CHAPTER - II

IDEOLOGICAL ROOTS OF SOVIET BUREAUCRATISATION
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There is a long tradition among revolutionary thinkers and activists that communist society would be administered without bureaucratic relationships between political leaders and the people - without, that is, an apparatus which represented the particular interests of a dominant stratum and which is divorced from those engaged in production. The aim of the following discourse is to examine what Marxists envisaged as the elements of the non-bureaucratic administration in the communist system. This is a prelude to a discussion of what had happened, in terms of bureaucratic developments, in Soviet Union organised on Marxist principles. Since Marxists have been more concerned to analyse the workings of capitalist societies than to draw up blue prints of collective organisation in a socialist or communist set-up, it is not easy to piece together a communal theory of administration in the sense of a model. This had been one reason which left enough room for the consolidation of the bureaucracy and bureaucratic degeneration of the Soviet state.

Marxist view of the Transitional state:

The apparent apathy in depicting the picture of the transitional state lies in Marx's stated desire that he did not like to write "receipts for the cookshops of the future".¹

Marx and Engels regarded socialism as the product of the laws of development of capitalism; therefore they left it to the historical process which would reveal the form socialism might take. For this vagueness Myrdal characterises Marx "not only as a fatalist but even basically as an anarchist". Robson says that no communist has detailed the goals of communism because the communist theories are a clever pliable combination of utopian theories and dictatorial practices.

Marx's most important text on the subject is the Critique of the Gotha Programme. Here, Marx identified two phases of communist society, namely "dictatorship of the proletariat" and "full communism". To quote Marx, "Between the capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the another. There corresponds to this also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the dictatorship of the proletariat."

The model for Marx was the Paris Commune of March-May 1871, though subsequently he dismissed it as merely an uprising, and not even a socialist one. Marx found in the commune something superior to the parliamentary system of democracy. The commune was a working institution,


embodying both legislative and executive powers. Public functions ceased to be the private property of the tools of the central government. Not only municipal administration but the whole initiative hitherto exercised by the state was laid into the hands of the commune. The commune indicated to Marx that it was possible to have all public servants elected, responsible and revocable and paid working men's wage. Marx saw the historical significance of the commune in the visible practical confirmation it provided for the necessity of smashing the bourgeois state and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Marx saw the commune as reabsorption of state power by society as its own living forces controlling and subduing it by the popular masses themselves forming their own force instead of the organised force of their suppression. In the first place, in the proletarian state there would be no standing army which will be replaced by armed people. Secondly, administration in that society is highly decentralized and democratic. There would be self-government of the producers. There would be communes at all levels. Thirdly, in socialist state there would be no wage differentiation. There would be direct election and accountability of executives to the legislative organs. Fourthly, there would not be any separation of powers of the governing class. MacLellan has rightly said that for Marx the abolition of state involved the abolition of a professionalised state apparatus in which an essentially irresponsible legislature and judiciary ensured the invulnerability of bureaucracy.

Lenin on Bureaucracy:

Marx and Engels identified three characteristics of socialist administration: (a) not only election but recall at any time; (b) pay not to exceed that of a workman; and (c) the immediate introduction of control and supervision, by all so that all may become 'bureaucrats' for a time and that, therefore, nobody may be able to become a bureaucrat. Lenin dealt with the last aspect. In a statement made in March 1918 to the 7th Party Congress, Lenin defined the tasks thus: to bring about union and organisation of the exploited masses; to educate every member of the working population for independent participation in the management of the state; to achieve union of legislation and executive state activity; fusion of administration with legislation; creation of an armed force of workers and peasants; and finally to ensure more complete democracy through less formality and making election and recall easier. Lenin distinguished between the repressive aspects of the state apparatus and its modern, economic regulative aspects in his book The State and Revolution. The proletarian state involves a gigantic replacement of certain institutions by other institutions of a fundamentally different character, and mass organisations and the working people would be at the helm of regulative functions.

The core of Lenin's model of socialist state is the vision that for the first time in history, the mass of the population will rise to take an independent part not only in nothing and elections but also in the everyday administration of the state. In the Proletarian Revolution and Renegade Kautsky, Lenin rejected Kautsky's contention that a class can only
dominate but not govern. His *State and Revolution*, is, Miliband says, "based on the notion that the proletariat can govern and not only dominate". Ever since the abolition of private property and the development of large scale production and distribution system of socialism, the task of state administration has become simple, clear and comprehensible to the working people.

Marx's interpretation of the Paris Commune was to become a Leninist shibboleth. For Lenin the principal lesson of Marxism on the task of the proletariat was that it should break up the bureaucratic and military machinery. Following Marx's analysis of the Paris Commune of 1871, Lenin believed that the people could, after a proletarian revolution, fulfil the functions once performed by privileged officialdom. Bureaucracy will be abolished by a return to "primitive democracy" in which state functions are discharged "by the majority of the population". Administration would be within the competence of any literate person, since the majority of the state administrative functions had become so simplified that they could be reduced to such simple operations as registering, filing and checking - were routine. Anyone performing administrative functions would be paid a workingman's wage. Privilege, official 'grandeur', special allowances

and high levels of remuneration would be abolished. "All officials, without exception elected and subject to recall at any time....-these simple and self-evident democratic measures, which completely unite the interests of the workers and the majority of the peasants, at the same time serve as a bridge leading from capitalism to socialism."\(^{12}\)

Lenin's references to primitive democracy and the delegation of state functions to ordinary people did not mean that he thought there would be no place for administration in a socialist state. Lenin accepted that socialism would be a form of state, no longer be parasitic, completely dependent on the bourgeoisie and playing no productive role.

Bureaucracy, for Lenin, was clearly associated with the repressive apparatus of the state. So only, the police, army and 'bureaucracy' would be dismantled by the representatives of the proletariat, leaving the registration and the accounting work of banks, factories, academics, syndicates and other institutions to be taken over by the proletarian Soviets.

Lenin clearly accepted the need for administration and administrations, but by a democratically controlled set of routine offices rotating widely among the population rather than by a special stratum of the population. Workers' control and workers' wages for technicians, managers and bookkeepers would prevent the re-emergence of a privileged bureaucratic stratum detached from the masses and standing above the masses. When the function of the state had been reduced to routine work and control by the workers themselves,

\(^{12}\) Ibid., p. 86.
public function would lose their political character and be transformed into simple administrative functions. Under socialism, all will take a turn in management and will soon become accustomed to the idea of no managers at all. 13

The state would also be highly decentralized. Lenin cites with approval Engel's recommendation that there should be complete self-government for the provinces, districts and localities through officials elected by universal suffrage. It would also be made impossible for posts in the public service to be used as "springboards" to highly profitable posts in banks and joint stock companies. However, the post-revolutionary bureaucracy consisted of authoritarianism, unrealistic planning and "red tape". Lenin's explanation of these setbacks was the dependence of the new regime on the personnel of the old. The cure was to get workers and peasants into the apparatus and into supervisory positions.

Trade unions were regarded by Lenin as a school for training the whole mass of workers and eventually all the working people in the art of management of socialist industry. Explaining how the trade unions teach the people the art of administration, Lenin told us that their task consisted in drawing unendingly new forces from the reserve of the working people and advancing them to the most difficult tasks. Lenin also felt that mass organisations are quite useful in supplementing the role of the

trade unions. Lenin wanted them to enter "all the government establishments so as to supervise the government apparatus". 14

**Trotsky on Bureaucracy:**

Trotsky was more concerned to confront Stalinism and expose the bureaucratisation of his regime than to set out an alternative model of non-bureaucratised government. Trotsky related bureaucratisation to the fallacy of trying to build a socialist political structure without conduct of permanent revolution. Trotsky drew attention to what was to become a recurring theme in critiques of Soviet Marxism - the bureaucratisation of the mass political political party. Bureaucracy, according to Trotsky represents a stable social force.

Trotsky argued there had been post-revolutionary disillusionment which had allowed reactionary forces to become influential. Secondly, the isolated position of the backward Soviet Union required a strong administration to plan the use of scarce resources and their distribution. Wage incentives were needed to motivate officials, thus giving the bureaucracy an institutional and material basis for power. 15

The distinctiveness of Soviet bureaucracy, says Trotsky, lay


in the degree of autonomy it had achieved from the dominating class, which was weak and hardly with any tradition of command. Bureaucracy appropriated political power, so it took control of the principal means of production.

Trotksy looked to proletarian democracy and workers' control as the defense against bureaucratisation. But, in the economic conditions of the 1920s in the Soviet Union, there were little chances of workers control. As Mandel put it:

if the working class is to manage factories, then these must be functioning, if the working class is to direct the state and society, then it must be employed; if this class is to show a minimum political initiative it must have a full stomach and some leisure time. Only on the basis of a minimum development of the productive forces and functioning degree of workers' democracy can a struggle against bureaucracy be a real possibility.16

According to Trotsky, after the October Revolution and particularly since Lenin's death the Soviet leadership did not act with the lesson of past experiences. Facts and documents suggest that the so-called "Left Opposition" offered more correct analysis of the processes taking place in the country and more truly foresaw their further development.17


A political struggle is always a struggle of interests and forces and not of leaders and arguments. The February Revolution let Kerensky and Tseretelli to assume power not because they were more astute but because they that time represented the revolutionary masses against the old regime. Bolsheviks too, later on, conquered the petty bourgeois democrats only through a new correlation of social forces. As obedience to objective law is incomparably more effective than the special traits of the historical protagonists themselves, as the French Revolution suggests.

Lenin's Concept of Self-Activity and Self-organisation of the Working Class:

Lenin's conception of the revolutionary party is dialectically linked with the Marxist conception of self-activity and self-organisation of the working class. To be sure, there is a dynamic equilibrium between those two constitutive elements in Lenin's thought. This dynamic equilibrium was in turn determined by the ups and downs of mass activity. As Marcel Liebman has convincingly pointed out, what was typical of Lenin was that in revolutionary situations he went out of his way to emphasize the self-organisation of the working class.

The building of a revolutionary party does not correspond in the first place to an organisational need, to the problems of centralising local, regional, sectoral and workplace activities and grouping them around political objects, although of course, that need is very real. Behind the need for organisational centralisation there looms a formidable historical problem, both theoretical and practical to which the adversaries of Lenin's
party concept have never been able to give an alternative answer. This is the problem of the centralisation of diverse struggling experience of the working class as the basis of the emergence of and development of class consciousness.

In other words, the need for the vanguard party results from the defacto day-to-day fragmentation of the working class as regards its living conditions, its conditions of work, its level of militancy, its political past, the historical roots and the stages of its formation. The need correspond to a necessary process of unification and homogenisation of self-consciousness of the class. Given the discontinuous feature of class mass activity, it is illusory to expect unification to occur continuously in mass trade union or in political parties. Only a vanguard will be able to achieve such a unification on the basis of a qualitatively higher level of continuous activity. 18

But, on the other hand, the possibility of making a real proletarian revolution and of building a classless society depends on the capacity of the mass of workers periodically to reach extraordinary levels of political activity. It follows that the dialectical inter relationship between the revolutionary vanguard party and the capacity for massive self-activity and self-organisation of the mass of the wage workers reflects precisely that dynamic "tension" between continuous vanguard militancy and discontinuous but no less real mass activity.

Did Lenin change his view of the interrelationship between the Soviets and the vanguard party after 1918 or 1920 or 1921, under pressure from the dramatic conditions that were emerging inside Soviet Russia? Was the gradual emasculation of the Soviets rather the inevitable outcome of Lenin's initial conception of the party? Was Lenin at first at least partly unaware of that emasculation, but did he react too late?

The economic and cultural backwardness of Russia worsened rapidly from the devastation of the civil war and the foreign imperialist intervention and blockade. A catastrophic decline of the productive forces expressed itself in a no less catastrophic numerical decline of the working class in 1919-20. This led to a significant decline in the political activity of the proletariat. Basically, the workers were not expelled from the Soviets by a Bolshevik conspiracy: they left them in order to fight in the Red Army and to look for potatoes in the countryside.

The negative development was amplified by the retreat of world revolution after 1920. Certainly, the retreat was not a rout nor even a grave defeat, except in Italy, where the fascists came to power. The strength of the British Labour movement remained great enough to prevent an open intervention by Britain on the side of Poland and France in the war against Russia. The chances of revolutionary victory remained open objectively, at least in Germany and in Austria. But the perspective of a short-term extension of the revolution to the Central Europe, which seems imminent in 1918-19, now became a medium-term perspective at best.
Under these circumstances, maintaining Soviet power in Russia became for the time being a question of maintaining Bolshevik party in power, at least until a change in internal and international conditions comes. Even the Workers' Opposition under the leadership of Slypnikov and Kollontai was dimly aware of this - a fact that puts a question mark over the credibility of its alternative platform.

The "substitutionist" logic of the Bolshevik's - which saw the initiatives of the party cadre as a substitute for the direct action of the working class as a whole - was sketched by Trotsky in an anti-Lenin pamphlet as resulting from Lenin's ideas, but it actually came about as a result of objective conditions and was not opposed by Trotsky himself. In real life, the Party's central "hard core cadre", exercised power in the name of the workers, as says Ernest Mandel.

One can discuss whether an alternative course would have been possible at the height of the civil war. When the numerical strength of the working class is reduced by two-thirds, there is little objective space for direct workers' power.

The real turning point came in 1921 when the civil war was won and with the introduction of NEP, decline of production reversed. Workers real consumption increased and the number of wage workers was also rapidly rising.
At that precise moment the Bolshevik leaders under the impetus of Lenin took a decision, that in hindsight, we can only characterise as a tragic mistake, as Issac Deutscher has observed. The Bolsheviks should have drawn a conclusion, from a favourable evolution of the social relationship of forces, that a large broadening of Soviet and proletarian democracy was now on the agenda, in order to stimulate the political reactivation of the working class. Instead, they decided to narrow democracy in a decisive way, by banning all opposition Soviet organisations and by banning factions inside the Bolshevik Party itself.

What was the reasoning? Precisely because the civil war had been won and the productive forces were rising again under the NEP (that is pettycommodity production), the danger of the revolutions losing political power was growing not declining. The proletariat which concentrated tremendous energies on the maintaining of power, but had become declassed under the blows of the decline of the productive forces, would now tend to relax. Procapitalist forces - the NEP men, the Kulaks - would therefore have new opportunities to undermine the workers' power. Against this danger and a direct military intervention by the foreign powers, the dictatorship must be strengthened, only through the concentration of power in the party cadre.

This reasoning includes at least three political-theoretical mistakes, says Mandel.

First, it is simply not true that Kulaks were a bigger threat
than Kolchak, Wrangel or Peludski for the overthrow of Soviet power. Such an overthrow needs not only a gradual socio-economic evolution; it also needs an active organised political force. The Kulaks were socially too dispersed and politically too demoralised to be capable of playing such a role. As to what could happen in the long-run that depended not only (not even primarily), on the Kulaks. It depended on the political-social correlation of forces between the Kulaks and the urban pro-bourgeois forces (with foreign help and pressure), on the one hand, and on the urban proletariat, the peasants, on the other (again with foreign counter-pressure), the key variable being the capacity of the constellation of forces on the later constellation to rally into an alliance with the majority of the middle peasants.

Second, far from reversing the trend toward "relaxation of energies" (i.e., demobilisation and depoliticisation) in the working class, all measures limiting Soviet and inner-party democracy gravely increased that trend, thereby undermining and weakening workers' power.

Third, the substantial identification of workers' power with politically experienced party cadre inevitably led to a growing process of bureaucratisation, in the party itself. The party apparatus grew by leaps and bounds, from a few hundred full-time functionaries in 1919 to 15,000 in 1922.19

19. Ibid.
The objective basis of the process of bureaucratisation needs to be understood. Under a one party regime, the decline of working class political life unavoidably hits the party and its working class members as well. De-facto exercise of power by paid functionaries thereby becomes the alternative. The formula that "workers' power equals party power equals party cadre equals party leadership power" becomes transformed into "workers' power equals party power equals party leadership power equals party apparatus power equals bureaucracy's power." The party bureaucracy repeatedly fuses with the state bureaucracy and identifies itself with it. Far from playing a leading role, the party becomes more and more a tool of the bureaucracy in its totality.

Of course, Lenin, Trotsky, Bukharin, Rykov, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Preobrazhensky and Riatikov did not want this to happen. They saw the danger - the danger of Thermidor - sooner or later; Lenin starting with 1922; Trotsky a bit later in 1922-23; Zinoviev in 1925-26; Bukharin in 1927-28. But, by the time they recognised the danger in a dispersed way, without a common plan of counter-action, the process of bureaucratisation was already too much advanced to be nipped in the bud. That is the historical balance sheet of 1921.

Lenin was conscious of the process of bureaucratic degeneration in the Party, in the state and society, but he was increasingly obsessed with a growing sense of helplessness. Lenin's writings and speeches of 1922 and 1923 are full of a constantly growing denunciation of bureaucratisation.
During the period, Lenin came progressively to conclude that the party apparatus itself was undergoing bureaucratic degeneration. As the sole antidote he saw a much stronger involvement of direct producers - representatives of factory workers' cadres and working peasants' cadres - and in the central worker - Bolshevik Party leadership. One must note, that, however, at that moment the capacity of the party apparatus to stifle inner-party democracy and to prevent worker-Bolsheviks from expressing their opinion frankly had grown already to the point where the practicality of Lenin's proposals is at least open to doubt.  

The degree of workers' depoliticisation and demobilisation had strongly increased in 1922-23. The key link between Lenin's conscious insight and his capacity to oppose the erring majority in the party and reverse the wrong party course had been in April 1917 and at time of the Brest Litovsk Treaty (1918), when there was an active, broad working class vanguard. In 1922-23, this link was missing.

Basically, that is the reason why Lenin's fight in 1922-23 and Trotsky's 1923 fight against the bureaucratised party leadership were defeated. For that reason, Stalin, with the help of Zinoviev, Kamenev and Bukharin was able to consolidate his hold over the party through the apparatus. Lenin really never had consciously embarked on the bureaucratisation of the Bolshevik leadership and the Soviet state.

Again, the decisive moment to reverse this process was 1920-21.

20. Ibid.
But Lenin had no time to consciously formulate a self-criticism in that respect. Bukharin and Trotsky had time to do it and they did it. Indeed, the emergence of an all powerful party apparatus had already assumed such proportions in 1922-23 that Lenin himself had become its prisoner in a direct, personal sense of the word. As Neil Harding has described it, "the apparatus now controlled him, dictating his daily regimen, refusing him books and newspapers (Even refusing him access to party documents: Mandel), forbidding him to communicate. Lenin was trapped and stifled in the web he himself had spun". 21

Mandel observed that Lenin hesitated on the most efficient way to fight the bureaucratic degeneration of the state and party apparatus during the final political battle of his life. To what degree should an appeal to the rank-and-file party members against Stalin's apparatus be linked to appeals to the party leadership to correct its course? To what extent should such an appeal be complemented by appeals to the workers outside the party to participate in that struggle? All the successive oppositions inside the Russian Communist Party - the Democratic Socialists of 1919, the Workers' Opposition of 1920-21, Lenin in 1922-23, the Trotskyite Left Opposition in 1923, the United Opposition of 1926-27, the Bukharin Rykov grouping of 1927-30, the Left Opposition from 1927 onward were faced with the same problem.

What transformed that problem into a real dilemma for Lenin was his sociological justification of the party dictatorship through an analysis

21. Ibid.
of alleged structural long term deficiencies in the working class. These formulations which appeared frequently in his 1920-21 writings, are in stark opposition to his previous opinions, not only those of the 1917-20 period but also of 1905-08:

"But the dictatorship of the proletariat cannot be exercised through an organisation embracing the whole of that class, because in all capitalist countries the proletariat is still so divided, so degraded, so corrupt that an organisation taking in the whole proletariat cannot directly exercise proletarian dictatorship. It can be exercised only by that vanguard that has absorbed the revolutionary energy of the class. The whole thing is like an arrangement of cogwheels... It cannot work without a number of 'transmission belts' running from the vanguard to the mass of the advanced class, and from the later to the mass of the working people". 22

Such statements represent an obvious and theoretically unjustified telescoping of conjunctural into structural analysis. They fade away from his writings and speeches after 1921, but they were never fully transcended in his thought. As long as the theoretical contradiction was not solved the political Gordian Knot could not be cut, observes Mandel.

The problem is very simple, if you reduce it to its inner core.

22. Ibid.
Were the specific "declasse" features of the Russian working class in 1920-21 a passing conjunctural result of the exceptional decline of the productive forces in Russia at that movement, in which case they would be gradually overcome by more positive, overarching developments? Or, were they rather permanent features of the proletariat, even under conditions of "normal" capitalism, resulting from the past effects of bourgeois society, both objectively and subjectively on the proletariat's post-revolutionary political behaviour? In the later case, the working class was "unfit" to exercise its dictatorship directly anywhere, anytime at least in the unfore-seable future. The dictatorship could only be exercised by the party.

It's true that Lenin bodily formulated the problem in this radical, essential way, and groped toward a solution. But while Lenin moved away in 1922-23 from his obviously wrong formulations of 1920-21, he never came to a clear counter-position.

It remains to the historical merit of Trotsky and the Left Opposition that with 1923, they did find a counter-position. Their relentless struggle against Stalin's course, both inside Soviet Russia and inside the Comintern, was based on unshakable confidence in the revolutionary potential of the working class as actually existed both within Russia and in the rest of the world.

Certainly, that revolutionary potential does not express itself everywhere, everyday, every month, every year or even every decade. It
passes through ups and downs, periods of reaction and revolutionary upsurge. But as the upsurges are inevitable, it is the duty of the revolutionists to assist in the maturing of the process and to concentrate on creating the best possible conditions for successive proletarian victories. In terms of Russian party policies, that meant not only political and cultural but also economic and social conditions.

Tortsky's and Left Opposition's position conformed in that respect (totally shared by the 4th International) with the position of Marx and Engels on the issue. One of the essential specifics of Marx's and Engels's thought about capitalism is that in spite of all its negative effects on the proletariat, it develops in the working class an exceptional combination of potential economic and political power and moralities, including moral values, which give the class a unique superiority compared to any other social force for building a new society.

Lenin's wavering on that essential question in 1921-22, of course, had an objective basis. There was a new strengthening of the Russian working class, but to what extent would it rapidly lead to new militancy? A turning point in the "temporary consolidation" of international capitalism was occurring, but to what extent would it lead to short-term revolutionary possibilities? Lenin, as both a theoretician and an eminently practical politician, constantly looked at problems through the prism, "What is to be done here and now?" What is the next step forward? In the situation of 1923 the prism deformed his answer.
The bureaucracy was rotten and had to be decisively weakened. The apparatus was already bureaucratised to the core, unable and unwilling to break the bureaucracy's stranglehold over the society. The working class still at least partially "declassed" and demoralised. The worker-Bolshevik was at least partly drawn in the same direction of depoliticisation and demoralisation. So in desperation Lenin turned to the top party leadership as the only tool at history's disposal for a rapid change. Lenin's "testament" while initially posing the problem in sociological terms, ends up with individual assessments and an individual proposal: remove Stalin as general secretary.

This approach deals with an essential feature of the ongoing bureaucratisation process: Stalin's nearly total grip over the party apparatus and the innumerable consequences of that grip. But it is obvious that this proposal is both inefficient and logically dubious, asserts Mandel.\textsuperscript{23}

If Stalin already had so much power over the party, how could a vote among a few dozen persons break that power? Was not the mobilisation of much broader forces indispensable for achieving that result? And there is a very grave and wrong conclusion that could be drawn from concentrating essentially on that line of reasoning: If everything turns around the attitudes and decisions of the central party leadership, unity of that leadership becomes a key in the fight for conserving Soviet power.

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid.
Lenin was definitely not unaware of the evident contradictions of his position. The testament was clearly a letter to the whole party, to the incoming 12th Congress. In that sense, if not explicitly, it appealed to the Congress delegates against Stalin and against the wavering Polit Buro. When Lenin proposed that several hundred workers and productive peasants be integrated into the Central Committee, he again appealed in fact to forces outside the central party leadership.

But, according to Mandel, by posing the question of Party unity as the central short-term goal in the struggle against the looming Thermidor, Lenin created a conceptual framework that could play a decisive role in the Old Bolsheviks' successive capitulation before Stalin.

This is all the more significant as it completely contradicts the real tradition of Lenin's party and factions before 1921. Top leaders of the Bolshevik had often appealed to the party members against what they considered wrong decisions of the leadership. Party leaders never hesitated to publish theoretical positions that were not shared by Lenin and the party majority. In several episodes, they even appealed to the general working class public against majority political positions which they considered disastrously wrong.

Lenin, admittedly, criticised them. But this never led to inner-party repression, nor did it prevent his comradely collaboration with these Bolsheviks. Lenin turned to Trotsky to support his fight on the Georgian question early in 1923, in spite of the harsh debate
between the two not long ago on the trade union problem.

So this obsession with keeping the differences bottled up in the central party leadership was inconsistent with the Bolshevik tradition and also with dialectical logic.

As Trotsky would point out in his "New Course" in complete conformity with what Lenin himself has stated repeatedly, Party unity and the "Centralist" component of "democratic centralism" are in the final analysis subordinate to a correct political discourse of the party leadership. Once the political decision of that leadership have such grave consequences for the proletariat, in the living class struggles, that they can lead to real disasters, it becomes totally counter-productive to refuse to fight with all means necessary for redressing that course. A refusal to "undermine Party unity" becomes organizational fetishism. It turns the party from an instrument of proletarian emancipation into a goal by itself. 24

Should revolutionary socialists have refused to question "the unity of the party" when confronted with social democracy's disastrous capitulation before the imperialist wave in 1914? Should they have refused to question that "unity" when confronted with Stalin's disastrous agrarian policies of 1926-30? Should they have

refused to question that "unity" when confronted with Stalin's and Comintern's "third period" of "ultra-leftism" which contributed decisively to Hitler's attainment of power in Germany, the worst disaster for the international working class in the 20th Century? The answer is obvious.

In the final analysis, the solution of Lenin's dilemma hinged on the question of the proletariat's revolutionary potential.

If one denies that potential, at least for the foreseeable future, then the unavoidable conclusion is that socialism is unrealisable. To believe that a ruling party bureaucracy could remain unstained by material privileges, and despite these privileges, could remain willing to build an egalitarian state and allow it to wither way afterwards - that is to work consciously toward its own suppression - is to deny the ABC of historical materialism. All evidence points in the opposite direction: Party, that is to say party apparatus, meaning Party bureaucracy rule, cannot be a long-term substitute for proletarian self-activity and self-organisation are not realistic likelihoods, then socialism is not a realistic likelihood. Bukharin, between 1923 and 1927 formulated the opposing theoretical position - "cadres decide everything" - in the most coherent way:

This transitional period is the time when... the working class... changes its nature in the most diverse ways, when it pushes forward from its reservoir of forces of resolute bands of men, who undergo a transformation, i.e. cultural, ideological,
technical, etc., and who emerges from this university in and their living form...of cadres, who are able to govern the entire country with a strong hand, to the extent that the working class places these trusted men into the most diverse posts. 25

But if one believes that even in periods of steep decline of proletarian militancy this decline remain a temporary and not a definitive phenomenon, then what is on the agenda for the vanguard is a holding operation, in which the struggle against counter-revolutionary dangers must be combined by force with the policies that favour a rebirth of working class militancy. And in that case, the "unity of the party", not to speak of the "unity of the party leadership," must be subordinated to the fight for policies that make rebirth possible.

So Trotsky was right, in his fight against bureaucratic degeneration, when he appealed first to members of the Russian Communist Party and afterwards to the working class inside and outside the party. Bukharin and Old Bolsheviks were wrong when they drew back from that decisive step, thereby smoothening the way for the bureaucracy. Lenin took an intermediary position.

These questions are particularly central to the problem of socialism in our country. The dogma of keeping "Party unity" at all costs hinges basically on the myth that "the party is always right". That myth which has no basis whatsoever, in Lenin's thought, was generally accepted in the Stalinised communist parties albeit with much self-doubt and double-talk. Marxist thought is set upside down, here. Workers demanding higher wages are regarded petty bourgeois, if not counter-revolutionary.

Ideology (false social consciousness), not relations of production, now determine the class nature of political actors. Instead of a real interaction of proletarian party leadership and self-activity of the class, we get the identification of the ideological party apparatus - heavily bureaucratised and materially privileged at that - with the proletariat. The proletarian character of the actually existing proletariat is simply denied for ideological reasons.

There is another approach in characterising the Soviet type societies which describes the Soviet system as a special breed of bureaucracy with its roots in its ideological and institutional base. Levels such as "mono-hierarchical", "mono-organisational", "USSR Incorporated", the "Organisational society", the "command society", and the "administered society" are used implying that the political conflicts and struggles over resources, status and power that take place within the communist state are analogous to those experienced within large corporations. The attempt to impose the rational management of a whole

society by means of complex organisation produces a political system where bureaucracy writ large. All the different bureaucracy covering the economic, political, social and cultural spheres of life are integrated and unified into a single all-encompassing, centrally administered hierarchy: "no social organisation has an institutional autonomy". 27

The "bureaucratic politics" model of communist government has four major elements that distinguishes public administration in Soviet type, socialist countries from its counterpart in liberal democratic states: the political dominance of a centralised and bureaucratised party the absence of party competition, thereby weakening accountability; the interweaving of party and state apparatus for control purpose; and the socialisation of means of production, distribution and exchange.

Bureaucratic Politics:

Trotsky drew attention to the way that the Party functionaries rather than its representative elements had come to control the party and how these functionaries had become indistinguishable in their political interests from the functionaries of the state apparatus. While not objecting to centralised planned, proletarian dictatorship or the primacy of the Bolshevik party, Trotsky strongly opposed the supplanting of the

political by the bureaucratic - administrative, a process in which functionaries seek to solve all problems by purely administrative means. The use of party machine as an instrument of political control led to a number of consequences. First, any distinction between party officials and state officials becomes blurred. In the USSR, local party agents are responsible for the general performance of government and enterprises within their districts. Particular individuals hold frequently both party and state offices.

Secondly, the party forms a kind of shadow administration parallel to and to a certain extent duplicating the state apparatus. The party "wields together all the differentiated and diversely articulated organs of social management, regulation and command into one immense structure of power".\(^{28}\) It acts as the sole broker in the bargaining and competition for resources between bureaucratic organisations. What is significant about this extensive apparatus in the Soviet Union is not the range of administrative functions to be performed, but, as Lenin repeatedly stressed, who performs them and how they are controlled. It is, in this respect that the state socialist countries has failed to wither away, becoming instead a massive bureaucratic and centralised organisation.

Hirszowicz summarises the specific features of communist bureaucracies which make them a new species of bureaucratic order:

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28. Ibid., p.109, in Smith, n.10, p. 103.
1. The overlapping of political and organisational structures that creates a situation in which communist bureaucracies are strongly opposed to all organisational improvements which might endanger the existing balance of power;

2. Full control of party-state over society which means instead of trying to implement targets determined by social expectation and social demands, communist bureaucracies can enforce and pursue aims of their own;

3. Monopoly of assessing administrative and economic performance, which creates a temptation to cover up all sorts of organisational divisions, contrary to the uniformity and unity of the system which were regarded as important advantages of the centralised hierarchical administration. 29

This way the Soviet bureaucracy does not correspond to the Weberian concept of bureaucracy as expedient, impartial, efficient and committed to the rule of law. On the contrary, it is characterised by the importance of political patronage, favouritism, internal rivalry and disunity. 30

History has proved Lenin correct in his belief that the problem of bureaucratic power could only be solved by a transformation of class

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class structure in which administration is carried on. Indeed, the history of capitalist and socialist societies alike in the 20th century has shown that bureaucratic power is a function not just of the weaknesses of parliaments and other representative institutions but of the structural requirements of class domination. Under capitalism the bourgeois has turned increasingly to executive domination to guarantee its privileged position. In Soviet type socialist society the bureaucracy has not been "controlled" by the strict application of egalitarian principles and the viability of democratic politics.

In this respect Lenin did not underestimate the importance of creating the political precondition for the control of bureaucratic structures, a failing of which is accused by Erick Olin Wright. Wright argues that Lenin failed to specify how "political struggle could mediate the relationship of economic and cultural conditions to state structures". He accuses Lenin of seeing the problem in terms of organisational change rather than "in terms of a genuine political mediation process". 31

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prescriptions for the state in socialist society. There are two different sets of objectives, in Marx. Model one has its objective the liberation of man from the relation of domination that derived from the division of labour within the productive process. The patterns of domination within the productive process were reflected in law and guaranteed by the coercive might of the state. Private property and the state were central elements of man's alienation from his true species being. The true being of man could be realised only by allowing uncoerced flowering of free, conscious, cooperative association of labour. Marx was in conscious rebellion against the dehumanising effects of large scale machine industry since, its intricate division of labour converts craftsmen into detail labourers trained to perform a tiny fraction of the old craft which make them survive wage labourers. Marx attributed division of labour a causal role in inducing alienation. Here, Marx was in broad agreement with Proudhon that socialism had more to do with absence of coercion and external authority that it did with the pursuit of plenty.

The question now arises of what forms of social organisation would realise Marx's objectives?

Of the forms of administration Marx proposed only one would serve in the task of eliminating alienation, and that was the form of Paris Commune of 1871. The Commune according to Marx, proceeded immediately to the elimination of the standing army, the police and the judiciary.
In so far as coercive power was now fused with the population at large the state no longer existed. According to Marx, "The True Antithesis to the empire (French) itself - that is to the state power... was the Commune".  

The ideal of the commune was a vision of self-working and self-governing communes, the standing army replaced by popular armies, the state functions reduced to a few functions for general national purposes. The scale of administration was to be enormously reduced, it was to be dissolved into a multitude of self-governing communes in which the individual could feel a real sense of participation and control.

The Commune, it is clear, qualified as a socialist form of administration only in so far as it set out a model for transforming the relationships of domination. And it was of some importance in leading Marx to recommend it as the political form at least discovered under which to work out the economic emancipation of labour.

What we might term Marx's Model Two, was concerned with eliminating exploitation. The severe problems of unregulated

32. Ibid., p.171.
capitalism could, Marx felt, only be overcome by the state owning and controlling the productive forces. It followed that, both for the initial task of putting down the opposition of the owners and for the subsequent task of planning national production and distribution, the socialists would have to dispose of a tightly centralised structure of coercive power and a very considerable body of administrative expertise. The state form explicitly linked to this objectives was dictatorship of the proletariat. Marx's emphasis upon the transformation of ownership relations determines the centralising and coercive structure.

It was from Saint Simon that Marx imbibed the particular vision of socialism society, in Simon's view, was a single coordinated subordinate to the whole. 33 For Marx too, "Civil society embraces the whole material intercourse of individuals within a definitive stage of the development of productive forces". And, "The relations of production in their totality constitute what are called the social relations, society, and specifically a society as a definite stage of historical development". 34

A number of important implications flowed from this sitting of social purpose. Firstly, it was clear that in this model the objective of society was not preeminently the realisation of man's freedom in political and legal equality. There was in Marx

a blindness to the virtues of social variegation and eccentricity and led him to see almost all social organizations as dependent on the mode of production. The whole of human history, Trotsky tells us, is the history of the organisation and education of collective man for labour, with the object of attaining a higher level of production.

Under the Soviet dictatorship of the proletariat, an exactly similar animus against industrial democracy, deriving from the same preoccupation with maximizing production, was to prevail. Marx's model of the dictatorship of the proletariat was distinguished precisely by its tendency to identify socialism with state ownership. If the objectives are elimination of exploitation and inequality, and the bountiful production of goods to satisfy expanded needs, then it seemed clear that a single central authority would have to organise social production and to own the forces of production.

Marx himself recognised that he had produced incommensurable accounts of the ends of socialism, which therefore entailed radically different recommendations for the form of the state. It is very telling that Marx himself consistently avoided identifying the commune as a form of dictatorship of the proletariat.35

What we have in Marx, as in the socialist tradition, generally, are two differing sets of objectives to which there

correspond differing models for the administration of public affairs. General participation in deliberating and executing public policy must, realistically, presuppose the volume of business to be restricted. It is fairly clear that a structure embodying these characteristics, admirable as it might be in emancipation, could not serve in the business of planning and directing a complex industrial economy and ensuring an equitable distribution of its product.

It is often presumed that the Bolsheviks took power with a ready-made conceptions of the dictatorship of the proletariat. However, in this explanation it is little noticed how un-placably anti-statist was the motivation and justification of the Bolshevik Revolution. Nor is it sufficiently recognised how the extravagant libertarianism, and the anarchic centrifugal forces it encouraged, were themselves causal factors necessitating the subsequent imposition of tight centralisation.

Lenin and Bukharin radical conclusions regarding the exploitative role of monopoly capitalism and its authoritative fall outs on the state bureaucracy led Lenin to consider the forms of administration that would replace the imperialist-state. Lenin took Marx's commune and made of it the practical programme of the Bolsheviks from April 1917 to April 1918. Lenin, insisted that the whole population were to be drawn into the administration of
common affairs of the society. So he made communes as the prototype of the state administration. The whole objective was to build:

Democracy from below, democracy without an officialdom, without a police, without a standing army; voluntary social duty guaranteed by a militia formed from a universally armed people.36

All the features that Marx had extolled in the commune, Lenin reproduced in the Soviets. "Only the commune can save us, so let us all perish, let us die, but let us have the commune". 37 As late as April 1918, Lenin still insisted:

All citizens must take part in the work of the courts, and in the government of the country. It is important for us to draw literally all working people into the government of the state. It is a task of tremendous difficulty. But socialism cannot be implemented by a minority, by the party. It can be implemented only by tens of millions when they have earned to do it themselves.38

We should be clear that what Lenin had in mind was a transformation of authority patterns benefitting society at the cost of the state, rather than a radical restructuring of the

38 Ibid., Vol. 27, p. 135.
ownership relations in the economic base. Capitalism in its finance capitalist stage had centralised resources and nationalised the productive and distributive system which made the administration of things a practicable proposition during the socialist phase. Socialism was simply a matter of turning around the structures created by the state capitalism, making them accessible to popular control and obliging them to serve public needs not private greed. State-monopoly capitalism had created "a complete material preparation for socialism, the threshold of socialism." Lenin believed that on the basis of the mechanisms of supervision of the national economy developed by financed capitalism, it was at last possible for the whole society to resume radical democratic control of its economic life. It seemed that the freedom of self-activity of the commune form could be reconciled with a planned and regulated administration of things. It appeared that the great conundrum of the Marxist theory of the state, its persistent duality, had been overcome. In Marx and Lenin, socialism was defined as a free and conscious relationship of man to man. Neither of them at least, Lenin, till 1918, was concerned with utilising the state to affect a wholesale restructuring of prevailing property relations. Socialist ownership, it was inferred, would extend itself through its technical superiority and natural attractiveness.

However, this optimism did not last long since from spring 1918 the revolution had to face unprecedented crises. Without making any sweeping generalisations, clearly one cannot avoid identifying a few elements of continuity in specific aspects of Leninism and Stalinism. Although that cannot justify that Stalinist forms of apparatus-rule was necessarily a result of Leninism. On the whole, there evolved a discrepancy between post-revolution state structure in theory and in practice.

Leninism resulted from the peculiarities of the Russian environment in which the socialist movement began and developed, also influenced by the general international situation: the transition of capitalism to the imperialist state, the development of monopoly capitalism, the First World War, etc. We cannot ignore various errors and inconsistencies in many of Lenin's theorisations which later contributed to the growth of Soviet bureaucratic authoritarianism. Let us consider, for example, his certainty, some months before the revolution, that given the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, it would be a straightforward matter to organise government affairs, and that no special skills would be called for.

This aim was clearly utopian in the extreme, as Lenin was soon to discover. In order to administer and dynamise the Soviet state, along with the Soviets, the Red Army, the CHEKA (Secret Police) and many other controlling bodies had to be brought in. Lenin realised the essentiality to sustain a system
of high salaries in the administration and even in the Party. 40 Massive errors in the implementation of socio-economic policies by the first Soviet Government led to mass terror and increasing regimentation in the system. What was clear was that there would be a period in Post Revolutionary Russia when the ruling power would not be able to use existing laws while new ones were not yet in existence. This is the limit of legality in revolution which led to the massive terrors and was used by the party-state apparatus to strengthen its position in the system. This thing was partly contributed by Lenin's views about communist morality - everything that serves the destruction of the old exploiting society, and his justification for a centralised singular structure.

Lenin's blurring of distinction between the state, the political power and dictatorship made room for the party-state apparatus to consolidate their position and extend their power since pretty often these two apparatuses used to overlap each other owing to a centralised structure. Also that the role of Soviets were completely reduced to that of executing central orders in contrast to what Bolsheviks said about their autonomy and self-activity before the revolution.

Lack of observance of rule of law which was inherent in Lenin's words about dictatorship as unbounded by laws made room for Party and the State apparatuses to strengthen its power and position over the society since it was not really the working masses which had any control over the system, rather it was the Party-state apparatus; they therefore misused this Leninist theories in increasingly centralised and regimented ways in order to spread their tentacles into the society.

Stalin always uttered the definition of dictatorship of the prole-tariat a power unbounded by law. The error in the definition consists in the failure to allow for any differences between spontaneous action by popular masses and the activities of the organs of the revolutionary government. This, taking the wind away from general popular self-activity and self-organisation, and resting too much confidence on organs of the government helped the system to grow along administrative logics. This gave an upperhand to the Party-State apparatus on deciding matters related to the organisation of the society. It led to the abuses and made the people always looking up to the apparatus for their development.

The one-party system was not established without the participation of Lenin and the same may be said of limitations on human freedom of speech and of the press which were introduced immediately after the Revolution and extended during the years of "War Communism". Some restrictions on freedom of the press
were relaxed only with the beginning of the NEP. After NEP it took to the same forms; Lenin ordered the closure of the journal Ekonomist already in 1922. This was the fate of Sergei Melgunov the editor of Gelos Menuvshego, which it too was closed down in 1922. The Petrograd journal "Mysl" was closed in that year and its contributors sent into exile abroad.

After Lenin's death Stalin and the men around him continued this repressive policy towards the press. By 1929 there was not a single non-Party publication left nor any private publishing house that could have served as vehicles for opposition views.

One could extend the list of Stalinist measures that in some sense were a continuation of anti-democratic trends in Lenin's time, although there is still the question of different historical circumstances.

Many letters and instructions from the civil war period show that Lenin sanctioned the use of terror on a scale that was entirely unjustified. In one of his telegrams of 1918 he ordered the authorities to Nezhey Novgorod to evacuate and shoot hundreds of prostitutes who were getting the soldiers misled. Even after the civil war Lenin proposed that terror be made legitimate in the Criminal Code of the RSFSR; he also advocated a much broader definition of political crime and counter-revolution. This only
enhanced the power of the apparatus in the long run. 41

In the spring of 1918 Lenin wrote:

So long as Revolution in Germany is delayed our task
is to learn from German State-Capitalism, to do every-
thing in our power to initiate it without shying away
from dictatorial methods... We must even surpass Peter,
who hastened the adoption of Westernism by barbaric
Rus without stopping at barbaric means in the struggle
against barbarism. 42

It was not the working masses but the apparatus which was empowered
by this, since neither the rank and file partymembers nor the
proletariat had any form of self-activity because of its declassed
condition and increasing contradiction.

Ironically, Lenin declared a large part of the poor
peasants to be guilty of immoral labour, not to mention the
middle peasants who were branded as exploiters only because they
possessed a certain surplus. This violation of minimum objective
economic laws resulted in the usurping of the popular power and
instead brightening the scope of bureaucratic and a total suppre-
ssion of political dissent. 43

41. Ibid.
42. Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 36, p. 301.
The complete banning of opposition groups and ideological factions within the Bolshevik Party were strictly affected with the coming of Stalin, but this process of depolitisation and authoritarianism started from the days of Lenin. In the absence of an atmosphere of debate and political intercourse, there was not much room left for finding avenues for alternative paths of modernizing the society, for spontaneous popular participation in the development process and making workers the real masters of the forces of production. As in the Fifth Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party, Lenin defended resorting to abusive languages and hatred against the breakaway Menshevik factions in order to keep the masses into the Bolshevik ranks. Also he introduced discord into the ranks of that section of the Petersburg proletariat that followed the Mensheviks on the eve of the elections. In his own words, "In my relations with political enemies of this kind... I shall always conduct - a war of extermination".

Leninism was an adapted form of Marxism. At the same time, however, Lenin's conception of Marxism was in certain respect a more narrow, one sided doctrine than that of his founders. That's why conservative tendencies and forces have appeared in the socialist movement of 20th century that have acted as a brake on the socialist revolutionary process.

As Stephen Cohen argues, Bolshevism contained in some respects the 'seeds', the 'roots', the 'embryo' of the later bureaucratic regime. The roots of the development of this Thermidor may be sought with equal justification in the historical and cultural traditions of Russia, the events of the civil war, the international situation and Bolshevik theorisation and approaches regarding the post-October 1917 set up. Historically, the Russian people were used to look toward the Czarist centre for organising their society; unfortunately, Bolshevik theories on state system merely strengthened this process of centralised apparatus rule. Many features of the bureaucratic authoritarian rule later developed first appeared under Lenin and in some cases he played a direct role in introducing it.


It was Trotsky who used a very plain but telling metaphor: the policeman can use his baton either for regulating traffic or for dispersing a demonstration of strikers or unemployed - classical distinction between administration of things and administration of men. A society where no class holds supremacy, the bureaucracy's role is reduced to the administration of things, of the objective

social and political process.\footnote{47. Issac Deutscher, \textit{Marxism, War and Revolution}, (London, 1984), pp. 232-42.}

In the light of all the painful experiences of last decades it is all too easy to see how greatly the representatives of classical Marxism had underrated the problems of bureaucracy. Two basic reasons: The original founders of Marxism never really attempted to portray in advance the society which could emerge after the socialist revolution. They thought of the post capitalist system in the abstract. They could not help viewing the future revolution on the pattern of the revolution of 1848. An all-European socialist revolution would have much less led to civil strife and foreign intervention and lesser still to recreate standing armies - an important factor of bureaucratisation. They also assume that in the industrialised society of Europe, the very considerable section of the working class would provide a strong mass support for revolutionary government. This, together with existing democratic traditions, would form the strongest guarantee against any bureaucratic revival. Also we should bear in mind the fact that they took the abundance of goods as the precondition for a socialist revolution.

Moreover, there was undoubtedly in Marxism an ambivalent attitude toward the state. On the one hand, there was the conviction that all revolutions are frustrated as long as they do not do away
with the state; on the other the socialist revolution has the need
of a state for its own purpose, to break the old capitalist system
and create its own machine representing the toiling masses and
taking possession of the means of production - its last independent
act as a state. The political function of the state disappears;
what remains is the direction of the process of production.

The reality of the October Revolution was in every single
respect a negation of the assumptions made by classical Marxism.
It was certainly not revolution in the abstract. It did not follow
the 1848 pattern. It occurred in a country where the proletariat
was in a minority, and even that minority disintegrated as a class
in the process of World War, revolution and civil strife. It was
also an extremely backward country where the problem immediately
facing the revolutionary government was not to build socialism but
to build preconditions for a modern life. All these resulted in the
political developments which the Bolsheviks were not ideologically
equipped to deal with, which eventually led to the recrudescence
of bureaucracy.

The political supremacy of bureaucracy always follows
a stalemate in the class struggle, an exhaustion of all social
classes in the process of political and social struggles. In the
Soviet Union after all the trials of a decade filled with World
War, Revolution, civil strife and industrial devastation no
social class was capable of asserting itself. What was left was only the machine of the Bolshevik Party which established its bureaucratic supremacy over the society as a whole.

Moreover, after the revolution the old division of rulers and the ruled acquires a far greater force. Far from 'withering away' the post-revolutionary state gathers into its hands such power as it has never had before. If under the capitalist system, we saw that the power of the bureaucracy always found a counter-weight in the power of the propertied class, here we see no such restrictions and no such limitations. The bureaucracy is the manager of the totality of the nation's resources; more than ever before it appears independent, indeed high above society.

What classical Marxism "telescoped" was the revolution and socialism as it were: what about the terribly rocky and complicated path in between revolution and socialism? Even under the best conditions that period would be marred by tension between workers and the bureaucracy.

The division between the organisers and the organised acquires more and not less importance precisely because the means of production having passed from private to public ownership, the responsibility for running the national economy rests now with the organisers. The new society has not developed to the extent to reward everyone according to his needs; and as long as everyone has to be paid according to his work, the bureaucracy will remain the
privileged group.

The tension between the bureaucrats and the workers is rooted in the cleavage between brain work and manual work. It proved impossible to establish the principle proclaimed by the "Paris Commune" which served Marx as the guarantee against the rise of bureaucracy, extolled by Lenin on the eve of the Revolution, according to which functionaries should not deserve to get more than ordinary workers' wage. The principle implied a truly egalitarian society - and here is part of an important contradiction. Evidently, the argument that no civil servant should earn more than an ordinary worker cannot be reconcile with the other argument that in the lower phase of socialism, which will bear the stamp of 'bourgeois right' it would be utopian to expect "equality of distribution". In the post-revolutionary Russian state, with its poverty and inadequacy of the development of its productive forces, the scramble for rewards was bound to be fierce.

Intellectual pauperisation of the working masses had also made the civil servant omnipotent. In a truly post-capitalist society, the workers constitute the basic social class. The dynamic balance between the official and the worker will find its counterpart in the authority of the state and the control of the masses over the state. This will also assure the necessary equilibrium between the principle of centralisation and decentralisation.
but in the Soviet Union, as a result of objective historic circumstance and subjective conditions, including an ideologival and institutional discouragement to self-organisation and self-activity of the working class, the balance swung decisively to the side of the bureaucracy. 48

For Lenin economic development demanded a reduction in the tasks and responsibilities of the state. It is then perhaps not surprising that to the developments in the European state forum in the early 20th century, he can only ascribe a uniformly negative character. Despite his modest assessment of the functions of the modern state apparatus, Lenin was aware of the tendency of the administrative organs to establish their own autonomy. But he never extend the writings of Marx and Engels on this issue.

48. How do one should see the development of tension between the worker and the bureaucrat? All the inequality in the Soviet system is the inequality of consumption, as suggests Deutscher. Yet the bureaucrats lacks the essential privilege of owning the means of production. It rules as a result of the abolition of the workers' victory over the "ancien regime". This conflict between the liberating origin of bureaucracy's power and the use that makes of it generates constant tension between the worker and the bureaucrat.
The theme of 'careerism' and 'place-hunting' is a pregnant one: it replicates the mistaking of the object that Lenin's critique of bureaucracy has shown. It is in fact remarkable that the only prescription for the control of officials that receives detailed attention is that of reduction of the remuneration of all servants of the state to the level of 'workman's wage. The more complex issue of the election of all officials, the constant right of recall and the necessity for binding mandates for delegates receive no elaboration. Too much stress had been given to a theory of motivation.

Lenin's theoretical failure was later to produce a practical failure. When the bureaucratic corruption of his state was finally borne in on him, his only solution was to intensify the concentration of power. It was impossible to distribute power, in as much as the source of corruption came from external sources to the state machine. This meant the penetration of the administrative starta by 'low cultural level' of the populace. Lenin's answer to the problem of bureaucracy was to fall back on the more advanced workers or on the party. This would only make the cure worse than the disease.

Trotsky's theory of the bureaucracy reproduced the fallacious theory of motivation. He stressed that the Soviet bureaucracy had no necessary role in the process of production. However, Trotsky ignored the major role played by the bureaucracy, although
in a surveiled manner, in the industrialisation; and this inadequate understanding of Trotsky prevents him from discovering any effective measures to cope with the problem. Trotsky could not propose any institutional changes to the existing state of affairs. His solution later turned simple: a political revolution to overthrow the bureaucracy. But only if the bureaucracy is seen as the unique product of a unique conjuncture will such a solution satisfy.

Lenin's 'right to recall' could not overcome the power and authority of the bureaucrat. If the power of the bureaucrat comes from knowledge, the situation would evade the control of procedures. Only as a result of conceding to the bureaucracy, its genuine and distinct functions can one begin to determine the boundaries of its powerss.

It may be argued that the usurpation of power by a bureaucracy was rooted in its substitution of an incorrect version of the general will for a correct one. The real error lies in bureaucracy's possession of the right to determine the general will at all, and that error is inescapable as long as the idea of a general will itself is not rejected as politically authoritarian. Bureaucracies contain natural tendencies to usurp power as a result of wider developments in 20th century economy society and culture. But the culture of Bolshevism consummated these tendencies. Political differences among the citizenry were defined as the
remnants of alien class forces, or as symptoms of inadequate political culture demanding education correction, or as historical contradictions among the people to be addressed through a rapid economic development. Repression provided a straightforward answer.

It is much more important to recognize how a whole series of political and institutional errors committed by the Bolshevik party aided the process of integration of party and state apparatus and their simultaneous bureaucratisation, so that the party became sociologically incapable or acting as a brake on this process:

1. The ban on factions inside the party. This means the end of internal party democracy.

2. The introduction of the single party practice. The ban on other parties was based on the fear that they might be used by the bourgeoisie and the peasantry to overthrow the new social order. However, history shows that the best way to combat the danger of capitalist restoration is the continuous political activity of the proletariat.

3. The third institutional error was the failure to understand the organic links between the Soviet power, collective ownership and the need for primitive socialist accumulation. Aware of the possibilities for bureaucratic misuse inherent in it, Bolsheviks
provided a number of safeguards: (a) a high degree of trade union autonomy; (b) the 'troika' system; and (c) social legislation designed to prevent abuses by the managers.

But all these depended on the health of political power. As the party and the state came over more under the control of the bureaucracy, the struggle of the workers to maintain those safeguards became more and more difficult.

Today the nature of the political debate in the Soviet Union seems to mean as if the forgotten critics of Bolshevism like Polish Marxist Luxemburg, the left - Menshevik leader Julian Martov, and even a politically distant philosopher like Nicolas Bardyaev have taken on a second life.

As Luxemburg said shortly after the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks:

Freedom for the supporter of the government, only for the members of one party - no matter how numerous they may be - is no freedom at all. Freedom is always and exclusively freedom for the one who thinks differently...

Far from being a sum of readymade prescriptions which have only to be applied, the practical realisation of socialism... is something which lies hidden in the mists of future. What we possess in our program is nothing but
a few main signposts indicating the general directions in which to look for the necessary measures and the indications are mainly negative at that. 49

Once at the Congress of Soviets shortly after the Bolshevik revolution, Martov declared his criticism and doubts regarding the Bolshevik course. Trotsky replied by consigning Martov to "the dustbin of history". 50

The Menshevik believed that the order of the day for Russia was a "bourgeois revolution" since so backward a country was clearly not ripe for socialism. But he ended by calling for a coalitining socialist government, one that would presumably "complete the bourgeois revolution".

In a way, the Menshevik position was arid. The Mensheviks knew that the revolution must not step beyond the bounds of a democratic republic with a capitalist economy. It was, according to Irving Howe, a clear case of a received formula clashing with the dynamics of history. But their criticisms of the Bolsheviks were prescient. 51

The Mensheviks, especially Martov said that:

...to construct socialism it was not enough to know what was wrong with capitalism... The preconditions for a socialist economy - the concentration of industry, the predominance of a conscious, highly skilled and numerous proletariat, a peasantry that supported socialist production - were missing in Russia... Socialism depended upon conditions of plenty, under which "no one would have to purchase an improvement in his life at the price of another's." 52

The Mensheviks argued that a coup engineered by a disciplined minority party, even one with a mass following, could maintain itself in power only by establishing a dictatorship, what Martov, anticipating the nomenclatura, called the "Commissarocracy". Such a bureaucratic dictatorship in a backward society, could only institutionalize backwardness, creating a grotesque, "barrack socialism".

The Bolsheviks were of course contemptuous of this Menshevik "scholasticism". But they too gave some tacit credence to the Menshevik criticism when Trotsky talked of the "Theory of

Permanent Revolution. But what if the revolution did not come in the West - what then should Bolshevik Russia do? Trotsky had no persuasive answer.

At first Lenin had an answer. In his pamphlet "Will the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?" he wrote that if 1,30,000 landowners had been able to govern Russia in the past, why could not the 2,40,000 members of the Bolshevik Party govern it now? To which Martov replied: Yest you may be able to stay in power with your 2,40,000 members but only so far as you approach and then exceed the repressive measures of the 1,30,000 landowners. As according to the Chinese dissident Liu Benyan, "The need to maintain state power persuaded Lenin to push aside the materialist science of Marxism and attempt to establish socialism in one backward country."

The Marxist position on the alternative to bureaucracy under socialism in largely based on the lessons derived from the Paris Commune and Trotsky's Critique of Stalinism. Thus Mandel had set out the three levels at which the fight against bureaucratisation must be waged by the revolutionary vanguard:

1. At the level of the political organisation of the state

53. Benyan, n. 51, p.185.
by fostering workers' democracy and direct participation by the masses in the running of the state.

2. At the international level by world revolution, by breaking the isolation of the workers' state.

3. At the economic level by avoiding the separation of accumulation from production and so giving the working class control of the social surplus product. "Democratically centralised, planned workers' management of the economy is the historical answer to this problem."

Andreas Hegedus, the Hungarian social scientist and former Prime Minister, suggests that the root cause of bureaucratism is the separation of administration from the ultimate guarantor of power, i.e., society and lack of social control. For Hegedus, the weakening of the bureaucratic character of the administration will have to start with social organisations - party organisations, trade unions, youth movements, parliament, local bodies, etc. The main means of bringing about the decay of bureaucratic relations for Hegedus are:

1. Redemocratisation of administration and the development of self-administration in society to ensure the institutional authority of society over the power of management.

2. "Healthy mobility" in all spheres of administration.

54. Mandel, n.52, p. 69.
Hegedus argued that "for the most part, administration involves the sort of functions where a planned rotation of administrative personnel is expedient not only for the sake of opposing bureaucratic tendency but also for the sake of greater efficiency".

3. Democratisation of public life: "the creation of the kind of atmosphere in society which will prevent expert knowledge from having a monopoly in any sphere of administration and will make the unlimited rule of hierarchic conditions impossible". 55

Hegedus recognises that the humanisation of administration will be opposed by vested interests within the bureaucracy - the fetish of expertise, the ideology of centralised planning, the principle of personnel stability and so on. For Hegedus one of the greatest distortions of Marxism was the ideology of centralised planning and hierarchical state management propounded during the first period of socialist development. In place of this he asserts the rights of members of society to exercise supervision, as trustees of the property of the people, over economic and enterprise management and to judge enterprise management. Bureaucratism, in the sense of hierarchical command structures alienated both those who work within administrative structures and those who are in one way or another dependent on them. 56

56. Ibid., p. 92.