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GOVERNMENT OF THE SOVIET UNION

In addition to the NIS, I recommend the following books. One of these is the Government of the Soviet Union, by Harper and Thompson, and the other is Soviet Politics, The Dilemma of Power, by Barrington Moore. Now there is one other work which is well worth attention, and is perhaps the classic on the subject of the Soviet Government today, and that is Political Power in the USSR, 1917-1947. The book is by Julian Towster. It's a very good work. I think the best starter, in addition to the NIS, is undoubtedly Thompson's a little less complex than Towster.

There are one or two fundamental points that I think might be emphasized in the way of background to a discussion of the Soviet government, that might be discussed at the outset. Some of them we mentioned the other day. One of them, certainly in a consideration of the origins of the Soviet government, would be the ruthlessness of the Tartars - the ruthlessness of the peoples that swept down upon the Russian plain in the 13th century, the 13th-14th centuries. An extremely barbaric and nomadic people, and there is no doubt but what their ways of life, their ways of doing things, their political and sociological processes, certainly had their effect upon later governments - the Czarist, and in due time, the Bolshevik. Another is the absolute autocracy of the Czars, a thought that we mentioned the other day. There are rather marked similarities in many respects between the political processes and approaches of the Bolshevik regime today and the techniques employed by the Czars. There are very marked differences, of course, but there are also similarities. The major similarity, of course, is the measure of autocracy and absolutism, which, if anything, is of a higher order in the

Approved For Release 1999/08/25 : CIA-RDP78-03362A000800140003-3

- 2 -

case of the Bolsheviks than it was under the Czars.

Another important influence, I think, rather related to the last, is the pre-revolutionary experiences of the later leaders of the Bolshevik Revolution of October 1917. Men such as Molotov, Vishinsky, Stalin, Lenin, and so forth, were men who were used to being hunted. They were men who were used to being regarded as being criminals, and they were used to exile, to imprisonment, and so forth. And certainly these experiences, and the experiences they had in this respect, with the Czarist secret police, with the Okrana, certainly must have had effect on their later thinking and on their interpretation of the correct political approach once they had secured power for themselves. It is quite obvious in the devices they resorted to then and in the devices that they have resorted to ever since that they learned much from the Czarist autocracy and from the Okrana.

Another set of influences are what might be termed Marxist-revolutionary influences. You will recall that Marx laid down the theoretical basis for revolution. He analyzed the capitalist system, or he claimed to have done so, and he drew certain conclusions, the most significant of which was that it was doomed to failure, to progressive deterioration. He did not, however, prescribe a governmental form. Someone had to do that. Someone had to decide what the form of the revolutionary state was going to be. Now Marx spoke - yes, of a dictatorship of the proletariat and of a withering away of the state, and so forth - but he never did prescribe a governmental form. The man to whom this job fell was the prime leader of the October Revolution, Lenin. Actually, in due time, Lenin based the new governmental form on the Soviets, councils that had commenced to arise in the Revolution of 1905. In the first stages of his thinking on this subject as to future governmental form, Lenin

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was not the first to do so. During the Soviet form, he felt that it was not

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Approved For Release 1999/08/25 : CIA-RDP78-03362A000800140003-3

- 3 -

substantial, that it was not adequate. But as time went on, as he saw the strength of the new soviets, particularly, of course, the Petrograd and, later, Moscow Soviets, he fell upon this system as a basis for the new government, at least for the ostensible government.

Two comments with respect to the Marxist reference to the dictatorship of the proletariat and to the withering away of the state. Certainly a dictatorship was established after the October Revolution and continues to be established. There is no reason, whatsoever, for feeling that it is a dictatorship of the proletariat. At best it is the dictatorship of a party. Much more realistically, it is the dictatorship of an oligarchy dominated by a single man, and at worst, is a personal, individual dictatorship, namely by Stalin. Marx also spoke of the withering away of the state. Quite obviously the state has not withered. As a matter of fact, it has prospered, it has expanded, it has become increasingly bureaucratic. If we are to believe the Soviet leaders themselves, it is evidently destined almost indefinitely to continue in that direction, and not in the direction of which Marx spoke.

I want to refer now to the essential complexity of the Soviet government. It is first of all very complex. It is the most complex, I think, by far, of modern governments. It is even more complex than ours, and certainly ours is sufficiently involved and complicated by this time. Why is it so complex? Well, first of all, the governments of all large modern states are complex. They have to be, particularly with the functions, formerly private, devolving upon central governments, it has been necessary to have many elements of rather considerable bureaucracy in order to administer the new state functions. The Soviet Union, in addition, is a very large country today, perhaps 8,700,000 square miles, or thereabouts. It has an exceedingly complex population makeup.

Approved For Release 1999/08/25 : CIA-RDP78-03362A000800140003-3

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Approved For Release 1999/08/25 : CIA-RDP78-03362A000800140003-3

- 4 -

We referred to the fact the other day that its population consists perhaps of approximately sixty nations, sixty nationalities, and includes perhaps 170-200 ethnic or linguistic groups. It is very complex. The administration of a territory so large and with such ethnic variety is obviously a great task, under any circumstances and irrespective of the particular nature of the central government. It is in addition, of course, and most significantly, a police state, and if you are going to regiment a people, if you are going to control every facet of their lives, be it political, economic, social, what-have-you, you are going to have to have a lot of people in a vast bureaucracy in order to carry out that task. And of particular importance, with respect to this matter of the complexity of the government, you have the fact that, ultimately, all economic control and direction emerges from Moscow, from the central government. And the task of directing economic development and organization, particularly under the accelerated program the Soviets have adopted since 1928, this obviously requires a vast planning, statistical, directing bureaucracy, and that is exactly the direction in which it has developed. And in this connection, there are some writers who feel that we have in the case of the Soviet Union, in the case of the Soviet state, something of a new entity in the history of society, of political society. It is not a new entity, or a new phenomenon, in the sense the Soviets would have us believe it is. It is no vast paradise, quite obviously. It is not God's gift to mankind. But we do essentially have in the Soviet state and in the Soviet government, what has been termed a social - economic - political entity, to the extent that ultimately all social, economic, and political life of the Soviet people is directed from the federal level, from

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Moscow. And we have something of a merging, under their approach, of social, economic, and political affairs. To a certain extent they all become one and the same. In that sense we do have a new animal, a new phenomenon. Perhaps, also, the government is complex by design, perhaps for purposes of deception. You have on the one hand, as we shall see or as you already know perhaps from your reading, you have an ostensible government, soviet in form, based on the Soviets, from the village to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. On the other hand, in addition to this facade, which is of little significance, you have the actual government, dominated by the Party, particularly by the top echelons of the Party. Very likely the facade, the added complexity that is represented by its existence, is to a certain extent for purposes of deception, deception of the people themselves, the USSR, and perhaps also for the deception of people abroad. In dealing with both their own people and the foreign populations, they can point to the facade, they can state the constitution under which it operates and the provisions of that constitution and they can claim that here is a democracy, here is a democratic governmental procedure. On the other hand, they have in addition to all of this the reality behind it, in the form of the real government of the Party. Of course the Soviet leaders claim also, the Bolshevik leaders, that there is the purpose of education in the maintenance of this facade, which they do not call it, but they say that they must have the Soviet system and this elective system of a sort in order to train the people in the processes of the new socialist state, processes of this new form of state. Well, in the very long run perhaps there is something to this, perhaps the people have been trained to a certain extent in the new processes and in the nature of the new state.

Nonetheless, they certainly have yet to be enabled to take a really effective part in the direction of the government and in the control of their own destinies.

Central Executive Committee (No longer in existence)

- 1. Formed by the Congress of Soviets 7 November 1917
- 2. Was "All-Russian" until 1922 when it became "all-Union"
- 3. Originally conceived as a "supreme organ of power" in the periods between the meetings of the Congress of Soviets. Functionally - both a legislative and executive organ.

Functions

- 1. Foreign Affairs - Brest - Litowsk 1918
- 2. Treaties
- 4. Membership greatly increased.
- 5. Main function: a high policy - propagating body - whose formal powers have passed largely to its Presidium. C. E. C. was the "Presidium" of the Soviet structure.

Political Background of The Republics

The first Soviet Constitution became effective 19 July 1918 and concerned only one union republic - RSFSR - Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic which comprised the Great Russian part of the former Czarist Empire - excluded:

- |               |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| Central Asia  | Ukraine       |
| Belorussia    | Transcaucasia |
| Finland       | Poland        |
| Baltic States |               |

Under this Constitution:

- 1. All-Russian Congress of Soviets became the supreme organ of authority.
- 2. All-Russian Central Executive Committee (about 200 members) became the supreme legislative administrative and controllive organ.
- 3. Council of People's Commissars became the chief organ for the direction of national affairs.
- 4. Organs of local authority, in descending order of power, were known as the:
  - Regional Soviets
  - Provincial Soviets
  - County Soviets
  - Rural District Soviets
  - Village Soviets

Supreme Soviet

1. Elected by direct suffrage for a term of 4 years.
2. Council of the Union - 1 Deputy per 300,000

Council of Nationalities - 25 Deputies per Union Republic  
 11 " " Autonomous Republic  
 5 " " Autonomous Regions  
 1 " " National area

A deputy is "a servant of the people, its messenger in the Supreme Soviet" who must report back to his electors concerning his own and the Soviet's work and who can be recalled by them at any time.

Deputy's Immunities; Immunity from arrest and prosecution; cannot be held to legal responsibility without consent of the Supreme Soviet - or during the interim between sessions of the latter - of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. Free transportation over mail and water routes.

In Supreme Soviet - reports and proposals are made by the SOVNARKOM (Soviet People's Commissars)

Council of People's Commissars in 1946 - called "Council of Ministers" appointed by Supreme Soviet.

Now the initial indication as to exactly what the future nature of the Soviet state in its political organization, or its political-territorial organization would be, its initial indication was indicated in a document that emerged on the 15th of November 1917, just after the Bolshevik Revolution, and which was entitled the "Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia." Now this particular document pledged four things: It pledged first of all the equality and sovereignty of the peoples of the new state. Secondly, the abolition of all national-religious privileges and restrictions.



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Thirdly, the free development of all national minorities and ethnic groups, and finally, the right of the various peoples to full self-determination, even to the point of separation, or secession; and the formation of independent states. (Above repeated.) Quite obviously this was a commendable program, it was a program that was designed to win the maximum, more or less voluntary, participation of the exotic peoples, the non-Great Russian peoples, to the new state. It was a program, of course, which took into account the ethnic approach, the approach to ethnic problems, that had been characteristic of the Czarist regime, in which the basic effort, particularly in the late stages of Nicholas' rule, had been marked by a program of Russification, as it was called, that is, an effort to force all of the non-Great Russian peoples into something of a Russian pattern and to derogate and eliminate their native cultures, the cultures of the Kazakhs, the Uzbeks, the Mongols, and so forth, and to eliminate and play down their cultures and to impress upon them the culture and the language of the Russian people, or the Great Russian people. And the Bolsheviks, of course, realized that if they could do a good job of persuading these people that they were for them, that they would have a right to real independence, to free development along their own lines, they realized that it would play a very important part in winning their adherence to the new state, something they regarded as very essential.

Approved For Release 1999/08/25 : CIA-RDP78-03362A000800140003-3

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Approved For Release 1999/08/25 : CIA-RDP78-03362A000800140003-3

- 9 -

UNION REPUBLICS

1. RSFSR
2. Georgian SSR
3. Armenian
4. Azerbaijan
5. Karelo-Finnish
6. Estonia
7. Latvia
8. Lithuania
9. Moldavia
10. White Russian (Belorussian)
11. Ukraine
12. Uzbek
13. Tadzhik
14. Kazakh
15. Turkmen
16. Kirgiz

Approved For Release 1999/08/25 : CIA-RDP78-03362A000800140003-3

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Approved For Release 1999/08/25 : CIA-RDP78-03362A000800140003-3

- 10 -

SOVIET CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT

104,000,000 Voters

U. S. S. R.  
Council  
of  
Ministers

U. S. S. R.  
Supreme Soviet

U. S. S. R.  
Supreme  
Court

U. S. S. R.  
Prosecutor  
General

Soviet of the Union

Soviet of Nationalities

Presidium

Communist Party

6,000,000 Communists

All-Union

Congress

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**CONFIDENTIAL**

CONFIDENTIAL

Approved For Release 1999/08/25 : CIA-RDP78-03362A000800140003-3

They had a limitation in mind, a very important one, they had this limitation as they put out this declaration, that while these new republics as they eventually called them, might be national in character, they must be soviet in form, and socialist in content. They should assume a soviet form of government and their government should be based on the theory of socialism. So it wasn't quite as magnanimous or idealistic as the lettering of the declaration itself indicated. We should keep in mind, as we discuss the development of the political territorial organization of the USSR, that actually the Russians themselves, the Great Russians, make up a majority of the population. As of about 1947, the Great Russians numbered about 58% of the Soviet population. The Ukrainians ran about 16%, the Belorussians a little over 3%. Now these percentages are perhaps today not exact, but pretty close to it. The Ukrainians and the Belorussians, the two Little Russian peoples, rather closely akin to the Great Russians, made up 19%, so that, all in all, the major Slav groups, these three Slav groups, make up about 78% of the population.

Now the first revolutionary state in Russia, after the October Revolution, was the RSFSR, the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic. This included primarily the Great Russians, plus a certain number of other national groups over whom domain was effected rather early, certain groups along the Volga and a few peoples in central Asia. Now these other peoples, the exotic members of the new state, were given representation in what was known as the Commissariat of Nationalities of the RSFSR, and, as a matter of fact, it was Stalin's leadership within this Commissariat that very early won him recognition within the Party as a leading, or the leading, Bolshevik authority on nationality questions. Now Stalin himself is a Georgian. He is from a little town not far from Tiflis, the present capital of the Republic of Georgia, and consequently, he was quite familiar with some of the problems

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CONFIDENTIAL

of the minority groups. Although, while he dealt rather cleverly, as time went on, with the minority problem, such things as coercing the minority peoples or encouraging them to stick to the new state, he was rather ruthless in dealing with his own people, the Georgians, for some reason. The exact causes, I suppose, are a bit obscure.

The RSFSR, however, did not include the principal non-Great Russian peoples, that is, the Ukrainians, the White Russians, the Georgians, the Armenians. But as the Civil War, which ended in 1921, the war with the White Russian forces, supported in some cases by foreign, Western powers and Japan, began to die down, as the Bolsheviks effected their domain over new areas and new groups, ranging out of the center and circling around Leningrad and Moscow, as this was gradually effected and the Civil War came to a close, these non-Great Russian peoples began to emerge as independent Soviet Socialist Republics, independent SSR's. Now they didn't do it just of their own accord. It was largely a matter of the Red Army conquering those areas and the Party agents working within the areas to achieve control over the governmental processes, and setting up the new Bolshevik Republics.

In 1922 another SFSR appeared, the Trans-Caucasian SFSR. This consisted of the three Trans-Caucasian Republics, Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan. They combined together into this new SFSR, primarily for reasons of military defense and economic stability. This occurred in 1922, a very trying period at the close of the Civil War. Also, in the same year the first USSR appeared in practice, if not on paper. In the same year that the TSFSR was formed, the RSFSR, the TSFSR, the Ukrainian SFSR, and the White Russian SFSR joined together to form the first USSR, or Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, although the first constitution of the USSR did not appear until 1924, the

first Russian constitution having been that of 1918 which established only the RSFSR. In 1924 the new and first Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was established formally under the constitution. Now since then there has been a series of additions. As new areas were effectively organized and as the Party agents achieved effective control over them, and as it was felt they were prepared for Union Republic or Soviet Socialist Republic status, they gradually emerged. Now this is the order in which this came about. In 1925 the Uzbeks and the Turkmen emerged as Republics. In 1929 the Tadzhiks. In 1936, two major changes, the Kazaks and the Kirghiz joined, and also in 1936 the TSFSR split into its three original component parts, namely Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. In 1940 came the last additions to the Union Republic ranks. First of all, the Soviet Union absorbed the three Baltic states, Estonia and Latvia, pretty much with the permission of the Germans during those days of delicate negotiations along Russia's western frontier, and also Lithuania without German compliance or permission. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were absorbed and established as Soviet Socialist Republics or Union Republics. The United States has never recognized this absorption. Also two areas that formerly had a subordinate status, known as autonomous republics, or ASSR's, these two areas, Moldavia and the Karelo-Finnish area, were elevated to Union Republic or Soviet Socialist Republic status. The new Moldavian Republic included the previous Moldavian Autonomous Republic, plus certain limited new areas that were taken from Rumania by Russia at this time, and in addition the Karelo-Finnish Republic was formed along the Russian-Finnish border.

On reason probably for the elevation of the Moldavian and Karelo-Finnish

CONFIDENTIAL

Approved For Release 1999/08/25 : CIA-RDP78-03362A000800140003-3

- 14 -

areas to top status was perhaps the realization by the Soviet leaders at this time that the German attack was probably not too far off, and their desire for morale purposes to elevate the status of these peoples, and that, perhaps, is a particularly likely hunch in light of the fact that the Karelo-Finnish Republic is the only Republic of the sixteen which has a population of less than a million. A million is normally the requirement, but its population was only about 500,000 and it's probably a lot less than that now with the passage of the war.

Well, so we come to the present political-territorial organization of the USSR. We have on top of the heap the Union itself, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which is theoretically a federal structure composed of sixteen constituent Union Republics. It is vested with supreme power and sovereignty; this is true largely in theory and in practice it is very literally true. And it has its sixteen component parts, the sixteen Union Republics - we shall run over them again. At the present time they run as follows: Russian, Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Kazakh, Uzbek, Turkmen, Kirghiz, Tadzhiks, Georgian, Armenian, Azerbaijan, Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Moldavian, and Karelo-Finnish Republics. Those are the sixteen.

Each of these, and incidentally let me first of all give you the various terms by which these sixteen constituent parts may be referred to. First, the official title is really Soviet Socialist Republic. It may be referred to as Union Republics. The term Republic in all cases in this lecture is used very loosely, but that is the official terminology so we use it. Each of these republics possesses a degree of autonomy by law, and they are named, each of them, after the main ethnic group residing in them. There are certain conditions for the creation of a Union Republic. First of all, the ethnic group

Approved For Release 1999/08/25 : CIA-RDP78-03362A000800140003-3

CONFIDENTIAL

- 15 -

after which they are named, the ethnic group which constitutes the core of the population, must be at least one million in number. We spoke of the exception, the Karelo-Finnish, with about 500,000. In addition, theoretically, to being a million in number, the main ethnic group must also form a majority of the population. And finally, the territory must border on a foreign state or coastline. Some of the territory of a Union Republic must border on a foreign state or coastline. Now, why? The official reason that was given by Stalin in 1936 when the Stalin constitution was evolved, was, as Stalin put it, if you did not have this stipulation, you might in due time have a situation where a Union Republic would desire to secede from the USSR. If it seceded, and it were entirely surrounded by remaining Soviet territory, Stalin pointed out that under such circumstances it would be exceedingly difficult for the Union Republic effectively to maintain its independence. He then went on to comment that, of course, none of our Union Republics would ever want to secede but, should they want to do so, they they should have a right and an opportunity to maintain that independence. As a matter of fact, every effort in the direction of nationalism on the part of any of the subordinate peoples has always been ruthlessly and brutally crushed. That is the practical record. It is not likely that any of them will be seceding in any foreseeable future.

As for the governmental structure of the Union Republics, in brief, they have their own constitution, each of them. It must, however, be approved by the central government. They elect their own supreme soviet, supreme legislature or council, which is, in the case of the Union Republics, a unicameral body. The two-body legislature is on the federal level. As of 1944, they are empowered to conduct foreign relations and maintain their own armed



forces, independently. They are empowered to do this, on paper. Practically, this means exactly nothing. The only practical result has been the presence of the Ukrainian Republic and the Byelorussian Republic in the United Nations. This was the result of a compromise arrived at in San Francisco after the Soviet had originally asked that each of the sixteen republics be admitted as independent nations. I believe that the United States reply at the time was "alright, we shall admit each of the 48 states as independent nations, also," or something to that effect. This undoubtedly, I think, is the prime reason for the changing of the foreign affairs and armed forces ministries from all-union to union republic status at this time, Russia's desire to have at least some of the Republics admitted to the United Nations and, presumably, two of the fundamental requirements for a claim to autonomy are the right to conduct your own foreign relations independently and to maintain your own armed forces. Well, the only significance has been an administrative one in the presence of these two Republics in the United Nations. It ends right there.

It is however, that enactment, or that change, on paper a very major one, which is a classic example of the dynamism with which the Soviet leadership operates. Within the peculiar nature of their political organization they can issue such decrees, bringing about what appear to be major changes, without any practical change. It is for an authoritarian leadership a highly practical and efficacious organization. It enables them to make on paper for propaganda purposes major changes which have, as far as the maintenance of their own individual power is concerned, absolutely no significance.

The next subordinate unit that we come to is the autonomous republic. The official title: Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. It may be referred to

CONFIDENTIAL

Approved For Release 1999/08/25 : CIA-RDP78-03362A000800140003-3

- 17 -

as an ASSR; it is commonly referred to as Autonomous Republic. I would like to point out, since I have not done so previously, that each of these four categories we are discussing here, these four subordinate categories, which will be the Union Republic, the Autonomous Republic, the Autonomous Region, and the National Area, each of these four subordinate categories are organized on an ethnic basis. At the conclusion of the hour I shall very briefly mention some that are organized on an administrative basis. These four are the major ones. These are the ones with particular significance because they are organized on an ethnic basis, a nationality basis. The Autonomous Republic is organized within a Union Republic where there exists a national group which does not qualify as a Union Republic, that is, the principal group that is in it, does not form a majority of the population, or perhaps the total population of the area is less than a million, or perhaps the area does not border on a foreign state or coastline. But in this case, while the population does not qualify for union republic status, nonetheless, they are a fairly numerous and cohesive people, cohesive population group, and this autonomous republic status has been set up for them. They are not to be found in all of the Union Republics, They have their own constitution which must be approved by the Union Republic to which they are subordinate. They elect their own supreme soviet, which is also unicameral. They have no secession right and they may not maintain their own armed forces, and they are not permitted to conduct foreign relations. This, in theory, differentiates them from the Union Republic. In reality, it leaves them exactly on the same level. They may be done away with and they have been liquidated on various occasions, more or less for a cause. There are certain examples. In September, 1941, the German legions were commencing to sweep through southern Russia. There was on the lower Volga, the Volga German Autonomous Republic,

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CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Approved For Release 1999/08/25 : CIA-RDP78-03362A000800140003-3

consisting largely of persons of Germanic origin. The Russians, despite their propaganda to the rest of the world to the effect that the USSR was a consolidated nation with one will and one purpose, and that there was no disaffection within its ranks, was not too confident that the 570,000 occupants of this area, this autonomous republic, were loyal to the regime. Consequently, with typical Bolshevik dynamism, they picked up this over half a million people and shipped them out to the wastes of Siberia, to get them out of the way of the oncoming Germans, feeling that when the Germans arrived there might be a good bit of camaraderie between the two groups.

There are some other examples. The Crimean Tatars, remnants of the Golden Horde of the Tatars of some centuries before, occupied the Crimean area in southern Russia, and also a couple of other peoples, including the Kalmyks, the Chechen-Ingushi, peoples of the area generally north of the Caucasus. They had their own autonomous republics in each case, and when the Red Army began to counterattack commencing in 1943 and to sweep back and liberate some areas - they use the term "liberated" rather loosely, also - they found evidence of a considerable amount of collaboration between some of these peoples and the Germans. The result was that these autonomous republics were simply abolished, the area of them was absorbed into adjacent political units, and so two millions of population in this case were absorbed into adjacent units. These three autonomous republics just disappeared. The autonomous republic has a rather limited economic competence and in reality they are rather dependent on the central government and on the union republic government of the union republic in which they find themselves. There are altogether sixteen autonomous republics, the same number as the union republics. This similarity is purely accidental. They run in population from a hundred thousand to about 3,300,000, and there have been, at one time or

Approved For Release 1999/08/25 : CIA-RDP78-03362A000800140003-3

CONFIDENTIAL

- 19 -

another, 22 autonomous republics, but as we have indicated, from time to time some of them have disappeared.

Now the next subordinate unit that we shall mention is the autonomous region. The Russian word for region is oblast. You will see that term used quite a bit. Personally, I prefer to stick to the English. The term is sometimes given because of the fact that there is not an exact translation of the word oblast into English. The autonomous region is below the autonomous republic in its degree of independence and they are subordinate, again, to the union republic, or in some cases to an administrative territory in a union republic. There are, altogether, nine autonomous regions, or autonomous oblasts. They, like the others, take their origin from the existence of a national minority or ethnic group, but in this case the minority group is quite small. They, like the others, are named for the major ethnic group within the area. They do not have a constitution and they are regulated by statutes enacted by the union republic of which they are a part. They do, however, elect their own local legislature, their own local soviet. They run in population, that is, they did run in about 1946-47, from about 40,000, to 270,000.

The final unit organized on an ethnic basis is the national area, or national okrug. The Russian word for area is okrug. It is a governmental subdivision for racial groups which are in a tribal state of development. A great many of these peoples are Arctic dwellers or semi-Arctic dwellers. Many of them are very basic peoples. An example is the Chukotsk Indians who are found on the Chukotsk Peninsula, in far northeastern Siberia. They are way up beyond the Arctic Circle and they are a very fundamental

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people. Now, for example, at the time that the Soviet regime began to exert its control over them they practiced euthanasia upon their old people. It is an example of the really basic social customs to which they adhere, completely out of keeping with Western approaches, of course and the Bolsheviks abolished this.

You have to work rather gradually in developing such a people into this new revolutionary state. You cannot take a Chukotsk Indian and pour Marxist dialectic down his throat. It's a very gradual process, the gradual bringing them into the new framework. We can judge that it is probably a pretty tough job, although in some cases the Soviet leadership seems to have done a fairly good job in taking a previously pretty basic people and in the educational field bringing them pretty well along. Of course, all this within the Marxist framework. The populations of the areas are quite small and naturally their demographic population is small. They are scattered populations. They have no constitution, these national areas; and they are ruled in accordance with statutes of the union republic in which they find themselves. They do, however, like the autonomous regions, have their own governing bodies, their own local soviets.

On March 4, 1942, the Supreme Soviet convened, probably for one week. 1316(?) members, representing over 50 nationalities - about 1/4 of the delegates were women. Function - merely to approve the budget. On 6 March, 1953, they met again - approved a stepped-up military appropriation (for H-Bomb?).

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CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Approved For Release 1999/08/25 : CIA-RDP78-03362A000800140003-3

- 21 -

(Chart)

Constitutional Structure of USSR

1. Highest authority in USSR under its constitution of 1936 is the legislative branch - The SUPREME SOVIET - elected by universal, direct, equal, and secret ballot of all voters.

2. Normally elected for a term of 4 years - has 2 chambers.

Soviet of the Union

1. Corresponds to U. S. House of Representatives.

2. Delegates are elected from the Union as a whole - 1 delegate for every 300,000 of population.

Soviet of Nationalities

1. Corresponds to U. S. Senate

2. Delegates are elected:

25 Deputies for each Union Republic  
11 Deputies for each Autonomous Republic  
5 Deputies for each Autonomous Region  
1 Deputy for each National Area

The two chambers have equal rights. A simple majority vote in each passes the laws. Failure to agree calls for new elections. Supreme Soviet must meet twice a year but may meet oftener in special sessions. From it stem the executive and judiciary branches of the Government (unlike the U. S. system, where the Chief Executive is elected by the people and makes appointments which the Congress only confirms). It elects a PRESIDUM OF 42 members, which is its working committee and which is always in session.

President of Presidium - Voroshilov

1. Titular head of State

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2. Referred to as President of the Soviet Union

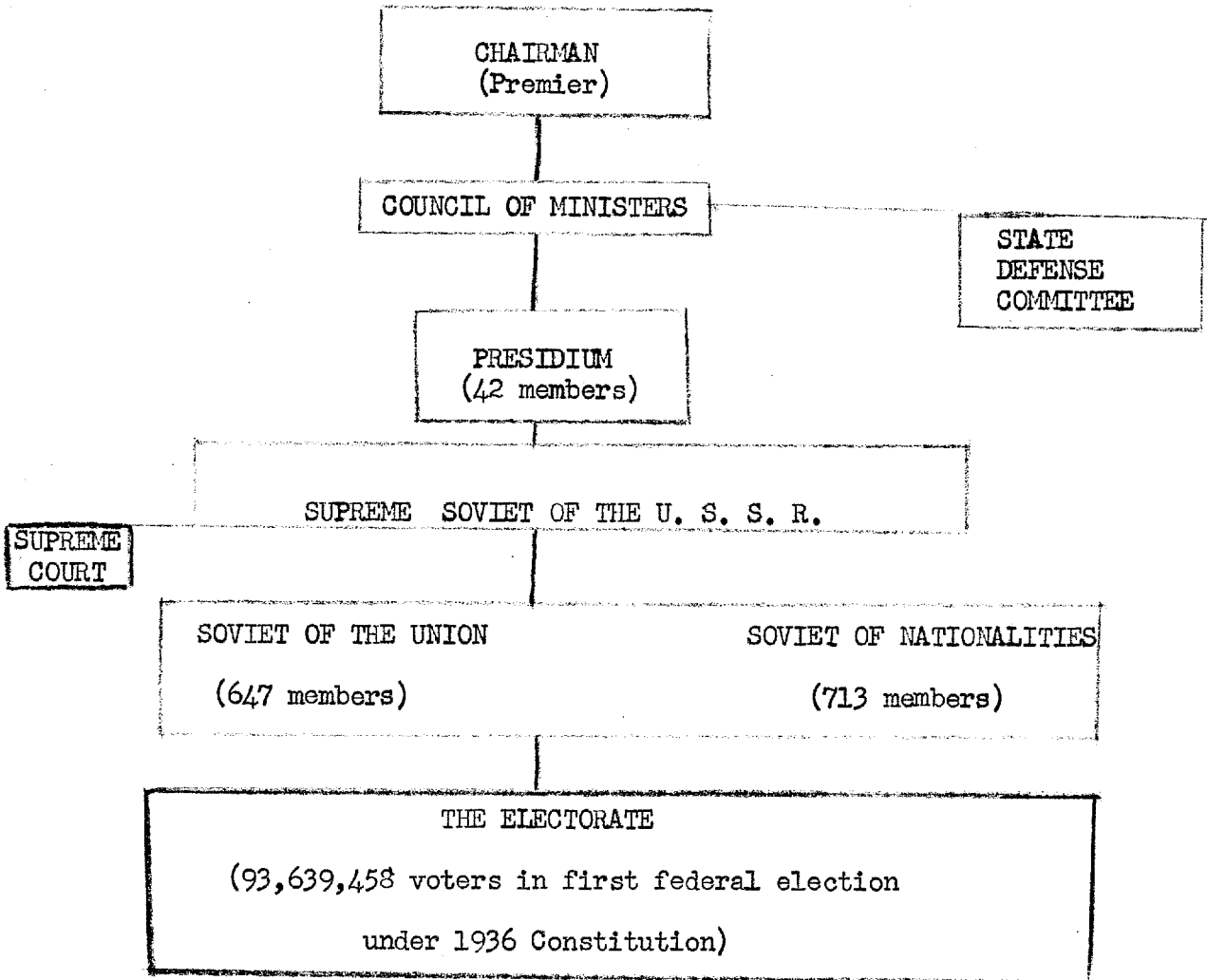
Acts of the Presidium are subject to confirmation by the Supreme Soviet.

Who presides over Supreme Soviet sessions?

1. Members of the Presidium take turns. This is in line with Communist theory of plural chairmanships.

2. Secretary of the body becoming the real power since he sets the agenda, words the resolutions, keeps the minutes.

Council of Ministers (executive cabinet) is appointed by the Presidium. During the war the PRESIDUM appointed a "State Defense Committee" (War Cabinet).





Presidium of Supreme Soviet

1. Came into existence 17 January 1938.
2. Functions are those performed in other states by a president.  
Stalin's definition of the Presidium - a "collective president."
3. No veto power. No right to dissolve the Soviet parliament - the Supreme Soviet.
4. Entirely subordinate and accountable to the Supreme Soviet.

Organization (By article 48, Constitution of 1936)

- |    |               |   |
|----|---------------|---|
| 1  | Chairman      | (to accord with the number of Republics at that time) |
| 11 | Vice-Chairman |   |
| 1  | Secretary     |   |
| 24 | Members       |   |

Total 37

Today - Presidium of U.S.S.R = 32 Chairman - Voroshilov

Vice-Chairmen are the chairmen of the Presidia of the Supreme Soviets of the Union Republics.

The Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, Voroshilov has stood out in practice as the titular head of the Soviet state in its relations with other states. For that reason he has generally been referred to outside of the U.S.S.R. as the Soviet President.

Membership of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet:

1. Several members of the Politburo
2. Several from the highest command of the Red Army

Proceedings are not made public. We do not know the frequency of its sessions, but it is referred to as a "daily working" organ. The chairman secretary, and some members are always at the center, assuring a minimum operating quorum.

Some of its more important duties:

1. Convenes the sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.
2. Issues decrees.
3. Interprets laws of the U.S.S.R. in force.
4. Dissolves the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. and designates new elections.
5. Annuls decisions and ordinances of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. in case they do not conform to law.
6. Appoints and removes the higher commands of the armed forces.
7. Proclaims general or partial mobilization.
8. Ratifies and denounces international treaties.
9. In the period between sessions of the Supreme Soviet of U.S.S.R., proclaims a state of war in the event of armed attack on the U.S.S.R., or whenever necessary to fulfill international treaty obligations concerning mutual defense against aggression.
10. Receives the credentials and letters of recall of diplomatic representatives of foreign States accredited to it.

Operation of Presidium in practice.

1. Really exercising its prerogatives
2. Has convoked the regular and extraordinary sessions of the Supreme Soviet.
3. Has set election days.
4. Has formed electoral areas.
5. Has been permitted wide latitude in decree powers. Examples:  
Working hours for workers and employees in time of war.

Tax on single men and single and childless citizens of U.S.S.R.

6. Most widely exercised prerogative of Presidium has been the award of decorations. New signs and symbols of distinction, most of which carry also material rewards, are added constantly, and a special department of Registry as the Secretariat of the Presidium keeps track of them. Occasionally the Presidium issues decrees depriving individuals of their awards.

7. The Presidium has declared martial law and subsequently decreed its end - proclaimed mobilization of the armed forces - and ordered partial demobilization on several occasions.

8. Has ratified international treaties - appointed and recalled diplomatic representatives.

Now once having seated themselves, the Supreme Soviet - the Supreme Soviet, incidentally, is selected for a 4-year period - the two houses of the Supreme Soviet having been seated, one of the first things they do is elect three permanent commissions. Actually, there are four, but three are significant. They elect a Legislative Bills Commission, a Budget Commission, a Foreign Affairs Commission, and a Credentials Commission. And, as is pretty much the case in our own Congress, the bulk of the actual work takes place in these Commissions, rather than in plenary session of the two houses. The customary procedure is for the Council of Ministers to submit legislation to the Supreme Soviet. It is then discussed, the membership of the Supreme Soviet can render a certain service to the Party leadership to the extent they know how things are going back in the provinces. If a particular piece of legislation is not going over well, they can indicate it. Perhaps the Party is glad to get the advice on it. They don't necessarily follow it. And so the principal assistance can be in the way of comment and advice on execution, rather than on the actual formulation and enactment of legislation.

When a new Supreme Soviet has succeeded itself, another initial thing they do is elect their Presidium, which is carefully determined ahead of time, of course, by the Party, and they also elect the President of the Presidium. The present President is Nikolai Shvernik. He is an alternate

A very distinctive feature in the procedure of the Supreme Soviet is the custom of unanimity. All notes on all legislation, on all matters, are unanimous. Now, this has a lot in common with the traditional Russian procedure in the village mir, where customarily all votes finally were unanimous after much discussion, everyone, seeing which the wind was blowing, voted for or against the matter before the mir. Nonetheless, it has another significance, also, I think. In the Supreme Soviet, as the Bolshevik leaders point out, it is all right to discuss the legislation, to discuss certain facets of it, concerning the practical application of it and so forth, but there is to be no question about the fundamental policy content of the legislation, the heart of it, once it has come down from the Council of Ministers to the Supreme Soviet. , And why not? Well, as the Soviet leadership points out, because of the fact that the men forming this legislation, are the leaders of the Soviet State. They are the authorized interpreters of Marxist-Leninist policy, and its Stalinist application. That being the case, you can discuss the practical application of the legislation, but you are not to challenge the heart of it, because to do so would be to indicate that you yourself are anti-Marxist, anti-Marxist-Leninist. And to do so would be, of course, tantamount to suicide. Consequently, all votes are unanimous when the final vote is taken.

Now, with respect to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the organization that sits for 25/26ths of the year, whereas the collective congress, the Soviet itself, sits for 1/26th, it is referred to as the collective president and its present is the President of the USSR, that is externally, outside, the USSR, he is. For years and years this position was held by "Papa" Kalinin, who was a good showpiece, and who was given this job in which he couldn't do much damage, in which he was respected and did

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the bidding of the real leadership. The Presidium is, of course, elected by joint session of the two houses. It has duties which fall mainly into three categories: Executive duties - it appoints officials, receives diplomats and confers honorary titles. Secondly, judicial duties - according to the constitution it gives interpretation of the laws in operation and adjusts or modifies non-conforming orders and decisions of the Union Republic Councils of Ministries. As a matter of fact, actually the concept of judicial review within the judicial system does not exist in the USSR. There is no such thing as declaring a piece of legislation unconstitutional. If it's unconstitutional, that's just too bad. It still sticks. Nonetheless, insofar as the laws are interpreted, and their practical application is delineated and set forth, this operation fundamentally falls within the prerogative of the Presidium.

In respect to legislative duties, which are the most significant, it issues decrees which are automatically ratified on the floor of the Supreme Soviet, when they reconvene. So what actually happens is this: Perhaps the Supreme Soviet is out of session for 25 weeks. In the meantime the Council of Ministers has been sending legislation over the Presidium, saying "Please rubber-stamp this." And they rubber-stamp it, and when the 1300 members of the Supreme Soviet reconvene they proceed to rubber-stamp everything which the Presidium was rubber-stamped during their absence. In summary, the Supreme Soviet has no power whatsoever - it is purely a facade whose task is to give perfunctory and automatic approval to government and party decisions.

A few words on the Soviets at the lower levels. The lower Soviets are unicameral. In the case of the Union Republic and Autonomous Republic Soviets they are called Supreme Soviet, they are elected for four years, and they elect a Presidium.

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- 29 -

Below the level of the Autonomous Republic the soviets are called Soviet of Working Peoples (Toilers) Deputies. These are elected for 2 years and in turn elect an Executive Committee instead of a Presidium.

And now we come to a consideration of the Council of Ministers of the USSR. The Council of Ministers is, we might say, the Cabinet of the country. It is a tremendously important body. From November 1917 to March 1946, what is today known as the Council of Ministers was known as the Council of Peoples' Commissars, or Sovnarkom. The title of the body was changed in March 1946, for a reason on which we can only speculate. Perhaps the desire was to bring their terminology more in accord with Western usage, since the USSR was then participating in the UN and had been brought into closer contact with the Western powers. The Council of Ministers is designated in the Constitution of 1936 as "the highest executive and administrative organ of the state power of the USSR." The Constitution states that the Council of Ministers is appointed by a joint session of the Supreme Soviet; and elsewhere in the Constitution the Council of Ministers is stated to be "the Government."

In the Constitution there are certain powers enumerated to the Council of Ministers. In fact, as one might expect, these powers cover virtually everything. They may be classified under the following categories: general administrative power, power of economy, police power, foreign affairs jurisdiction, military authority, special power to attach extraordinary units to the Council of Ministers, and a veto-power—that is, the right to nullify actions of Union Republics' Councils of Ministers and to annul orders and instructions of individual members of the Central Council of Ministers.

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Let us take a look at this chart, which is entitled "Council of Ministers of the USSR." We note that within the Council of Ministers there is a separate body known as the Bureau of the Council of Ministers. Sometimes it is called the "Inner Cabinet." This particular organ is overwhelmingly the most significant part of the Council of Ministers. It consists of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, who is presently Stalin, plus the Deputy Chairman. It is the Bureau of the Council of Ministers which is the real policy-making part of the Council of Ministers. One will note that under the jurisdiction of the Inner Cabinet there are ten major administrative sections, each of which is concerned with a major phase of Soviet state activity. In general, grouped under each of these administrative sections, which comprise the central administrative apparatus, will be a number of Ministries and other lesser but related bodies.

You will see that taken together these the sections cover all phases of state activity in the USSR. Each of these sections is headed by a Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers. The total membership of the Council of Ministers consists of the Chairman plus the Deputy Chairmen, the Chairman of the State Planning Committee, or GOSPLAN, as it is known in Russian, the Chairman of the Committee for Art Affairs, and, finally, the Ministers themselves. Altogether there are today in the neighborhood of 50 ordinary ministers in the Council of Ministers. The Council of Ministers had 13 members at the time of its inception as the SOVNARKOM in 1918. By 1947 it had 60 members. The Soviet leadership explains this growth in membership as the result of the growth in the economy and the rise in military needs.

One of the most striking things about the makeup of the Council of Ministers is the overwhelmingly economic nature of its organization. Mr.

Thompson, in his book on the Soviet Union, summarizes this situation as enumeration of them today reads more like the roster of the National Association of Manufacturers than any cabinet with which English-speaking peoples are familiar." I think that fairly well summarizes the situation.

Now with respect to the system of organs of the Council of Ministers, we will see from our chart that the system of organs includes the following types: the ministry, the committee, the council, the main administration, the commission, the administration, and finally there are a group of other types less numerous—for instance, the bureau, the agency, the academy (of which an outstanding example is the Academy of Sciences of the USSR), the representative, and finally the main state inspection. These are all types of bodies which operate under the Council of Ministers, and which have been attached to it under the special authority to so attach which is granted in the Constitution.

### Council of Ministers

Formerly the SOVNARKOM (Russian for "Council of People's Commissars")

1. Came into existence 8 November 1917.
2. Originally formed "for the general administration of the affairs of the state."

Responsible and accountable to the Congress of Soviets and the Central Executive Committee.

Today, it is emphasized the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. is not a legislative but an executive - administrative organ and hence strictly subordinate to the legislative power, to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. as the highest embodiment of the popular will.

The present constitution (article 68) gives the functions of the Council



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The Council of Ministers

1. Co-ordinates and directs the work of the all-Union and Union-republic ministries of the U.S.S.R. and of other institutions under its administration.

2. Adopts measures to carry out the plan of the national economy, the state budget, and the strengthening of the credit-monetary system.

3. Adopts measures to secure public order, defend the interests of the state, and guard the rights of citizens.

4. Exercises general supervision in the sphere of relations with foreign states.

5. Determines the yearly quotas of citizens subject to call for active military service, directs the general organization and development of the armed forces of the country.

6. Forms, in case of necessity, special committees and chief administrations attached to the council of Ministers of matters of economic, cultural, and defense organizations.

Operation of Council of Ministers in practice -

"It has been the most continuously operating and the most potent organ of the Soviet hierarchy in both the administrative and legislative fields." And again -

"The scope and volume of its enactments make it abundantly clear that the Council of Ministers is the greatest producer of obligatory, state-enforced, activity - guiding norms in the Soviet system."

What does the Council of Ministers do?

1. Enacts the numerous statutes, rules and regulations in regard to industry, agriculture, transportation, education, etc.

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- 33 -

2. Approves the various operative plans for production, agricultural work and crops, volume and movement of freight, construction, contracts between the collective farms and the State.

3. Submits the draft of the enormous state budget of the USSR.

4. Proclaims public celebrations.

5. Sets rates of taxes, wage rates, etc.

A considerable part of the Council of Ministers' decisions have to do with the organization and activity of the administrative organs subordinate to it.

#### Composition of Council of Ministers

1. Is formed by the Supreme Soviet

2. Chairmen

Deputy chairmen

Chairman of State Planning Commission

Chairman of Committee on Arts

Ministers (heads of the Ministries of the U.S.S.R.)

#### Membership -

8 November 1917 - 13 members

1946 - 64 members

#### Term of Office

A little longer than that of the forming body because it continues until a newly elected Supreme Soviet confirms its composition. In the interim between sessions of the Supreme Soviet, individual ministers are appointed and replaced at the instance of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet.

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System of Organs of the Council of Ministers

The Ministries (formerly the Commissariats)

1. By the summer of 1946 the central system of organs of the Council of Ministers consisted of 55 ministries - less than a dozen committees and councils and about half a dozen chief administrations.

2. Two types of Ministries of the U.S.S.R. -

1. All-Union

2. Union republic

All-Union ministries direct the branches of state administration entrusted to them throughout the territory of the U.S.S.R.

Union-republic ministries of the U.S.S.R. do the same thing through corresponding ministries of the Union-republic.

Examples of All-Union Ministries:

Foreign Trade

Railways

Communications (Post, Telegraph, Telephones)

Maritime Transport

Coal Industry

Oil Industry

Ferrous Metallurgy

Non-Ferrous Metallurgy

Armaments

Food Reserves.

Union-republic ministries:

Armed Forces

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Food Industry

Fish Industry

Agriculture

Finance

Internal Affairs

The Committees, Councils, Chief Administrations

1. Committees on Arts, Radio, Physical Culture and Sports
2. Councils on Russian Orthodox Church, Collective Forms Affairs.
3. Chief Administrations of Civil Aviation, Forest Guarding and Forest Planting, Geodetics and Cartography.

The State Planning Commission or GOSPLAN is a preparatory organ engaged in continuous study of the conditions and perspectives of the national economy and in working out the yearly and quarterly economic plans for the Council of Ministers.

Sessions of the Council of Ministers

1. Are held when at least half of the voting members are present.
2. Probably meet several times a week, though the exact frequency is nowhere indicated.
3. Proceedings are secret - no minutes are published - but a major part of the decisions became known through formal publication in the "Collection of Decisions and Ordinances of the government.

Relation Standing of the Members of the Council of Ministers

Since the Council of Ministers is designated as the "government" of the Soviet policy as a whole is that of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers - earlier the SOVNARKOM - often referred to outside of the U.S.S.R.

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- 36 -

as the "Soviet Premier". The four incumbents of this office since the inception of the Soviet regime have all been top Party men.

Lenin - 8 November 1917 to January 1924

Kykov - January 1924 to December 1930

Molotov - December 1930 to 6 May 1941

Stalin - 6 May 1941

Malenkov - March 1953

Next in importance are the deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers.

#### The Ministers:

The present official conception of a Minister is that he is a servant of the Soviet people, a pupil of Lenin, and an assistant of Stalin, and the "personal director" of the branch of state administration which he heads.

These "Ministers" are experts, fully acquainted with the affairs they administer. Formally elected in a body by the Supreme Soviet and individually appointed and replaced by the presidium of the Supreme Soviet, yet actually selected and removed on decision of the Party, the members of the Council of Ministers are in fact supersensitive to all angles and changes in high policy.

#### Supreme Court

1. Elected for 4 years by the Supreme Soviet.
2. Lower courts have citizen judges chosen from panels, like the American "grand jury."

This is the federal structure which is duplicated (except for a bicameral feature) in all the 16 Union Republics and to a lesser extent further down the line in the autonomous republics, territories, regions, districts which have not yet qualified for membership as Union Republic.

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The System of Courts

By the new constitution of the U.S.S.R., justice is represented by:

Supreme Court )  
Special Courts ) of USSR

Supreme Courts of the Union and autonomous republics. Also - territorial and regional courts.

Judicial proceedings are conducted in the language of the Union republic, autonomous republic, or autonomous region.

Persons not knowing the language are guaranteed the right to acquaint themselves with the relevant materials through an interpreter and to use their own language in court.

Usually cases are heard in public and the accused is guaranteed the right to be defended by counsel.

Judicial Review:

The decisions and verdicts of all the courts, except the Supreme Courts of the USSR and the Union republics, can be appealed by the accused.

There are no courts in the Soviet judicial system given over exclusively to appellate functions. The case goes up for review only to the next higher court which is required to determine - on the basis of the record and materials presented by the contestants whether the decision rendered by the lower court is supported by the facts in the case and accords with the law.

The People's Courts form the broad base of the system of courts. They are exclusively courts of original jurisdiction and the bulk of the criminal and civil cases pass through them. These people's courts are apportioned to each district by the respective minister of Justice.

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- 38 -

Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R.

1. Highest judicial organ in the land.
2. Elected for term of 5 years.
3. Supervises the judicial activity of the entire court system, reviews decisions.
4. Chairman  
Deputy chairman  
66 other members  
25 people's assessors (all citizens who possess electoral rights are entitled to be elected as judges or people's assessors)
5. Five divisions -
  - Criminal
  - Civil
  - Military
  - Railroad transport
  - Water transport

Basic conception of Supreme Court of U.S.S.R. -

An auxiliary and not a superior or independent branch of the Government.

The Soviet court is a class court, dedicated at its inception to the twin purpose of suppressing the formerly dominant classes and inculcating Socialist principles and Labor discipline among the workers themselves.

Also an attorney general called Procurator General. His office is independent of the Supreme Court.

1. Not appointed by the Council of Ministers (4 years)
2. Has a higher term of appointment (7 years)
3. Is not an agent of the executive power, but occupies a position side by side with it, with the special assignment of "guardian of legality". Supervises the carrying out of the laws.

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Powers of the Government

1. Unique
2. Only comparable governments are those set up in Soviet satellite countries.

Reasons for complete power of the Soviets:

1. Adoption of a socialist form of government with its extensive reliance on the centralized planning of all aspects of the life and activity of the people.
2. Determination of the Communist Party and its leaders to perpetrate their power.
3. Program of the Communist Party which seeks ultimately to establish a Communist society and to create a new type of "Soviet Man".

Scope of government's control is indicated by the fact that as early as 1937, 90% of the productive resources of the USSR belonged directly to the government and 8.9% belonged to cooperative organizations closely controlled by the government.

Originally Soviet Marxists expected the Soviet governmental apparatus to "wither away" and disappear once the former "exploiting classes" had been destroyed. Although the last such class was supposedly removed around 1930, with the liquidation of the KULAKS (prosperous peasants), the Communists maintain that the remaining groups are united in friendly solidarity in support of their regime. The governmental apparatus has, obviously, failed to disappear. In fact, the Party line in recent years has been to call for a strengthening of the governmental apparatus.

According to Stalin (1926) the mechanism of the government includes primarily: Trade Unions, The Soviets, Cooperatives, Youth League, The Party itself--the basic directing force.



- 40 -

Most important governing organs:

1. The Central Executive Committee of the Soviet Communist Party
2. U.S.S.R. Council of Ministers.

Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, which nominally controls the Council of Ministers, is of less importance.

The Supreme Soviet, which since 1946 has met only once a year, lacks any real significance.

The USSR Supreme Court - of importance in enforcing the will of the government on the people - serves only as an instrument because the courts have no independent authority and no power to declare laws unconstitutional.

#### Party in the Government

Politburo (Supreme policy-making body in the Soviet Union)

Orgburo - Party control commission

Secretariat - very important

#### Secretariat -

Most important executive body in the Party - corresponds roughly to the Bureau of the Council of Ministers. (This "Bureau" is the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers.) It is significant that Stalin is the head of both groups.

#### The Party and the Government

The unique feature of the operations of the Soviet Central Government is the interaction between the organs of the Party Central Committee and those of the Central Constitutional Government.

Soviet administrative philosophy may be characterized by three words: Policy, personnel, control. First comes the determination of policy, then the

assignment of persons to implement it, and finally the check on its fulfillment.

Stalin in 1939:

"Party cadres are the command personnel of the Party and since our Party is in power they are also organs, after the correct political line has been determined and tested in practice, Party cadres become the decisive force in Party and governmental leadership."

Especially significant in Soviet government is the system of "interlocking Directorates" in staffing agencies and the <sup>dual</sup> subordination (i.e., to both Party and supervisor governmental agencies) of the organs of the constitutional administrative apparatus. Sometimes the Party even publishes important economic directives in its own name - for example, the 1947 Agricultural plan. More often, the Council of Ministers is associated with the Party in issuing important directives, such as the one terminating rationing in 1947.

The utilization of interlocking directorates is illustrated by the fact that Stalin personally is head of the Politburo, the Secretariat, the Orgburo, and the Council of Ministers. Similarly, almost all the other members of the Politburo are also Deputy Chairmen of the Council of Ministers and thereby are called upon to execute policies which they have formulated. This system of interlocking directorates safeguards Party control against challenge, economizes on personnel, and insures coordination between policy-making and policy-implementing agencies.

#### Regional Government

1. Corresponds to the components on the central of All-Union level.
2. Party control is strong.
3. The First Secretary of the Party committee on each level is the most powerful person in the area and is so recognized on all public occasions.

The five basic levels below the Central Government:

1. Union Republic
2. Oblast (Region)
3. The Rural Raion (District) or The City
4. Village
5. Primary level consisting of the individual collective farm or factory.

"Krai" exists only in RSFSR or 6 "Krai" Territories

1 January 1948

Union Republics	- 16
Oblasts (Region)	126
Rural <u>Raions</u>	4,248
Cities	1,397
Villages	74,855

Also rules by U.S.S.R.

1. Occupation Zones in Austria and Germany.
2. Porkkala Udd by Lease from Finland
3. Port Arthur and Darien in Manchuria (Theoretically occupied by China and the U.S.S.R.)

Peoples and Religions

177 minority groups, speaking 125 different languages and dialects, and worshipping in 40 different religions.

Main ethnic groups number 10, which the Slavs, consisting mainly of the Great Russians, comprise approximately 3/4 of the entire population of the U.S.S.R. and are predominantly members of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Next largest strain - Turco-Tartar people, who are mixed descendants of

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- 43 -

Mongolian, Teutonic, and Turkish stock--their prevailing religion is Islam although some of them have been connected to the Russian Orthodox Church.

People of the Japhetic ethnic strain are found chiefly in the Caucasus region. They have varied religious faiths - Moslems, Armenian and Georgian Orthodox.

Jewish people of Hebrew faith constitute an important group. Now, with additions of arms and populations in Eastern Europe - the Jewish population of USSR ranks second to that of the United States.

Mongols follow Buddhism in its modified form Lamaism.

Now, in addition to these four categories, which are organized on an ethnic basis, there are also five units that are not organized on an ethnic basis, that are organized purely for administrative purposes. The overlapping of the two can be quite confusing if you let it be that way. I simply want to mention them to you, and mention the difference between these and the others, so you at least will have heard to them. There is also a similarity in terminology in some cases. These are all organized for purely administrative purposes. The others are organized on an ethnic basis. These are as follows, in order of most important to most basic: First of all, the territory, for which the Russian word is krai; secondly, the region - again an overlapping in terminology, the oblast in Russian; thirdly, the area or okrug; fourth, the district or raion; and finally, the village, the most basic unit. The village or selo. The basic legislative unit within the country is the sel-soviet, the village council. You will see that term from time to time.

Well, let's go on now to the first part of our discussion on the governmental organization itself, the governmental organization and processes.

Well, the Soviet structure, as we indicated before, is the ostensible source of power. The series of legislatures, from the village to the Supreme Soviet

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- 44 -

of the USSR in Moscow. This soviet organization, this hierarchy of legislatures, is the ostensible source of power in the Soviet Union. On paper that is the source of power. That is the organ wherein resides ultimate sovereignty. This is a far cry from the truth, as we shall see.

Now, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR consists of two houses. One is the Soviet of the Union, the council of the Union, the other is the Soviet of Nationalities. Between them they seat something over 1300 people. The Soviet of the Union is elected on a basis of electoral districts, each of which numbers about 300,000 people. The Soviet of Nationalities is elected on the basis of the four ethnically organized subordinate units which we have just mentioned, to the extent of 25 delegates for each Union Republic, 11 for Autonomous Republic, 4 for Autonomous Region, and 1 for National Area. That is indicated in your OIR booklet. The Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the most important Soviet and the one to which we shall devote most attention, meets twice a year and each session is about a week in duration, so the national legislature is in session two weeks out of the fifty-two weeks of the year, and while they are not in session their collective president, the Presidium, which we shall discuss in a moment, presides - some perhaps 36 or 37 people, headed by a chairman who is generally referred to outside the USSR as the President of the country. Headed by this chairman, these 37 men operate in effect as the national legislature during fifty weeks of the year, so that we can see that even on paper this thing is something other than democratic in the Western sense. The national legislature sits for 1/26th of the year.

#### Military Administration

The U.S.S.R. is divided into 31 military districts for internal military administration somewhat similar to U. S. Service Command, set

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A district may contain one or more union republics or it may be within the boundaries of single union republic.

### Pyramidal Arrangement of Soviet Structure

1. Hierarchical Organization of the Soviets. Each Soviet has the same hierarchical principle as the Party itself. At the base of pyramid are the village and city soviets—over which rise successively the administrative-territorial tiers of the districts and areas, regions or territories and autonomous republics - to the central, all-Union organ.

2. Electoral Rights: All Soviets, from city and village upwards, are elected in accordance with the formula of universal, equal, direct, secret suffrage. Only insane and persons convicted by a court of law whose sentence include deprivation of their electoral rights are excluded.

All citizens who have reached the age of 18, irrespective of race, nationality, sex, religion, educational and residential qualifications, social origin, property status, or past activities.

Any person who has reached the age of 23 may be elected as a deputy. Elections - to Supreme Soviet of USSR are held on a non-working day (6 a.m. to 12 p.m.) - are set by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet - announced not later than two months in advance of the appointed date.

### Voters' Lists

Compiled by the executive committees of the city and village soviets.

### Candidates

Are nominated according to electoral areas.

Electoral areas for elections to the Council of the Union are established on the basis of 300,000 people to each area.

Electoral areas for elections to the Council of Nationalities are set up

25 areas in each Union republic  
11 areas in each autonomous republic  
5 areas in each autonomous region  
1 area in each national area

In February 1946 - elections for Supreme Soviet - 1287 electoral areas  
656 - Council of Union  
631 - Council of  
Nationalities

Also 26 special areas (armed forces abroad) added for the elections to each chamber.

Territory of the cities and districts that enter into electoral areas are divided into election precincts, common for elections to the Council of the Union and the Council of Nationalities, where the ballots are cast and the votes counted.

#### Supervision of Elections.

To conduct the elections

To keep the records

1. Central Election Commission (for the entire USSR)
2. Commissions for elections to the Council of Nationalities in the Union and autonomous republics, autonomous regions, and national areas.
3. Area commissions, separate for elections to the Council of the Union and for elections to the Council of Nationalities
4. Precinct elections commissions

#### Voting

1. Special rooms
2. Voter must leave on each ballot only one name - strikes out the names of the other candidates.
3. Supervised.

Candidates

1. Need not be party members but must be loyal
2. Candidates chosen to represent occupations

Voting is actually a plebiscite to show the universal confidence in the Party - a festive occasion. The outcome is a foregone conclusion.

For Supreme Soviet

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| 1937 | 96.8% (91,000,000) of eligible voters actually voted. |
| 1946 | 99.7% (101,000,000)                                   |
| 1937 | 1.4% (Council of the Unions)                          |
|      | 2.2% (Council of Nationalities)                       |
| 1946 | 0.8% (Council of the Union)                           |
|      | 0.8% (Council of Nationalities)                       |

Local Soviets (Constitution of 1936)

Six basic links

- Soviets of:
1. Territories and regions
  2. Autonomous regions
  3. Areas
  4. Districts
  5. Cities
  6. Villages

The Congress of Soviets

1. Composition of the Congress has risen tremendously in numbers.
2. At the same time - the frequency of its convocation has fallen.
3. Up to the end of 1919 - there were members of other socialist parties present at the Congress - hence, debates were often characterized



by sharp and bitter clashes.

Now, the elections to the Supreme Soviet, as well as to the subordinate soviets, are, according to the constitution, according to law, universal, direct, equal, and secret. The Elections are reasonably universal. Persons demented and certain categories of political prisoners, who are denied civil rights, are excluded; but it is in general quite universal. As a matter of fact, Soviet leaders make sure that it is quite universal - the people are almost literally herded to the polls. The voting takes place on trains, boats, aircraft, as well as upon the land itself. The elections themselves are essentially direct, but the important thing is that it is not the elections, even so far as the facade of the Soviet system is concerned, that are decisive. It is really the nominations, the action of the regional and central election commissions that are significant. The general procedure for making nominations is as follows:

It is stipulated in the constitution that public organizations, commencing with the Communist Party and then on down to the trade unions, so-called, to the collective farm units, to the city cooperatives, and so forth, all of these public organizations, all dominated by the Communist Party, of course, and led by it, may nominate people for the soviets and for the Supreme Soviet. The customary procedure, for instance, at the time of nominations for the Supreme Soviet, is for a carefully selected person ahead of time, a Party activist, or a party member, a strong Party supporter, would stand up in the particular unit of the public organization, be it Party, trade union, or

what-have-you, to stand up and first of all nominate Comrade Stalin. His nomination was followed by speakers strongly praising Stalin, extolling his works for the last four years, and they customarily today would end with something to the effect of "Glory to our beloved leader and teacher, Joseph Stalin." This was followed by a series of huzzahs and with that over they get down to the business at hand. Actually it was quite a privilege to have Stalin represent your area. He generally choose to represent an area which has done a particularly good job, an area that was stacked full of Stakhanovites, that had record-breaking workers, or an area that had done a particularly good job during the war of afterwards, or something of that sort.

Well, then various names are proposed. Usually, they have been pretty well culled ahead of time. Don't think that usually just happens. These names have been pretty well placed, I think you will find, by the Party, although we don't know a lot about these electoral procedures, because the information just hasn't been available. But in any case, the names having been submitted, there will perhaps be several persons nominated for one job for one position, say on the Supreme Soviet. Well, it is naturally essential, of course, that only one name finally appear on the ticket. At least that is the procedure. So the various names put forth go to the Regional Electoral Commission. This commission is dominated by the Party, by Party members and Party activists, and a name is selected, the most acceptable, the most feasible name at the moment is selected. If there is any further difficulty in selecting a name, it is to be settled by the Central Electoral Commission in Moscow, similarly dominated. So, finally, they decide on one name for one position and this is the name that appears on the ballot. Now it is also stated that the nominations are equal and secret. Formerly they weren't. Formerly,

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peasants in the country. Today they are equal.

With respect to secrecy, we now come to this point. When the voter arrives at the polling place on the national holiday which is set aside for such occasions, and on which occasion there is great celebration, he is faced with the choice of either putting an X in the box for the one candidate for the one position or making the name out. He can do either one. In addition, in many cases, there is both the secret polling booth and an open box. You may take your choice. But also evidently very often there is a representative of the MGB present at the polling place - one avoids this gentleman - and it evidently is presumed that you may use the polling booth if you wish, but that if you do so, then, evidently, you are trying to hide something, that you may have marked out the candidate. And, of course, the list that appears on the ballot is generally referred to as the list of "Party and non-Party Bolsheviks," so everyone on the list is acceptable either as a Party member or one who has been an activist or has been active in supporting the Party. So you may use the booth, but perhaps you have to be rather careful about it. On the other hand, you can also drop your ballot right in the box and show by so doing to everyone present that you are an active supporter of the regime and that you are proud to indicate your support for the slate.

As far as the membership of the Supreme Soviet goes, it is generally a very elite membership, a very select group. It consists typically of such people as a premier ballerina, a captain of a championship soccer team, of a distinguished composer such as Shostakovich, of an outstanding artist of one sort or another, of perhaps an outstanding writer, an outstanding factory worker, perhaps an outstanding collective farmer. So, all in all, the 1300 people that finally end up on the Supreme Soviet are ready to rubber-stamp everything that comes along. They are a very elite group.

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CONFIDENTIAL

respect, not a particularly representative group.

After the 1936 Constitution was adopted, the first general election was held. 91.1 million people voted - this was 96.8% of the eligible voters. Of the total membership of the Supreme Soviet, 1,143 deputies - 76% of the seats were held by members of the Communist Party.

Here is the great Soviet paradox. The Communist Party is the only organized party permitted by law. It absolutely controls the country's constitutional structure and government personnel. The Party exercises as a self-appointed, self-perpetuating trustee - the dictatorship of the toiling people.

#### Stalin's Position

1. A deputy of the Supreme Soviet.
2. A member of the Presidium since 1938.
3. Chairman of the SOVNARKOM of the USSR since 6 May 1941.
4. Commissar of War - 19 July 1941
5. Fall of 1941 - Supreme Commander in Chief of the Soviet Armies
6. 6 March 1943 - given title of "Marshal of the Soviet Union"
7. On 26 June 1945, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet created the rank of Generalissimo of the Soviet Union as the highest military title in the land, and the following day this title was bestowed on Stalin for his leadership in the War. Simultaneously he was given four new awards: the Order of Victory; the Hero of the Soviet Union; the Order of Lenin; Gold Star Medal.
8. On 25 February, 1946, with the replacement of the Commissariats of Defense and Navy by a Commissariat of the Armed Forces, uniting all the land, air, and naval forces, Stalin was again named the People's Commissar for the Armed Forces, and Supreme Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of

the U.S.S.R. while he has since relinquished the last-named post, he retains the chairmanship of the Council of Ministers.

Now in general it is the ministries which are of most fundamental importance. There are three basic types of ministries in the USSR. These are the All-Union Ministry, the Union Republic Ministry, and the Republic type of ministry. The All-Union Ministry is found only in the Central Council of Ministers in Moscow and in each of the 16 Union Republics' Councils of Ministers. The ultimate authority still rests with the Central Council of Ministers, but a considerable measure of authority is delegated for administrative convenience to the Union Republics' Councils of Ministers. The All-Union type of ministry is concerned, in the economic field, primarily with heavy industry. The Union Republic Ministries are primarily concerned with light industry. Finally, the Republic type of ministry is found only in the Council of Ministers at the Union Republic level, and these are concerned with matters of local importance.

Present indication of Party's role in Russia

Several measures were taken during and since the war to

- (1) Further assert the Party's supremacy.
- (2) Counteract any excessive sense of exclusiveness on the part of the professional elite of the Army.

Steps taken:

- (1) In the autumn of 1943, several civilian services were given the prestige of rank and uniform
  - (a) Employees of the railroad network
  - (b) Procurators

(d) Members of the Foreign Service.

(2) In addition to Stalin, a number of top Party officials were endowed with high military ranks.

ZHDANOV  
KAGANOVICH

KHRUSHCHEV  
SHCHERBAKOV

BULGANIN of the Politburo - many close associates of Stalin in the Central Committee were made generals.

(3) July 1945 -

Beria, member of Politburo and then head of MVD (Ministry of Internal Affairs), was made a marshal, while other ranks, orders and medals were conferred on his aides in the Ministry.

(4) Most significant measure of all -

the singular emphasis given in the press and public statements since the latter part of 1943 to

(a) The role of the Party in the war.

(b) Stalin as embodiment of the supreme military leadership. While the military leaders who emerged during the war are praised as a group - very rarely as individuals - Stalin's role in "discovering" and directing them which is emphasized.

There are two ministries which are of particular importance to us as intelligence people. One was the MVD, or Ministry of Internal Affairs; the other is the MGB, or Ministry of State Security.

The MVD was essentially a police organization, although it had military formations within its ranks. It had a number of jobs, which was as follows; Perhaps its most important task was the supervision of the vast slave labor system of the USSR, a system which includes perhaps 10,000,000 inmates. The MVD operated the slave labor camps and contracts out labor from these camps in

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some cases to various industrial enterprises. The MVD also had the task of guarding the very extensive borders and coastlines of the USSR. The MVD in some cases escorted important trains and truck convoys within the borders of the USSR. The MVD had supervision of the so-called Militia, that is, the city police. Finally, the Ministry of Internal Affairs had regular military formations which would be used to combat hostile elements in the country and to subdue major civil disturbances.

The MGB, or Ministry of State Security, is the major intelligence organization of the USSR. It is concerned with two types of intelligence: internal intelligence and external intelligence. Internally, the MGB operates the vast system of confidential informants which has been estimated ~~to~~ to include from 1 out of every 10 to 1 out of every 20 persons in the USSR— confidential informants who regularly report to the MGB on the activities of their friends and associates. The MGB also conducts intelligence operations against other nations for the purpose of procuring foreign intelligence.

It is perhaps interesting to note that the task of a factory manager or a mining supervisor in the USSR is not always an entirely pleasant one. Such a director or supervisor is, for example, subject to the more or less constant supervision of as many as six checking agencies. He may be checked on at any time by the ministry under which he operates, secondly by the ministry of Finance, by the State Planning Committee, by the Ministry of State Security, by the local Communist Party organization, and finally by representatives of the Ministry of State Control, which is the government equivalent of the Party Control Commission, and which has substantial auditing and investigative powers; so, as you will see the direction of an economic enterprise can be a rather trying affair when the director is faced with such a complex supervision and investigation.

We may say a few words more about the State Planning Committee, or GOSPLAN. This is a very important body. It is currently headed by Maxim Z. Saburov. The State Planning Committee is a very important body in the USSR because the Soviet economy is the most planned of economies, and it is the State Planning Committee, or GOSPLAN' which is charged with the task of planning that economy. The GOSPLAN employs an army of clerks, economists, and statisticians. Very extensive surveys are constantly conducted on the status of the various phases of the Soviet economy and on the basis of the statistics that emerge from these surveys the 5-year plans, the annual plans within the 5-year plans, and the quarterly plans within the annual plans are laid out by the GOSPLAN.

One should note the distinct difference in power and authority between the members of the Inner Cabinet and the regular ministers or ordinary ministers of the Council of Ministers. The regular ministers head their particular ministries because of their technical ability and experience, for the most part. Their task is to run their ministries in accord with the directives that they receive from the Inner Cabinet, but the ordinary minister is not a policy-maker in the real sense. The fundamental policy is laid down by the Inner Cabinet.

The Chairman of the Council of Ministers is, outside the USSR, customarily referred to as the Premier of the Soviet Union. The four incumbents of that position have all been top Party men. The first Chairman of the SOVNARKOM was, of course, Lenin. After Lenin's death, he was replaced by Alexei Rykov. Rykov held the position until 1930, by which time he had come into Stalin's disfavor and of course was later liquidated. Molotov, Stalin's friend and confidant, took over in 1930 and held the position until 6 May 1941. On that



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date, for the first time, Stalin officially took over a governmental position and became Chairman of the SOVNARKOM. Up to that time, Stalin had officially stayed within the Party and out of the government.

In summary, the Council of Ministers, within the framework of the Soviet Government, is overwhelmingly the most important body; but in a real sense its tremendous authority emerges primarily from the fact of the virtual identity of the Inner Cabinet with the Politburo.

In conclusion, what does one find with respect to the nature of the Soviet Government? One finds that it is probably the most totalitarian government ever established. The Bolsheviks have managed to achieve a degree of centralization and central control which outdoes even the government of Nazi Germany and the centralized control and power seems to continue to expand. With respect to the real seat of power in the Soviet Union, where does it rest? In a general sense, it rests within the Party; more specifically, within the top councils of the Party, that is, in the Central Committee, Presidium, the Secretariat, Much more specifically, it rests within the Presidium, which has long since become overwhelmingly the most important single element of the Party, as the policy-making body. Finally, within the Party it is Stalin who is overwhelmingly the most significant. One finds under him a monolithic and tightly controlled Party apparatus. With respect to the future of the Soviet Government, what is the outlook? Is it withering away? Obviously not. It is continuing to expand and becoming more and more centralized. Will it wither away, as Marx said? The outlook is not very

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encouraging, if we are to judge by the record to date. The Soviet leadership has explained that the Soviet government cannot begin to wither away so long as the capitalist encirclement continues, and it would appear that the Soviet definition of "capitalist encirclement" is the continued existence of a single free nation.

In actual practice, supreme political power and control within the USSR is nested in the Politburo of the Central Committee of CPSU.

A Union Republic (SSR) must border on a foreign state or on a coastline.

Economic planning in the USSR is the immediate responsibility of the GOSPLAN or State Planning Committee.

The most significant factor making for Communist Party control of the Soviet Government is the duplication of party and governmental personnel at all echelons.

The abbreviation for the Ministry of State Security is M. G. B.

The fundamental law of the USSR is the "Stalin" Constitution of 1936.

The Organ charged with the operation of labor camps in the USSR is the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

In June 1940, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania were made an integral part of the USSR.

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OKKANA: - 1917. A Czarist weapon. Active in 1905. Functioned under the law as special political police in cases involving "exceptional measures".

CHEKA; 1917 - 1922. A Bolshevik weapon. "Extraordinary Commissions to combat Counter-Revolution, Sabotage and Speculation."

OGPU: 1922 - 1934. Political Police. "United Department of Political Police."

NKVD 1934 - 1947.  
"Peoples Commissariat of Internal Affairs"

MVD 1947 - 195? "Ministry of Internal Affairs"

MGB 1947 - 195? "Ministry of State Security"

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