TOTALITARIAN and AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES

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TOTALITARIAN SYSTEMS

Toward a Definition of Totalitarianism

In view of the central place in the study of modern noncompetitive democratic regimes of totalitarianism it seems useful to start with some of the already classical definitions of totalitarian systems and, after presenting them, attempt to push our knowledge somewhat further along the lines derived from the criticism they have been subject to (Jänicke, 1971; Friedrich, 1954; Friedrich and Brzezinski 1965, S. Neumann, 1942; Aron, 1968; Buchheim, 1968a; Schapiro, 1972a, 1972b; Seidel and Jenkner, 1968). Carl Friedrich has recently reformulated the original descriptive definition he and Z. K. Brzezinski (1965) had formulated, in the following way:

> The features which distinguish this regime from other and older autocracies as well as from heterocracies are six in number. They are to recall what by now is a fairly generally accepted set of facts: (1) a totalist ideology; (2) a single party commited to this ideology and usually led by one man, the dictator; (3) a fully developed secret police and three kinds of monopoly or more precisely monopolistic control; namely, that of (a) mass communications, (b) operational weapons, and (c) all organizations including economic ones, thus involving a centrally planned economy. . . . We might add that these six features could if greater simplicity is desired lie grouped into three, a totalist ideology, a party reinforced by a secret police and a monopoly of the three major forms of interpersonal confrontation in industrial mass society. Such monopoly is not necessarily exercized by the party. This should be stressed at the outset in order to forestall a misunderstanding which has arisen in some of the critical commentaries

> in my earlier work. The important point is that such a monopolistic control is in the hands of whatever elite rules the particular society and thereby constitutes its regime. (Friedrich, 1969, p. 126)

Brzezinski has offered a more essentialist definition emphasizing the ultimate end of such systems when he writes:

> Totalitarianism is a new form of government falling into the general classification of dictatorship, a system in which technologically advanced instruments of political power are wielded without restraint by centralized leadership of an elite movement for the purpose of affecting a total social revolution, including the conditioning of man on the basis of certain arbitrary ideological assumptions, proclaimed by the leadership in an atmosphere of coerced unanimity of the entire population. (Brzezinski, 1962)

Franz Neumann (1957, pp. 233–56) has provided us with a similar set of defining characteristics.

Let us stress that in these definitions the terror element—the role of the police, of coercion—is not central as, for example, in the work of Hannah Arendt (1966). In fact, it could be argued that a totalitarian system could be based on the identification of a very large part of the population with the rulers, the population's active involvement in political organizations controlled by them and at the service of their goals, and use of diffused social control based on voluntary, manipulated involvement and a mixture of rewards and fears in a relatively closed society, as long as the rulers could count on the loyalty of the armed forces. In some respects, communist China has approached this type of totalitarianism, and the Khrushchev experience of a populist rationalization of party control described by Paul Cocks (1970) would fit such a model.

Explicitly or implicitly those definitions suggest a tendency toward the destruction of the line between state and society and the emergence of "total" politicization of society by political organizations, generally the party and its affiliates. However, this dimension that differentiates totalitarian systems from various types of authoritarian regimes and particularly from democratic governments is unlikely to be fully realized and, consequently, the problem of tension between society and political system, while reduced, is far from disappearing under such systems. The shaping of the individual, the internalization by the mass of the citizens of the ideology, the realization of the "new man" of which

ideologists talk are obviously even more unlikely, even when few social systems, except religions, have gone as far in this direction as the totalitarian systems.

The dimensions that we have to retain as necessary to characterize a system as totalitarian are an ideology, a single mass party and other mobilizational organizations, and concentrated power in an individual and his collaborators or a small group that is not accountable to any large constituency and cannot be dislodged from power by institutionalized, peaceful means. Each of those elements can be found separately in other types of nondemocratic systems and only their simultaneous presence makes a system totalitarian. This means that not all single-party systems are totalitarian, that no system in which there exists a fair competition for power between freely created parties can be totalitarian, and that no nondemocratic system without a single party, or more specifically an active single party, can be considered totalitarian. As Friedrich admits in his revised version, it is not essential that ultimate power or the largest amount of power should be found in the party organization, even when it seems highly improbable that such a single mass party and the bureaucracy controlling it should not be among the most powerful institutions in the society, at least in relationship to its members and to the common citizen.

There are certainly dictators—Caesaristic leaders, small oligarchies like military juntas, or coalitions of elites within different institutional realms not accountable to the members of their organizations and institutions—whose power we would not call totalitarian. Unless their power is exercised in the name of an ideology guided to a greater or lesser degree by some central ideas, or *Weltanschauung,* and unless they use some form of mass organization and participation of members of the society beyond the armed forces and a police to impose their rule, we cannot speak of a totalitarian system but, as we shall see later, of authoritarian regimes. Whatever its unity, infighting might exist in the top leadership around and under the top leader and between organizations created by the top leadership. Such group politics does not emerge from the society or take place between institutions or organizations that existed before taking of power. The conflicting men, factions, or organizations do not derive their power from structures of the society that are not strictly political, even when those engaged in such struggles for power might have closer links with some sectors of society than with others. In this sense it seems impossible to speak of class conflict in a Marxist sense in totalitarian systems. The initial power

positions from which the competitors attempt to expand their base by linking with the diversity of interests in the society are part of the political system—political organizations like the party, affiliated mass organizations, regional organizations of the party, the party militia, or government and police bureaucracies. In stable totalitarian systems preexisting institutions like business organizations, the church, or even the army play a secondary role in the struggle for power, and to the extent that they participate they are brought in to support one or another leader or group within the political elite. Their leadership is not a legitimate contender for political power but only for influence on particular decisions and rarely capable of veto power. In this respect, the subordination of the military authority is one of the distinctive characteristics of totalitarian systems in contrast to other nondemocratic systems. To this day, no totalitarian system has been overthrown or changed fundamentally by the intervention of the armed forces, even when in crisis moments one or another faction might have reinforced its power by the support of the military.

Only the highly political People's Liberation Army (PLA) in China (Joffe, 1965, 1971; Pollack, 1974; Schurmann, 1968, pp. 12–13; Gittings, 1967) and the army in Cuba (Domínguez, 1974; Dumont, 1970) might have played such a role. It is only in a very relative sense that we can speak of particular leaders or factions or bureaucracies within the power structure as representing the managers, the farmers, linguistic or cultural groups, the intellectuals, and so on. Whenever leaders or groups represent to some degree the interests of such sectors of the society, they are not accountable to a constituency, do not derive their power base fundamentally from it, generally are not recruited from it, and often are not even co-opted as leaders emerging from such social groups. The destruction or at least decisive weakening of all the institutions, organizations, and interest groups existing before a new elite takes political power and organizes its own political structures is one of the distinguishing characteristics of totalitarian systems compared with other nondemocratic systems. In this sense we can speak of monopoly of power, monism, but it would be a great mistake to take this concentration of power in the political sphere and in the hands of the people and the organizations created by the political leadership as monolithic. The pluralism of totalitarian systems is not social pluralism but political pluralism within the ruling political elite. To give one example: the conflicts between the SA and the SS, the DAF (Labor Front) and the party, the four-year plan organization of Goehring and the Organization

Todt of Speer, were conflicts within the Nazi elite and between its organizations. They certainly looked for and found allies among the military, the bureaucracy, and sectors of business, but it would be a great mistake to consider any of those leaders or organizations as representatives of the pre-Nazi structures of German society. The same could probably he said about the struggles among factions within the Politbureau or the Central Committee after the death of Stalin.

However, it might be argued that in a totalitarian system that is fully established and in power for a long time, members of the political organizations, particularly the party, become identified through a process of differentiation and division of labor with particular policy areas and are likely to identify increasingly with particular economic or territorial interests and represent their aspirations and points of view in the formulation of specific policies, particularly in peacetime, when no single goal is all-important, and at the time of succession or leadership crisis. Once basic decisions about the nature of the political system have been settled, preexisting social structures destroyed or decisively weakened, and dominant leaders displaced, a transformation of the system allowing a pluralism limited in scope and autonomy is not unlikely to take place. At that point, the degree of vitality of the ideology and the party or other organizations committed to its dominance and the strength of the leaders at the top will be decisive in characterizing the system as some variety of totalitarianism or as being transformed into something different. Certainly such transformations within totalitarian systems are not without tension and strain and therefore may be characterized by cyclical changes rather than a smooth continuous evolution.

Any typology of totalitarian systems will have to take into account the relative importance of ideology, party and mass organizations, and the political leader or leadership groups than have appropriated power—and the cohesion or factionalization of the leadership. In addition, it will have to analyze how those three main dimensions link with the society and its structure, history, and cultural traditions. Different totalitarian systems or phases of the same system might be characterized as more ideological, populist, or bureaucratic, depending on the character of the single party, and more charismatic, oligarchical, or even feudal, depending on the structure of the dominant center of power. The absence of any of those three factors or their weakening beyond a certain point will fundamentally change the nature of the system. However, the variety among those three dimensions certainly allows for quite different types of totalitarian systems.

It is the combination of those three dimensions that accounts for many of the other characteristics we are more likely to find in totalitarian than other nondemocratic systems. However, some of those other characteristics are neither necessary nor sufficient to characterize a system as totalitarian and can be found in other types of political systems.

In summary, I shall consider a system totalitarian when the following characteristics apply.

1. There is a monistic but not monolithic center of power, and whatever pluralism of institutions or groups exists derives its legitimacy from that center, is largely mediated by it, and is mostly a political creation rather than an outgrowth of the dynamics of the preexisting society.
2. There is an exclusive, autonomous, and more or less intellectually elaborate ideology with which the ruling group or leader, and the party serving the leaders, identify and which they use as a basis for policies or manipulate to legitimize them. The ideology has some boundaries beyond which lies heterodoxy that does not remain unsanctioned. The ideology goes beyond a particular program or definition of the boundaries of legitimate political action to provide, presumably, some ultimate meaning, sense of historical purpose, and interpretation of social reality.
3. Citizen participation in and active mobilization for political and collective social tasks are encouraged, demanded, rewarded, and channeled through a single party and many monopolistic secondary groups. Passive obedience and apathy, retreat into the role of "parochials" and "subjects," characteristic of many authoritarian regimes, are considered undesirable by the rulers.

This third characteristic brings a totalitarian society closer to the ideal and even the reality of most democracies and basically differentiates it from most "nontotalitarian nondemocratic systems." It is this participation and the sense of participation that democratic observers of totalitarian systems often find so admirable and that make them think that they are faced with a democracy, even a more perfect democracy than one in which citizens get involved in public issues only or mainly at election time. However, the basic difference between participation in a mobilizational regime and in a democracy is that, in the former, in each realm of life for each purpose there is only one possible channel

for participation and the overall purpose and direction is set by one center, which defines the legitimate goals of those organizations and ultimately controls them.

It is the constant feedback between the dominant, more or less monistic center of decision making, undergirded by the ideological commitments that guide it or are used or manipulated by it, and these processes of participation for those ideological purposes within those controlled organizations that characterizes a totalitarian system.

It should be possible to derive other characteristics frequently stressed in describing totalitarian systems from the three we just sketched, and we shall do so in discussing in more detail some of the main scholarly contributions to the study of specific totalitarian systems. Here we might give a few basic examples. The tense relationship between intellectuals and artists and the political authorities,[9] in addition to being the result of the personal idiosyncrasies of rulers like Hitler and Stalin, is certainly the result of the emphasis on an ideology and the exclusion by the commitment to it of other systems of ideas or the fear of the questioning of the values implicit in the ideology, particularly the collective and public goals versus individual and private ones. Privatized, inner-oriented man is a latent threat, and certainly many forms of aesthetic expression search for that orientation. The same is true for the exacerbation of the normal conflicts between church and state to conflicts between religion and politics.[10] The importance of ideology also has positive aspects, in the sense of making education a highly valued activity, making selective cultural efforts and their mass diffusion highly desirable. This is in contrast to most traditional autocracies, with the exception of religious indoctrination in religious autocracies and scientific and technological education in secular autocracies. Propaganda, education, training of cadres, intellectual elaboration of the ideology, scholarship inspired by the ideology, rewards for intellectuals identified with the system are more likely to be important in totalitarian than in other nondemocratic systems. If we ignore the limited content of that effort, the limitations or denial of freedom, we find here a certain convergence with democratic systems, in which the mass participation in political life requires also mass education and mass communications and assigns to intellectuals an important, even when not always welcome, role.

The concentration of power in the leader and his collaborators or a distinct group of powerholders, formed by their joint participation in

the struggle to gain power and create the regime, their socialization in the political organizations, or their co-optation from other sectors (keeping in mind criteria of loyalty and/or identification with the ideology), necessarily limits the autonomy of other organizations like industrial enterprises, professional groups, the armed forces, the intellectuals, and so on. The sharing to greater or lesser degree of the belief in the ideology, of the identification with its symbols, and the conviction that decisions should be legitimized or at least rationalized in terms of the ideology, separates this group from those more skeptical or disinterested in the ideology and from those who, because of their calling, like the intellectuals, are most likely to question those ideas. However, it also brings them close to those who, without challenging their power, are willing to elaborate the ideology. The element of elitism so often stressed in the analysis of totalitarian systems is a logical consequence of this search for a monopoly of power. It is also a source of the bitterness of many conflicts within the elite and the ostracism or purge of those who lose the struggle for power. Power, more than in democratic societies, becomes a zero-sum game.

The commitment to ideology, the desire for monopolistic control, and the fear of losing power certainly explain the propensity toward coercive methods in such systems and the likelihood for continuing terror. Therefore, terror, particularly within the elite rather than against opponents or even potential opponents to the system, distinguishes totalitarian systems from other nondemocratic systems. The size of the society, stressed by Hannah Arendt, and the degree of modernization in terms of technology linked with industrialization, stressed by other scholars, are not as important as ideological zeal in explaining the drive for positive commitment rather than apathy of subjects or just external conformity of bureaucrats.

The nature and role of the single party is obviously the most important variable when we come to analyze in behavioral terms the impact of totalitarian systems on different societies. The importance assigned to the party organization, the specialized political organizations emerging from the party, and the mass organizations linked with it account for many of the basic characteristics of such systems. Foremost, their capacity to penetrate the society, to be present and influential in many institutional realms, to mobilize people for large-scale tasks on a voluntary or pseudo voluntary basis rather than just for material incentives and rewards allows such systems to carry out important changes with limited resources and therefore to serve as instruments

for certain types of economic and social development. It also gives them a certain democratic character, in the sense of offering to those willing to participate (accepting the basic goals of the leadership rather than advancing alternative goals) a chance for active participation and a sense of involvement. Despite the bureaucratic character of the state and of many organizations and even the party, the mass membership in the party and in related sponsored organizations can give meaning, purpose, and a sense of participation to many citizens. In this respect, totalitarian systems are very different from many other nondemocratic systems—authoritarian regimes—in which the rulers rely fundamentally on a staff of bureaucrats, experts, and policemen, distinct and separate from the rest of the people, who have little or no chance to feel as active participants in the society and polity beyond their personal life and their work.

The party organization and the many minor leadership positions in it give many people a chance to exercise some share in power, sometimes over people who in other hierarchies of the society would be their superiors.[11] This obviously introduces an element of equality undermining other stratified structures of the society while introducing a new and different type of inequality. An active party organization with members involved in its activities also increases enormously the possibilities of control and latent coercion of those who are unwilling to join or are excluded. Many of the energies that in a democratic society are channeled into political life, but also into a myriad of voluntary associations that take an interest in collective goods, are used by totalitarian systems. Much of the idealism associated with collective orientation rather than self-orientation (idealism that in the past went into religious organizations and now in liberal democratic society goes into voluntary groups) is likely to be found in the party and its sponsored organizations, together, obviously, with the opportunism of those attracted by a variety of rewards and access to power or the hope of having it. This mobilizational aspect is central to totalitarian systems and absent in many, if not most, other nondemocratic systems. Some of the kind of people who in a totalitarian system become zealous activists on many of the tasks assigned to them by the leadership in other nondemocratic systems would be passive subjects only interested in their private narrow goals or alienated in view of the lack of opportunities for any participation in efforts directed at changing their societies. Certainly much of the attraction that the totalitarian model has comes from this participatory mobilizational dimension of the party and the mass organizations. But also much of the alienation and negative feelings

about such systems are due to the absence of choice for the average citizen between alternative goals for the society and the limited freedom or lack of freedom in choosing the leadership of such organizations due to the bureaucratic character derived from norms like the leadership principle or democratic centralism.

Other characteristics often noted in describing totalitarian systems, like their expansionist tendencies, are much more difficult to derive from their more central characteristics. There is obviously an indirect relationship, since the emphasis on an exclusive ideology makes the persistence of alternative ideologies and belief systems a latent threat. However, much will depend on the content of the ideology, and certainly the character and direction of the expansionism will be shaped more by that than by other structural features.[12]

A search for conformity, a proscription of most forms of dissidence, particularly those that can reach larger segments of the population and that involve any attempt of organization, a reduction of the private realm, and considerable amount of half-free if not enforced participation are almost inevitable in totalitarian systems. The massive and/or arbitrary use of terror as we find in the concentration camps, the purges, the show trials, the collective punishments of groups or communities do not seem essential to a totalitarian system. However, we can say that it was not accidental that some of those forms appeared under Hitler and Stalin, that they were distinctive and widespread as they have not been in any democratic system, and that they should have been qualitatively and quantitatively different from other nondemocratic systems, except in their periods of consolidation in power either during or immediately after a civil war. Terror is neither a necessary nor sufficient characteristic of totalitarian systems, but there seems to be a greater probability that it should appear under such systems than under others, and certain of its forms seem to be distinctive of certain types of totalitarian systems. Some authors have rightly spoken of totalitarianism without terror.

Early studies of totalitarianism, particularly Sigmund Neumann's (1942) *Permanent Revolution,* emphasized the role of a leader. The fascist commitment to the *Führerprinzip* and the exaltation of the *Duce,* together with the cult of personality around Stalin, certainly made this an obvious element in a definition of totalitarian systems. However, in recent years we have seen systems that on many counts are still totalitarian in which we do not find such an undisputed leader at the top or

a comparable cult or personification of leadership. On the other hand, there are many nondemocratic systems that would not fit into the type we have delineated above in which a single leader occupies a comparable place and the cult of personality has gone as far. Therefore we can legitimately say that the appearance of a single leader who concentrates vast amounts of power in his person, is the object of a cult of personality, and claims a charismatic authority and to a greater or lesser extent enjoys it among the party members and the populace at large is highly probable in totalitarian systems but not inevitable or necessary for their stability. Succession crises that some scholars thought threatened the stability and even survival of such regimes have not led to their downfall or breakdown even when they have been very critical for them.[13] It could be argued that the emphasis on personal leadership is characteristic of totalitarian systems of the fascist type, and this is certainly true of Italy and Germany as well as of some of the minor fascist regimes, but the role of Stalin in the Soviet Union shows that it was not a feature exclusive to fascist regimes. Obviously if we should argue, as some dissident communists and some left fascists do, that Stalin was the Russian functional equivalent to fascism, the difficulty would disappear. But this seems a sophistic solution. At this point we can say only that there is a higher probability that such leadership will appear in totalitarian systems than in other nondemocratic systems. Changes in the relationship between leadership, ideology, and organized participation are the variables likely to offer the best clue for the construction of the typology of totalitarian systems and for an understanding of the processes of consolidation, stability, and change—and perhaps breakdown—of such systems. It might be overambitious to attempt to formulate some propositions about those interrelationships among those relatively independent variables for any totalitarian system; and certainly only a theoretical-empirical analysis of particular types and even unique cases will facilitate such a theoretical effort at a higher level of abstraction. With all the risks involved, we shall attempt to sketch some directions in which such an analysis might move. Let us stress from the beginning that the relationships are likely to be two way without any of them being ever fully unidirectional, since unidirectional relationships would change decisively the nature of the system and bring into question the independent character of each of the variables, but also that the flow of influence of the variables might be stronger in one or another direction.

Ideology and Totalitarianism

As some of the scholars have noted, totalitarian systems might be considered ideocracies or logocracies, and Inkeles (1954) has developed the notion of totalitarian mystique to convey the importance of ideology as a powerful independent variable in such systems.[14] There can be no doubt that totalitarian leaders, individuals or groups, in contrast to other nondemocratic rulers, derive much of their sense of mission, their legitimation, and often very specific policies from their commitment to some holistic conception of man and society. Ideologies vary much in the richness and complexity of their content and in the degree to which they are closed, fixed, and can be action-related. The study of ideologies as systems of ideas, of meanings, and of the internal logical or emotional connections between those ideas is obviously essential to understanding different totalitarian systems. Such a study can be done from different perspectives: intellectual-cultural history, sociology of knowledge, and social psychology. The initial commitment of a ruler or ruling group to an ideology imposes constraints, excluding a greater or smaller number of alternative values, goals, and styles of thinking, and sets a framework limiting the range of alternative policies. There can be no question that an intellectually elaborate ideology like Marxism provides a more complex and heterogenous as well as rational starting point for ideological elaboration than the more simple, emotional, and less intellectually fixated elements of fascist ideology. Some of those who question the usefulness of the totalitarian approach to the study of fascist regimes and of Nazism do so because they question the ideological character of those movements reducing their ideas to those of their founders and rulers and engaging in purely pragmatic power seeking and opportunist manipulation of symbols. The existence of a printed and fixed and to some degree unambiguous corpus of writing of Marx, Engels, and Lenin, which can be doctored, partly suppressed, and reinterpreted but not fully abandoned, certainly differs from those regimes in which the leader or group in power claims identification with much less elaborate ideas or is in the process of giving ideological content to his rule. The autonomy or heteronomy in the control of ideological formulation is obviously a key to the autonomy and stability of different totalitarian systems and is one of the sources of conflict between them when they attempt to derive their legitimacy from identification with an ideological corpus. The hypothesis may be advanced that a fully autonomous totalitarian system cannot exist without almost

full control over the formulation or interpretation of the ideological heritage or content. In this respect different fascist regimes found themselves in a better position in relation to the hegemonic powers in their camp than did the Eastern European communists, and the regimes of China and Cuba found themselves in a better position than those of other minor communist states. The heteronomous control of the ideological content of Catholic thought by a universal church and specifically by the Pope is one of the most serious obstacles to the creation of a truly totalitarian system by nondemocratic rulers claiming to implement Catholic social doctrine in their states. Among other factors this is one that has prevented the Austrian "clerical-fascists" and the regimes of Franco and Salazar from pursuing further the path toward totalitarianism (Linz, 1964, p. 303).

Ideologies in totalitarian systems are a source of legitimacy, a source of the sense of mission of a leader or a ruling group, and it is not surprising that one should speak of charisma of the leader or the party, for at least important segments of their societies, on the basis of that element. Many of the differences between systems or within the same system over time are to be understood in terms of the relationship of people in those positions to the ideology. However, while the ideology imposes some constraints, more or less narrow, on the rulers and their actions, the relationship is not one-sided, and much of the effort in such systems goes into the manipulation, adaptation, and selective interpretation of the ideological heritage, particularly in the second generation of rulers. Only a complete change in the relationship to the ideology—its substitution by pragmatic policy formulation and the acceptance of heteronomous sources for ideas and central policies, of evidence clearly and explicitly in conflict with the ideology—will lead to changes away from the totalitarian model. The ruling group might very well reach the conclusion that a fixed ideology limits its choices too much and that a scholastic reinterpretation of the texts can go only so far, but the fact that a simplified and vulgarized version of the ideologies has been central to the indoctrination of the middle levels of cadres of the single mass party and even the membership will certainly make it difficult to abandon certain policies and sometimes create real crises of legitimacy. The autonomy and importance of the party organization compared to the personal power of the leader or a small oligarchy is to some extent a function of the importance of the commitment to the ideology. Inversely, the constraining character of the ideological commitments for the ruling group is likely to be directly related to the active

life of the party—intraparty discussion, elaboration of party thought, cadre training activities, agitprop activities, and so on. Important ideological changes rather than just manipulation of the ideology require some activation of the party structure and thereby impose pressures on the ruling group, contribute to crises within it, and might lead to important changes in its composition. Obviously, changes in the relationship between the ruling group or leader and the party organization, like those achieved by Stalin as first secretary, also make possible changes in the ideology and the displacement of those in the ruling group who had devoted their energies to the intellectual elaboration of the ideology and policies derived from it rather than to the development of an organizational base. The displacement and elimination of the original Bolshevik intellectual ideologists by the apparatchiki identified with Stalin certainly contributed to the debasement of the Marxist-Leninist ideological heritage. This process had some interesting parallels in fascist regimes, with the displacement of Rosenberg by Himmler and Bormann and of Gentile and Bottai by Starace. Such processes are not without consequences for the system, since the capacity to mobilize the loyalties of intellectuals, students, and young idealistic activists in the party and the mass organizations is to some degree a function of the capacity for creative ideological development as well as for continuity. This might account for waves of ideological fervor and with them mobilization of new members in some sectors of the regime. The intellectual elaborations sponsored by the SS, often neglected by scholars, might be a good example. The simultaneous weakening and ossification of the ideology and the party organization obviously tend to isolate the ruling group, weaken the dynamism of the society, and create a certain power vacuum that tends to be filled by more coercive bureaucratic control and the reliance on a more praetorian police. Ultimately this could lead to the transformation of a totalitarian system into other forms of authoritarianism.

The Totalitarian Party

The unique syndrome of totalitarian political systems resulting from the importance of ideology, the tendency toward a monistic center of power, and the emphasis on mass participation and mobilization finds its purest expression in the totalitarian party, its dependent organizations and affiliates, and the functions they perform in the society. The

totalitarian party, as a unique type of organization, distinguishes most clearly the modern forms of autocracy from any traditional absolutist regime and from a great variety of other nondemocratic governments. Mussolini was right when he wrote: "The party that governs a nation totalitarianly is a new fact in history; similarities and comparisons are impossible" (Aquarone, 1965, p. 577).[15] In the mid-thirties Mihail Manoïlesco (1938), a Rumanian scholar and cabinet member sympathetic to authoritarian regimes, wrote one of the first comparative analyses of single parties, including, together with the fascist parties that enjoyed his sympathies, the Communist party of the Soviet Union and the Turkish Republican party. The index of his book reflects some of the permanent intellectual problems in the study of such parties: the ideological-historical context in which they are born, their functions in the process of taking power and consolidating it, in established regimes the complex relationship between party, state, and nation, their organizational characteristics, and their special legal status. At that time there were six single ruling parties. Today their number has multiplied manifold and we are conscious that there are many different types of established single-party systems. In addition, in a number of communist countries, including China, one cannot speak of one-party systems but of dominant leading parties and subordinate parties under their aegis. The theoretical model of the totalitarian party has been widely imitated, but only under very special circumstances can we say that the single party is a totalitarian party. In many democracies we find parties that more or less explicitly have the goal of doing away with party competition. Such parties often by extension have been called totalitarian but we feel this is a misleading use of the term, since only after taking power can such a party realize its ambitions. In fact, it is debatable whether a party that shares an ideology and certain organizational characteristics with totalitarian parties would not be forced to function differently if it came to power in a stable democracy and might even become a loyal opposition or a legitimate participant in democratic politics.

The concept of the totalitarian party itself reflects some of the inherent tensions and ambivalence of the term, and it is no accident that some of the parties, particularly of the fascist and nationalist type and including many Nazi theoreticians, tried to substitute the word "party" by others like "movement." Party underlines that the organization is only part of the political life, while the adjective totalitarian indicates the more or less utopian goal of encompassing the whole individual, the whole society. Communist parties based on the Leninist conception

of the vanguard party have always emphasized this part character. For example, Article 126 of the Stalin Constitution:

> The citizens of the USSR are guaranteed the right to unite in public organizations, trade unions, cooperative societies, youth organizations, sport and defense organizations, cultural, technical, and scientific societies. And the most active and politically conscious citizens in the ranks of the working class, working peasants, and working intelligentsia voluntarily unite in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union which is the vanguard of the working people in their struggle to build a Communist society and is the leading core of all organizations of the working people, both societal and governmental. (Meyer, 1965, p. 107)

The party is therefore a minority, a vanguard in communist terminology, an elite in that of the fascist. In most communist countries it represents somewhat less than 5 percent of the population, and even where it is larger than that it does not get close to 25 percent.[16] Totalitarian parties fit the definition of party of Max Weber:

> The term "party" will be employed to designate associations, membership in which rests on formally free recruitment. The end to which its activity is devoted is to secure power within an organization for its leaders in order to attain ideal or material advantages for its active members. These advantages may consist in the realization of certain objective policies or the attainment of personal advantages, or both. (1968, Vol. 1, p. 284)

The goal of power within an organization highlights a major problem in the study of totalitarian parties, the relationship between party and state. In spite of all the bureaucratization of parties, the oligarchic continuity of leadership, and even the legally privileged status of its leaders and members, parties are deliberately distinct from the organization of a state, its offices and bureaucracy, whatever degree of overlap between their leadership. In the USSR ministers of the Soviet government have frequently not been members of the highest bodies of the Politbureau and even the Central Committee, and men highly placed in the party have never held government office. Fraenkel (1941), in his analysis of early Nazi rule, even when emphasizing some different aspects, spoke of the dual state. In principle, therefore, the totalitarian party retains the function of expressing the demands, aspirations, interests of the society or particular classes of society. In this sense it is

a modern phenomenon, inconceivable without the duality of state and society. Despite the tendency of the totalitarian party to become a closed group, incorporated by law into the administrative staff, the formal criterion of voluntary solicitation and adherence distinguishes parties from state bureaucracies, modern or patrimonial, and from most modern armies. Membership involves whatever the psychic, social, and economic pressures to join there are, for example for civil servants, a commitment to a voltuntary identification. It is no accident that a member of the Hitler cabinet would for reasons of conscience refuse even an honorary membership in the Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (NSDAP) (Peterson, 1969, p. 33).[17] This part character contrasts with the totalitarian goal expressed in a 1958 edition of the official *Primer of Soviet Philosophy:*

> Only the party expressing the interest of the entire nation embodying its collective understanding, uniting in its ranks the finest individuals of the nation, is qualified and called to control the work of all organizations and organs of power. The party realizes the leadership of all state and public organizations through its members who work in these organizations and who enter into their governing organ. (Schurmann, 1968, p. 109)

Hitler (1924–26) in *Mein Kampf* expressed this ambition of totality of the party in this revealing text:

> Every philosophy of life, even if it is a thousand times correct and of highest benefit to humanity, will remain without significance for the practical shaping of a people's life as long as its principles have not become the banner of the fighting movement which for its part in turn will be a party as long as its activity has not found completion in the victory of its ideas and its party dogmas have not become the new state principles of a people's community. (p. 380)

Ideas valid for the whole community or a class cannot be realized without a militant organization. Significantly, the party had to conquer and retain the power in the state. The state is an indispensable means for its realization but no totalitarian leader conceives that the state could realize his utopia. It is significant that only in Italy, where the Fascists tended, after taking control of the state, to subordinate the party organization and its leaders to Fascist state officials and where the corporativist ideology offered an alternative way to organize society, the possibility of dissolving the party would be discussed briefly. Despite the

constant use by the Fascists of the term "totalitarian," the Fascist conception of the party as an organization of the political administrative forces of the regime, as a voluntary civil militia, at the order of the *Duce,* at the service of the Fascist state, tended to undermine the totalitarian conception of the party and make it more comparable to the many single parties created by a ruler or ruling group from above.[18]

The totalitarian party is a mass party. It is not just an organization of officeholders based on the co-optation by a ruling group of officials, local notables, army officers in civilian garb, and perhaps some functionaries and a few office-seeking members, as many single parties in authoritarian regimes can accurately be described. It is also not an organization based on indirect membership in trade unions, cooperatives, professional associations, and so forth. Certainly, totalitarian parties have a close relationship with such functional organizations. The NSDAP, for example, made a clear distinction between the party as a cadre and membership organization, its divisions *(Gliederungen),* the Hitler Youth *(Jugend),* the SA, the SS, and the large number of affiliated organizations *(angeschlossene Verbände),* that is, professional and interest groups including the giant labor organization, the *Deutsche Arbeitsfront* (DAF) (Orlow, 1973, pp. 6–7, 92). Those organizations for the communists are transmission belts, and as Stalin put it:

> To forget the distinction between the advanced detachment and the whole of the masses which gravitate towards it, to forget the constant duty of the advanced detachment to raise ever wider strata to this most advanced level means merely to deceive oneself. (1924, p. 174)

As one *Gauleiter* (regional head of the party) representing the popular Nazi farmers organization, the *NS Landvolk,* put it, the purpose of the *NS Landvolk* is not to represent the farmers but to make National Socialists out of them (Orlow, 1973, p. 59). Membership in theory and very often in practice involves much more than paying dues, like in many democratic parties and even social democratic parties. It is no accident that the definition of party membership should have been one of the basic disagreements between Martov and Lenin, between the Mencheviks and the Bolsheviks, by requiring personal participation in one of the party organizations. The acceptance by the party member of party discipline and the intolerability of any criticism undermining or obstructing the unity of action decided on by the party, extended even to activities outside of politics in the professional sphere, even in conflict

with the hierarchical authority relationships in the state or the army, characterize totalitarian parties. Admission to membership is not automatic; parties reserve for themselves the right to admit or to reject. They often establish a probationary or candidate period, formally grant different rights to new members and provide for expulsion, which means, as the statutes of the PNF *(Partito Nazionale Fascista)* stated, "The Fascist who is expelled from the party must be outlawed from public life" (Aquarone, 1965, p. 510). Deliberate planning of the composition of the membership and purges by the leadership characterize those parties,[19] and, consistent with the conception of the organization as voluntary and self-regulating, there is no recourse in the absence of other parties against the decision to any outside authority or court despite the privation of political citizenship (Rigby, 1968; Buchheim, 1958). Many positions in the state and societal organizations are formally or de facto accessible only to party members.

Totalitarian parties are bureaucratic in a way that even the most bureaucratized democratic parties are not. As Lenin stated it in *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back:*

> The party link must be founded on formal "bureaucratically" (from the point of view of the disorganized intellectual) worded rules strict observance of which alone can guarantee us from the willfulness and the caprices of the circle spirit, from the circle scramble methods which are termed the free "process of the ideological struggle." (Daniels, 1969, p. 11)

The life of the party is regulated by innumerable rules. Written norms are constantly enacted, extensive files are kept, decisions go through channels, and party officials control that apparatus. Both at the center and at the periphery there is a large number of full-time officials, who often have distinctive training and sometimes with privileged legal status and enjoy not only power but other rewards comparable to those of civil servants; in addition there are others who exercise leadership functions on a part-time basis. In the Communist party the expression "cadre" is used to designate party members who exercise leadership roles with distinctive ranks included in the *nomenklatura* (list of key job categories and descriptions used in elite recruitment) (Harasymiw, 1972). In the case of the Nazis the equivalent was the *Hoheitsträger,* the political leadership of the party from the *Gauleiters* down to the local leaders. In 1934, in Germany, the terrritorial cadre organization, *Politische Organisation,* had 373,000 functionaries for a party membership of

some 2.5 in million, while the Weimar Social Democratic party, with 1 million members, needed only 10,000 (Orlow, 1973, p. 42). At that time the Hitler Youth had 205,000 functionaries and the NSDAP, including all its affiliates, had 1,017,000, not all of them necessarily party members. Jerry F. Hough (1971, p. 49), on the basis of the size of the apparatus of various city and district party committees, estimates the number of party apparatchiki in the Soviet Union between 100,000 and 125,000. A 1956 breakdown of party membership by occupation in China lists 1,039,419 "organs," which seems to refer to party members employed full-time in the party bureaucracy among the party's 10.7 million members. The penetration by the party into the society to perform the multiple functions assigned to it is achieved by a large number of functionaries close to the masses, the heads of cell and local organizations. The figures for the NSDAP in 1939 show 28,376 leaders of local groups, 89,378 cell leaders, and 463,048 block leaders, without counting those of the affiliated organizations. Obviously the degree of ideological consciousness, dedication to political activity, and willingness of these cadres to put loyalty to the party ahead of other loyalties vary enormously from party to party and over time. However, we cannot underestimate the degree to which the cadres of a party are perceived by the members as leaders and by the citizens as representatives of the power of the party, for good and evil, to help them solve many problems (like a ward heeler in urban America) or to supply information to those in power about their doings and attitudes (Inkeles and Bauer, 1959, p. 321–37). Nor can we ignore the sense of participation in politics, in a collective effort, or the petty gratifications of these leaders, which are so characteristic of totalitarian systems. It is this cadre structure that allows totalitarian parties to pursue successfully their functions, and many of the achievements in transforming the society have to be attributed to the cadres. Without them the mobilization for the large number of campaigns, actions, problems, policies, would be impossible. Even if the party did not play a decisive role, as it does in communist systems, in the management of the society and the economy, the availability at short notice of such cadres and those they can influence or control can assure a massive and visible expression of support for the regime in plebiscitarian elections and mass rallies. If we keep in mind the findings about opinion leaders as mediators between the mass media and the individual in democratic societies and the impossibility of creating any comparable network of personal influences, except in some cases the churches, we can understand the success of

propaganda, the appearance of enthusiasm and support and the pervasive conformity in totalitarian systems. Many of those who in pluralistic societies devote their time and energy to diverse voluntary associations do so in totalitarian societies in the activities of the party and its affiliated organizations, often with the same motivation and sincerity. Their actions contribute to the efficacy of the system and through it to its legitimacy. It is the absence of either pluralistic or single-party forms of voluntary participation and of a complex organizational network that characterizes most authoritarian regimes (except for short periods of mobilization through single parties).

Since the totalitarian party assumes a growing number of functions of a technical character in the management of complex industrial societies, the cadres experience a slow process of transformation, not infrequently accompanied by reversals, in the course of the stabilization of totalitarian systems. Initially, the cadres are recruited from the old fighters, the people who joined the party while it was in the opposition and sometimes in the illegal underground, who often made great sacrifices for the cause. Their loyalty, except for those disappointed by the absence of a second revolution, tends to be unquestionable but their competence to manage large-scale organizations in normal rather than exceptional circumstances is often limited. If the party wants to retain its momentum and not abdicate its revolutionary ambition and become dependent on the civil service, it has to recruit and socialize those who are experts and in due time train loyal party members as experts. The creation of party schools (Orlow, 1965; Scholtz, 1967; Ueberhorst, 1968; Mickiewicz, 1967), the promotion of activists from the youth organization through educational channels and through stages in different sectors of party activity into elite positions, the efforts to commit and even to compromse in the party those with expert knowledge are some of the techniques used. The dilemma of red or expert, which has been central to the Communist parties in power, is a perfect example. In the case of communist regimes the problem is compounded by the fact that the party plays a decisive role in the management of industry, agriculture, and services. The problem of preventing red expert cadres from also becoming professionals with a less political conception of their role, particularly devoting less attention to the social and political mobilization dimension of the party, has been particularly well analyzed in the Chinese case by Franz Schurmann (1968, pp. 75–76, 163–67, 170–72; Townsend, 1972). The Italian PNF, despite some efforts to create party schools, never fully faced this dilemma, due to the limited ideological

thrust of the movement, the compatibility of its authoritarian nationalism and corporativism with a reliance on the state, and Mussolini's identification with the state, whose ministries and prefectures he had taken over, leaving to the party officials a secondary role. We do not know how the Nazis would have ultimately solved this dilemma, except that the social recruitment by the party before takeover and the ideological affinity of conservative, nationalist, authoritarian experts allowed the Nazis the partification of many sectors of the society. Even so, the men in the administration of the party felt unhappy about the situation and made generally unsuccessful attempts to train the Nazi elite in special schools. The irrational, romantic, anti-intellectual, militaristic, genetic, and racist components of the ideology were an obvious obstacle for the training of party men as experts. The SS as an elite within the party, with its pseudoreligious, pseudofeudal, semisecret, and terroristic character, opted for a process of co-optation and compromise in the "order"; these were men who had made their career not in the street fights and propaganda activities of the party before 1933, but in the establishment (Krausnick, 1968; Höhne, 1969). We do not know how a stable Nazi regime, victorious in the war, would have handled this problem. We know, however, how the Soviet Union and other communist countries have, in the course of their longer and more stable, peaceful development, moved toward combining *partiinost* ("partyness") with expertise. What we do not know exactly is the answer to the question raised so well by Jerry F. Hough (1971, pp. 47–92) of to what extent the apparatchiki of the contemporary Soviet Union in their multiple functions and career lines, with their professional education and expertise, their frequent shifts from state administration to party work, share a distinctive ideological outlook, and have common interests, have a different party perspective than their counterparts in the governmental and economic hierarchies. As he writes:

> It would certainly simplify the comparative study of political systems if we could assume that the elite members of the institutional groups which comprise "the gigantic bureaucracy party organizational complex" in a country such as the Soviet Union represent essentially their own interests and not those of farmers, workers, and clerks whom they supervise. (Hough, 1971, p. 89)

Franz Schurmann, in the context of his analysis of the Cultural Revolution in China, has suggested the need to make a distinction between professional and expert when he writes:

> Expertise means a technical capacity (e.g., in science, technology, or administration). Professionalism means commitment to an occupational position. I have noted that two elites appeared to be developing in China, the body of organizational leaders with political status deriving from ideology and the professional intellectuals with status deriving from education. If occupational position gives rise to status, then professionalism will lead to the formation of elites. The accusations directed against "the authoritarian clique following the capitalist road" have aimed at the elite status, and not at the expertise. That has also been at the root of the attacks on the tendencies for a professional officer corps to develop. The intellectuals are the men of expertise in China, its scientists, technicians, and administrators. There are, have been, and undoubtedly continue to be tendencies toward the formation of an expert elite. However, since the brunt of the attack of the Cultural Revolution was on the Party, of gravest concern to Mao Tse-tung and his followers was the emergence of a professional red elite—that is, an elite whose power and status derived from Party position. (Schurmann, 1968, p. 565)

The commitment in a totalitarian society to the ideology of "politics takes command," to the control and preferably guidance of the society by a group of dedicated people committed to collective interests and to a utopian vision (however muddleheaded it is), accounts for the basic ambiguity in the role of the cadres of a party. It might well be that what starts as total politicization through the mobilization of a party might end, except for permanent revolution against the party or within the party, in the administration of a post-totalitarian society with its limited bureaucratic pluralism.

Party Leadership

Many scholars in their analysis of totalitarian parties have emphasized as the ultimate key to our understanding the role of the leader, be it the *Duce, Führer,* or First Secretary, and the unique concentration of power in his hands and the cult of personality, *Führerprinzip,* the distorted interpretation of democratic centralism that from the top down permeates the party (Schapiro, 1972a; Tucker, 1965; Vierhaus, 1964).[20] Others go even further and find the explanation in the unique personalities of men like Hitler and Stalin.[21] It would be an obvious mistake to ignore those factors, but the question will still remain, Why were those men capable of exercising such power and how did those principles emerge and become accepted by their staff and many party members? Michels (1962; originally published 1911) in his sociology of the modern party lists

many of the factors that account for the exercise of such power, which are far from absent in competitive democratic parties but do not have the same consequences due to the pluralism of parties. Rosa Luxemburg in 1904 already noted that "the ultra centralism advocated by Lenin is not something born of the positive creative spirit but of the negative sterile spirit of the watchman" (Daniels, 1969, p. 12), and Trotsky felt that Lenin would have the party and its prescribed theology substitute for the mass movement in order to force the pace of history, concluding prophetically:

> These methods lead, as we shall yet see to this: the party organization is substituted for the party, the Central Committee is substituted for the party organization, and finally the "dictator" is substituted for the Central Committee. (Daniels, 1969, p. 13)

He concludes that the complicated task of cleaning out deadwood and bourgeois thinking "cannot be solved by placing above the proletariat a well-selected group of people, or still better one person and with the right to liquidate and demote." Those tendencies toward an all-powerful leader and the destruction even of a collective leadership are perhaps, as recent trends show, not inevitable in a communist party. They were, perhaps, in fascist parties, given some of their basic ideological orientations—the voluntarism, irrationalism, and appeal to emotion so congruent with the appeal to charisma, the admiration of military organization and leadership, the appeal of the great man in history idea, and in the German case the romantic yearning for a saviour with particular virtues based on a fascist, feudal, or Germanic imagery. However, it should be noted that fascist party statutes provided for elected leadership and that one of the few changes in *Mein Kampf* from the first edition was a radical formulation of the *Führerprinzip*.[22] The commitment to an indisputable ideology that expresses inexorable laws of history with substantive rather than procedural content makes the emergence of that kind of leadership more likely. Such commitment can easily justify the search for unanimity and the outlawing of any opposition within the party. The degree of free discussion before reaching a decision and the tolerance for loyal support of dissenters not convinced in such a context would depend on the personality of the leader or leaders rather than, in a more relativist conception of politics, based on normative limits of authority and pragmatic skepticism. The leadership principle, the charismatic demand of obedience, and the truly charismatic or

pseudocharismatic loyalty of the followers are congruent with the totalitarian party but perhaps not inevitable. The model of concentration of power in a rational bureaucratic organization, the creation of a single center of decision making, is often used in describing such regimes. In fact, the contrary is true, and Franck, the Nazi governor of Poland, was right in stressing the anarchy in Hitler's rule. No centers of power challenging the authority of the leader are allowed to emerge, but the struggle for power between subleaders and organizations is one of the central characteristics of totalitarian systems, tolerated, if not encouraged, by the leader, following a policy of divide and rule. In a pure totalitarian system that struggle takes place mainly within the party and its affiliate organizations, which seek alliances with pretotalitarian structures or the emerging social interests of complex societies. As Orlow (1973, pp. 7–12) has noted, Hitler subcontracted (with the understanding that the contract could be terminated at will) segments of his authority to his individual agents, rather than to officers or institutions, on the basis of intensely personal relationships. Since, on the same principle, those agents developed strong power bases with different interests and goals and with poorly defined areas of competence, conflicts between them were endemic and required either arbitration by the *Führer,* or by those able to speak in his name, or efforts of coordination by creating complex interdependencies between agencies, new organizations under someone the rivals could agree on, or the like. The system, despite the appearance of monocentrism, could not be further from rational bureaucratic organization principles, and only arbitrary interventions of the leader or his spokesmen could disentangle it. In the German case the importance of certain ideological elements derived from the romantic idealization of the Middle Ages and the hostility to law contributed to giving it, as Robert Koehl has noted, a feudal aspect (Koehl, 1972), understanding by feudalism, in the words of Coulborn, a system in which "the performance of political functions depends on personal agreement between a limited number of individuals . . . since political power is personal rather than institutional, there is relatively little separation of function" and in which "a dispersal of political authority amongst the hierarchy of persons who exercise in their own interests powers normally attributed to the state, which are often in fact derived from its breakup." In other systems in which the emotional bond between the leader and most of his followers was less stable than in the case of Hitler, the political process approached more the model of court politics in a degenerate patrimonial regime. Sometimes the

withdrawal of direct intervention of the leaders leads to stalemates, greater bureaucratization, and rationality, but as long as the leader retains legitimacy and/or control of coercion he can impose his will without being restrained by norms or traditions. This is one among the many factors accounting for the unpredictability so often noted in the analysis of totalitarian politics. It is also one of the factors that ultimately may account for the instability of pure totalitarianism and the emergence of post-totalitarian patterns, the rejection of the cult of personality and the emergence of collective leadership, and the search for greater rationality in the allocation of competencies by the leadership that has experienced working with such a leader. It accounts for an effort to institutionalize the charisma of the leader in the party as a corporate body.

Functions of the Party

The totalitarian party, however, is defined not only by its unique structure but by its functions. Functions obviously change from one period in the development of the regime to another. They are different in the stage of creating a power vacuum in a previous regime, particularly a democratic one, in the takeover phase, the phase of consolidation (often combined with considerable tactical compromises with the existing power structure, social interests, and pretotalitarian institutions in a two-step-forward, one-step-backward pattern to neutralize them), in the phase of purging itself from those co-opted in that consolidation process, in the renewed efforts of mass mobilization followed by more stable domination of an atomized society (Kornhauser, 1959; Dallin and Breslauer, 1970), to a final phase of administering society without basis for principled opposition but facing complex policy decisions heading to a moderate degree of pluralism among decision makers even within the party. The scholarly literature focusing on politics in totalitarian regimes rather than on the process of their establishment, particularly in the case of Nazi Germany, and the more monographic work on particular policy areas make us more conscious of those phases and the very different functions performed by the party and its organization in each of them. It is impossible to summarize here in a comparative perspective these problems, and therefore we have to describe the functions of the party without taking into account the high and low tides in their performance (Orlow, 1973).

Foremost among its functions is the politicization of the masses, their incorporation in-cadration, integration, conscientization, and conversion, and their reciprocals, the detachment from other bonds, the destruction of the autonomy of other organizations, uprooting of other values, and desocialization. This process is achieved by a mixture, which is very different in various totalitarian systems, of propaganda, education, and coercion. It is here where the different styles of totaitarian systems become most visible. There is an abyss between the brutal regimentation of the Nazis in their mass organizations and the sophisticated combination in China of coercion in the land reform and the "speaking bitterness," the small groups organized by party cadres and activists for thought reform, propaganda, and coercion, in very different proportions in different phases (Townsend, 1972; Schurmann, 1968). This function of integration and conscientization also accounts for the importance assigned in such parties to the youth organization as the recruiting ground for future leaders and to counteract the socializing influences of family and church (Brandenburg, 1968; Klönne, 1957; Kassof, 1965; Germino, 1959). The in-cadration of masses not ready to join the party and participate in its many activities is to be achieved by the many functional organizations to which people have to belong to achieve other ends. In the case of Nazi Germany, this, given the large number of organizations and their high rate of penetration into their constituencies (which contrasts within the theory of mass society of Kornhauser, 1959, as Lepsius, 1968, has noted), required either the destruction or the infiltration and *Gleichschaltung* of those organizations. An example: the *Doppolavoro* and *Kraft durch Freude* organizations of leisure time in Italy and Germany show how even the free time can, by voluntary participation on apolitical grounds, be used for political socialization. In the case of less developed countries one of the great achievements of totalitarian parties is to create such functional organizations that can serve as transmission belts. It is important to stress that participation is not passive but involves active engagement in campaigns for the benefit of community, from welfare to beautification, sports to culture, and, in developing countries, for production on the basis of moral incentives. Organizations like a voluntary or compulsory labor service, *Arbeitsdienst,* capture motivations such as in the United States led young people to join the Peace Corps. Brigades of volunteers also serve as a recruiting ground of activists and future leaders. In fact, one of the threats to the totalitarian ideological socialization

is that many participants become more interested in the substantive functions of such organizations and activities than in ideological schooling (Pipping, 1954, pp. 324–25). In a stabilized totalitarian society the careful screening and indoctrination of educators obviously lowers the saliency of these socialization functions of the party and probably weakens the responsiveness of those tired of indoctrination.

The integrative function explains the importance assigned to elections and plebiscites in totalitarian systems and their use to test the effectiveness of the party and its mass organizations in their success of getting out the vote.[23] Voting is not just a duty but an opportunity to express publicly, visibly, and preferably joyously the identification with the regime. Many types of authoritarian regimes less concerned with democratic legitimation and ideological conversion just put off elections or tolerate apathy as long as their candidates get elected.

The second central function of the totalitarian party is the recruitment, testing, selection, and training of the new political elite. This is obvious in the phase of the struggle for power in opposition, underground, revolution, and civil war. In the process of consolidation, cooptation into the party of experts and people of the establishment swells its ranks, often leading to the closure of admission and even purges of the newcomers (Rigby, 1968, pp. 178–81; Aquarone, 1965, pp. 379–81; Orlow, 1973, pp. 202–5; Buchheim, 1958). Ideally, once the party has consolidated itself in power, the recruitment should take place through socialization in the youth organizations, a so-called *leva fascista,* literally "fascist draft," by which those who graduate from the youth organizations are admitted into the party. The compulsory or at least mass character of those youth organizations, however, limits their effectiveness as a selection mechanism, and more stringent and specialized systems of recruitment tend to be devised. The dilemma of expert versus red and the search for the red expert often leads to lateral entry, particularly through active participation in party-affiliated mass organizations. Success of the party ultimately depends in a stabilized totalitarian system on its capacity to attract people in different sectors of society who are loyal to the regime but uninterested in political activism, contact with the masses, and political responsibilities. Recruitment and cadre selection in a stabilized totalitarian system finds itself between the Scylla and Charybdis of professionalization, with the consequent loss of representativeness by emphasizing educational requirements, and the promotion of activists without qualification with the risk of incompetence. The efforts to combine a broad recruitment, particularly

in communist systems from the working class in the factories, with rapid and intensive training in party programs in organizational and managerial skills reflect this dilemma (Rigby, 1968, pp. 115–25; Ludz, 1964 and 1970). In communist systems the important role of the party in the management of production and economic planning makes this problem central. It also accounts for the more rapid routinization of totalitarianism in advanced industrial communist societies.

One major function of totalitarian parties is to control a variety of specialized functions that can become independent, nonpolitical centers of power. The party is a recruiting ground for the political commissars in the army (Kolkowicz, 1967 and 1971), and in this respect it is interesting to remember that the Nazis in the last period of their rule were moving to partify the army (Orlow, 1973, pp. 460–62). The importance of coercion of opponents in the struggle to gain power, the tradition of secrecy developed in the period of illegality under repressive regimes, the international tension that has often surrounded the new regime, and the emergence of many of them in a civil war lead to an almost projective fear of subversion, conspiracy, and aggression, and consequently to a propensity for terror. Since a defense of order involves political considerations, a strictly professional police is largely inadequate, and therefore the politicization of police forces and the creation of party militias are characteristic of totalitarian systems. The organizations involved tend to be heavily recruited through party channels.

However, the main function of the party is to be present in the many sponsored organizations and those that have been taken over—trade unions, cooperatives, professional and interest groups. In a socialized economy this control function acquires a special sense. There is a great variety in the way of conceiving this "leading and guiding function" of the party, and volumes have been written on the shifting conception of the relationship between party and society, both in ideology and practice, particularly in communist countries.

Even among the Nazis, as Orlow (1973, pp. 14–16) has pointed out, two conceptions of the role of the NSDAP emerged, identified with Hess, the "representative of the *Führer,*" and Ley, the head of the Party Organization Office and the Labor Front. The key terms in the differing approaches were "control" and *"Betreuung"* ("welfare, taking care"), signaling two different ways of responding to a complex, sophisticated, industrialized society, ways that largely remained intact during the years of struggle for and after the seizuire of power. According to Ley, the synthetic party community, *Gemeinschaft,* created

in the course of the struggle, should merge with the remaining, now politicized segment of the German social organism and form a *Volksgemeinschaft,* a people's community, through *Betreuung* ("taking care of the needs of the people through a politically motivated welfare state"), emphasizing less the elite status of membership and the cadre organization by ultimately fusing the party with the Labor Front into a single mass organization. His opponents felt that far from becoming a *Volksgemeinschaft,* Germany should remain a society *(Gesellschaft)* in which the key activity of the party was controlled through a tightly knit centralized organization with an elite co-opted membership and a fanatic but technically and administratively competent functionary corps. Neither of the two conceptions won the endorsement of Hitler, but basically the regime was closer to the second alternative.

State and Party

The important role of the party in providing leadership to many affiliated or sponsored organizations that control other institutions should not lead us to forget that the main function of the party is to fill political offices at all levels of government through elections or appointments. Since the officeholders in totalitarian systems, in contrast to competitive political systems, are assured their position as long as they enjoy the confidence of the party, basically the party has its own extensive and often specialized bureaucracies and the relation between government and party is central to these systems. The extent to which the party in government is or is not independent from the party as an organization, attempts to subordinate or ignore the party, or the party organization attempts to give orders to its representatives at all levels of government is perhaps the most interesting question in the study of totalitarian parties. Only when the party organization is superior or equal to the government can we speak of a totalitarian system.[24] Without that tension the system degenerates into bureaucratic authoritarianism, losing its linkage with the society and much of its mobilization and dynamic potential. Mao's statement that the party is the instrument that "forges the resolution of the contradiction between state and society under socialism" is a very exact formulation of this novel phenomenon (Schurmann, 1968, p. 112). The superiority of the state apparatus even when manned by party members characterizes a pretotalitarian phase of the regime, a failure of the totalitarian drive, as in the case of Italy, or the transition to a post-totalitarian system. It is fundamental

to remember that in the Marxist ideological tradition there is no legitimacy in the postcapitalist society for the state apparatus and that ultimately the utopian stage will represent the withering away of the state. What is less known and almost deliberately forgotten is that Hitler in *Mein Kampf* expressed his hostility to the state and the traditional German *Staatsgläubigkeit.* As he writes:

> It is therefore the first obligation of the new movement standing on the ground of the folkish world view to make sure that the conception of the nature and purpose of the state attains a uniform and clear character.
>
> Thus the basic realization is: that the state represents no end but a means. It is, to be sure, the premise for the formation of higher human culture, but not its cause, which lies exclusively in the existence of a race capable of culture. . . . thus the precondition for the existence of a higher humanity is not the state but the nation possessing the necessary ability . . . of course as I have said before, it is easier to see in state authority the near formal mechanism of an organization, than the sovereign embodiment of a nationality's instinct of self preservation on earth. (1924–26, p. 391)

The chapter goes on from here into a rambling discourse on race, biological selection, and a socialization informed by those values. The radical community is basically counterposed to the state, particularly a state like the German that does not coincide with that community. As Hannah Arendt (1966, pp. 257–66) rightly noted, the totalitarian movements cannot be understood without reference to the hostility to the state, and to conventional patriotism and the substitution by a loyalty to a larger social unit. She rightly links totalitarianism with the pan-movements that appeared in Central and Eastern Europe, where state and national boundaries did not tend to coincide like in the West. Hitler, born Austrian, deserter from the Imperial Army, serving in that of his adopted country, Germany, clearly reflects this disjunction between state and broader social community. The international proletariat and the identification of socialism in one country with leadership of a world political movement beyond its borders is the Marxist equivalent. In this context the ideological and organizational development in Italy and in Mussolini's mind put inherent limits to a totalitarian development. Hitler's confused idea in the second book of *Mein Kampf* of a distinction between subjects and citizens of the state, which found its legal expression in the Nuremberg racial laws, differentiates his regime from both the civic culture of democracies and traditional and authoritarian conceptions of the state.

The Party in Theory and Reality

The description of both manifest and latent functions of the party we have presented is based largely on the ideological conception, programatic statements, ideal typical descriptions, and research on the overlap between parties and other institutions. The question is, To what extent do party cadres, particularly at the middle and lower levels, and party members behave as expected? There are obvious variations from one totalitarian system to another, from one period or phase to another, which monographic research, particularly studies of regional and local life under such regimes, is revealing every day.[25] The research points out that, for a variety of reasons, there is considerable degree of policy diversion, that is, alteration of policies from within the power structure in directions not wanted by the rulers. It also shows that particularly on the periphery the local organs of the party, far away from the centers of ideological infighting at the top, might concentrate their attention on a function that appears in the theory of totalitarian parties but tends to be less emphasized, to represent the interests of the constituencies before higher-up party, and government, bureaucracies. This point has been particularly emphasized by Jerry F. Hough (1969) for the Soviet Union, but a reading of literature on Nazi local party activities would probably show the same pattern, even when in a more limited sphere, in view of the function of the Soviet party in the economy. The representation of the interests of territorial communities (perhaps facilitated because of a relatively centralized system with a national policy and monocentrism for major decisions) by the local party organizations, is not unlike democratic parties and democratically elected lower government units. Less divided over and involved in overall policy formulation and resource collection, they can agree on demanding as much as possible from the center for the benefit of their constituents. Successful, influential, old-time party leaders can act as mediators between a variety of local, special, and even private interests and the higher bureaucratic structures, and this, as in democratic government, is obviously an opportunity for corruption and for diversion of policy.

Somewhat similarly, the ideologically assigned functions of a party at the higher levels become often secondary to those of bureaucratic infighting between organizations, both in the party and in the government controlled by party officials, interested, like their civil servants, in protecting the autonomy of the organization from the party. Totalitarian politics, despite its mobilizational component, very often gets clogged

down in endless bureaucratic infighting, which in the German case, given the very personal direct relations of many of the top leaders with Hitler, led to feudal infighting and court politics and consumed most of the energies of the elite. Thus the limited span of attention of the top levels of leadership, even their work habits, the shifting goals and policies often hastily decided, run counter to any image of totalitarian politics as an efficient machine frictionlessly transmitting decisions from the top to the bottom. However, a superficial reading of Edward Peterson's book (1969) *The Limits of Hitler's Power* should not lead us to forget that many, and particularly the really important, wishes of the *Führer* were ultimately implemented without the possibility of any effective opposition to them, and that the "rule of anticipated reactions" made the whole system responsive to decisions congruent with the image of his power and his basic policies, or of those close to him. In a sense, an image of an all-powerful leader making all the decisions is empirically false, but in another sense it is true, since the men chosen by him or tolerated around him will act in such a system largely as they think he expects them to do. In this sense, contrary to finding in the total power of the leader an alibi for the party and other organizations, they have to share in the responsibility for decisions (Speer, 1971, pp. 649–50). Without them there cannot be even the attempt to create a totalitarian society, nor can there be the attempt without the responsiveness to their expectations of a large number of middle and lower cadres, party members, and citizens whatever the motivation, even if as minimal as the security of the individual and his or her family. The lesser commitment of many of the top leaders to such a total control for the sake of certain utopian goals of social mobilization, and as a result the lesser commitment throughout the structure of the state, explains that Italian Fascism never reached the level of control and mobilization that the pronouncements of the *Duce* and the legal enactments would lead us to expect. This in turn might have been a reflection of the degree to which Italians felt more strongly other loyalties and interests, even particularistic ties embedded in the culture, than loyalty to the PNF. In our discussion of the conditions for the emergence of totalitarianism we shall note some of the social, economic, cultural, and psychological conditions that make it possible for a totalitarian organization to approach even remotely its utopian self-image that has served us to construct the ideal type. We have seen, however, that it is dangerous to lose sight of the degree to which a limited number of political systems, in particular historical phases, approach the totalitarian utopia, both for evil and for good.

Communist and Fascist Parties

There are many important differences between communist and fascist totalitarian parties, not only in the ideology and policies, as we noted before, but in the organizational structure. The most important difference is the emphasis in the fascist parties on the *Führerprinzip* (Vierhaus, 1964; Nyomarkay, 1967; Horn, 1972), specifically in the Nazi case, which contrasts with the democratic component of democratic socialism, whatever similarities emerged in practice in the Stalinist period. The different ideological and formal principle is of central importance. Some degree of internal party democracy is possible in communist parties and there is ideological basis for those who want to move in that direction, while there was none in the National Socialist case.

Another major difference between the national socialist totalitarian party and Stalinist parties is the formal institutionalization of paramilitary organizations like the SA and the SS. Already the Italian Fascists had attempted, with the creation of the *Milizia volontaria per la sicurezza nazionale* (MVSN), to absorb the more unruly elements of the party *squadrismo* and to give a legal and institutional basis to the repression in support of the regime. In Italy its subordination to the head of the government and the coordination with the army for the appointment of officers did not allow it to become a real political army. The evolution of the SA (Werner, 1964) and particularly the SS (Höhne, 1969; Krausnick et al., 1968), which in the course of the war became a real party army, parallel to the army of the state but not subject to its control and influence, was one of the basic differences with Italy that assured the turn toward totalitarianism of the Nazi regime. There have been similar tendencies in communist countries, but the total control by the political leadership of the regular army and its politicization, as well as the politicization of the police, have prevented the emergence of organizations of violence as part of the party and distinct from those more professional organizations. The difference, while congruent with the ideological romanticization of violence in fascism and the nationalist admiration for the armed forces, can also be explained by the different process of takeover of power. The fascist parties emerged in liberal democratic societies that allowed the opponents a large degree of freedom of organization and tolerated, if not indirectly encouraged, for a variety of reasons (reaction to communist revolutionary attempts or fear of a highly organized and mobilized working class, illegal rearmament in violation of the Versailles treaty), the emergence of paramilitary

organizations and armed party groups. Once the fascist leadership had taken over a state thanks largely to the violence and the threat created by those organizations, it was not ready to disband them even when they were forced to compromise with the establishment, particularly the military, which was suspicious of them. Such a compromise and fear of a second revolution led in Germany to the bloody purge of the SA in 1934, which, however, initiated the rise of the SS and, contrary to formal promises to the army, broke the monopoly of armed forces (Mau, 1953). Those organizations based on a voluntary recruitment attracted a strange mixture of violence-prone persons—fanatical idealists, mercenaries, and sadists—who nonetheless could feel, on the basis of elaborate rituals, the comradeship of the barracks; the romantic, pseudofeudal rhetoric of "loyalty is mine honour" plus their rejection by civil society produced a sense of being the vanguard of the movement, a mixture of monastic and chivalry order. It was this organization that implemented the most monstrous aspects of the totalitarian utopia. As Himmler said:

> These measures could not be carried out by a police force consisting simply of officials. A body which had merely sworn the normal official oath would not have the necessary strength. These measures could only be tolerable and could only be carried out by an organization consisting of the staunchest individuals, of fanatical, deeply committed National Socialists. The SS believes it is such an organization, considers that it is fitted for this task and so has assumed this responsibility. (Buchheim, 1968b, p. 366)

In the communist countries the party was born in secrecy without opportunity to organize freely—and even less so its strong arm. The takeover of power took place either in societies in which the existing establishments had disintegrated or under the sponsorship of the Soviet army. In most cases the takeover required a more or less prolonged civil war often mixed, like in China or Vietnam, with a national independence struggle. In such circumstances the party acted as a core organizing element of a new army, the Red Army, the People's Liberation Army, and in the areas controlled by the revolutionaries the party was able to establish its own police, the *Cheka,* and its successor organization staffed by loyal party members. Neither the army nor the police had to compete with organizations created before the takeover, with their distinct professional status and self-conception and therefore perceived as unreliable from a political point of view. Even though there

is evidence of idealization of the role of the *chekist,* there was no need to develop a distinctive ethos for the instruments of coercion and make them elitist, voluntary, ideological organizations (Barghoorn, 1971). It was possible to conceive of them as part of the state apparatus, intimately coordinated with the party but never equal or potentially superior to the party mass organization. It is no accident that the revolutionaries in the SA would have preferred a militia type of army in which they would have played a leading role and that a segment of the SS, the Waffen SS, showed tendencies to drift apart from the more terroristic *Verfügungstruppe* and were less interested in ideology, seeking ultimately the respectability of the armed forces. In authoritarian regimes with totalitarian tendencies, particularly with a fascist party, the failure to build an independent armed militia to challenge the monopoly of force in the hands of the army and traditional police corps is one of the best signs of the limit to the total politicization and control of the society.

Excursus on Terror

The claim of the modern state to monopolize the use of force is one of its defining characteristics, but certainly regimes differ widely in the amount, type, and ways of using coercion. Totalitarian systems, at least in some of their phases, have been characterized by massive coercion—police acting unrestrained by any outside controls, concentration camps and torture, imprisonment and executions without proof of guilt, repressive measures against whole categories of people, the absence of public trial and even any opportunity for defense, the imposition of penalties totally out of proportion to the actions of the accused, all on a scale without precedence in recent history (Solzhenitsyn, 1973).

Political terror, defined by Dallin and Breslauer (1970, p. 7) as "the arbitrary use, by organs of the political authority of severe coercion against individuals or groups, the credible threat of such use or the arbitrary extermination of such individuals or groups," has certainly characterized totalitarian rule. This has led Hannah Arendt (1966, p. 474) to define totalitarianism as "a form of government whose essence is terror and whose principle of action is the logicality of ideological thinking." However, it is undeniable that the forms of coercion we have mentioned and political terror can be found in political systems that otherwise, without stretching the term, could not be called totalitarian (Chapman, 1970). Certainly, nondemocratic systems not characterized

by "the logicality of ideological thinking" have shown their capacity for terror and the violation of the most elementary human rights. We only have to think of the rule of Trujillo in the Dominican Republic, where the arbitrary terror exercised by one man did not have or need ideological justification and was not characterized by modern forms of political mobilization.

On the other side, we can conceive regimes with the characteristics we have used in defining totalitarianism, and which distinguish them from those we characterize as authoritarian, without political terror. Certainly in such regimes we cannot expect the political freedoms enjoyed by a citizen of a democracy, but we can expect limits on the arbitrary power of the police, certain legal, particularly procedural, guarantees, and a return to the principle of *nullum crimen sine lege,* which makes it possible for those not willing to take the risk of violating the laws to enjoy a modicum of security. Even with laws that punish behavior considered legal in other societies, like publishing criticism of the government, associating for political purposes or the defense of interests, participating in strikes, etc., the definition of such acts as crimes, the exclusion of retroactive application of the law, combined with a mininium of procedural guarantees for the defendant, independence of the judiciary from direct intervention of the authorities, and restraints on the police, would allow the citizen who does not contest the regime to live without fear. A regime with those characteristics could still be highly monopolistic in its power structure, be guided by ideological commitment, and demand and reward active participation in its organizations. It would be, in our view, totalitarianism without terror. Its legal system would be repressive rather than liberal but certainly different from Stalinism or the rule of the SS under Hitler. The Soviet Union in recent years, with the introduction of what is called "socialist legality," is moving in this direction (Barghoorn, 1972, Chapter 10; Lipson, 1968; Weiner, 1970; Berman and Spindler, 1972).

To summarize our argument, while terror acquired a unique importance in totalitarian systems, many of its manifestations are not absent in regimes that lack many of the characteristics used by most authors to characterize totalitarianism, and we can conceive of particularly stabilized systems with all the characteristics of totalitarianism except widespread and all-pervasive terror. It is for that reason we have not included terror in our definition of totalitarianism.

We cannot ignore, however, the distinctive forms and scale of repression under totalitarianism and have to raise the question: Was the

terror that accompanied it, without being a necessary consequence, a likely result of that type of regime rather than of the personality of men like Stalin and Hitler? We would argue that the system made those leaders possible but not inevitable. We also have to ask if and why terror in those systems had some characteristics not found elsewhere. Does the terror of different totalitarian systems differ? Which were functions and consequences of terror? Can we distinguish different types of terror, corresponding to different phases in those regimes? These and other questions would bring us closer to an answer to the question, How was it possible? In addition we shall ask the question, What forms does terror and coercion take in authoritarian regimes? Are they different, and if so, can we link the differences to the characteristics defining totalitarian and authoritarian regimes?

Coercion in totalitarian systems has shown the following characteristics: (1) its unprecedented scale, (2) its use against social categories without consideration of guilt for specific acts, (3) the disregard for even the appearance of legal procedures, the formalities of the trial, and the opportunity for some kind of defense, in imposing penalties, (4) the moral self-righteousness and often the publicity surrounding it, (5) the extension of the terror to members of the elite, (6) the extension to members of the family of the accused not involved in the crime, (7) the emphasis on the intent and social characteristics of the accused rather than on his actions, (8) the use of organizations of the state and/or the party rather than of so-called uncontrolled elements, and the size and complexity of those organizations, (9) the continuing and sometimes growing terror after the consolidation of the regime in power, and (10) the nonexclusion of the leadership of the armed forces from the repressive policy.

In addition, with the all-important position of the party in the society, a new form of sanction emerges: the exclusion from party membership, the purges that affect decisively the life chances of people and their social relations.

The scale in number of lives lost, man-years in concentration camps, and people arrested and subject to limitations of freedom of movement not resulting from strictly military operations is unique in modern repressive societies. While there can be debates about the exactness of statistical estimates, the magnitude is beyond discussion. Conquest (1968) has brought together the scattered evidence on the number of arrests, executions, and prisoners and death in camps and the estimates that can be derived from population census data. The estimate

for executions in the late 1930s runs into around 1 million persons. Calculations for the number of inmates in camps around 1940 range between 6.5 and 12 million, depending on the year and the method of estimate. Taking the conservative figure of an average over the period 1936–1950, inclusive of an 8 million population of the camps and a 10 percent death rate per annum, we get a total casualty figure of 12 million dead. Adding to them the million executions of the period, the casualties of the pre-Yezhov era of Stalin's rule (1930–1936), those sent to camps who died, and the 3.5 million victims of the collectivization, Conquest reaches the figure of 20 million dead in 23 years of Stalin's rule. The figures for China in the consolidation phase are lower, but Mao admitted in February 1967 that in the first five years of communist rule some 800,000 "enemies of the people" had been killed, while others estimate the number between 1 and 3 million, that is, between $^1/_3$ and $^1/_2$ of 1 percent of the population (Dallin and Breslauer, 1970, p. 55). Reitlinger (1968, pp. 533–46) estimates that the number of victims of the Nazi "final solution of the Jewish problem" ranges between 4.2 and 4.5 million persons, with a total loss of Jewish life estimated at 6 million. It Italy, despite strong tendencies toward totalitarianism, terror except in the struggle for power and the short-lived Republic of Salo period was more limited. The Special Tribunal for the Defense of the State sentenced over the years 33 persons to death, of whom 22 were executed, and tried 5,619, sentencing 4,596 to an average of five years (Aquarone, 1965, p. 104). Undoubtedly the scale of repression in a number of regimes approaching far less the totalitarian model than Italy has been greater.

As significant, if not more, than the scale of the terror in some totalitarian systems has been its use against whole categories of people irrespective of any evidence of guilt or even intention of threatening the political system. The deprivation of human rights, wholesale arrests, and extermination as a result of deliberately formulated government policy by the agents of the state or the party of those identified, in the case of the Nazis, as Jews, gypsies (Döring, 1964), members of religious sects, biologically unfit, certain prisoners of war, or sectors of the population of occupied territories (Institut für Zeitgeschichte, 1958) and, in the case of communist countries, as belonging to certain social categories that could be labeled counterrevolutionary, like landlords, the clergy, and kulaks, and as members of ethnic groups on the basis of collective guilt (Conquest, 1960), have been unique in modern times. In those cases, the victims did not need to be personally guilty of any

acts against the state or the social order, nor did their persecutors have to attempt to make a case against them based on any charges, trumped up or real, nor could they represent in many cases any real threat even if they had wanted to do so. Their fate was the result of ideological preconceptions, often, like in the case of Hitler, formulated before coming to power, which deprived those people of their human character and linked the creation of a better society with their destruction. The holocaust was in the eyes of a Himmler (Bracher, 1970; Krausnick et al., 1968) a painful duty at the service of historical tasks for which future generations would be grateful.

In every political system there are miscarriages of justice, violations of procedural guarantees, obstacles to an adequate defense, biased courts, unfair trials, as well as illegal violence against political opponents ordered or condoned by those in power. But the systematic, large-scale, formally organized imposition of penalties, including death, without even the semblance of an adversary procedure and in the absence of an emergency situation, has been characteristic of totalitarian systems. The power of the special boards of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in the Soviet Union, on the basis of the 1934 statute, effective until 1953, to sentence people in absentia and without trial or counsel to labor camps is only one example. The executions ordered by the *Führer* without intervention of any regular or extraordinary courts that began with the purge of the SA leadership and other opponents in "the night of the long knives" in 1934, legalized by a law as emergency defense of the state, officially of 77 persons but perhaps three times as many, was only the beginning of the legalization of lawlessness (Bloch, 1970; Bracher, 1970; Mau, 1953). The terror of totalitarianism is not only the perversion and misuse of justice in the courts or the unofficial tolerance for illegal acts of the authorities that we find in many authoritarian regimes, and sometimes in democracies, but the normative institutionalization of such practices and their ideological justification sometimes even in the learned commentaries of jurists. The writing of Soviet and Nazi legal theorists, sometimes men of intellectual distinction—like Carl Schmitt—reflect and articulate that break with a long legal tradition. When Vyshinsky, the attorney general of the USSR, wrote in 1935,

> The formal law is subordinate to the law of the revolution. There might be collisions and discrepancies between the formal commands of laws and those of the proletarian revolution. . . . This collision

> must be solved only by the subordination of the formal commands of law to those of party policy (Berman, 1963, pp. 42–43),

he was expressing a thought that we will not find so frequently and authoritatively stated in any authoritarian regime.

The most striking characteristic of terror under totalitarianism and perhaps the explanation for its pervasiveness and scope is the moral self-righteousness with which it is justified by the rulers and their supporters, sometimes publicly, other times in the inner circle. Often it even conflicts with more pragmatic goals of the system. The nonpurely instrumental character of the terror derived from the passion for unanimity, the ideal of conflictlessness, the need to eradicate totally social groups defined as evil as a historical task, the explicit rejection of traditional moral standards that would make other men hesitate or feel guilty, and the demand of abdication of personal responsibility constitute some of the unique characteristics of totalitarian terror (Arendt, 1963; Cohn, 1966; Jäger, 1967; Barghoorn, 1971; Dicks, 1972). They ultimately are derived from the strength of ideological commitments. They also explain why many of the agents of terror could be otherwise normal men in their daily life, rather than psychologically defective persons. Let us not forget that Khrushchev in his secret speech of February 1956 concludes, after his appalling revelations and his negative portrayal of Stalin's personality, saying:

> Stalin was convinced that it was necessary for the defence of the interests of the working class against the plotting of the enemies and against the attack of the imperialist camp. He saw this from the position of the working class, the interests of the working people, the interests of the victory of Socialism and Communism. We cannot say that these were the deeds of a giddy despot. He considered that this should be done in the interests of the Party, of the working masses, in the name of defence of the revolution's gains. In this lies the whole tragedy. (Conquest, 1968, p. 66)

Another unique feature is the extension of the terror to members of the elite, in fact, the harsher punishment particularly under Stalin of those who had made the revolution with him and those who had positions of responsibility and whose loss of favor or trust in other systems would lead to their demotion, return to private life, and often to powerless but well-paid or prestigeful sinecures. In the case of Stalin, the victims were not only Soviet citizens but the leaders of foreign Communist

parties living in the USSR and the satellite countries (Kriegel, 1972; Oren, 1973). Few data could tell the grim story of political terror better than those of Weber (1969, pp. 36–37) on the fate of the 504 leading cadres of the German Party (KPD) before Hitler: of the 136 who died violently, 86 (17 percent) were victims of the Nazis and 43 (9 percent) of Stalinist and East German purges. Members of the elite that lose in the struggle for power, even when they cannot represent a real threat, are to be destroyed, dishonored, and under Stalinism made to confess crimes they did not commit and to become nonpersons even in the writing of history (Leites and Bernaut, 1954; Brzezinski, 1956; Kriegel, 1972; Levytsky, 1974). As a result of the subordination of the military to the political leadership and the capacity of the party or police units to challenge the monopoly of force of the army, even the military leadership cannot escape political repression and a nonmilitary jurisdiction. The figures given by Conquest (1968, p. 485) for the Stalinist purges—3 of the 5 marshalls, 14 of the 16 army commanders Class I and II, 60 of the 67 corps commanders, 136 of the 199 divisional commanders, and about half of the officer corps, some 35,000 either shot or imprisoned—are testimony of that capacity. In the case of Germany, 20 generals of the army executed among 675 do not represent comparable figures, particularly considering the actual involvement in the plot of July 1944 against Hitler, but show the capacity to punish even in wartime the high command (Zapf, 1965, p. 164). Another unique characteristic is the extension of legal responsibility to the members of the family of the accused irrespective of complicity in their acts, both in the Nazi *Sippenhaft* (arrest of the family) and in the provisions of Article 58 (i.c.) of the criminal code of the RSFSR that punished "in the event of flight abroad of a member of the armed forces, the adult members of his family if they assisted him . . . or even if they knew about the crime but failed to report," and made "the remaining members of the family, and those living with him or dependent on him at the time of the commission of the crime liable to exile to the remote areas of Siberia for a period of five years" (Conquest, 1968, p. 558). The Nazi taking away the children of those involved in the 20th of July plot and the praise given to members of the youth organizations ready to denounce their parents are examples of the disregard for family bonds under totalitarian terror.

The ideological basis of totalitarian coercion leads to a rejection of legal formalism even in the definitions of crime, in the formulation of the accusation by the prosecutors, the argumentation of the judges of

their sentences, and the variations in the punishment. Rather than strict laws and draconian but clearly established penalties, the tendency is to introduce subjective considerations, diffuse standards, and unpredictable sentences more dependent on who the defendant is than on his legally typified actions. Even the harshest military summary justice, by contrast, tends to be formalistic and even legalistic, paying little attention to the motive and not trying to justify its decisions except on the basis of repressive legislation and inarticulated, pragmatic considerations. Political justice in totalitarian regimes tries to show the base motives of the actor, to punish his intention rather than just his acts. The punishment is to reflect substantive ideological criteria, like the *gesunde Volksempfinden* ("the healthy sense of the people") or "socialist legal consciousness," and the pedagogical and exemplary rather than retributional aspects. The emphasis on the actor and his motive rather than the act itself is closely linked with the consideration given to the social background of the defendant and the ideological characterization of entire social groups. This explains the paradox that legal positivism in authoritarian settings serves the repressive state and in totalitarian systems is substituted by a sociological conception of law with legal positivism becoming an obstacle to the desires of the rulers (Schorn, 1959; Staff, 1964; Johe, 1967; Weinkauff, 1968).

Another tendency is the greater implication of the whole society in the repressive process, which is not left in the hands of a professional police and the courts but tends to involve actively or passively many members of the society through participation in the party and its formations, typically commanding those among high-status groups who had joined the SS to a tour of concentration camp duty, by making party members informers on their neighbors, by widespread publicity of selected political trials, and particularly in China through participation of the whole community in the process of repression—the "speaking bitterness" against landlords and efforts toward "thought reform" with the participation of the work group or the community. The Moscow show trials, the great purge, and the trial before the *Volksgerichtshof*—People's Court—of those involved in the plot against Hitler and their propagandistic exploitation are examples of this pattern without many parallels in authoritarian regimes (Travaglini, 1963). This does not exclude on the other hand the utmost secrecy surrounding other manifestations of the terror. Without accepting the thesis of Hannah Arendt that terror under totalitarianism increases with the consolidation of the regime and the weakness of its opponents, we can say that it

certainly is not limited to or greatest in the takeover stage, as it tends to be in most authoritarian regimes. Perhaps because terror is not just instrumental in the way that Lenin and Trotsky conceived it when the latter wrote:

> The question as to who is to rule . . . will be decided on either side not by references to the paragraphs of the constitution, but by the employment of all forms of violence . . . war like revolution is founded upon intimidation, a victorious war generally destroys only an insignificant part of the conquered army intimidating the remainder and breaking their will, the revolution works in the same way, it kills individuals and intimidates thousands. (Dallin and Breslauer, 1970, p. 77)

That type of terror in the takeover stage would be found in most authoritarian regimes, particularly when confronted with a well-organized opponent whose defeat is not assured, as in the case of Spain after the Civil War or in Chile today.

Totalitarian terror acquires its unique character from the centrality of ideology for many of those participating in it. As Hitler had remarked, "Any violence which does not spring from a firm spiritual base will be wavering and uncertain, it lacks the stability which can only rest in a fanatical outlook." However, it would not be possible without the organizational resources provided by the cadres and activists of a party committed to the defense of the regime. Without those factors it would not reach the intensity and scope or the systematic character that it can but does not necessarily reach under totalitarianism. Terror under some authoritarian regimes can be widespread, and under those that we shall call sultanistic, equally if not more arbitrary, but as we think we have shown it is likely to be very different.

In accounting for that difference one major factor is that in most authoritarian regimes the repressive function is left to the armed forces, which, while far from reluctant to use violence and expeditious methods of justice, tend to have a bureaucratic mentality emphasizing rules and procedures and none of the interest of intellectually more sophisticated men in motives and ideological justifications and little desire to explain their actions to the people and to gain their support. Unfortunately, we have no comparative analysis of political trials under different types of political systems to capture the different styles of the proceedings under totalitarianism and authoritarian regimes. A reading of the reporting in the mass media and systematic observation would certainly reveal some of the basic differences.

In totalitarian systems the independence of the regular courts is likely to disappear and their politicization to be the goal of the regime (Wagner, 1968), while most authoritarian regimes tend to leave to the regular judiciary its traditional degree of independence while they shift the politically relevant cases to special courts, generally the military justice (Toharia, 1974). We find here another example of the breakdown of the differentiation between state and society, politics and administration under totalitarianism.

There are undoubtedly major differences in the forms of repression under different totalitarian systems that should not be ignored but that we cannot fully develop here. It is not always clear to what extent those differences are due to national culture and legal traditions, to the idiosyncrasies of the leadership, to the patterns of behavior acquired in the process of takeover of power, and last but not least to a learning process based on the experience of similar regimes preceding them. Nazi and communist terror are certainly different in many respects, and despite many similarities between communist regimes, Stalinist and Chinese methods differ in many fundamental respects. In Cuba the possibility of emigration (estimated to be 7.1 percent of the population) to Spain and the United States probably limited the need for repression (Fagen, Brody, and O'Leary, 1968). The Nazis, having come in to power in a society whose institutional order had not been destroyed, initially relied much more on manipulated spontaneity and uncontrolled but planned actions than on the normal machinery of the state, which they only slowly transformed to serve their purposes. It also meant the emergence of a dual state and ultimately a parallel state of the SS, as well as a much greater secrecy surrounding their actions. The Nazis never developed the same urge to have the victims confess their guilt and to recognize the rightness of those in power. The self-criticism of the victims of the purges under Stalin has no parallel in Germany. Undoubtedly the communist conception of man as perfectable and the biological determinism underlying the Nazi ideology account in part for the difference. The Chinese, with their idea of the recuperability through "thought reform" and "coercive persuasion" even of class enemies, tend toward a "voluntarism" and "activism" and an emphasis on consciousness that substitutes a sophisticated assault on the individual's identity through self-criticism, confession, self-degradation, punishment, and rehabilitation for strictly physical punishment (Lifton, 1968; Schein, 1961; Townsend, 1972; Vogel, 1967). In this the Chinese carry to the ultimate consequences certain tendencies implicit in

the Soviet party. The contrast between Soviet Stalinism and the Chinese communists might also reflect the different process of conquest and consolidation in power, the different relationship to the rural masses in both systems. The patterns of behavior acquired during the revolution and the civil war by the *chekists* could be extended under Stalin to the kulaks by basically urban cadres and created the habits of brutality that would be institutionalized in the *Yezhovshchina.* Perhaps the Chinese also became aware of the fact that certain forms of terror provoke hostility that only terror can repress, that is, of the dysfunctional consequences of terror. Finally, the experience of Stalinist terror accounts for the efforts of the post-Stalinist leadership in the Soviet Union to do away with his excesses, to introduce forms of "socialist legality" while maintaining patterns of coercion very different from those in most authoritarian regimes through the creation of comrades courts and other forms of popular participation in enforcing social and political conformity (O'Connor, 1963; Lipson, 1967). The Committees for the Defense of the Revolution in Cuba, with their multiple social functions, also represent a system of collective vigilance capable of arresting those threatening the political order (Fagen, 1969). Undoubtedly, the 110,000 CDR, with 2 million members, represent a capacity of political integration, socialization, and organizational implementation of various programs that goes far beyond the vigilance activities for which they initially were created to face the counterrevolutionary challenge in the 1960s, but their presence in each neighborhood and work place contributes to providing the coercive organs of the state and party with information it would otherwise not have. In the last analysis, the compliance and efficacy of consolidated totalitarian systems is likely to depend more on such a penetration of the society and the coercive atmosphere it can provide than on the police and indiscriminate terror. It could be argued that initially the Stalinist form of terror was the result of the loss of revolutionary enthusiasm combined with low capacity to satisfy demands and the lack of penetration of the Communist party in many rural areas. Paradoxically, it could be argued that coercive compliance under totalitarianism is more likely to be achieved by the penetration of the party and its mass organizations in the whole society along Chinese lines than the excesses and the surplus of Stalinist police terror.

The great question on the prison walls and one that has no easy answer is, Why? Why did terror take the forms it took, how was it possible to create the machinery to implement it, and why was no one able

to stop it? Dallin and Breslauer (1970), those who have written about the great purges (Leites and Bernaut, 1954; Brzezinski, 1956; Conquest, 1968; Gliksman, 1954; Kriegel, 1972), and those who have written on Nazism and the SS (Bracher, 1970; Arendt, 1963, 1966; Cohn, 1966; Krausnick et al., 1968; Höhne, 1969; Dicks, 1972) have all asked these questions. The answers, sometimes conflicting, cannot be discussed in detail here. Undoubtedly terror and its different manifestations have to be explained differently in the variety of systems and historical situations. Any political system established by a minority or even a majority against the will of others who decided to use force to oppose its consolidation will turn to a greater or lesser extent to terror. The greater the conviction of those involved in the conflict and the weaker the support in the whole political community in the absence of a normative framework regulating conflict accepted by both sides, the more coercion. Violence has its legitimate place in revolutionary thought and tends to go with a takeover of power as "measures of suppression and intimidation towards determined and armed counter-revolution," to use Trotsky's words, and "the scientific concept of dictatorship means nothing else but power based directly on violence unrestrained by any laws, absolutely unrestricted by any rules," to use Lenin's expression (Dallin and Breslauer, 1970, pp. 10–11). Without theorizing as much about it, any counterrevolutionary would agree within those formulations substituting the word counterrevolution by revolution. The takeover phase directed at breaking the backbone of the opposition and punishing those collaborating with it, particularly in a civil war, leads to mass violence without concern of hurting innocents. The weakness of the minority attempting to impose a new order is likely to heighten its repression. Terror in turn leads to counterterror and the consequent spiral of violence. The justifications then formulated create the "habit of violence" among those involved in the repression. At this stage the terror can be seen as purely instrumental, even when many of its manifestations go far beyond such a "means-end" relationship to become ends in themselves, as a purifying act carried out by idealists or as a source of gratification of the base motives of its agents. But terror continues and even in many political systems, particularly totalitarian ones, it seems to increase to become more rationalized and bureaucratically controlled when the regime seems most consolidated and counts on at least a passive compliance of most of the population. Dallin and Breslauer (1970) and many others have attempted to explain the continuity and rise in terror by describing its

functions for the regime in this new phase, in which the regime attempts to achieve a decisive breakthrough toward critical goals. The more a regime attempts to transform the social order to create the "new man," to change the values of the people, and the greater the speed with which it attempts to achieve those ends, the greater the perception of the resistance to those changes, the more terror. They describe this period as a mobilization phase. The fewer the positive incentives in terms of rewards and the greater the deprivations required to implement the policies of the ruling elite, the greater the terror in the mobilization phase. We find this type of analysis among those who argue that the rapid industrialization of the Soviet Union, which required the transformation of the rural economy and society and consequently deprivations for the peasantry, was at the root of Stalinist terror. In such a view terror is still instrumental and rational, at least for those who accept the goals of the rulers and their timetable as valid and cannot conceive alternative ways to achieve the same goals. Those assumptions undoubtedly do not remain unchallenged and are not easy to prove or disprove. It is certainly difficult to argue that the goals achieved justified the cost in human misery, but it is possible to think that rulers could feel the need to sacrifice one generation for the sake of goals highly valued. Here the ideology, "the spiritual base," of which Hitler spoke, becomes decisive in the fanatical implementation through terror, and we can find here the root of the high probability of terror in totalitarian systems. In this context the emphasis has been on the functions of terror in establishing the monopoly of authority and organization, eliminating all autonomous subgroups, destroying physically and morally not only actual but potential opponents, creating an atomized society in which individuals feel unable to trust others, disrupting even the most elementary solidarities like the family and friendship, creating a widespread sense of personal insecurity leading to compliance and even overcompliance (Moore, 1954). Terror is conceived as social prophylaxis (Gliksman, 1954) and as educational—"unfreezing" the individual's perceptions, assumptions, and attitudes, particularly in the Chinese conception of "thought reform," with a combination of public accusation, confession, and reeducation in small groups. Significantly Kriegel (1972) subtitles her book *La Pédagogie infernale.* It is no accident either that the imagery used in describing the victims so often refers to the opponents as carriers of sickness; we have only to think of the expressions used by Hitler (Jäckel, 1972) to describe the Jews and Mao Tse-tung's view of "the citizen as a patient in need of treatment."

In one case the cure required the destruction of its carrier, in the other a complex process labelled "coercive persuasion." In either case the victims are not considered normal members of the community. The "passion for unanimity" that follows from the commitment to a single belief system, a single hierarchy, and the concomitant definition of orthodoxy and heterodoxy requires the use of coercion within the elite and particularly against intellectuals. Since the right policy goals are presumably linked to the orthodox political beliefs, that kind of terror becomes presumably functional to their implementation. A latent function that often is neglected in the analysis but has been noted particularly for the SS state is that of compromising those connected with the terrorist system and even many ordinary citizens, to assure ultimately their loyalty as fearful accomplices.

The emphasis on those functions runs the risk of making the whole process far too rational and purposive, ignoring that it has a dynamics of its own that cannot be explained by the alleged functions in the mobilization phase. First of all, one cannot ignore the carryover of the habit of terror from the revolutionary takeover period among policemen and activists, nor can one ignore the personal grievances and vendettas and just plain human nastiness that find a now-legitimate outlet. The bureaucratic apparatus itself ends having to justify its existence, and compliance and overcompliance with directives from above produce more and more victims. The assignation to the labor camps of certain economic functions ends creating the need to supply more inmates (Dallin and Nicolaevsky, 1947). The criticism, the hatred, the resistance created by terror and the fear that they arouse in its agents in turn spiral the wave of terror. Finally the Khrushchev speech reminds us of the personality of the top leader and the obedience he can find as a major factor in initiating and maintaining a system of terror. In view of all those noninstrumental reasons for widespread terror we should not overestimate the extent to which it is a prerequisite for the deep social transformations that totalitarian systems want to achieve. That is why we can conceive similar totalitarian systems and comparable social transformations with very different amounts, degrees, and forms of terror, and the same would be true for authoritarian regimes. A frightening and rationally difficult to explain characteristic of Nazi and Stalinist terror was the degree to which it was unnecessary and even dysfunctional for the achievement of the goals those systems had set themselves, the extent to which it had become an evil end in itself (Nove, 1964). This also accounts for the fact that the "decompression"

of terror could be introduced relatively easily in the post-Stalin era without serious threats to the system, except in its Eastern European periphery, without a radical change in the nature of the political and socioeconomic system and probably with considerable gains in legitimacy. Certainly the introduction of calculated rather than arbitrary forms of coercion allows for new and before-unknown expressions of dissidence (Tökés, 1974) and with it the need for renewed coercion, but it should not be forgotten that those manifestations of dissidence were made possible by the end of terror. Undoubtedly, as Dallin and Breslauer (1970, p. 90) note, terror may generate alienation, and the abandonment of terror may paradoxically permit the expression of such alienation in the form of organized resistance or revolt, or more mildly in various forms of dissidence. This is why the phase of decompression is a dangerous one for totalitarian and authoritarian regimes that have been highly coercive and not able to create stable bases of legitimacy. Often, if it were not for the fears of the members of the elite of becomming themselves victims of terror and probably for the loss of faith in the ideological commitment, we would expect an increase in coercive measures after such a liberalization phase.

The Internal Dynamics of the Totalitarian System

A systematic analysis of the relative independent contribution of ideology, party, and ruling group or leader to the legitimacy, the formulation of policies, and the mobilization of the population in different totalitarian systems might be one way to conceptualize different types of totalitarian systems and to understand better the processes of change within them. Without ignoring the significance of the other factors we might then distinguish ideological totalitarian systems, power-centered ones, of which those in which the leadership principle becomes dominant would be a specially important subtype, and party-centered ones, which might vary from more bureaucratic to more populist-participatory. We might suggest very tentatively that the dynamics of such regimes move from a highly ideological phase, in which often there is a spectre of a second revolution of those ideologically committed but disappointed with the compromises the leadership had to make with reality in the process of consolidation of power, to more personalized leadership or oligarchic control. In a second phase a more instrumental attitude toward ideology, despite protestations to the contrary, is likely.