power was exercised by the Presidium, which was, however, accountable to the Supreme Soviet. The Supreme Soviet was also entrusted with the appointment of Council of Ministers (Article 122), bearing direct responsibility for normal state functions and for running of the economy. Its power included 'the adoption and amendment of the constitution of the USSR: the admission of new republics to the USSR, endorsement of the formation of new Autonomous Republics and Autonomous Regions; approval of the plans for economic and social development, of the budget of the USSR, and of reports on their execution; and the institution of bodies of the USSR accountable to it (Article 108)'.

Ministries and Related Agencies:

There were three types of ministries in the Soviet Union: the All-Union, Union-Republics and Republic Ministries. The All-Union ministries were situated only in Moscow and were exclusively in the jurisdiction of the centre; they were functioning directly over the entire territory of Soviet Union and did not operate through republic ministries of the same name, although

2. Ibid, p.275.
they might have had field offices. For example of All-
Union ministries like foreign trade, merchant marine,
railroad and variety of industrial ministries were all-
Union ministries. The second type of ministry, the
Union-Republican, was a joint type found both in the
USSR Council of Ministers and in the Union Republic
Council of Ministers. Each such ministry in Moscow
functioned in the field through the Union republic
ministries of the same name. The Union-Republic
category included such ministries as foreign affairs,
culture, finance, public health, higher and specialized
secondary education, communications, agriculture and a
variety of economic ministries. The third type of
ministry was found only at the republic level and
included social insurance, communal economy and
vehicular transpor-tation and highways.5

Some ministries of the first and second type had
been consolidated or divided at times. The regime had
also employed variety of "state committees": that were
supra-agencies charged with planning, coordinating and
verifying the works of ministries dealing with common
problems. Examples are Gosplan, the State Planning
Committee and Gostroi, the State Committee for
Construction, as well as the USSR State Committees for
professional-technical education, standards, inventions

5. John S. Reshetar Jr. The Soviet Polity :
Government Politics in the USSR (New York, 1978),
p.212.
and discoveries, forestry economy and foreign economic relations. Those committees that were of the Council of Ministers had the status of ministries, while other had subordinate status, indicating that they were attached to the Council of Ministers.6

The various special agencies that were below ministerial status include State Committees, Committees, main Administrations and a Council. Such agencies were established by the Council of Ministers and not by the Supreme Soviet as ministries were. The functions for which they were established were too specialised and of insufficient importance to be given ministerial status and the heads of such agencies were not members of the Council of Ministers but had the right to speak at its meetings. The special agencies had included the State Committee on the uses of Atomic Energy, the State Committee for Safety Inspection in industry and Mining, the Committee for Physical Culture and Sports, the main Administration for Geodesy and Cartography and the Council for Religious Affairs.7

The Committee of State Security provides an example of a "Committee" that was actually a powerful ministry of the second (Union Republican) type and that had subordinate to it "Committees" of the same name in the republic councils of ministries. The Civil air

fleet (Aeroflot) was organised as a Main Administration attached to the Council of Ministers until 1964, when it was given the status of an All-Union ministry of Civil Aviation. These examples illustrate the variety of organisational forms available to the governmental leadership and the flexibility with which they were sometimes employed.

The ministers bore sole responsibility for the conduct of the ministry's work before the council of Ministers and was indirectly responsible for Supreme Soviet. This was in accordance with the principle of unitary leadership. The principle of collectivity was also recognised and finds application in the institution of the Collegium (Kollegia), which was found in each ministry. The collegium had from nine to eleven members and consisted of minister (who presided over its meetings), several of the deputy ministers and heads of departments. It was expected to meet at least once every ten days to discuss important questions affecting the ministry's work, but it was not to involve itself in operational matters. Collegium decisions could be carried out only by an order issued by the minister because the Collegium as such had no authority. In the event of disagreement, the minister was authorised to carry out his own decision but was required to inform the Council of Ministers of this.8

Administration of Industry:

The re-establishment of the industrial ministries following the 1965 reform, was intended to consolidate the function that had been exercised by a series of agencies: State Committees, Gosplan, and Gostroi, and USSR Sovnarkhoz. The industrial ministries were supposed to supervise fulfillments of plans, direct production, cope with problems of technological innovation, see the supply of material and equipment is adequate, supervise financial arrangements and watch over employment and wage. The industrial ministries had also been placed in direct control of the scientific research institutes in their respective fields. It is apparent, therefore, that the industrial ministries had secured a wide measure of power, including power of planning in their own particular sphere.9

Republic and Local Administration:

Although the Union Republics were said to be independent and sovereign they constituted an integral part of the countrywide administrative system. The majority of ministries were either joint (Union-Republican) or Republic bodies; consequently most of the business of Soviet government was conducted through ministries that were found in the republic council of ministries. However, Union-Republican joint ministries

function in conformity with directive issued by the USSR ministry of the same name in Moscow and hence their administrative competence was subjected to limitations and changes because of their status of dual subordination to the republic and to the Union.\textsuperscript{10}

The government and administration at the union republic level manifest many of the features that characterise the central government. The unicameral Republic Supreme Soviets function in a manner similar to that of the USSR Supreme Soviet; their presidiums, while varying in size, had power to investigate questions and complaints referred to them by deputies regarding the activities of ministries and government agencies. The Presidium, also had power to issue decrees, interpret the laws of the Union Republics.\textsuperscript{11}

The Union Republics were said to be sovereign and independent when in fact they enjoyed little more than autonomy. The autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics had their own courts, Supreme Soviets, Presidiums, Supreme Courts and Council of Ministers. However, autonomous republics did not have the state seal and flag that union republics were permitted to have unlike the union republics, the autonomous oblast had a status that distinguishes it from the ordinary oblast and provides for recognition of its nationality. Unlike the ordinary

\textsuperscript{10} Reshetar, n.5, p.218.

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid, p.218.
oblast, it had separate representation in the USSR Soviet of nationalities and could delimit its districts (raiony). 12

The least of the ethnic autonomous administrative units was the 'national area' (okrug). They had been established for the numerically small people of the Soviet Far North and Far East who inhabit large and sparsely populated areas. They were actually multinational units and were included within regular oblasti or Kraia. Each such area had one deputy in the USSR Soviet of Nationalities. It differs from the autonomous oblast in not having a separate status for its legal basis. The administration of Krai or regular oblast in which the national area was located exercised greater powers over it than were exercised by the krai over the autonomous oblast. 13

The ordinary oblast was the most numerous of the important units of the Soviet administration, both in party and governmental organization. The more than one hundred oblast and the far less numerous Kraia (territories) occupied a crucial place in the hierarchy of Soviet administrative jurisdictions. They were subordinate to the union republic governments; but they, in turn, were subordinate in relationship to the

raiony (districts) and to the city of oblast subordination. The smaller union republics — like Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldavia, and Armenia — did not possess oblast but were divided into raiony. The administration at the raion level had within its jurisdiction small towns, the poselok (settlement) and rural villages. The workers' poselok was a populated area usually near a factory, mine, electric station or railroad centre.14

Local administration ran in the name of the Soviet or Council that was popularly elected within each jurisdiction in the administrative hierarchy. Formally known as the Soviet of workers' deputies under the 1936 constitution and as Soviet of people's deputies under the 1977 constitution, these bodies vary in size and in the frequency of their meetings. Oblast and krai soviets had 100-300 deputies and met at least once every three months. Rural (rural) Soviets had 40-80 deputies, while poselok and village Soviets were usually half that size; both hold bimonthly meetings.15

The functions of local government were as extensive and varied as those of Soviet government as a whole. Some of these functions, like traffic control, keeping public records, care of parks and provision of local services, were similar to those in any modern

15. Ibid, p.221.
country. In addition, local government in the Soviet Union maintained public facilities such as hospitals, schools, stores for retail distribution, markets and repair shops. Local soviets were also functioning as draft boards, recruiting those liable for military service. They were also charged with local construction and small industries.

Local soviets lacked adequate powers and resources, however, to handle these manifold tasks effectively. All units, in practice, were the agents of centralized bureaucracy. Moreover, large industrial units often dominated the local communities in their areas, turning them virtually into company towns and usurping local governments functions in road and bridge building, housing and other services to meet their own needs. Vying with other comparable local units for a share of the resources doubled out by higher agencies, competing with large scale industry, and subject to sometimes conflicting orders from above local administration had retained little if any of the prestige and power they possessed in the early period of local autonomy.16

ADMINISTRATION OF ECONOMIC PLANNING

Drastic measures of nationalization of all resources were taken almost immediately after the Bolshevik seized power. The main purpose of

16. Gwendolen, n.9, p.91.
nationalization was to end the economic inequalities, but in fact it resulted from the desperate state of national economy with its breakdown of production, collapse of transportation links, rampant inflation and burgeoning black market. The Civil War threw the country into still worse chaos, leading to the period known as War Communism, in which government resorted to barter and seizure of produce despite bitter resistance by the peasants. To the ravage of civil war, accentuated by foreign intervention and blockade, was added conflict between country and city; the former hoarding food, the latter seeking by force to extract it. 17

In these circumstances Lenin made the compromise known as a New Economic Policy (NEP), which had a far reaching impact on the period from 1921 to 1928. Requisining the surplus grain ceased, and peasants were allowed to sell grain in a free competitive market. Heavy industry was retained under centralized state administration but managed on a commercial basis. Apart from the approximately 10 percent of industrial enterprises considered vital to the national economy, the rest were given administrative and financial independence or leased to foreign interests. A stabilized currency was instituted in 1923. Moreover, the Communist Party continued its overall national

17. Ibid, p.81.
control on state government and all other institutions. It was in this context that Lenin, in his last works, before dying, bemoaned the growing bureaucracy and its inherent dangers.

The distinctive feature of economic planning was that central authorities determined the target for economic units and the means for attaining them. This process meant that decision on production, distribution and investment were made administratively and passed down through the hierarchy to the individual enterprises. Growth rate were fixed arbitrarily and plans drawn up to achieve them.18

Under Stalin, economic planning operated in relation to changing goals, and with little regard to available resources and their distribution. Then the plan was considered the criterion of performance. Failure to achieve its levels could be a signal for harsh punishment during the Stalin period. It was at this time that the Soviet system received its full form and acquired the status of an immovable and rigid structure.

In the post-Stalin period, the greater complexity of the economy, coupled with the removal of mass terror, had made for more rational evolution. It appeared that the retention of centralized

18. Ibid, p.82.
administrative planning of economic growth was an ineffective system for maximizing the use of country's productive resources and meeting the needs of its people. But from the point of view of central political control, it serve its purpose extremely well. But despite the concerted efforts made at reforming the Soviet administrative system during the Khrushchev and early Brezhnev period, no reform could touch the essentials of the rigid Soviet bureaucracy as formulated by Stalin.

The Managers:

In the Soviet Union there was clearly no such distinction between the government officials and the businessmen as is familiar to western countries. Every industrial or business manager in the Soviet Union, as well as each of his workers, was a state employee. Every enterprise was as much a part of government service as was a department in a ministry. Thus to describe the personnel of the public service in the Soviet Union is to describe the work of almost everyone in the country.

Since the enterprises of the Soviet Union were concentrated to such a vast extent upon industrial production, it is hardly surprising that the outstanding 'public servants' were the industrial

19. Ibid, p.82.
managers. The distinctive characteristic of a manager was that, within the limits of the plan, he was entrusted with the operation of his own particular part of the public economy. A minister was considered to be a manager just as much as was the head of a factory, the difference in their work being one of scope rather than of kind. 20

Since the party and the government were directing industry, governmental, industrial, and some high ranking party post required many of the same qualifications: technical knowledge of industry, efficiency in handling work and people, and commitment to the purpose of the regime. The same person thus held several positions, leading to centralization of power and privilege, and other an inflexible position. Moreover while tasks were delineated, accountability to public played too small a role, leading to a highly inaccessible bureaucrat.

Party and Interlocking Pattern of Administration:

Despite being the chief legislative and executive body, the Supreme Soviet did not enjoy supreme political authority. The Communist Party was 'the leading and guiding force of Soviet Society and the nucleus of its political systems'. 21 The distinction between political authority, claimed by the party, and

legislative and executive powers exercised by the parliament (Soviets) and the executive of the government, was novel to the Soviet Union.

Paralleling its fairly standard constitutional structure — with its elections, legislative and executive organs, the administrative machinery — was the much more important informal structure of the Communist Party. The party formed a kind of ‘shadow’ administration parallel to and to a certain extent duplicating the state apparatus. It penetrated and controlled the different structures of administration with its own institutional arrangements (see Diagram B and C).
Diagram B
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

Members overlap with:

Presidium-------------------------------------->Politbureau:

Council of Ministers----------------->Party Central Committee

Committees (e.g. Gosplan, Foreign Economic Relations, Science & Technology) :

Production Ministries (e.g. Ministry of Construction, Ministry of Civil Aviation):

Defence and Foreign Affairs

Key: Administrative Subordination
Personnel overlap
### DIAGRAM (C)

**CONFIGURATION OF PARLIAMENTS, MINISTRIES AND PARTY ORGANS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parliamentary Organs</th>
<th>Government Organs</th>
<th>Party Organs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presidium</td>
<td>Presidium</td>
<td>Politbureau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supreme Soviet</td>
<td>Council of Ministers</td>
<td>Central Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commissions</td>
<td>State Committees</td>
<td>Secretariat Republican Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican Soviet</td>
<td>All Union Ministries</td>
<td>Republican Ministries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Soviets</td>
<td>Operational Ministry Structure</td>
<td>Operational Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Technically, the supreme organ at the All Union level was the Party Congress; the Congress elects the Central Committee; the Central Committee chooses the Politburo and Secretariat. In practice control operated in reverse. An apt comparison would be between the party and an army. The full time professionals were the generals; the functional specialists were the officers corps; and the secretaries at the party units were the non commissioned officers. At the helm of affairs between them was the general staff, the Politburo, and the Commander in Chief, the First or General Secretary.

There were two other top party organs of some significance: the Central Auditing Commission appointed by the Congress, and the Party Control Committee, appointed by the Party Central Committee. The former had general supervisory responsibilities regarding the relation of party activities and expenditures. The Party Control Committee enforced party discipline at the All-Union level. Besides, the election of Central Committee, the Party Congress had powers to determine the tactical line of the party on issues of current concern, revise and amend the programme of the rule of the party, hear and act on the reports of the Central Committee and other central party organs. In practice, however, the Party Congress was little more than a
sounding board, used by party leaders to enunciate their policies and to give them publicity.22

Like the Party Congress, the Central Committee usually had far less power or influence than the party rules suggested. At the same time, membership in the Central Committee provided prestige, visibility, access to information and latent power.23 The members included the holders of top offices in administration, the foreign service, the military and above all, the party. The politburo was the ultimate centre of power within the Communist Party. It was vested with the authority to make the most important decisions on policies and appointments. The greatest freedom of discussion occurred within its ranks, but the great secrecy was maintained regarding the number of its meetings and the character of its discussions. It included not only party but also government leaders and, in addition, the head of the security service and the head of the organisation of trade unions, which provided an important "driving belt" of the party. It provided the supreme example of interlocking directorate of Party, state and society. That we know less about its actual operations than those of the party and state organs subjected to its

22. Gwendolen, n.9, pp.51-52.
top leadership, was in the nature of supreme policy making.

While the politburo was entitled to hammer out decision on policy, these were implemented through the mechanism of the party and of the government. Within the Soviet government, the most important agency for planning and coordinating policy and for formulating and implementing the structure of banks that legitimated action, was the Council of Ministers. But due to its vastness the Council of Ministers accepted the overall coordination and direction of its own Presidium, which consisted officially of its chairman and its two first deputy chairmen, all three of whom were among the full members of politburo — and the nine deputy chairmen. Along with the host of others, who were in charge of different aspects of the economy, these later figures head vast administrative structures and interacted through these structures with the parallel organization of the party.24

The most important body in the Soviet Union for preparing plans and proposing policy was the Secretariat of the Central Committee. It ranked second only to the Politburo in making decisions, and a number of Secretaries (which varied from time to time) who were Politburo members, provided the interlocking relation between the two bodies. Although the

24. Gwendolen, n.9, pp. 69-70.
Secretaries were formally elected by the Central Committee in its plenary sessions, the later's action was merely pro forma approved of a list already prepared by the top leaders.25

In supervising all activities of administrative affairs, the Secretariat had to heavily rely on administrative staffs, which, not surprisingly, were organised very much like a government. The most important of these staffs was the apparatus of the Central Committee, which assisted all the top central agencies but was directly responsible to the secretariat. Its large number of experienced staff were responsible for monitoring all sphere of Soviet life; they had active field staffs, wide resources of information, and considerable authority.

**RECRUITMENT AND CONTROL SYSTEMS:**

Since the system was controlled by the CPSU, elite recruitment was principally planned and supervised by the Party's central organs. The method of recruitment was exceptionally centralized and also an extremely 'Political Civil System'. It operated through 'what is known as nomenklatura'—a comprehensive set of job categories and descriptions, defined as a list of posts confirmed by the superior organizations.26 It was


administered, in accordance with their status by the party and government. This system sought to standardize selection norms, tenure of office, and promotions based on competence and ideological commitment. Although standardized civil services entry examination were not used, personnel regulations after appointment were highly uniform and similar in many respects to those in civil service system in other developed countries. Nationwide uniformity was provided in description of job functions, with a specific ways scale attached to each job, incorporating variations to recognize such factors as academic qualifications, years of service, and work locations that were remote or dangerous.

The Soviet administrative system confirmed to a monocratic model where it was difficult to disentangle politics from administrative controls, and deviations from norms of efficiency were regarded as political disloyalty, and internal conflict was never permitted. As stated before, the party bureaucracy operated parallel to and almost penetrated into the state bureaucracy. Its members became 'apparatchiki'. A Soviet apparatchiki was determined by his position in the party organization.

At each level of government, administrative action was theoretically subjected to be controlled by the

soviet which were popularly elected at that level, infusing elements of mass participation and control into the administrative process. The Soviet administrative apparatus was controlled by: the Party, the Security Police, the Plan, Financial Control, the Party-State Control Committee, Legal Control and Personnel Control. From the perspective of the party leadership, multiple control devices were necessary to ensure dependency on the part of the state bureaucracy. The monopolistic nature of state employment was, in itself, a powerful incentive towards conformity. The more obvious personnel control in a well organised bureaucratic system was too good advantage. Party membership and adherence to party doctrine by the higher ranking bureaucrats meant a built-in tendency towards meeting party expectations.

An impressive array of official state control devices were put into place for the specific purpose of keeping bureaucrats in line. Hierarchical authority was exercised vigorously on an agency by agency basis. The Ministry of Finance, in addition to the personnel management functions also had several fiscal control responsibilities, including budget enforcement, inspection of financial records, and auditing. State banks which extended credits to industrial plants had access to details as to financial operation. The secret

29. Merele Fainsod, How Russia is Ruled (Cambridge, 1964), Ch. 6, 7 & 15.
police kept tabs on all organizations, especially those engaged in crucial operations or where misconduct was suspected.

The principal role in the application of legal control was played by the procuracy. This was the centralized and unified system of state's attorneys that was headed by the Procurator-General. He was the government's chief legal officer and was elected for a five-year term by the USSR Supreme Soviet. He had power to appoint the procurators of the union republics, autonomous republics, provinces and territories for five-year terms and confirms the appointment of area (okrug), district, and city procurators (who were appointed by the procurators of the union republics).

The procuracy was authorised to exercise supervision (nadzor) over all activities of ministries and their agencies to determine whether their acts are in accordance with Soviet law. This power was extended to the operation of economic enterprises and to the organ of local government. However the procuracy was not empowered to annul orders and decisions of administrative bodies. However, in the event of a violation of the criminal code, prosecution of officials could be instituted. Procuracy was added by the silent surveillance exercised by the Soviet Security Police.30

The vagueness of the procuracy's powers in dealing with administrative decisions that were based on a liberal interpretation of the law and its inability to discipline errant administrators directly limited its role as a guardian of 'legality'. However its ability to influence the Soviet courts did give it an effective sanction whenever there was the possibility that a basis for criminal prosecution existed in a case. Since the procuracy functioned under the direction of the Communist Party's administrative organs Department and was also an agency of the Supreme Soviet and its Presidium, it could be expected to serve both party and state interests.

A form of legal control was also provided by the system of state arbitration (Gosarbitrazh) established by Stalin in 1931 and which was not part of the regular judicial system. It provided a special type of administrative court that adjudicated disputes between economic enterprises concerning deliveries, accounts, the quality of goods and the interpretation and fulfillment of contracts.31

Summing up:

From the above discussion it is quite evident that the Soviet bureaucratic structure was commonly visualized as a highly centralized administrative

hierarchy in which all initiative and decision-making powers were concentrated in the top leadership and in which the lower officials served as mere autonomous to execute the will of the ruling group. While this stereotype performed the usual function of emphasizing the high degree of centralization which characterized the Soviet system, it also distorted reality by ignoring the fluid play of bureaucratic politics that underlay the monolithic totalitarian facade.

Further, the Soviet bureaucracy operated under the strain of constant pressure from above to accelerate the programme of rapid industrialization and to which the regime was committed.

In later years, especially after the 1970's, the demands of the military, industrial complex, led to the militarization of industry and society. The ever-increasing defence expenditures, led to the continuance of the command and control system. This only helped further fuel tight bureaucratic control.

This programme accorded top priority to military needs and the expansion of heavy industry. Scarce resources were allocated in accordance with these dominating priorities. The 'key sectors' which were chosen for intensive development enjoyed a preferential position in the soviet economy, but no part of bureaucracy was immune from the insistent and implacable demands of the leadership for maximum output and effort.
Thus, the tensions generated by the industrialization drive set the stage for a steady tug of war between the central leadership and the bureaucracy. The ruling group had developed a variety of ingenious devices to make its control operative throughout the bureaucratic structure. It appealed to the self interest of the bureaucratic elite by combining positive incentives with negative controls of harsh penalties.

The essence of bureaucratic politics consisted in a search for a viable equilibrium between the pressure from above for maximal output and the inescapable limitations for resource scarcity and human frailty, the problem of bureaucracy was aggravated by the use of the party machine as an instrument of political control. This had a number of consequences. First, any distinction between party officials and state officials became confused. Second, the party formed a kind of shadow administration parallel to and to a certain extent duplicating the state apparatus. Third, administrators were expected to be politically committed.

It became clear that the administrative apparatus of the Soviet state had a special political significance when all social and economic relations were socialized and planned and managed under central political direction through administrative institu-
tions. Insofar as socialism meant the collective ownership and management of the economy and social relations, it required an extensive administrative apparatus. It is in this respect that the state had failed 'to wither away', becoming instead a massive bureaucratic and centralized organization, whose officialdom was typical of a ruling class.