

## THE BUREAUCRACY

- there are many definitions of bureaucracy
- the key factors are:
  - a hierarchical chain of command
  - division of labor and specialization
  - clear lines of authority
  - impersonal rules and merit-based decision making

## GROWTH IN BUREAUCRACY

- in 1789, George Washington headed a federal bureaucracy of three departments: state, war, and treasury
- the government grew as needs arose; in general, the government grew most during national crises and times of war, e.g. the civil war, national efforts to regulate the economy

## THE CIVIL WAR

- the Civil War (1861-1865) permanently changed the nature of the federal bureaucracy
- thousands of employees were added in order to mount the war effort
- after the Civil War, demands on the government continued to grow; the government needed to pay pensions to veterans and the injured from the war
- legal issues became pressing so the Justice Department was created

## REGULATING THE ECONOMY

- the industrial revolution of the late 1800s brought big business onto the national stage
- while some people called for a laissez-faire attitude toward the economy, many others decried the development of big railroads, price fixing, monopolies, and unfair business practices and called for the government to regulate the economy

## THE NEW DEAL AND WWII

- FDR faced high unemployment and weak financial markets during the Great Depression
- in order to face the economic crisis, FDR created large numbers of federal agencies and many federal programs (AAA, NIRA, CCC)
- WWII (like the Civil War and WWI) also caused the national government to grow

## THE MODERN BUREAUCRACY

- governments exist for the public good, not for profit
- government leaders are driven by reelection (and thus accountability) goals while businesspeople are out to increase their share prices on Wall Street; businesses get money from customers, government gets it from taxpayers
- who are bureaucrats responsible to? the president? congress? the people?

## THE CABINET DEPARTMENTS

- the 14 cabinet departments are the major administrative units that have responsibility for conducting broad areas of government operation
- these positions account for 60% of the federal workforce
- departments vary in prestige, power, size, and access to the president... each is headed by a secretary (except Department of Justice, that is headed by the Attorney General)

## GOVERNMENT CORPORATIONS

- government corporations are businesses created by Congress to perform functions that could be performed by private business but aren't usually because they aren't profitable
- these corporations include Amtrak and the Tennessee Valley Authority

#### INDEPENDENT EXECUTIVE AGENCIES

- independent executive agencies have narrower mandates than a Cabinet department
- they generally perform a service function, not a regulatory one
- some examples include: CIA, NASA, and the EPA

#### INDEPENDENT REGULATORY COMMISSIONS

- IRCs exist to regulate a specific economic activity or interest such as the National Labor Relations Board or Securities and Exchange Commission
- the commissions are independent from Congress and the President; once appointed and seated members cannot be removed without cause
- they also have staggered terms of office to ensure that no one party gets to appoint all members

#### POLICY MAKING

- when Congress passes a law that creates any kind of federal agency, department, or commission, it delegates some part of its powers
- in the law, Congress sets parameters, guidelines, and then leaves it to the agency to work out the details
- how agencies execute congressional wishes is called implementation

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#### MAKING AGENCIES ACCOUNTABLE

Is the bureaucracy accountable? To Whom?

The President has the authority to...

- appoint and remove agency heads
- reorganize the bureaucracy
- make changes in budget proposals
- ignore initiatives from the bureaucracy
- issue executive orders
- reduce an agency's budget

Congress has the authority to...

- pass legislation that alters an agency's functions
- abolish existing programs
- investigate bureaucratic activities
- influence presidential appointments
- write legislation to limit bureaucratic discretion

The judiciary has the power to...

- rule on whether the bureaucracy has acted within the law
- rule on constitutionality
- force respect for the rights of individuals through hearings

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