The Bureaucracy

Keeping the Republic
Chapter 8
Lone Star Politics
Chapter 4, pages 114-119

The Bureaucracy

- What it is?
- A quick history
- Bad things it gets blamed for
- Who is to blame?

Bureaucracy

- A complex, hierarchically arranged organization composed of many small subdivision with specialized functions
A few myths about Bureaucrats

#1 They’re appointed by the President

*Only about 3,000 out of 1,800,000 civilians employees of the Federal Government are appointed by the president*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Employees</th>
<th>Appointed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>102,542</td>
<td>0.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>34,497</td>
<td>1.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defense</td>
<td>766,086</td>
<td>0.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>4,540</td>
<td>4.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>17,257</td>
<td>2.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HHS</td>
<td>59,378</td>
<td>0.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interior</td>
<td>70,843</td>
<td>0.33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Civilian Employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Employees</th>
<th>Appointed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Justice</td>
<td>113,881</td>
<td>.043%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor</td>
<td>15,497</td>
<td>1.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>24,033</td>
<td>4.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>63,050</td>
<td>.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasury</td>
<td>156,394</td>
<td>.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans’ Affairs</td>
<td>243,948</td>
<td>.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>1,683,040</td>
<td>.31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only about a half million government employees have characteristically bureaucratic positions such as clerk or general administrator.

#2 They’re paperpushers

The government employs about 147,000 engineers and architects, 84,000 scientists, and 2,400 veterinarians.
#3 They work in Washington DC
Only about 10% of government civilian employees work in Washington.
139,566 Federal Employees work in DC
135,735 work in California
102,094 work in Texas

#4 Most work in the federal government
About 22% of government employees work for the federal government

A History of the Bureaucracy
The Whig Theory

- The idea that public service was domain of an elite class.
- Families had a tradition of public service.

The Spoils System

- Andrew Jackson used government jobs or “patronage” to reward supporters and to remove elitists from the bureaucracy

“To the victor belong the spoils”

Civil Service Reform
The Civil Service System

• The Pendleton Act (Civil Service Reform Act of 1883) established the principle of employment on the basis of merit
• Civil Service System created to oversee the hiring and firing of government employees

General Schedule Salaries
“Typical Starting Salary” 2004

• Menial, clerical
  • GS 1-4 $17,000 - $23,412
• Management entry; low-level supervisor
  • GS 5-8 $26,195 - $35,933
• Technical; mid-level supervisor
  • GS9-12 $39,690 - $57,556
• Highly technical; middle management
  • GS 13-15 $68,443 - $95,136

Tradeoffs

The need to make sure that government jobs are not handed out to reward political allies.

The need to make sure that the bureaucracy is responsive to the people through elected officials.
Bad Things Bureaucrats Get Blamed For

Bad Things Bureaucrats Do

Expand their authority

Bad Things Bureaucrats Do

Develop political constituencies
Bad Things Bureaucrats Do

Fight over jurisdiction

Bad Things Bureaucrats Do

Expand their work

Bad Things Bureaucrats Do

The spend it or lose it mentality
Bad Things Bureaucrats Do

Become paternalistic

Bad Things Bureaucrats Do

The Peter Principle

Who is to blame?

- Who controls the bureaucracy
- Who corrupts bureaucrats?
Who controls the bureaucracy?

• The chief executive?
• The legislative branch?

Who corrupts bureaucrats?

• Theories of bureaucratic influence
  • Expert
  • Capture
  • Economic theory

Privatization

• Contracting out government services to private firms
Privatization

• In 2001, 40,000 federal tax returns with checks totaling more than $800 million were lost.

Employees at the private contractor, Mellon Bank, threw away returns they didn’t have time to process.

The Texas Bureaucracy

Appointed Boards and Commissions

• Many agencies in Texas are headed by unsalaried, part-time boards
• For example, the Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife is headed by a 9 member board that selects an executive director to run the agency
College and University Boards

- Appointed regents oversee the functioning of the state’s colleges and universities

Licensing Boards

- Responsible for licensing and regulating professions
- State law usually requires that board members be drawn from the profession they regulate

Licensing Boards

- Board of Barber Examiners
- Advisory Board of Athletic Trainers
- Board of Chiropractic Examiners
- Cosmetology Commission
- Funeral Service Commission
- Board of Dental Examiners
Elected Regulatory Boards

- Texas Railroad Commission
- State Board of Education

Regulating Boards

- All except Railroad Commission and Board of Education, all regulatory boards are appointed rather than elected
- Regulatory Board make rules that are legally binding

Regulating Boards

- Public Utility Commission
  - Sets local telephone and electric utility rates
- Board of Insurance
  - Licenses and regulate insurance companies
- Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission
  - Regulates manufacture and sale of alcohol
Social Service Agencies
- Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse
- Governor’s Committee on People with Disability
- Texas Department on Aging
- Texas Commission for the Deaf

Promotional and Preservation Agencies
- Texas Department of Economic Development
- Texas Historical Commission

Issues in bureaucratic politics today
An Amateur Bureaucracy?

- What are the costs of having a professional bureaucracy led by amateurs and part-time administrators?

No man is allowed to be a judge in his own cause, because his interest would certainly bias his judgment, and, not improbably, corrupt his integrity.

James Madison, Federalist #10

Sunset review

- The Sunset Advisory Commission was created in 1977.
- It reviews the effectiveness of most state agencies every 12 years.
- Unless the commission takes action an agency automatically disappears.
- 52 agencies have been “sun-setted” and 12 have been consolidated with other agencies.

Sunshine laws

- Texas and other states have laws that make the governing process as visible as possible.
- Boards and commissions must notify the public of meeting times and agenda items.
- Government records must be available to the public.