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## The Federal Bureaucracy

Produce read & précis notes  
From pages 239-248 of 'US Government & Politics' by A J Bennett.

## Simple rules to follow ...

- Hand in your read & précis notes before the start of the lecture.
- Do NOT chat during the lecture
- Raise your hand if you have any questions.

## Introduction

- In that Lecture on the President we discussed how one man cannot possibly lead and control 3 million civil servants - with around 60 federal government agencies.

## Introduction

- Over the twentieth century - as the US developed into a modern civilisation - so did its federal government. Immigration led to growth - to more housing - more technology - more roads - more need for government as the US grew into a world power.

## Introduction

- The Federal Bureaucracy is a necessary evil. To many people bureaucracy is seen as red tape and undesirable - but without government bureaucracy such a large society would exist in chaos.

## Introduction

- It is not one central mass of 1.9 million civil servants - the bureaucracy is not based simply in Washington (only 11%) - it is spread throughout the whole of the USA existing in every state. Each state having its own government and bureaucracy
- See Washington Post article for further detail and analysis.

## The structure of the bureaucracy

- See page 240 of 'US & Comparative Government & Politics' by A J Bennett and reproduce (use colour coding) Table 6.6 Note the long term existence of most of these Executive Departments and produce a few words (next to each) which explains its function etc.

## Some Questions ...

1. What are Executive Agencies?
  2. How do Executive departments differ from Executive Agencies?
  3. What are Independent Regulatory Commissions?
  4. What are Government Corporations?
- **Examples are needed of each.**

## Functions of the bureaucracy

- It has three principal functions:
- **(1) Executing Laws:** While the President signs all bills passed by Congress - he then has the responsibility of enforcing or carrying it out. Taxes need to be collected, mail to be delivered, planes to be inspected, security to be maintained etc.

## Functions of the bureaucracy

- **2. Creating rules.** US legislators usually establish just the broad principles of policy. It is the bureaucrats who are required to write the specific rules that decide how the laws will be executed. The bigger and more complex societies have become - so the need for specialist bureaucrats has grown.

## Functions of the bureaucracy

- **3. Adjudication.** Creating laws and rules leads to the need for adjudication. For example, if a law is made to tackle speeding. The bureaucracy has to establish which roads require speed limits and set up rules and a mechanism for dealing with the problem. Any breaches of rules lead to the need for adjudication (he is liable/guilty or not).

## List of Personnel

- Each student should produce a list of Personnel they consider are employed in the federal bureaucracy (see page 242 of A J Bennett). Return to analyse this in light of the Washington Post article.

## Problems with the Federal Bureaucracy

### Explain these terms

Singh (2002)- with Bennett

1. Clientelism
2. Imperialism
3. Parochialism
4. Incrementalism
1. Arbitrariness
2. Waste
3. Iron triangles
4. Going native
5. Inefficiency

## Checking the power of the federal bureaucracy

- The role of Congress is to check the power.
- Congress has reorganised the federal bureaucracy on several occasions. For example, in 2002 170,000 government employees were extracted from 22 different agencies to create the Department of Homeland Security.

## Checking the power of the federal bureaucracy

- Congress has the power of the purse ...
- Congress has the power of oversight
- What did Reagan say were the most frightening words in the English Language?
- Did Reagan succeed in his aim of reducing significantly the bureaucrats?

## A thought for today ...

- Who are the federal bureaucrats in the UK?
- Who is the head of them in the UK?
- Do we have similar calls for cuts in bureaucrats in the UK?

## Discussion time ...

- Break up into three small groups. Each student member of the group then draws out of a hat a number (out of a selection of 10-17) which relates to one of the exercises on page 284 of *'US & Politics'*. The student then leads a discussion within their group on that topic.
- A member of each group finally summarises each of the discussions for the whole class.