CHAPTER - III

HISTORICAL ROOTS OF SOVIET BUREAUCRACY
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The soviet bureaucracy was an organic product of the October revolution. It constituted one of its social bases: Marx expected the socialist revolution to occur in the wealthiest capitalist countries. The absence of a large, developed industrial proletariat was one of the decisive causes of the bureaucratic perversion of the socialist revolution. Moreover, the small proletariat which did exist was decimated in the revolutionary struggle. We shall cite some of the extremely unfavourable factors in this respect: the feudal capitalist economic and social legacy of Russia, the atmosphere bred by a tradition of political absolutism and a low standard of education and culture; the World War; the obstinate counter revolution and foreign intervention; the absence of effective support from the workers' movements of the developed countries; and the prolonged hostile encirclement. In such conditions the tendency toward bureaucratic despotisms was all the stronger. Nevertheless, it cannot be said that the struggle for socialism was doomed in advance to failure. There is no
"iron law" of revolutionary degeneration. The triumph of the statist bureaucratic tendency can be prevented by persistent struggle on the part of the revolutionary forces.

The regimentation of social and political life in Russia is often said to have come about in the stalinist period but in fact Russian society has been regimented to a greater or lesser extent since the 16th century. Tsarist Russia has been called a "barracks state", with a rigid hierarchy of social and political command. The resuscitation in new form of the militarized aspects of Russian society had a crushing effect on utopian experiments during the civil war and continued to infiltrate Soviet life in the years that followed.

In Russia the revolutionary party had to take it largely upon itself to accomplish the mission of a yet undeveloped industrial proletariat. After the seizure and consolidation of power, it found itself confronted with a choice: either to develop the social self-government of the soviets of workers', soldiers' and peasants' deputies, or to base the entire system permanently and exclusively upon

The optimism of the early months of the Revolution could not long survive the series of crisis it had to face by the spring of 1918. The plethora of self-governing communes, councils and committees and the loosely structured hierarchy of soviets, found themselves faced in the summer of 1918, by food, fuel and transport crisis, by civil war and predatory intervention of hostile states. To deal with this aggregation of crisis the Bolsheviks had to centralise the meagre resources at their command. They rapidly built up a standing army. The soviet institutions proved incapable of dealing with famine and war. They were swiftly infiltrated at all levels by the Bolsheviks. By this time, the international revolutions, upon which Bolsheviks pinned all their hopes had not materialized. Internally, industry and trade were at their lowest ebb. Even after a modest recovery in 1921 to 1922, Preobrazhensky estimated that "Industrial production stands at no more than about one fifth of the prewar level."\(^2\) The regime, which had long since alienated the peasantry, found itself faced with a numerically tiny and declassed urban work force. The Bolsheviks had to build their policies on the frank recognition that "we are but a drop in the ocean of the

people". The prognosis for the regime looked desperate. It was these extraordinary and quite unanticipated difficulties that the new model of dictatorship of the prolitariat was constructed to remedy.

Bereft of the international support which they hitherto had believed alone can cave them, with a declassed prolitariat and a minimal internal social base, with a ruined industrial structure, the Bolshiniks had no other available recourse to maintain their sway other than the power of the state. The only form of state which was available to them was the imperialist state. The barons of finance capital had also comprised a tiny minority of the population and had to ruthlessly impose their will upon society in order to sustain their own mode of production. They too had had to reform, reeducate and discipline the working class and to establish the armed might of the embattled state capitalist trust in order to survive in the hostile world environment. Finance capitalists put down opposition and faction and insisted upon the conformity and accountability of all to the single co-ordianted politics-economic productive system they had created, "State capitalism", Bukharin declared, "saved the capitalist state by an active and conscious intervention in production

relations. Socialist methods will be a continuation of this active process of organisation. "4

The organisational norm exists in the co-ordination of all prolitarian organisation with one all-encompassing organisation, i.e. with the state organisation of the working class, with the soviet state of the prolitariat. The 'nationalisation' of the trade union and the effectual nationalisation of all mass organisations of the prolitariat result from the internal logic of the process of transformation itself. The minutest cells of the labour apparatus must transform themselves into agents of the general process of organisation.... Thus the system of state capitalisms dialectically transforms itself into its own inversion, into the state form of workers' socialism. 5

According to this model, the superstructure of organised coercion was to determine the economic base of society rather than vice versa. "The road to socialism", according to Trotsky, "lies through a period of the highest possible intensification of the principle of the State...." 6 Socialism in the commune model was defined in terms of relationships in the deliberation and execution of public

4. N.Bukharin, Economics of the Transformation Period (New Delhi, 1971) p.69.
5. Ibid, p.79.
policy and control over the productive process. In the Dictatorship of Prolitariat, socialism was now defined as a relationship of men to things; as an ownership relationship rather than a social one.

By November 1918 Lenin introduced a distinction between the form of government and form of the state. Reversing the commune logic he concluded that the forms of government is irrelevant; what is important is the class nature of the state. The same sophistical reasoning was to be applied to the administration of industry and the management of plants. Socialism, according to Trotsky's definition, consisted in state ownership of the forces of production and not at all in collegical forms of decision-making, workers' control or industrial democracy.

The terminus in this progression was the redefinition of socialism as that system of social ownership that best conduced to maximum economic efficiency and productivity. "All citizens become employees and workers of a single countrywide state "syndicate". "The whole of society", Lenin continued, "will have become a single office and a single factory". The whole population, in Trotsky's

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8. Trotsky, n.6.
view was to be treated as the reservoir of the necessary labour power and socialist industry is a trust of trusts.

The principle of distributive justice that was to apply was originally Marxian; from each according to his ability to each according to his work.

Interestingly, the objective of their first model (commune) had been to smash the old authoritarian patterns of administration. The organic labour state which they called the dictatorship of the proletariat unequivocally demanded authoritative or even despotic management in industry and the unquestionable jurisdiction of the centralised state to manage society. In a phrase that might encapsulate the spirit of the organic labour state, Lenin insisted "Industry is indispensable, democracy is not". ¹⁰ The programme of the industrial democracy henceforth became a dangerous syndicalist deviation which Lenin and Trotsky fought vehemently against.

Just as the magnets of finance capital had had to utilise state power against its own bourgeoisie, so too the state power of the proletariat would have to twin against sections of the proletariat since it had been disnined and declassed in the traumas of the revolution, and in a backward country it lacked the cultural and organisational

¹⁰ Lenin, C.W. Vol.25, p.479.
means to defend itself against petty-bourgeois infiltration from the great peasant mass around it. "The dictatorship of the proletariat became possible only by means of the dictatorship of the Party", because only "the communists express the fundamental interest of the working class." Confronted with a declassed and undisciplined proletariat, the Bolsheviks had no options but to turn this concentrated force inward by constituting a factor of the self-organisation and the compulsory self-discipline of the workers, in order to achieve maximum productivity.

In 1920, Lenin, Trotsky and Bukharin all favoured the militarisation of labour, the absorption of the trade unions by the state and the planned mobilisation of the entire labour force on the production front. Since, by their reasoning, socialism was defined as a system of ownership relations promoting the maximisation of productivity and not at all in terms of administration, there could be no incompatibility between dictatorial direction and socialism. The continued pretensions of the unions to interfere in the management must be regarded as positively harmful and impermissible. The unions' task were to mobilise the masses behind the state plans. The union's were simply the 'transmissions belts', the 'cogs and wheel's of the national economy.

In terms of its distributive principle, Preobrazhensky conceded, Soviet Russia has not gone very far from capitalism. In June 1921 Lenin even complained that, "The system of distributing food on the egalitarian principle has led to equalisation, which sometimes proves to be an obstacle to increasing output."

The Bolsheviks increasing intolerance towards alternative specifications of socialism hardened into a more generalised antagonism towards 'Politics' which had a disastrous impact upon the style of Soviet-type administrations. Faithful to Saint Simon, the dictatorship of the proletariat proclaimed the end of politics in the sense of parties and factions competing for support with differing specifications of national goals. Bolsheviks believed, it had passed away, to be replaced by a more mature application of scientific reason to the problems of industrializing society and maximizing production.

It is partially true that during Lenin's tenure the party at least remained the forum for vital and animated debate. Disagreements, separate platforms and genuine debate, far from being indices of health and vitality, indicated to Lenin that "The party is sick. The Party is

down with fever". 14

Lenin waged a consistent and bitter campaign against the old Bolsheviks' fixation with theoretical disputations. In Lenin's eyes, "production work is more interesting than the rectifying of a minute theoretical disagreement". 15 The dictatorship of the proletariat; in this sense, entailed the imperative of remaking the party, reeducating its personnel to make them effective and efficient managers of the national economy. It was better by far, Lenin concluded, to have the services of one avowedly bourgeois expert, than to enjoy the sympathy of a dozen useless Marxists schooled in exegetics. 16 "Before the expert", Trotsky prophetically concluded, "there opens up a boundless field of activity." 17

Lenin's exhortations to the process were blunt and clear:

"Let us have less political fireworks, fewer general arguments and abstract slogans from inexperienced communists who fail to understand their task; let us have more production propaganda".

The content of the press is hardly political in the conventional sense, since their objective, from Lenin's time onward, has been to mobilize and enthuse the masses for the fulfilment of production norms.

The administration of things was, in the eyes of the Bolsheviks, not at all a matter of disputation. The specialists and experts had to be treasured as the apple of the eye of the organic labour state and given payment and authority commensurate with their status. For the time being the proletariat, and even the party to a large extent, would have to suborinate themselves to the authority of the experts and managers. What was imperatively required was a new model that would restore the link between the technical intelligentsia and the workers which had been lost during the election. The solution as Bukharin perceived it in 1920, was that within factories and plants the workers were to submit to the authority of the technical intelligentsia. And working-class control was to be exercised only at the state level and emphatically denied at the local level.¹⁹

Once again the guarantee of socialism was to consist solely in party control over the state. The responsibility of managers and officials to local, plant, industrial level was expressly disavowed, they are appointed

¹⁹. For a detailed discussion, see Nikolai Bukharin, Economics of Transformation Period (New York, 1971).
by and answerable to the central state. This is intrinsic to the planned economy and the organic labour state.

The dictatorship of the prolitariat was adopted as the foundation myth of modern communism by generation of militant marxists. Communism announced itself to the world not in the libaritarian garb of the commune but in the steely armour of the dictatorship of the prolitarit. It proved quite successful in the depressed and turbulent 1920s and 1930s. It was also, of course, indispensable for the rise of Stalin.

Gradually, a very large apparatus had surfaced, both within the state and the Party, but growth of personnel seemed to stand in inverse proposition to the extensiveness of their useful functions. The threat of bureaucratism, of a swollen executive parasitically leeching the vitality from industry, seemed genuine enough. Lenin's response was to advise a swinging reduction of this great apparatus that in his view was not merely useless but harmful and parasitic. On pain of frustrating the goal of producing that highest possible surplus, he thought, both the party and state machine have to reform themselves.\(^\text{20}\)

Lenin could do little to curb the remorseless

growth of vast bureaucratised commissariats which in the era of New Economic Policy had little to do. There was without doubt a discrepancy between the extensiveness of the machinery of state and its effectiveness in planning the economy and modernising the productive process. The decade from 1918 to 1928 was characterised by audacity, extremism in formulating the theory of the organic labour state. From 1928, ruthless efforts were made for realising all of the conditions for the practical operation of the organic labour state. The revolution whose inspiration had been that of dispersing power throughout society by dismantling the hierarchical structures of domination internal to the old productive process, social structure and state apparatus, had sown the seeds of most consummate concentration of domination in the hands of a relatively predictable bureaucracy. Increasingly this bureaucracy would hamper the regimes continuing claims to legitimacy - that it served to maximise the productive potential of society.

Dictatorship of the Proletariat on the establishment of an organic labour state had the seeds of breeding an omnipotent bureaucracy. But there were many other historical catalysts from its breeding. Along with, there were also failures to understand and deal with the growth of a powerful administrative force.
Lenin rarely saw the connection between social underdevelopment and bureaucracy and preferred to ignore some of the political reasons such as emphasis on party hierarchy, rigid central control, and the will to permeate all subsidiary institutions with Bolshevik officials. Sometimes vague political reasons were given to explain it. Blame was pinned on class or national enemies or the prerevolutionary regime and capitalist intervention during the civil war. These meanaces were true but it all these were upheld even during peace time. Bukharin too was blinkired in his assessment of bureaucracy. He believed that the emergence of a segregated administrative elite was impossible on account of the "colosal over-production of the organisers, which will nullify the stability of the ruling groups".21 The workers opposition only dimly realised how the authoritarian political structure as established by Lenin was a major reason for bureaucractism. But they never launched such a fundamentalist attack on the regime.

Trotsky did alight briefly on two fundamental socio-economic causes for the rise of Soviet bureaucracy. The first point he made was that, the level of technology helps to determine the basis of society as much as do the relations of production. Given that "material forces" it

was no surprising to find in Russia permanent body officials still set in opposition to the working masses. In the second point, stressing more on early social situation in the Soviet Union, Trotsky said, that the proletariat, suffering an intrinsic tradition of domination, it fell prey to a bureaucratic group which came to monopolize the control of Soviet society. 22

Trostsky held that the bureaucracy entered into a relation of exploitation vis-a-vis the proletariat, although he did not term the bureaucracy as a class, rather as a privileged social stratum, since he admitted that bureaucracy had no property relation of its own, nor could they hand over their right of exploitation to their heirs. 23 Trotsky's successors in this line of thought, Rizzi, Djilas and Schachtman took a step further, evolving the state capitalist theory which conceives the soviet bureaucracy as a definite class.

However, Trotskyites failed to prove that the socio-economic interests of all the members of the Soviet bureaucracy were unified. An erstwhile supporter of


Trotsky, Boris Suvarine thought that a social division of interests had taken place within the Party-State Bureaucracy itself. The best products of 1917 had been absorbed into intellectually demanding positions. Mediocre mass became the top stratum of Soviet society. And the rest of the Bolsheviks ended up in the hierarchy of party secretaries. The constructs of Trotskytes are not quite provable but still they show how socio-economic power sustains an entrenched political system.

Leninist conception of the Party came under widespread criticism in this context. In his analysis of the French Revolution Tocqueville goes straight to the heart of the matter: "If the principle of centralization did not perish in the Revolution, it was because that principle was itself the precursor and the commencement of the revolution." In order to oppose a Tzarist maximalist regime extreme methods had to be used. In What Is To Be Done? Lenin opted for a negative image of the power structure he wanted to destroy. Leninist understanding of the Tzarist administration assumed that the state authority was one and indivisible and had two arms—the units of bureaucratic pyramid and the institutions of the local self-government.

Lenin's notion of party structure owed a certain debt to the prevailing authoritarian model, though he viewed the tight party elite as a temporary cudgel only. He underestimated the dragging effect of a backward society after a political revolution. A centralised authoritarian structure of the kind outlined in "What is to be done", with no separation of powers, becomes notorious for its permanence once it is established. Tsarist specialists had to be taken, since, the Bolskiniks were far fewer to control the system. Inspite of the successive facades of the grassroot soviet network, the intrinsic party-state hierarchy continued to proliferate, masking the realities of naked power concentrated in ever narrower circles.²⁵

That the type of party structure selected by Lenin and the cumbersome central administration which eventually fused with it, were responses to the Russian situation and the Russian disease itself becomes even clearer when we move on to study the social base and the economic foundations which necessitated the survival of highly centralised state management.

After the Revolution, the immense task of a speedy modernisation had to be undertaken to catch up with a hostile capitalist West, without the aid of a long-standing

and extensive bourgeois class. As Robert Mitchel predicted in 1911: "Social wealth cannot be satisfactorily administered in any other manner than by the creation of an extensive bureaucracy." Industrilisation tends to drive a wedge between the administration and those directly employed in large-scale projects. In Russia, the lack of a strong bourgeoisie background, the need for speed, and for protective barriers against West European industry, led to the creation of government monopolies run by central administrators.

Given Lenin's view that the Bolshevik party would have to be the leading element in all aspects of socio-economic life, and given also the unintrumpted and growing need for central economic administration, it was natural that the Soviet Party state apparatus should take over the entrepreneurial role of the 19th century West European bourgeoisie. Marx in his Third vol. of Das Capital envisaged a society in which the functions of capitalists, might be taken over by agents or 'managers' of capital.

So, probably, we then have arrived at the conclusion that Russia's political economic and social problems partly rendered centralised, unwieldly administration almost inevitable.

Weber wrote that "once it (bureaucracy) is fully established, bureaucracy is among those social structures which are the hardest to destroy. Where the bureaucratization of administration has been completely carried through, a form of power relation is established that is practically unshatterable". Toqueville wrote of the first English Revolution that although the political constitution was overthrown by it, the administration of justice and the conduct of public business changed scarcely any of the customs and usages of the nation. Of the French Revolution he wrote, "since 1789 the administrative constitution of France has ever remained standing amidst the ruins of her political constitutions." This historic examples were repeated in some respects after 1917.

Marx dared to generalise when he stated that "All revolutions perfected this machine [centralised administrative power] instead of smashing it". He expected the proletarian revolution to smash this machine. If he had survived to witness 1917 and its aftermath, he might have


seen that centralised administration would recur, more so in the case of Russia where the preconditions for a successful proletarian revolution did not exist.

This is why socialists no longer try to ignore the historical precedents set by the great revolutions of modern times. Thus J.A. Schumpeter admits: "I for one cannot visualize, in the conditions of modern society, a socialist organisation in any form other than that of huge and all-embracing bureaucratic apparatus."30

Apart from economic reasons there were also strong social reasons for the resurgence of highly centralised and bureaucratised administration in the Soviet Union. Economic and social conditions hestened the move towards a centralized system, which the political leadership strongly favoured in any case as an ideological necessity. The social reasons may be said to constitute the heavy antiquated frame which the political motor had to pull into the 20th century: and the way the motor was built by the Bolsheviks was determined to a large extent by the shape of the frame.

In spite of the fact that the ruling elite of Russia changed beyond recognition in 1917, in some instances the outlines of the preexisting administrative pattern

remained as latent reference signals in the minds of the new elite. A striking example was the way the Bolsheniks took over two indigenous organisational control inherited from the pre-1917 period, namely the secret police and the system of political commissars in the army.

Bolsheviks attitude toward social administration was similar to that of may West European Socialists: Lenin was concerned about the welfare management concept of the Fabians. The crucial thing to note is that their plans necessarily involved an increase in numbers rather than a diminuation of administrative personnel in order to undertake social welfare on a huge scale. The departure from laissez-faire in Britain and from authoritarian paternalims or neglect in Russia meant an augmentation of the machinery of the state to a great degree. Both Lenin and Sydney Webb underestimated the bureaucratic problems that would rise in due course of time.

Out of sheer utopian urges the Bolsheviks ignored the historical origins of the Russian society, which led them to underplay the continuing vitality of the weighty administration that had long been required to cope with such a society. Also that their belief that politics could be reduced to administrative problems lies behind Lenin's devotion to party structure in What Is To Be Done? and helps
in part to explain Stalin's reliance on bureaucratic institutions.\(^{31}\) Thus the ideas of the early Bolsheviks on society, as well as backwardness of existing Russian society, tended to ensure the stability of bureaucracy. Together with H.G. Wells, the Bolsheviks were the final heirs of a tradition of utopian social models.\(^{32}\) The Bolsheviks followed the authoritarian branch of the utopian tradition, hoping to immerse man's selfish individuality in the collective. In the years of the early Five-Year-Plans Stalin eliminated all elements of the libertarian branch of utopian thought which survived until then in Bolshevik social policies.

Also to be noted is the fact that the cultural and class background of the Bolshevik leaders placed thus in a category apart from the prolitariat in whose name they acted and even further from the peasants since most of the Bolsheviks were from the middle strata of society and townspeople. This social character was ultimately reflected in the hierarchical administrative structures.

Lenin tried his best to ignore this influence, as in his 'State and Revolution' he looked forward to a system in which peasants as well as factory workers would take up


\(^{32}\) Ibid.
commanding roles in the administration. He understood the problems arising from an inadequate socio-economic base that had to be abridged in this way. But there were vital differences between workers control and mass participation in the administration.

In the first place, workers' control had sprung up prior to the Bolshevik assumption of power. Secondly, for this very reason Lenin wooed this movement with shared authority in the event of a successful revolution: there was never really any question of co-equal status for the state administration by the side of the party. A third difference lay in the anarchist elements which permeated workers' control. Finally, the real threat of syndicalism which existed in individual factories never affected the workings of the unified state administration.

Workers' control and the idea of early mass participation in state administration both failed. Since the problem connected with workers' control cropped up first, the methods used to deal with them tended to set a precedent for managing the subsequent entry of workers into the central administration. The size of the working class was reduced so drastically by decimation in the Civil War, unemployment, famine that it was difficult for the regime to

33. Ibid, p.274.
create a large pool of workers for the administrations. Lenin's idea of drawing on peasants also didn't work since the peasants were far off from administrative centres and they were not politically reliable.

The autonomy of the trade unions were crippled and were made into yet another branch of the party-state administration in order to mobilize resources for creating an organic labour state. As time went on, it became impossible to distinguish union officials from other servants of the state. The atrophied factory committees became mere tools of the central authority, only carrying out orders and they lost touch with the ordinary workers. 34

The harnessing of the trade unions and rigorous party control over those workers in the partly-state apparatus are usually characterised in Western scholarship as mainly one-way process of dictatorial political enforcement from above. 35 However, we must note that the social backwardness of the proletariat helped to mould the character and composition of state management almost as much

34. For more details on the "Bureaucratisation" of the Trade Unions and factory committees see Margaret Dewar, Labour Policy in the USSR 1917-1928, Op. Cit, Ch.3 and 4. Ibid, p.275.

35. For example, one winter sums up in this manner the fate of the trade unions: "Government by dictatorship had an adverse effect on internal union politics. It gave rise to a bureaucracy which was characterised by the usual problems..." See J.B. Sorensen Op. Cit, p.187, cited in Pithybridge, p.275.
as political machination by the party.

The debacle of workers' control soon proved that the proletariat, even had it not been obstructed politically, was incapable of running the economy. Also that the representatives of the proletariat who were elevated to the ranks of national administration found to be not strong enough in calibre or in numbers to make a major impact on the party-controlled machinery, neither were they able to keep in close touch with the working masses and their vital class interests. A contemporary Soviet critic observed how, as industry contracted in the Civil War and workers were drafted into administrative tasks the forman range of jobs did not contract so fast, as proportionately more were needed in order to oversee the reduced working force.

Hierarchical trends were growing, thus, in both industry and the state administration, and between the two. Workers transformed into white-collar officials tended, as is so often the case, to ascribe more value to their privileges than to the function that justified them. These tendencies stemmed from the understandable lack of expertise which the ex-workers brought with them. Lack of initiative was one. It was not possible to turn a worker conditioned by Tsarist factory life into a self-reliant administrator
overnight. Both vertical and horizontal buck-passing became widespread due to functional incompetence of officials and refusal of officials to make a decision. Unnecessary duplication was also rife in the administration, due in part to the low literacy standard of the prolitariat.

During 1919-20 only 11% of the workers were in industry, and the rest with the party-state administration. The rift in terms of status and interests between exworkers in administration and the working masses widened as time went on. Like any government, the Bolsheviks depended upon labour to keep the country going, but after 1917 they were never in a position where this dependence developed into a bargaining point for economic or political concessions to the working class. The Marxist view of labour, the compulsion to work was written into the Bolshenik ethic, which was used against requests for free labour; that could have threatened party-state apparatus dominance. In the first years after the Revolution a threat of this kind was non-existent due to the near-liquidation of the working class.

Another reason for the dilution of the proletarian


37. A good example of the combined economic and political pressures in 1917 is provided by the million-strong railway workers. See Pethybridge, The Spread of the Russian Revolution, "The Railway".
power was indicated by M. Tomsky at the 14th Party Congress in December 1925. The composition of the labour which underwent a change because of joining of people, who had no experience of factory-life prior to the revolution, and influx of illiterate and inexperienced plasants, their alienation from the proletarian vanguard of 1917, some of which now worked in party-states apparatus, affected workers' consciousness and organisation. The rank and file was not only out of touch with its representatives in the central state offices, but even with its own trade union leaders. Constructive criticism from below was sparse and weak and the principle of open elections was fading. If the internal hierarchy of the trade union movement was producing splits of this kind amongst its own members, there was little chance of maintaining a strong and converted influence on the central administrators, let alone on the higher reaches of the party decision-making process.

The Soviets were originally intended to be the archetype for direct management by the proletariat but as early as March 1919 Lenin admitted that on account of the social backwardness of the masses "the Soviets which according to their programme were organs of government by the workers, are in fact only government for the workers by the most advanced sections of the proletariat, but not by..."
the working class themselves." Due to this situation, any link between workers and bureaucrats-specialists were too remote.

Long before Lenin tried to come to grips with the problems outlined above, three political thinkers of very different persuasions had agreed in general terms on the course administrative processes would probably take after a revolutionary upheaval. Tocqueville observed with regard to the French Revolution: if at each revolution the administration was decapacitated, its trunk remained unmutilated and alive, the same public duties were discharged by the same public officers". Max Weber forecasted in 1918 that in socialist system those best qualified would run the nationalised administration and would feel no solidarity with the prolitariat. Finally, Bakunin criticised Marxists for not realising that their theories were bound to lead to a minority of ex-workers ruling the masses in a powerfully centralised state.

The low educational standards prevalent in the early Soviet period compounded the tendencies that have been described above.


If only one section of the society is literate or educated, then its socio-economic powers are enhanced in relation to the masses. In a backward, largely illiterate country the administrators act as scribe for the whole range of political, economic, and legal affairs, which tends to swell the size and importance of central administration. In the specific case of Russia, certain intrinsic features, like, Russia's enormous size made it essential to have a dependable and durable means of passing information between the administrative hub and the peripheries.

Russia's authoritarian political tradition which helped in the consolidation of power and position by the bureaucracy, both after and before 1917, was partly a result of having to deal in a paternal manner with the common people. In the mid-1920s, the Soviet Procuracy, the supreme coordinating legal organ, ordered that all local ordinances be sent to it to find out whether there was any illegality. The motive was just not one of pursuing tight legal and political control from above, but was based on bitter experience of the low educational standards of all those in the legal apparatus at the local level.

The survival of widespread illiteracy and semi-literacy during the NEP undoubtedly shored up the administration's exclusive structure. An analysis which appeared in 1923
revealed that almost two-thirds of full party members and half the candidate members were white-collar workers. This evidence make it plain that the party, the party-state administration, were becoming the bastion of the more articulate and privileged groups of early Soviet society.

Given the high rate of illiteracy among the rural population, the number of peasants in the party is a good indication of the correlation between illiteracy and exclusion from influential political and administrative bodies. By the start of 1925 under 10% of the party members were working peasants. An the majority of this small percentage were really officials who only farmed in their spare time, the actual permanent agriculturists were probably as low as 2% or 3%. The illiterate peasantry felt more at home in the infantry than in the urban offices of the peacetime administrations.

The Bolshevik party strove to close the social gaps caused by low levels of literacy and increased need for administrative personnel, but the rise of large numbers of previously illiterate persons into administrative posts naturally occurred even later, due to the extra skill that were required. In a functionally specialised society like

43. Ibid., p.135.
Russia, the occupational structure, together with literacy rates, has a pyramidal shape. It was obviously impossible within one on two generations to turn the truncated pyramid upside down.

Soviet leaders tried to accelerate the process. So, in 1919 workers' Faculties were set up. But it did not succeed due to the objective socio-economic situation. Organisations sponsoring candidates for workers' Faculties turned to hold back heir most able members. And enrolled proletarian students often found that they could not survive on their paltry stipends and had to take up some kind of work. Some students with party ties were drawn into too many extra-mural activities and were frequently of the opinion that party influence would make up for their lack of academic progress. The disease of bureaucracy crept into those very bodies which were set up precisely to smash the social causes of this disease.

The broader implications of the educational gulf for the future social and political administrations in Russia were seen with considerable clarity by Soviet leaders during the 1920s, and even prophesied as early as 1898. Trotsky wrote that the bureaucracy proliferated "in inverse proportions to the enlightenment, the cultural standards and

the political consciousness of the masses. Djilas may well have taken his idea from J. Machajski who, between 1898 and 1971, elaborated the theory that the Russian Revolutionary intelligentsia were not genuine allies of the working class. They owned a peculiar form of property, namely, education which they could exploit with as much success as the capitalists wielding the material means of production. In 1918 he declared that a new "peoples' bureaucracy" was emerging, led by Bolshinik intellectuals.45

This line of argument appeared to cut very near the bone. Certainly a new administrative elite did spring-up, and it did serve to separate further the educated from the semi-literate masses. But it cannot be maintained that there was a deliberate intent to suppress the dissemination of knowledge. The social problems defeated the Bolsheviks' aim for socialisations of knowledge and means of production.

There was, however, another ironical and important difference. Machajski's gloomy vision of a hierarchical, nationalised economy run by highly salaried managers coincied with the features of Stalinist administrative arrangements. But, ironically, Stalin personally represented the anti-intellectual stream in the Bolshevik

leadership.\textsuperscript{46} According to Souvarine, the intellectually mediocre men rose to the top of the bureaucratic system. However, it was clear through the 1930s that at least some of the mud from Machajski's attacks still stuck despite the discrepancies between his forecast and actually what has happened.

Although scarcely a whiff of genuine Bonapartism ever affected the political climate, there was no doubt that military ideas were influential in the administration of society. The military model was deeply rooted, as Prof. M. Fainsod has pointed out: under Alexander I and II and Nicholas I there was an increasing disposition to turn to military to perform functions of civil administration. This tradition was reinforced rather than reversed, despite Bolsheviks' distaste for military and hierarchical institutions, under the impact of total war in the revolutionary period. In Russia the military machine in conjunction with the Bolshevik party became a stop-gap administrative system in the wake of the collapse of the Tsarist structure. The cruel necessities of internal war allowed the party bureaucracy to adopt a single line of authority based on a highly disciplined hierarchy. The similarity with military procedures was further enhanced by Lenin's deliberate fusion of the military and political

The most important influence which was to survive through NEP and affect the long-term evolution of administrative attitude was the nature of the personnel involved. The ideas and values of the Tsarist specialist who were retained into the new administration, the differentiations of rank to which they were accustomed, their hierarchical inclinations and naturally ruthless methods became part and parcel of the administrative climate. The habits did not disappear even after 1921: appointments were still made in an authoritarian manner from above through the special bureau of the party central committee.

Even Bolshevik leaders were aware of the role of Civil War conditions and the so-called militarisation of the party in breeding bureaucratisation. 13 members of the Polit Bureau who kept their posts into the 1950s had held combined military-political posts in the Civil War. Below the political peaks, 4000 military officers were taken into the party at one below during the Leninist enrolment of 1924. An Trotsky said, "The demobilization of the Red Army of five millions played, no small role in the formation of

47. J. LaPalombara, "Bureaucracy Modernisation: The Russian and Soviet Case", p.244, Cited in Ibid., p.287.

48. Ibid. p.288.
the bureaucracy. The victorious commanders assumed leading posts in the local Soviets, in the economy, in education, and they persistently introduced everywhere that regime which had ensured success in the Civil War. Although the dual political - military structure did not survive after the Civil War, many ex-military personnel, imbued with experience of wartime methods and national affairs continued to serve in administrative posts.

In the course of the high level struggle between Lenin's lieutenants shortly before his death Trotsky advocated that younger men should be allowed to play a greater role by promoting them to leading positions in the party and in the administrative cadres. The irony was that when Trotsky occupied the leading position on the military side of the dual command it was Stalin who criticised authoritarian ways; but as soon as Stalin took over control, he retained many rigid administrative features in the peace that followed. NEP gave a laxer atmosphere, but during the period of collectivisation and the First Five-Year Plan it surfaced on a much vaster scale than during the Civil War.

Lingering traces of military attitudes pervaded Soviet social administration. The breakdown of all attempts to link up small scale with large scale activities

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49. Trotsky, n.22, pp.89-90.
perpetuated an administrative vacuum that was gradually filled up by a highly centralised system. The collapse of central authority in 1917, together with newly-released social and economic aspirations of the peasants and the prolittariat, led in the short term to fissiporous trends that threatened both the basic law and order and the long-term aims of the Bolsheviks. At the height of the campaign for workers' control in January 1918, the Bolshevik leadership warned the trade unions that it would be suicidal for them to deal with socialisation of industry in the crude manner then being applied by the peasants for the socialisation of land. 50 Bukharin reiterated the warning, saying that the large number of petty owners who would be thrown up by the system of ownership-sharing envisaged by workers' control would lead to anarchic competition between them and result in neo-capitalist features. 51

Thus workers' control, one of the most likely viable links between the Bolshevik political centre and the socio-economic grass-roots, was discarded as an administrative bridge. Soviets, which were intended to serve as the primary antidote to the large-scale

50. "Rervylvserossiiskii s"izd professionalnykh soiuzev 7-14 ianvaria 1918"; stenograficheskii otchet (Moscow, 1918) p.236; cited in Pethybridge, p.296.

51. Bukharin, "Programma Kommunistov" (Bolshevikov) Petrograd, 1919) pp.8-9; Ibid.
bureaucratic structures of the past, were soon to be infiltrated by anti-Bolshevik elements and corruption and inefficiency, fell prey to close Communist Party supervision as a result of the decisions taken in the 8th party congress in March 1919.

Subsequently, the regime's attempts at revitalising the Soviets failed due to huge distances, poor communications, illiteracy and lack of local cooperation. Also the system dual subordination of the Soviets, its enlargements of areas of jurisdiction further compounded its administrative difficulties by weakening their contacts with the day-to-day life of the working people.

Into the gap between large-scale and small-scale administration stepped the monolithic Bolshevik Party. After the Civil War, the party moulded in its own centralised image a party and a state system which from the start was clearly subordinate to its authority. Without exception all spheres of social affairs came under Bolshevik scrutiny, but the pattern was based on repetitive extension of similar functions at all levels, a system far better suited to unitary political command than one influenced in its workings by variegated multiplicity. The system of dual subordinations ensured the perpetuity of the repetitive extension.

52. Bukharin, pp.232-3, Ibid.
Naked force was the instrument wielded by the central bureaucrats to bring about "symchka" on a grand scale. The violent background of the Civil War rendered this move less unexpected. The fast growth of forced labour in the early years of the Five Year Plans was also an reminder of the Civil War years.

The question of force in the hands of the administration introduces us finally to the relationship between Russia's social backwardness, the need for a bureaucracy, and the specific ways in which that bureaucracy was made to work on Soviet society.

Whenever in this century the leading elements in any society have decided to introduce innovation on a large scale, they have had to resort to bureaucratic methods of administration. The Bolsheviks represent the most clearest example of this. Given the all embracing nature of Marx's ideas on economic and social affairs, the Soviet bureaucracy had to be equipped to deal with the comprehensive planning and management of the whole of Russian society. It was far more than a colonial-type bureaucracy. It was intended to be a dynamic instrument for socio-economic change.

It is when one looks at the social and political implications of bureaucratic modernisations that the resulting benefits become less apparent. Unfortunately, in
the process of creating an efficient bureaucratic apparatus, radical ideas are abandoned in favor of more conservative ones. Less attention is paid to external social need, than to internal self-preservation. Bureaucratic methods became an end rather than a means, so that administration try to adapt the social environment to thier convenience, instead of switching their activities inorder to suit changing circumstances. In any case, political progress has been left behind as early as 1921, when the notion of dictatorship became a meaningless slogan. Continuing political backwardness bound to distort subsequent social progress and economic modernisation. 53

Rosa Luximberg foresaw Russia's fate:

Without general elections, without unrestricted freedom of press and assembly, without a free struggle of opinion, life dies out in every public institution, becomes a mere semblance of life, in which only the bureaucracy remains as the active element. Yes, we can go ever further: such conditions must cause a brutalisation of public life. 54

Rose Luxemburg did not spell out what she meant by the "brutalisation of public life", but she was correct in this prophery as well. At this point we return to the questin of

53. Pethybridge, p.293.

force and Stalin's part in it. At the end of NEP, the central administrative authority proceeded to mould social and economic affairs, entirely from above. This involved an immediate reduction in technical friction over matters of administrative organisation, but soon led to an sharp rise in social tensions between the ruthless bureaucracy and those sectors of the population that suffered acutely from its arbitrary actions. Herein lies the main reason behind the Great Purge. The aim of the Bolsheviks remained to transform constantly the modalities of social and economic organisation. A potential clash appeared between this ideal and the stabilising ethos of the entrenched bureaucracy. The purges were a drastic method of trying to maintain revolutionary dynamism in the face of bureaucratic consolidation.

We can now, trace the gradual course of events to identify the most important and distinctive features of the situation. The bourgeoisie had not recaptured power during NEP and after. Yet the proletariat no longer possessed it. Sharply in constrast to the real historical content of the French bourgeois still remained the ruling class. In Hitler's dictatorship, the finance and industrial capital retained their hold on means of production. But in Soviet Union the proletariat was bereft of its right to the means of production.
Capitalism, in the early 20th century had not created the basis for a technology of socialised productions, so capitalist mode of production cold not be overtaken. The proletariat eliminated the capitalist ownership of the productive forces, but since the same class took the task of production and management their executions by the same class leads to an intolerable situation. Functional tension thus begins to operate within the proletariat. As history shows, the work-force proletariat very soon lost control of the state. The management proletariat very quickly integrated itself into the body of traditional functionaries. It was out of this organic split in the proletariat that new social formations emerged - as a privileged bureaucracy. The organisation of the manegerial proletariat as a bureaucracy resulted from the initial historical contradiction of economic development.

Apart from the historical backwardness of the Russian society the rise of bureaucracy was also the product of a very specific world conjuncture.

The concentration of property and administrative control in the hands of the state transformed the party, as the political corps of this state. But the power of the party were more the product of large-scale transformations which went beyond the party. The power of the party was a
consequence of the fundamental modification of the balance of class forces; the expropriation of finance and industrial bourgeoisie and the landed property, the organic split of the proletariat. The power of the party-state apparatus was inversely proportional to the power of the proletariat, due to the specific backwardness of Russia the deep-seated contradiction between the tasks of management and of production.

The Bolsheviks had to keep in control the instruments of political actions inorder to hold on until proletarian help from the West comes, and herein lay the direct danger. The backwardness created a political impasse: a numerically weak proletariat; a ubiquitous peasantry, a weighty bureaucracy, and a secular tradition of Oriental despotism. The consequence was the proletariat did not contain enough human and political resources to support a plurality of parties which would express simultaneously the new juridical relations of production and the natural heterogeneity of the working class. So the process of reduction to a single party was an objective phenomena.

The eliminations of democracy from the Soviets, by substituting the Soviet elected delegation in favour of the party apparatus and replacements of factory councils by authoritarian one-man management, marked the historical
setback for the proletariat as the ruling class. The working class lost the political initiative because it was deprived of its control over the means of production. Workers self-management was the most advanced form of socialised production which demands a very high level of automation and culture. But it succumbed since it was too far ahead of the historical reality.

Russian backwardness operated in a world situation, dominated by the technological impossibility of transcending the mode of production. So relief could not have come from outside Russia. The major contradictions of this period—between the powerful revolutionary upsurge and the lack of technological growth was expressed very clearly in Russia.

It caused a serious weakening of proletariats base and the single party in power remained integrated with the proletariat. The division of labor reacted against this integration. And the main danger was in the effect the division of labor had within a society dominated by the fundamental contradiction between the tasks of management and production. This antagonistic relations introduced a social constraint imposed by Russian backwardness and intolerable impoverishment due to Civil War. This situation obviously led to authoritarianism. The proletariat lost to
the party its direct control. The functional division which
gave rise to a technical separation between the producer and
the means of production was rapidly, transformed into a
social separation. 55

The general historical situation was confirmed to
a remarkable extent in the case of Russia. The total defeat
of workers self-management and then of the coercive
administrative measures of the War Communism prevented this
party control from developing into socially exercised
control. Activities of control were institutionalized as a
monopoly of the party. Thus, the division of labour changed
the role of the party from top to bottom and transformed its
organisation and the texture of its political life and
finally its social composition.

The tasks of management and control brought about
a total change in the social milieu. The bureaucracy became
the inevitable transmission belt. The party became lodged in
the bureaucracy. The bureaucracy made use of unavoidable
daily technical cooperation to practise an insidious osmosis
which in turn precipitated the social modification of the
party. This was a dependence which grew because the party
was integrated into the administration, that the proletariat
was weakened and that the bureaucracy reproduced itself

rapidly through a spontaneous extension of its power. However, the mechanism was basically determined by the obligation to exercise this essential monopoly role, by the party, under the dominion of the tension between the tasks of management and of production.

In the internal life of the party, relationship of authority and military-style subordination replaced political relations. By the very nature of things, political life became atomized personalized and specialized with no contact between people. It was in this climate, under the decisive pressure of external forces, that the creation of an "apparatus" came about. The Political Bureau and the secretariat, which were to become effective and indispensable levers of bureaucratic power were born of convenience.

The filiation of the party as a structure of the ruling bureaucracy from the proletarian party now appeared with full clarity. The division of labour reverse its functions, overtured its structure and profoundly modified the technical infrastructure of its political life. The new technical complex failed to provide organic links with the working people, because it was the distorted expression of those objective constraints inherent in the tasks of management in that historical context. It was more
favourable to bureaucratic intervention. But it did not determine the route from the proletariat to the bureaucracy. The forces acting on events are outside the party. And these profound changes in relationship of forces were themselves the social expression of labour organisation dictated by the real level of society. And the party appeared as an extraordinary echo-chamber.

The October revolution was the correct response to the social crisis of Tsarist Russia, but it was premature in the sense it came before capitalism produced a material base adequate to transcend the capitalist production process. Lenin's prognosis of imperialism turned out to be far closer to reality than Kautsky's, whereas analogous observations of Rosa Luxemburg should have been heeded. The contradiction between the social crisis of the capitalist system and the level of civilisation, in so far as it did not develop into a prolonged decomposition of capitalism, necessarily changed the social bases of the protection revolution. The substitution of the state for direct workers' control was the only inescapable phenomena. If the German revolution had been victorious it would have faced the same barriers in socialising the production process. However, with superior intellectual and technical capabilities the statist bureaucratism would have been
constructed with more flexibility and at much lower social cost. 56

The statist bureaucratism developed from the primitive state administration of extreme shortage. It came about inspite of the political leadership of the state and against its will. This contradiction between the ideological infrastructure of the regime and the real relations of production introduced a permanent instability into the system.

In the absence of an adequate technology, the administrative control of the economy necessarily generates bureaucracy. In its essential functioning the bureaucracy is the substitution of man for a non-existent machine - due to lack of development of the productive forces. Therefore, the appearance of the bureaucracy was natural. The moment society, incapable of self-management, hands over its attributes to the state, the bureaucracy becomes the obligatory vehicle. Bureaucracy's technical function necessarily carries with it social attributes. Bureaucratic state administration hence signifies the social implantation of the state into the production process.

The proletariat had been incapable of establishing institutions of direct control. Hence it had to relinquish a

56. Ibid., pp.109-110.
large part of its attributes as a ruling class in favour of the state. The bureaucracy draws its power from its role as an autonomous agent in the production-process, from the division of labour, and from the organic split of the proletariat.

Hence the bureaucracy arose from the very texture of this society. The bureaucracy, as the social corps of the state did not need to modify the juridical form of property.

Revolutionary institution were the bureaucracy's natural base of support. It was placed in this position as a reaction to rejection of the socialized process of production by the technological infrastructure. It represented at once a deformation and a continuation of the October revolution. The powers of the state became powers of the bureaucracy.

The Kulak and the NEP-man were working against revolutionary institutions and bureaucracy. The bureaucracy did stop the Kulak and NEP-man and not the proletariat, since proletarian power had been eliminated by the technological impasse. Here, the failure of the revolution was an objective fact, to which must also be included the strategic errors of the proletarian leadership. The composition of the Soviet bureaucracy was originally a functional amalgam of
officials of the old regime and of the managing corps drawn from the working class. The proletarian managerial corps was the theatre of profound changes. There was the dislocation of institutions, the party was isolated and destroyed internally; growing disintegration of the proletariat, the downturn of the European revolution. Then, the thermidor in Russia expressed the way the bureaucracy came to consciousness.

Three series of factors therefore combined to bring about the bureaucratic state-socialist society. The first was the fundamental contradiction of the crises of capitalism which made the revolution possible, without however accepting any transcendence of the capitalist mode of production. The inescapable consequence of this was the organic splitting of the proletariat into tasks of control and production. This gave the bureaucracy its opening as an autonomous force in the productive process. Thus there was the social scale of the proletarian revolution of October 1917 which expropriated big bourgeoisie and the landed proprietors, thus made room for the most highly developed form of state monopoly. The final factor was the world regression of 1930s which at once isolated and decomposed the revolutionary forces, drove the rural and urban middle classes into complete impasse, and accelerated the retreat.
into the national arena of the forces of production, in this way providing the bureaucracy with economic support and social reinforcement.

The bureaucratic degeneration of the CPSU cannot be understood if we attempt to tease it out of the particular ideas on organisation that Lenin presented in 1902. Something more can be gained, however, if we turn to an even earlier text from Marx, The German Ideology (1945), where it is argued that for communism the "development of productive forces... is an absolutely necessary practical premise because without it want is merely made general, and with 'destitution' the struggle for necessities and all the old filthy business would necessarily be reproduced..." 90 years later, Trotsky utilized this insight and explained that "the basis of bureaucratic rule is the poverty of society in objects of consumption, with the resulting struggle of each against all. When there is enough goods in a store, the purchaser can come whenever they want to, when there is little goods, the purchasers are compelled to stand in line... very long... it is necessary to appoint a policemen to keep order. Such is the starting point of the power of the Soviet bureaucracy." 57 The "policeman/bureaucrats" naturally made sure that their own

needs were met first of all, and soon their function came to be not merely to keep order in the face of poverty, but also to defend their own material privileges. Regarding the range of privileges, a veteran of the communist International, Joseph Berger, recalls that as long as Lenin was alive something more than lip service was paid to it. The change came with Stalin. In preparation for the final struggle with the opposition, the struggle against privilege was finally given up.

The opposition to which Berger refers was formed in 1926, containing such people as Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamener and krupskaia. They opposed Stalinist policy of subordinating revolutionary internationalism to the notion of creating socialism in one country; they also advocate a more conscientious plan for creating an industrial basis for the country's economic development while improving the conditions of the workers and expanding their role in decision making. More than this, they denounced "the bureaucratic perversion of the party apparatus," warning that "the methods of mechanical adjudication are preparing new splits and cleavages, new removals, new expulsions, new pressures with respect to the party as a whole. The system inevitably constricts the leading summit, reduces its authority and compels it to replace its ideological authority with doubled and tripled pressure... Geniune
discipline is shaken apart and replaced by subordination to the influential figures of the state apparatus". 58

Once stalin's temporary ally, Nikolai Bukharin, argued that the very existence of the opposition was, intolerable because "the party is 'unitary' in structure... "When Bukharin himself came into opposition with Stalins' new policies, Stalin suppressed him with the remainder that "freedom for factional squabbling among groups of intellectuals is not inner party democracy." 59

Leopold Trepper, a dedicated communist who was to organise the heroic anti-Nazi network known as the Red Orchestra during World War II, expressed this about this transitional period:

"During Lenin's lifetime, political life among the Bolshevik was always very animated. At the congresses, in the plenums, at the meetings... militants said frankly what they thought. This democratic... clash of opinion gave the party its cohesion and vitality. From the moment Stalin extended his power over the party machine, however, even old Bolsheviks no longer dared to oppose his decisions on even discuss them. Some kept silent and suffered inwardly,

59. Ibid., p.323.
others withdrew from active political life... This terrible hypocrisy accelerated the inner demoralisation of the party.

"Along with the cult of Stalin there developed the cult of the party... The party cannot be wrong, the party never makes a mistake; you cannot be right if you oppose the party. The party is sacred. Whatever the party says... is the gospel truth. To question it is sacrilege. There is no salvation outside the party; and if you are not with the party, you are against it. These were the unspoken truth that were beaten into the heads of skeptics as for heretics, they were doomed to excommunications." 60

1938 Max Shachtman made an interesting point: "In the days of illegality and thin purses, under Tzarist despotism the Russian party nevertheless held four regular congresses between July 1903 and May 1907. In the revolutionary period, between the overthrow of the Tzar and the death of Lenin, the party held eight regular party congresses... Under the stalinist bureaucracy, the Bolshevik party has been allowed to meet in congress only four times in more than 13 years. 61

In terms of program, morale and other internal

60. Ibid., p.324.

organisational norms and activity the party of Lenin had passed out of existence. The excessive violence during the industrialisation and collectinisation created a dynamic which only de-Bolshevised the party further.

In a challenging interpretation of the great Purges of the 1930s, J. Arch Getty raises an interesting question about whether "an untrained and unducated bureaucracy in a huge, developing peasant society somehow functioned and obeyed enough to be termed totalitarian. He sugests that the party in the 1930s was inefficient, fragmented, split several ways by internal conflict with organisational relationships that seem more primitive than totalitarian. But Paul le Blanc says if "Totalitarian" means something akin to Orwell's "1984" then Getty has a point here; but if we define it as attempting to subjugate to the state all functions of the country's social, political and ideological life and crushing the slightest manifestations of criticism, Getty's argument is overstated. 62

The party was more monolithic in the 1930's than in the early 1910s. Discipline, too, severely had a more unyielding character once the correct line was handed down from above, regardless of the infractions and ambiguities

that can be documented. However, Getty was quite insightful when he says this: Its upper ranks were divided and its lower organisations were disorganised, chaotic, undisciplined. Moscow leaders were divided on policy issues, and central leaders were at odds with territorial secretaries. Such a clumsy and unwieldy organisation could not have been an efficient and satisfying instrument for Moscow's purposes.

Trotsky noted that Stalin was the front man, the symbol of the bureaucracy. Stalin did not create the bureaucracy but vice versa. Getty argues that Stalin did not initiate control over everything that happened in the party and country. He was an executive, and reality forced him to delegate most of his authority to his subordinates each of whom had his own opinions, client groups and interests. Getty concludes: "It is not necessary for us to put Stalin in day-to-day control of events to judge him. A chaotic local bureaucracy, a quasi-feudal network of politicians... and a set of perhaps insoluble political and social problems created an atmosphere conducive to violence. All it took from Stalin were catalytic and probably ad hoc interventions...."  

63. Ibid., p.227.
64. Michael Walzer, "A Credo for this Moment" (Dissent, Spring, 1899), pp.