

## Parties, bureaucracies, and the search for an equilibrium between democracy and economic development

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*Jean Blondel and Takashi Inoguchi*

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If there is to be a satisfactory relationship between democracy and economic development, the two key institutions which have been examined in the previous chapters, parties and bureaucracies, must be in harmony. Yet such a harmony is difficult to obtain; some might even suggest that it cannot be obtained. If parties are very strong, they are likely to wish to dominate the bureaucracy; if the bureaucracy is very strong, it is likely to try to reduce what it might consider to be the undue interference of the parties. The second of these situations characterizes authoritarian polities and it has characterized to a greater or lesser extent a number of states of East and Southeast Asia. If democracy is to progress in the region, parties must be strengthened and a genuinely pluralistic party system must emerge, as has already occurred in a number of countries. But a way has to be found to ensure also that such a development does not result in the bureaucracy being demoted and thus ceasing to exert a key role in the governance of the economy.

The aim must be to create a stable relationship in which each of the two sides has the authority and the power to play the part which it is best suited to fulfil. Parties must be able to ensure that the polity is pluralistic by providing the people with an adequate representation of their feelings and hopes; the bureaucracy must be able to steer the economy in such a way that it continues to develop rapidly. It is manifestly difficult to achieve both these goals simultaneously because societal conditions must be such that parties have strong roots in the community and because it is

only natural that, once parties have begun to be influential, the strength and influence of one side should affect the strength and influence of the other. Having examined successively in the previous chapters the types of party characteristics and of party system arrangements, on the one hand, and, on the other, the kinds of bureaucratic structures which would appear to be best suited to achieve sound economic governance, we need now to look at the conditions under which a pluralistic party system and an active bureaucracy can coexist and thus make it possible for democracy to flourish while economic development is maintained.

Democratization has a number of implications and consequences for economic governance. It implies an active role for the political leadership: there may even be "national mobilization" based on what we referred to in chapter 2 as "programmatic" parties. In any case, democratization at least invites rivals for national office to campaign on equal terms, and this can be felt to be disruptive of the national consensus. Moreover, democratization licenses the formation of interests and these interests may start to create policy networks; indeed, as economic development proceeds, a more differentiated civil society can be expected to take shape, with a well-defined middle class and a distinct labour interest.

A "perfect" solution of the problems which arise in this way is unquestionably impossible to find, as such a solution would require that parties would be in control and yet that the bureaucracy would keep its area of complete autonomy. What one must look for is an acceptable arrangement, with each side being prepared (and obliged) to renounce a fraction of its potential power in order to allow the other side to achieve a large part at least of what it is essential that it should achieve. Given that we are looking for partial solutions of this kind, there is likely to be more than one optimal arrangement, the one best suited to a particular country being likely to be the one which best fits the specific societal conditions of that country.

There is, moreover, another aspect to the problem, for under certain conditions, a stable democratic political system based on strong parties can help the bureaucracy to maintain its influence. Economic development is unlikely to continue for very long in the face of an indifferent citizenry. The emergence of distinct interests both among segments of the middle class and between the middle class and labour will tend to undermine the position of the bureaucracy. It is in this respect that the party system can be of considerable value: it has even been suggested that consensus can be preserved if the party system adopts, for instance, a consociational structure, although other forms of party system may also help (Haggard and Kaufman 1992, 342). The form of the party system is thus a key feature in assessing the impact of democratization on economic governance.

The purpose of this chapter is therefore to investigate what types of relationships between parties and party systems, on the one hand, and the bureaucracy, on the other, can be expected to be practical. The best procedure is to look for guidance to contemporary examples across the world which might approximate the societal conditions of East and Southeast Asia. There is one example only, however, that of Japan, which meets truly closely the double requirement of political democracy and strong economic development steered by a powerful bureaucracy; yet some of the countries of East and Southeast Asia display societal characteristics which are likely to make it difficult for them to follow the Japanese path. It is therefore essential to examine also other examples – matching less neatly the required double goal, admittedly, but perhaps characterized by a socio-political structure more akin than that of Japan to those of these polities. Two types of examples are particularly relevant: one is constituted by presidential systems, primarily the United States; the other is provided by countries practising “consociationalism,” notably the Low Countries of Northwestern Europe, Belgium and the Netherlands. Thus, after having analysed in the first section the general conditions under which different types of relationships between parties and bureaucracies can be expected to emerge, we will examine the ways in which these relationships may develop successfully by referring successively to the models of Japan, Belgium and the Netherlands, and the United States. This will make it possible to discover whether different governmental arrangements which have been adopted elsewhere can help, in the context of the countries of East and Southeast Asia, to provide a means of combining a lively party system with a strong bureaucracy.

### Types of party-bureaucracy relationships and economic governance in a democratic context

Rather surprisingly, the problems posed by the relationship between party and bureaucracy have not so far been given the serious attention which they deserve. It is as if scholars had deliberately avoided the difficulty by parcelling out the problem, as there has been a curious compartmentalization between two types of studies. On the one hand, those who have been concerned with general analysis of political systems have focused on parties as key agents of representation in democracy. Consequently, they have maintained that the correct position for the bureaucracy is to be subordinated to the government, as the government is composed of the leadership group of the party or parties which have obtained a popular majority (Bagehot 1963, 116–18; Schumpeter 1979, 273–80; Huntington 1968, 397–432; Blondel 1978; Kamenka 1989; Shefter

1994). On the other hand, students of public administration have been concerned with management and governance as if these were exclusively matters for administrators: what they analyse are the mechanisms by which policies can be elaborated and implemented in a particular societal context, the main goal being to discover under what conditions a good "fit" will be achieved between a society and its administrators (see, e.g., Halligan and Turner 1995). Both these approaches are partially correct, but neither corresponds to the whole reality. The solution of the problem which the relationship between democratization and economic development poses lies in establishing a link between these two approaches in order to be able to see how, in East and Southeast Asia, for instance, the two sides can work together in harmony: these links have not so far been carefully investigated (Lane 1993, 47–89; Peters 1995).

This situation is surely in part due to the fact that, without being entirely novel, the problem came to arise particularly acutely in East and Southeast Asia. First, the rapidity of the economic success of the countries of the region has been unprecedented, except in the case of Japan. Second, such a rapid development occurred under the leadership of a bureaucracy which has both been unusually effective (by the standards of countries outside the West) and unusually proactive by world standards (except for Japan and perhaps, at some periods, France) (Ridley and Blondel 1969; Cerny and Schain 1980; Wright 1989, 236–55). Third, the extent of competitiveness and pluralism among the political parties in the countries of the region has been low by comparison with Western countries and with Japan. Either parties have simply been very weak and almost non-existent, or the government and the bureaucracy have had at their disposal a dominant party ready to mobilize the population and induce it to support the goals and the achievements of the bureaucracy.

Thus the key question which has to be answered with respect to the future of the political systems of the East and Southeast Asian countries consists in determining how far the bureaucracy will continue to be able to preside over economic development if the party system becomes fully pluralistic. Yet there is little experience to rely on to provide the guidelines for an answer, Japan and possibly France being the only countries whose evolution might be relevant in this context. Conclusions have therefore to be rather tentative, although the exploration has to be undertaken.

The starting point of such an exploration has to be the recognition that the introduction of a pluralistic system in a polity is bound to have at least some adverse effect on the role of the bureaucracy if the party system is to play a significant part in decision-making. On this basis, three questions have to be answered. First, how large will this effect be? Second, how rapidly will it occur? Third, how detrimental will it be to the ability

		PARTIES	
BUREAUCRACY	STRONG	(II) "Responsible" party	(III) "Irresponsible" party: Bureaucratic state
	WEAK	(I) Political machine	(IV) Regime of notables; corporate state; machine of incumbents

Figure 4.1 **Party and Bureaucratic Power I** (from Shefter 1994, 62)

of the bureaucracy to steer the economy of the countries concerned, in both the short and the long run?

In a rare attempt to analyse the (changing) relationship between parties and the state, in the context of the United States, M. Shefter examines what this relationship is likely to be depending on whether parties and/or bureaucracy are strong or weak. He thus develops a two-by-two matrix (figure 4.1) which enables him to distinguish between "responsible" parties, when both parties and bureaucracy are strong; "irresponsible" parties, when the bureaucracy is strong but the parties are weak; "machine" parties, when the parties are strong and the bureaucracy weak; and a variety of situations which are located in a single group and are labelled "regime of notables," "corporate state," and "machine of incumbents," when both parties and bureaucracy are weak (Shefter 1994, 62).

This matrix provides a means of examining generally what the relationship between (pluralistic) party systems and bureaucracies can be; however, it needs to be made a little more complex if it is to cover the reality of contemporary liberal democracies in general and in particular the democratization process taking place in East and Southeast Asia. This somewhat increased complexity can be obtained by introducing an "intermediate" category between the two extremes of "strong" and "weak" for both parties and bureaucracies (figure 4.2).

When such a threefold distinction is made, a strong (that is, truly proactive) bureaucracy can be defined as one in which there is, to adopt the expressions used in the previous chapter, "embeddedness" and "state steering." The intermediate category corresponds to cases in which there is embeddedness only, that is to say when the state penetrates the society and its decisions are implemented efficiently, but there is no state steering. Weak bureaucracies are those whose decisions are not implemented easily or efficiently.

In the same way, the strength of parties can be assessed by means of a threefold distinction. Strong parties are those which aim truly at implementing and endeavour in practice to implement a programme which

		PARTIES		
		STRONG	INTERMEDIATE	WEAK
BUREAUCRACY	STRONG	Embeddedness and state strong	Representative  South and Japan France ↓	Internally divided
	INTERMEDIATE	Embeddedness only  Britain Sweden	↓  Many continental European countries USA →→	
	WEAK	Implementation difficult– impossible		Many Latin American states

Figure 4.2 **Party and Bureaucratic Power II** (adapted from Shefter 1994, 62)

these parties have previously devised. The programme need not be radical – indeed it is often the case that radical programmes cannot be implemented – but a programme there must be, and it should be considered by both supporters and opponents to be the basis of the action of the government. Alongside such parties, which were referred to in chapter 2 as “programmatic,” there are those which were referred to as “representative,” and which do not really aim at implementing a programme or cannot do so as a result of having to participate in a coalition: whatever programme they may have adopted will be at best partially implemented. What characterizes these latter parties is more a desire to represent their electors and to make sure that they obtain benefits and suffer as little as possible from the policies which may have to be implemented as a result of the actions of other parties belonging to the ruling coalition. Finally, weak parties are those which are internally very divided, often on a geographical basis: not being cohesive, the help and benefits which they provide to their constituents are more the result of the action of individual representatives than of those of the party as such.

On the basis of these characterisations, liberal democratic countries can be located with relative ease. No country falls in two of the three cells

corresponding to strong parties, as no country is found to have both strong parties and a strong bureaucracy; nor does any country have both strong parties and a weak bureaucracy. The first case is non-existent because of the manifest desire of strong parties to achieve their programmes and not to accept that the bureaucracy be fully in charge of steering the country's affairs, on the economic front or elsewhere; the second case is non-existent because a strong party cannot achieve its goals if the bureaucracy is so weak that it does not penetrate the society: parties which are truly strong need the support of the bureaucracy if they are to be effective. In general, Western countries do not have weak bureaucracies, while Latin American democracies are typically associated with weak bureaucracies which do not penetrate their societies well (Mainwaring in Mainwaring and Scully 1995, 388–97; Sloan 1984, 136–53).

The location of countries in figure 4.2 suggests the following conclusions. First, except for Japan, no liberal democracy has a truly strong bureaucracy: France had one in the past, but its strength declined appreciably in the last decades of the twentieth century (Frears 1981; Machin and Wright 1985; Wright 1989). Second, liberal democracies tend to have intermediate bureaucracies, that is to say bureaucracies characterized by a high degree of efficiency but not typically able or willing to do more than advise on how the polity should be steered; on the other hand, those countries vary appreciably in terms of the strength of their political parties. British and Swedish parties, for instance, are strong, while American parties have become weak, especially in the last decades of the twentieth century. The parties of most Continental countries are intermediate in strength: they are centralized and often have a large membership, but are more representative than programmatic, often because they cannot implement fully their programmes in the context of coalitions (Daalder 1987).

Since in liberal democracies, except in Japan, bureaucracies are intermediate in strength, it might seem to follow by analogy that the introduction of a pluralistic party system in East and Southeast Asia would result in the bureaucracy losing some of its current strength. Only Japan would appear to constitute a strong counter-example. The French evolution under the Fifth Republic suggests inevitability in the decline of the role of the bureaucracy when parties begin to be more effective; indeed, the strength of the Spanish bureaucracy was also markedly reduced by the fact that democratization occurred from the second half of the 1970s onward (Esping-Andersen 1992, 118–25).

The conclusion that bureaucracies tend to see their strength reduced as parties become stronger needs to be tempered for two reasons. First, what occurred in France took place over a long period: French parties had only a limited say in the decision-making process not only during the

early years of the Fifth Republic, after 1958, but also between 1946 and 1958 during the Fourth Republic: throughout that time, the French economy was steered by the bureaucracy and this steering resulted in high levels of economic growth (Williams 1964). Thus it may be that, in the very long run, a decline in the role of the bureaucracy is likely to occur in a liberal democratic context. It may also be that economic growth will decline, but at least the French case and even more the Japanese case show that the process can be slow, indeed very slow; moreover, a variety of other factors, in particular international ones, can contribute to account for changes in the way the economy comes to be steered. Thus, European integration played a significant part in the French case; and we examined in chapter 1 the possible effect of the globalization of the world economy on the extent to which national economies can be steered at the national level.

Second, in the other Western democracies the bureaucracy was not normally placed in charge of steering the economy at the time when pluralistic party systems developed, typically because the prevailing ideology was opposed to the very idea that the state should be responsible for economic development. Thus bureaucratic agencies in these countries were typically assigned almost exclusively an implementation role and, at best, a role of advice, not of governance (Kellner and Crowther-Hunt 1980; Strauss 1961, 229–80). It is true that when the question of steering the economy did arise in the twentieth century in most if not all of these countries, it was also believed that the liberal democratic ideology entailed that politicians elected by the people should be those who had the authority to take the major decisions. But it is also the case that almost never were the governments of those countries confronted with a strong bureaucracy; nor was the idea of having such a strong bureaucracy, at least at the national level, ever seriously debated. In this respect, France is unique in Western Europe, largely because of the traditions of the French monarchy which, far from being superseded by the advent of the Republic (as was to be the case in Austria and in the Federal Republic of Germany), were reinforced by the rule of both Napoleon I and Napoleon III in the nineteenth century (Ridley and Blondel 1969, 28–31; Kamenka 1989, 97–101). Given that the idea of a strong bureaucracy was not on the agenda of these liberal democratic Western European countries, it is not permissible to conclude that a pluralistic party system necessarily implies the absence of a strong bureaucracy in the sense which was given to the term in this study. Meanwhile, the Japanese example shows that a strong bureaucracy can be combined with a liberal democratic system, while the French example suggests that it can at least take a long time for what was previously a strong bureaucracy to lose some of its capacity to steer the economy.



The fact that we simply cannot justifiably claim that the introduction of liberal democratic arrangements means the end of a strong bureaucracy suggests that we should examine, alongside the case of Japan, those of a number of liberal democracies; this will make it possible to analyse the conditions under which such a strong bureaucracy can coexist with a lively party system. If we are to undertake such a quest, however, there is little point in considering the cases of countries in which parties are strong in the sense we have given here to the term, such as Britain or Sweden, since a truly strong party system does not appear logically able to coexist with a strong bureaucracy: programmatic parties are not likely to accept that the bureaucracy should be involved directly in economic governance. Rather, examples drawn from among countries in which parties are weak or of intermediate strength should be examined. These parties can be associated with strong bureaucracies; indeed, they may be of great value to such bureaucracies, because these bureaucracies may be confronted with major societal pressures and even serious disturbances if there are no outlets for the population of these countries to manifest their discontent. Parties which are intermediate in strength and are thus representative only, and even parties which are weak and cater to local interests only through their elected representatives, can thus render strong bureaucracies more alert to the problems of their societies and can help, rather than hinder, the actions of these bureaucracies (Blondel 1978; Maisel and Cooper 1978; Katz and Mair 1994).

Moreover, given that some East and Southeast Asian countries are presidential or semi-presidential (Korea, Taiwan, and the Philippines, as well as, in a different constitutional context, Indonesia) and given that some countries are multicultural (Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and the Philippines), it is most relevant to look at the cases of other presidential or semi-presidential systems and at multicultural consociational democracies in order to discover whether specific institutional or behavioural difficulties need to be faced if one wishes to see countries with these characteristics retain strong bureaucracies in a liberal democratic framework. Yet it is above all most relevant to consider the Japanese case which is, ostensibly at least, by far the closest to those of the democratizing countries of East and Southeast Asia. We shall therefore naturally turn first to an examination of the Japanese case; we shall then consider the cases of consociational parliamentary systems, specifically the Low Countries, and those of presidential systems, principally the United States, but also, to an extent, Latin American countries. It will be possible in this way to discover to what extent the experience of these types of government can constitute models at a time when East and Southeast Asian polities move towards pluralistic party systems but also wish to retain high-profile bureaucracies.

## Japan: Liberal democracy and strong bureaucracy

In Martin Shefter's typology, Japan may be viewed as a system where strong bureaucracies and irresponsible parties live side by side. Indeed, bureaucracy enjoys much higher esteem than political parties in Japan: in both policy-making and implementation, the bureaucracy is widely recognized as a driving force. Three major historical turning points of Japanese political development over the past four centuries have given much more advantages to the bureaucracy than to parties.

The first turning point took place in the seventeenth century, when Tokugawa rule (1603–1858) was established and the early modern bureaucracy was set up in each of the 300-odd governing units called *han*. The bureaucracy was characterized by the following features. First, it consisted of disarmed warriors residing in castle towns and thus detached from land possession. These embryo bureaucrats were very small in number compared to the population; they were highly educated and helped to spread literacy among the population.

Second, the bureaucracy carried out the key major tasks of each governing unit except for defense, diplomacy, and external trade, which the Tokugawa wanted to keep as their prerogative. These tasks included taxation, crime control, flood control, and the promotion of indigenous industries and commerce. The bureaucracy was often too small for these tasks: this prompted it to delegate a substantial amount of business to large landlords and merchants. Warrior-bureaucrats retained their power over these non-warrior-bureaucrats as the highest social class of the regime.

Third, the ethos of the new bureaucracy was that of “honorific collectivism” as opposed to “honorific individualism,” to use Keiko Ikegami's expression (1995). Their loyalty was not to the “lord of *han*” but to the organization headed by the lord, and to certain principles associated with it. The bureaucracy resembled some types of modern professional organizations in that it was not overly disturbed by an arbitrary, despotic, or incompetent lord.

The second turning point came in the mid-nineteenth century. The Meiji Restoration brought the emperor back to sovereign status, yet the policy apparatus to make the country rich and its army strong had to be created. The task went to bureaucracy. The trend of bureaucratization of the governing regime was further enhanced. Three hundred-odd bureaucracies at the *han* level were abolished, and a nationwide state bureaucracy recruited on a meritocratic basis was set up towards the end of the nineteenth century. Bureaucrats were to serve the country above partisan interests and work for the general interests of the nation. Although parliamentary democracy was also set up in a somewhat limited fashion

toward the end of the nineteenth century, the policy apparatus remained firmly under the control of the bureaucracy. Parliamentarians in the Imperial Diet and local assemblies were drawn largely either from unemployed warriors or from overtaxed landlords: they were therefore regarded by the government as disgruntled upwardly mobile strata who could be co-opted. The Imperial Diet was a bastion of parliamentarians of this type until the 1910s when most were obliged to fit into a framework in which two major parties alternated in power. Meanwhile, policy-making and implementation rested firmly with the bureaucracy: the main task of parliamentarians was to take care of people's sentiments in their districts by participating in funerals, wedding ceremonies, business opening ceremonies, and festivals as well as by bringing in pork-barrel projects.

The third turning point came in the mid-twentieth century. After its crushing defeat by the United States in the Second World War, Japan was occupied by the U.S.-led Allied powers for seven years. The ancient regime was meant to be thoroughly destroyed in order that Japan be transformed into a peace-loving democratic country without military or industrial might. However, the exigencies of the Cold War led the United States to occupy Japan in an indirect way, i.e., through the Japanese bureaucracy. All political, social, and economic organizations were more or less tainted by wartime misconduct and thus eligible for political purge by the occupying powers: only the bureaucracy emerged more or less intact from the purge, though the Ministry of Internal Affairs was divided into a number of ministries such as Health and Welfare, Labour, Home Affairs, and Construction, and the war ministries were abolished. The Allies ruled Japan through the Japanese bureaucracy and the latter's power was immensely enhanced as counterbalancing institutions, including political parties, were almost all destroyed. Especially noteworthy is the fact that the Allies were at the origin of the dominance of economic ministries such as the Economic Planning Board (later the Economic Planning Agency), the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of International Trade and Industry. These were to become the foci of policy-making and implementing power in much of the latter half of the twentieth century.

Parliamentarians, now elected in a thoroughly liberal institutional manner, were again given their traditional role of taking care of constituencies rather than the function of designing broad policy lines or shaping policy itself. This policy role did increase significantly after the 1980s, admittedly, especially as a result of committee memberships; yet the change was one of degree only. Furthermore, even when newspaper headlines constantly proclaim scandals in the bureaucracy, the prestige of bureaucrats remains higher than that of politicians in the eyes of the public.

Given these three levels of bureaucratic strength over three centuries,

it is only natural that in Japan the bureaucracy should reign supreme, even if its prestige and power have somewhat declined by comparison with that of parliamentarians and of political parties. In any case, one should not conclude that the bureaucracy is overwhelmingly strong and political parties extremely weak. First, an egalitarian trend is at work in which social background also plays a part: as their educational levels were high, bureaucrats of ex-warrior family origin were disproportionately numerous until the 1920s, forming half of the total intake, although the recruitment was meritocratic. After the Second World War, any reference to social background became politically incorrect and therefore no systematic evidence exists as to class origin. More importantly, the egalitarian trend means that bureaucrats are increasingly regarded as being on a par with ordinary citizens. A streak of anti-authoritarianism has been increasingly obvious in Japanese society after the Second World War: for instance, in the mid-1980s, respondents who gave a favourable response to the view that "greater respect should be accorded to authority" were about one-tenth in Japan of the percentage in the United States or United Kingdom.

Second, globalization now permeates the Japanese body politic, undermining the basis of political institutions. It may not subvert overnight the whole system of the territorial sovereign nation state, as Jean Marie Guehenno contends, but it weakens and undermines the society steadily. In tandem with the loosening of the nation state's grip on the population, democracy is threatened, as Guehenno argues. Globalization first divides competitive firms from non-competitive firms, competitive sectors from non-competitive sectors, competitive regions from non-competitive regions. Competitive actors start to behave as if government-imposed rules and frameworks were barriers while non-competitive actors increasingly seek government action. The former tend to pay a disproportionate portion of government tax revenue while the latter normally do not shoulder any tax burden at all. Yet, in political terms, the latter have the votes. For instance, in the 1996 Metropolitan Assembly elections, only those in their sixties and older voted in overwhelmingly high proportions while voters from other age groups abstained at a disturbingly high rate. Aged people are highly dependent on public money. Also, those parliamentarians who represent sparsely populated areas are markedly more numerous than those representing metropolitan districts. Only a few dozen business firms in the automobile, electronic, and machine industries contribute to the trade surplus while thousands of other businesses do not. Although Japanese society is highly adaptable, globalization does undermine closely organized relationships among actors and institutions. The closely organized relationships between government agencies and business sectors, between business firms and banking sec-

tors, big business firms and subcontractors, and between management and labour are being forced to change.

Third, with civil society becoming stronger, the power of its representatives, the parliamentarians, is enhanced. However historically structurally handicapped it may be vis-à-vis bureaucrats, business is increasingly self-confident: its power is far less dependent on government subsidies, credit rationing, preferential treatment in public works, or official development assistance than in the past. The number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) has steadily risen, thus falsifying the observation, which is often made, that in Japanese society there are only two categories: government organizations (GOs) and non-governmental individuals (NGIs). A recent manifestation of this rise is the seeming success of the administrative reform efforts of Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto. In the past, efforts of this kind but on a smaller scale had died a premature death, largely because of the bureaucrats' diehard resistance; but Prime Minister Hashimoto was able to bring the recommendations of the Administrative Reform Council for approval to the governing parties and to the National Diet.

As a consequence, first, the top echelon of governmental agencies is increasingly politicized: top-ranking bureaucrats at the higher level are increasingly under the influence of the prime minister and other leading party politicians. Second, some sections of the governmental agencies are becoming guardians-cum-agents of business sectors. In the past the bureaucracy had definitely the role of guardian, but it is now sometimes an agent and a colony of some business sectors, such as agriculture, financial services, transportation, or telecommunications. Governmental agencies therefore face increasing difficulties when they claim to represent the general interest of the nation. Third, the social prestige of bureaucrats has steadily declined: those economic ministries which enjoyed high prestige are at their nadir whilst "order"-orientated ministries are regaining some of the prestige they enjoyed before 1945.

Despite all of these counter-trends, the basic configuration of a strong bureaucracy and of weak political parties has not been changed fundamentally, at least by comparison with other countries. The bureaucracy has been the key element shaping Japanese society for the last three to four centuries. It monitors the society and its various segments. It identifies policy needs, designs policy frameworks, and shapes policy itself from the bill drafting phase onward. It then implements and assesses policy. The bureaucratic sector may be based on meritocratic recruitment, but school ties are important. Japanese bureaucracy may not be "a government of strangers"; yet there are school networks at the top. Equally important is the relative isolation of the bureaucracy from other sectors in terms of recruitment. Bureaucrats can descend from heaven after retire-

ment but virtually no one was recruited from outside the bureaucratic sector as far as the top echelon is concerned. This is in sharp contrast with France, which is also a society dominated by the bureaucracy: ENA graduates go to the bureaucracy, to business and to politics; they change their profession in a far more flexible manner.

Japanese political parties have a number of special features. Except for the Communists, they are not strongly programmatic parties. The basis of their popular support is not primarily socio-economic; party identification is not as strong as in the United States. On the other hand, personal linkages play a decisive role in campaigning: to reach the hearts of constituents and to bring pork to their districts are major tasks of parliamentarians, in which political party headquarters may not have much to say.

Moreover, the party system has distinctive features. First, the largest party has been the governing party of the Centre-Right which has captured a vast contingent of voters. Second, opposition parties are divided and much smaller than the governing party. They rely heavily on some special sectors or on some wind blowing against the government because of its misconduct or of that of well-known individual parliamentarians. Third, within the governing party, factions play a strong part: they compete while also co-operating to sustain the government. They may not be states within the state, but they cannot be disregarded where candidate selection, cabinet composition, and party positions are concerned.

Two elements may induce East and Southeast Asian nations to emulate the Japanese model based on a strong bureaucracy, one predominant party, and a few relatively small opposition parties. First, like Japan from the 1930s to the 1960s, many countries of the region industrialized rapidly from the 1960s to the 1980s. Japan's state-led industrialization strengthened the power of the bureaucracy and especially that of the economic ministries: countries which are similarly motivated will try to emulate Japan's approach. From the 1960s and 1970s to the 1980s "developmental authoritarianism" was the key expression in the region, leading to what might be labelled top-down emulation. It is questionable how successful this was: indeed, there is some doubt as to whether, even at the height of developmental authoritarianism, the bureaucracy in most countries had the political muscle which Japanese economic ministries enjoyed in the 1950s and 1960s. Second, the spread of Japan's vast manufacturing networks throughout East and Southeast Asia means that emulation from the bottom up is also at work as a result of the adoption of Japanese-style factory management, *keiretsu*, and business-government practices. Of course, Japan's manufacturing preponderance is far from absolute; its institutional influence is far from hegemonic. Yet so long as Asia is in Japan's embrace in manufacturing sectors, the economic base is bound to

have some influence on the political framework. The combination of a strong bureaucracy and of one dominant governing party may therefore be the preferred framework in many East and Southeast Asian states. But this combination may be ephemeral even when developmental authoritarianism prevails: once democratization begins to take place, the bureaucracy comes to be increasingly under the influence of the politicians and the single dominant party often evaporates overnight. Thus the Japanese model of a strong bureaucracy in a liberal democratic context is not likely to fit easily other polities of the region; nor are these countries likely to adopt the Japanese model of one dominant governing party and a number of small opposition parties.

### The consociational parliamentary model and the maintenance of a strong bureaucracy

Since the Japanese model may not suit very well at least some of the countries of East and Southeast Asia for a variety of socio-cultural and political reasons, it is worth at least considering some alternatives. In fact, the political arrangements of the Low Countries may be regarded as providing a valuable model. Admittedly, neither Belgium nor the Netherlands, and especially not Belgium, has a truly strong public bureaucracy, although the bureaucracy of these countries is efficient and penetrates well into the society; but the parallel with some East and Southeast Asian countries is striking, as the social structure of Malaysia, Singapore, and – though in a different way – Indonesia and the Philippines is closer to that of Belgium and the Netherlands than to that of Japan. This is because the complex ethnic or religious divisions which characterize these countries need to be given their full weight in the political order if these polities are to remain stable and to continue to progress in a harmonious and peaceful manner.

The social cleavages or “pillars” which characterize the multicultural polities of East and Southeast Asia are admittedly different from those of the Low Countries. In Belgium and the Netherlands, the main cleavage was traditionally the religious one, to which a class cleavage was gradually added; in Belgium, the linguistic cleavage grew increasingly in importance until it became paramount in the last decades of the twentieth century (Daalder 1987; Lijphart 1977; Lijphart 1984). In Malaysia and Singapore, on the other hand, the principal cleavage is ethnic, though a religious division is associated with this; in Indonesia and in the Philippines, and to an extent in Malaysia as well, the basic cleavage occurs along geographical lines, while in continental Malaysia, by and large, and naturally in Singapore, the different “pillars” are found in the same areas.

In Belgium and the Netherlands, some of the cleavages occur also along geographical lines: this is particularly the case in Belgium, where the linguistic boundary runs approximately east-west, with Dutch being spoken in the north of the country and French in the south; a geographical division also occurs to an extent in the Netherlands as the south of the country is Catholic while the north is Protestant.

Thus the contrast is sharp between Japan, where there is a profound cultural homogeneity, and the Low Countries, where means had gradually to be found to accommodate social cleavages in order to maintain political order and ensure peaceful progress (Lijphart 1977; Lijphart 1984). Similarly, in East and Southeast Asia, the contrast is also sharp between Japan (and also Korea) and Malaysia and in a different way Singapore, which have had to accommodate deep-seated ethnic-cum-religious cleavages in order to avoid serious social problems. Moreover, whether Indonesia and the Philippines can long avoid being structured on the basis of principles of social and political accommodation seems somewhat doubtful, despite the fact that in both countries, and in particular in the latter, presidentialism, as opposed to the cabinet system, would appear to make it more difficult for the principle of accommodation to be introduced.

The principle of accommodation led to the development of consociationalism on the political plane, as we noted in chapter 2. This principle has been in force not only in Belgium and the Netherlands, but also in Switzerland since at least the middle of the nineteenth century and in Austria since World War II (Daalder 1987). Belgium and the Netherlands constitute the best basis for a comparison with East and Southeast Asia, however: in Switzerland, consociationalism is so deep and affects the whole political system to such an extent that it can scarcely be imitated (except, somewhat surprisingly perhaps, but very logically, at the level of the European Union) (Blondel 1998); in Austria, on the contrary, consociationalism has been based almost exclusively on the class cleavage and it was adopted to prevent a repetition of the violent conflicts of the 1920s and 1930s, but its impact has gradually been reduced (Gerlich in Daalder 1987, 61–106).

Consociationalism means setting aside the majority principle, at least with respect to certain key issues which are deemed to be so fundamental for the well-being of the society that they need to be handled by means of arrangements leading to compromises between the political representatives of the major groups in the country. Thus consociationalism prevails whether a particular group is in the majority or not. This principle has had two fundamental consequences for the structure of politics in Belgium and the Netherlands. The first consequence is that the alternation of



parties in power plays a limited part and that accommodation extends beyond those parties which happen to be represented in the government at a given point in time, to affect others which were before and are likely to be again later part of the ruling coalition. In the Netherlands, the adoption of the principle has undoubtedly been helped by the fact that no single party has ever come close to obtaining a majority in parliament; in Belgium, only once in the 1950s did a party (the Christian Democrats) achieve such a result. Thus, both countries are governed by coalitions which vary only to a limited extent, as, with rare exceptions, one of the parties, the Christian Democrats, is the pivot of the majority while the other parties come in and out of the government but are never considered to be very far from it. Given that each party in government at a given point in time knows that the parties which are out of power are likely to join the ruling coalition in the future, it is manifestly not in their interest to pursue policies to which the parties which are in such a temporary opposition deeply object. Thus, by osmosis, the consociational principle extends, to a degree, to most of the parties and at least to the parties which embody the major social cleavages in the country, a development which has led to the idea that these parties may constitute a kind of "cartel," as was noted in chapter 2 (Katz and Mair 1995, 5–28).

The second consequence of the consociational principle is that parties are neither truly strong nor truly weak. They are not as strong as British or Swedish parties; they are not as weak as American parties because they have emerged from the broad social cleavages which are their *raison d'être*. Admittedly, these cleavages have declined markedly in the Netherlands; but, in Belgium, the "pillars" on which the society is based have remained strong. Even in the Netherlands, the traditional strength of these "pillars" is such that parties have remained highly centralized and the local influence which individual politicians may exercise is channelled through and on behalf of the parties. On the other hand, as each party knows that it has to operate in the context of a coalition and, more generally, that compromises have to be made on key issues, the nature of party expectations has come to be markedly reduced: since parties do not believe that they can implement their goals on their own, they are not strong in the sense of being programmatic, as defined in this study, even if they issue programmes at election time. Given that these organizations all know that they have to work with others to build coalitions, the programmes which they propose are more in the nature of opening gambits than of genuine proposals. The real aim of these parties is thus to represent their electors and in particular to represent what they regard as the interests of the social groups from which they have emerged.

Such a state of affairs would clearly seem to be advantageous for the

establishment of a good working relationship between parties and bureaucracy. As parties have relatively limited goals and have intermediate strength only, the bureaucracy is not prevented from being strong. Moreover, as there cannot be more than limited alternation in power among the parties, there can be continuity of governmental action, and efforts made by the bureaucracy to move the economy in a particular direction are unlikely to be impeded; in particular, an election result will not lead to the coming to power of a party or of a presidential team whose views and aims are wholly different from those of the outgoing government.

Yet, despite these ostensible advantages from which the bureaucracy might benefit in a consociational system, the experience of Belgium and of the Netherlands does not suggest, in particular in the Belgian case, that the part played by the bureaucracy will necessarily be large in practice. Two types of serious limitations to the role of the bureaucracy have indeed characterized the Low Countries. First, the claim has often been made, seemingly on the basis of substantial evidence, that the consociational system, far from leading to the bureaucracy being on top, results in the political parties using the bureaucracy in order to bring favours to party members and supporters. Such a development has not occurred significantly in the Netherlands, but it has occurred in Belgium on a very large scale (as well as in Austria) (Blondel and Cotta 1996, 72–75, 103–8). This practice might even be described as constituting a form of compensation for the fact that the parties cannot fully satisfy their supporters in terms of programme implementation: the compromises which are struck between the top leadership groups of the coalition parties might be less easily accepted by the rank and file if the system was not “oiled” by means of favours distributed to supporters. These supporters also know that they must remain loyal to their party, even though that party may not implement the policies which they would wish to see adopted, as otherwise, the purely personal benefits which they have enjoyed in the past may cease to come their way.

The second problem which the bureaucracy has faced in the Low Countries has originated from the way in which compromises are arrived at the governmental level. As there have to be compromises, the policy-making process is more likely to be characterized by meandering than by clear-cut decisions based on well-defined goals. This is likely to be true at the time governments are formed; it is also likely to be true during the lifetime of governments when unforeseen circumstances arise and one of the parties in the coalition (or even a party outside the coalition) insists on different arrangements being worked out in order to take into account the new developments. While these complex and often difficult negotia-

tions take place, the bureaucracy's goals with respect to the economy may be set aside or modified in order to achieve the accommodation which is required to maintain political peace.

It is therefore understandable that despite the advantages from which it ostensibly benefits in terms of governmental continuity, the bureaucracy may also find its power markedly reduced where consociationalism prevails. However, the fact that the bureaucracy has not been able to assert its strength in the Low Countries does not entail that it will not remain strong in those multicultural polities of East and Southeast Asia where it might be appropriate to adopt consociational arrangements: to come to a realistic conclusion in this respect, two profound differences between the political evolution of the Low Countries and that of the polities of East and Southeast Asia have to be taken into account.

First, the colonization of the bureaucracy by the political parties has not been universal in Western European consociational countries, as we saw: it has occurred on a major scale in Belgium but not in the Netherlands. The reasons for this sharp contrast are numerous and range probably from differences in political culture to differences in the relationship between the executive and the legislature in the two countries. What should also be remembered is that patronage does play a large part as well in some non-consociational Western European countries but not in all (Blondel and Cotta 1996). What the contrast between Belgium and the Netherlands does show is that the distribution of favours via the parties is not an integral part of consociationalism. Moreover, although this may be regarded as distasteful, favours extracted from the public bureaucracy play a large part in many of the polities of East and Southeast Asia, whether these are consociational or not: while it would clearly be wrong to promote a type of governmental arrangement likely to develop on an even greater scale the distribution of favours from the public sector to party supporters, it has to be noted that these practices exist and that they will be uprooted only gradually. Moreover, as favours are being extracted from the public sector in a context in which the bureaucracy also promotes rapid economic development, it follows that the two elements are not incompatible, however unhappy we may be to have to arrive at such a conclusion. As the experience of the Low Countries shows that favours are not intrinsically linked to a consociational system, it must therefore be concluded that the introduction of consociationalism should not be ruled out on the grounds that it might result in a decline in the strength of the bureaucracy because favours are distributed from the public sector to party supporters.

Second, the patterns of behaviour of the leadership groups of the coalition parties in consociational systems would seem likely to have a def-

inite impact on the part which the bureaucracy plays in ensuring that the progress of the economy is regular. However, with respect to the expansion of the role of the bureaucracy, there is a sharp contrast between the current situation in East and Southeast Asia and the situation which has characterized Belgium and the Netherlands since liberal democracy was introduced in those countries. In Belgium and the Netherlands, the development of the party system and the implementation of the accommodation principle antedated markedly the development of bureaucracy, though in the Netherlands, the bureaucracy did retain the somewhat autonomous status which it had acquired earlier under the constitutional monarchy even when the executive came to be controlled by the political parties at the beginning of the twentieth century. This separation may, indeed, have accounted in part for the fact that the Dutch bureaucracy was never colonized by the political parties as it was to be in Belgium. Yet, in neither country was the bureaucracy given the task of steering the economy or indeed of the general governance of the country. The role of the bureaucracy was always conceived as lower-key, and it continued to be lower-key even when the political parties came to be in charge of the government in the twentieth century. In a situation such as that of East and Southeast Asia where, on the contrary, the emphasis on economic development has been dominant, it is not very likely, to say the least, that any political party which would belong to a consociational arrangement would challenge the ideology of economic development and the right of the bureaucracy to take a firm lead in this respect.

In East and Southeast Asia, the bureaucracy would therefore be able to benefit to the full from the development of consociationalism. These benefits are above all constituted by the fact that the political parties can provide the representative base which is needed for the political system to function regularly and without major upheavals. In this way the parties are able to reduce the tensions which might arise among key groups in the society and ensure that these conflicts do not impinge significantly on the direction which the bureaucracy wishes to give to the economy. The capacity of the parties to achieve these results is already noticeable in what must be regarded as the somewhat limited consociational formula prevailing in Malaysia: were such a arrangement made truly consociational by being wholly pluralistic at the level of party campaigning and electoral practices, the effect would be to give full legitimacy both to the links between the coalition parties and to the relationship between these parties and the bureaucracy. What could thus occur in Malaysia could manifestly also occur in the other East and Southeast Asian polities in which the complexity of the ethnic and/or religious social structure suggests that there is a need for a consociational arrangement.

## Presidentialism on the United States and Latin American models and the maintenance of a strong bureaucracy

While the Japanese model may appeal to a number of polities in East and Southeast Asia and while the consociational model may serve the needs of those polities which are multicultural, there are also countries in the area in which presidential or semi-presidential rule has prevailed for decades, Korea and the Philippines in particular. These are not likely to want to move or, if they attempted to do so, to move easily and quickly, towards a parliamentary system either of the Japanese or of the Belgian and Dutch variety. There is therefore a case for seeing whether a full-fledged pluralistic form of presidentialism is compatible with a strong influence of the bureaucracy in steering the economy. One must therefore examine the way in which parties and bureaucracy relate in those presidential systems which have had a long experience of pluralistic rule, in particular in the United States.

At first sight, such an examination does not seem reassuring for the future role of the bureaucracies in East and Southeast Asia. The United States is the Western country which has probably the weakest political parties; it is also probably the country in which the bureaucracy, while efficient, has been least able and even least inclined to act on its own initiative. Both parties and bureaucracy have come to be highly divided internally. The level of decentralization of the two main American parties is such that it has often been suggested that there are in reality one hundred parties – two per state, rather than two in the country as a whole; it is perhaps even questionable whether there is, or at least whether there is any longer, a genuine party system in the United States (Ware 1987, 118; Peele, Bailey, and Cain 1992, 63–82). The bureaucracy is divided among federal, state, and local authorities; but it is further divided as a result of the existence of a large number of regulatory and semi-autonomous agencies (Peele, Bailey, and Cain 1992, 165–89). Thus, not surprisingly, parties must be described as weak; the bureaucracy may be regarded as occupying an intermediate position between strength and weakness because of its efficiency, but it is not proactive.

The problems posed by both parties and bureaucracy in the United States are partly the consequence of the institutional structure. As we noted in chapter 2, presidentialism has been widely criticized especially on two main grounds, although the distinction is not always made between characteristics which are specific to the United States and stem from the nature of American society and characteristics which appear to result from presidentialism itself. The first ground is that it divides parties internally rather than unites them because of internal competition among

presidential candidates of these parties, and the second is the fixed duration and the non- or limited reeligibility of the presidential incumbents (Linz 1990; Shugart and Carey 1992, 273–87).

The first criticism, according to which presidentialism divides parties internally, stems from the fact that as the survival of the executive does not depend on the loyalty of the members of the legislature in the way it does in parliamentary systems, these elected representatives seem likely to give priority to maintaining their popularity in their districts rather than to supporting the executive. This conclusion may not be an inevitable consequence of presidential systems, however. In some Latin American countries, for instance Argentina and Venezuela, parties are centralized and disciplined: this suggests that other factors are likely to be at play and/or that the decentralization of parties may be due, in part at least, to specific characteristics of American society (Coppedge 1994; McGuire in Mainwaring and Scully 1995, 200–248).

Presidentialism is also criticized because of the fixed duration of the mandate of the chief executive, which results in lack of flexibility; this fixed duration may also be rather short, especially if it is coupled with the widely adopted rule according to which incumbents may not stand again (typical in Latin America, especially before the 1990s) or can stand again once only (in the United States). The fixed terms and the non- (or limited) reeligibility rules result in repeated changes at the top of the executive: this is allegedly detrimental to policy continuity and, therefore, to the ability of the bureaucracy to steer the society and in particular the economy. Thus, even if the same party wins successive elections, changes at the top of the administration have an effect which may not be markedly different from the effect which results from a different party coming to power.

This state of affairs is particularly detrimental to the bureaucracy since presidents, once elected, are able (indeed expected) to choose their immediate subordinates at will: they are not – especially in the United States currently, though less so in Latin America and indeed in the United States in the nineteenth century – constrained to appoint their cabinets from among members of the leadership of their parties. As a matter of fact, presidents often have to reward those who have helped them during the election campaign by giving them positions in the government. Two consequences follow, both of which have an impact on the role of the bureaucracy. First, the members of the executive are likely to want to pursue their own policies and disregard the bureaucracy as much as possible: one side effect may well be a marked loss of morale among some of the top public servants. Second, the government is not truly a team, as its members are appointed for reasons which have more to do with the personal circumstances of the individuals concerned than with

the work they might previously have done for the good of the party (Heclo 1977, 84–112). These characteristics, too, are more marked in U.S. administrations than in Latin American executives: some of these are indeed based on party coalitions in which the members of the cabinet are selected by the leadership of the parties concerned (Coppedge 1994; McGuire in Mainwaring and Scully 1995, 200–248).

A number of characteristics of the presidential system and in particular of the U.S. presidential system are thus likely to have a negative effect on the role of the bureaucracy. But another aspect, which we also noted in chapter 2, works at least to an extent in favour of the bureaucracy: both as it developed in the United States and as it developed elsewhere, the presidential system has one strongly positive value, which is to ensure the stability of the executive in countries in which parties tend to be “naturally” internally divided, for instance on a geographical basis; or in which the party system is highly fragmented, because it is not based on a small number of deeply felt and therefore strong social cleavages. When either or both of these cases obtain, the parliamentary system tends to lead to unstable governments while the presidential system brings about at least a substantial degree of executive stability.

Given the weakness of parliamentary executives where the party system is highly fragmented and in particular highly localized, the role of the bureaucracy is likely to be impaired. Admittedly, in France, immediately after World War II and during the dozen years of the Fourth Republic before De Gaulle installed a form of semi-presidentialism in 1958, the bureaucracy seemed paradoxically to have benefited from the weaknesses of the parliamentary system: as a result of the absence of governmental leadership, the bureaucracy exercised for a while considerable influence, in particular over the economy. The circumstances were exceptional, however. The bureaucracy’s role was boosted by the imperatives of postwar reconstruction and modernisation, and it is doubtful whether it would have been maintained its great strength for very much longer had not De Gaulle protected it in turn against the pressure of the politicians, but in the very different institutional context of the Fifth Republic. Above all, the system of the Fourth Republic collapsed in 1958 at least in part because the instability of the parliamentary executive had shown the system to be ineffective, had therefore fostered popular discontent, and had led to demands for a complete overhaul of political arrangements. Thus the strength of the bureaucracy in conditions of parliamentary instability was temporary; as a matter of fact, it came to be better established during the first decades of the Fifth Republic, in the 1960s and 1970s, until the party system became more programmatic as a result of the increased popularity of the Socialist Party from the late 1970s (Frears 1981; Machin and Wright 1985; Wright 1989).

Thus, in countries in which broad social cleavages are weak or almost non-existent, the presidential system provides an opportunity to create, somewhat artificially to be sure, a relatively stable executive. The liberal democratic form of government is likely to acquire greater legitimacy as a result: this is indirectly advantageous to the bureaucracy as it is then in a better position to resist demands made by local politicians and to maintain a degree of autonomy vis-à-vis elected representatives. Both because of the nature of the pressures which tend to be exercised by legislators and because the institutional framework of government is likely to be regarded by the population as more legitimate than a weak and unstable parliamentary executive, the presidential system may help a strong bureaucracy to continue to exercise its influence in countries where the party system remains rather inchoate.

Yet the strength of the bureaucracy may also be undermined in part because the stability of the presidents and of their administration is only relative and in part because of the autonomy of the presidents in the selection of their cabinets: these characteristics may make it difficult for public servants to maintain a consistent line of action and even to preserve their collective identity. Presidential governments are sometimes inclined to engage in forms of populism, in which the bureaucracy is a target for criticism: such a mode of behaviour has been noticeable in the United States in a number of instances when crusades aimed at cleaning up the bureaucracy were started. The ostensible purpose of these crusades may be to ensure that appointments are made on the basis of merit rather than as a result of patronage and that subsequent career prospects of public servants be more regular and based on equity. But the likely result is to provide a further reason for the politicians to intervene in the workings of the bureaucracy and even to reduce its *esprit de corps* by instilling the view, for instance, that the bureaucracy must be more "democratic" and take popular demands more into account (Shefter in Maisel and Cooper 1978, 211–66).

These developments, coupled with the vertical division of powers in the United States among federal, state, and local authorities, have ensured that the U.S. bureaucracy is not strong in the sense which has been given to this expression throughout this chapter. Yet the fact that the U.S. bureaucracy is not truly strong should not be attributed exclusively to the effect of the presidential system on the character of bureaucracies. The origins of the U.S. polity are vastly different from those of Latin American polities; they are also vastly different from those of the Philippine or Korean polities, despite the fact that a widespread American influence was exercised in these two countries, and in particular in the Philippines. The aspect of the political system which these two countries have in common with the United States is constituted by the fact that parties are



highly regionalized or even localized, and that there are no strong national cleavages helping to cement the allegiance of citizens to these parties. On the other hand, while in the United States the electoral structure and the liberal democratic processes preceded and in effect created the bureaucracy, in Korea and the Philippines the bureaucratic structure antedated the introduction of an elected executive, even if one takes into account the reorganization which took place in the Philippines under American rule before World War II and in Korea immediately after that war when the country gained its independence. It is important to note that in Korea as well as in Taiwan, Japanese influence predominated previously and had led to the setting up of a strong bureaucracy, while Spanish rule in the Philippines also had a manifestly bureaucratic character.

It follows that in Korea in particular, and to a lesser extent in the Philippines, the reality is that of a kind of presidential system in which two forces compete within the executive, the presidency and the bureaucracy. The power relationships characterizing these two countries are thus in sharp contrast with the power relationships which characterize the United States. It seems therefore highly improbable that the strength of the bureaucracy will be quickly eroded, or at least quickly eroded to a significant extent, in either Korea or the Philippines. The president and the cabinet are confronted in both countries with a cohesive and highly motivated bureaucracy, and the opportunity which a rather transient president may have to succeed in shaking – supposing that the president even wishes to shake – the prerogatives of such a bureaucracy is very limited and probably non-existent in practice.

Indeed, a further reason militates in favour of the maintenance of a strong bureaucracy, especially in Korea, but also, and perhaps by way of imitation, in the Philippines. In the United States, the basic ideology has always been the pursuit of the happiness of the citizens, a pursuit which is expected to be achieved by individual effort and through the exercise of personal freedom; but the prevailing ideology on which a state such as Korea has been based has been the goal of economic development achieved by means of a collective and cohesive effort. Following the success, not merely of Japan, but of Korea itself and of the other “Tigers,” a similar ideology has come increasingly to be adopted in other East and Southeast Asian countries, for instance in the Philippines. It is widely believed – whether with truth or not is beside the point, at any rate so far – that such a rapid economic development could not have taken place without the presence of a strong bureaucracy at the helm. Given this belief, presidents and their cabinets are, to say the least, extremely unlikely to want to upset pre-existing arrangements; on the contrary, they are most likely to want to strengthen them. They will therefore tend to sup-

port the bureaucracy – and draw some prestige out of this support – rather than reduce its power and establish their own strength at the expense of and against the bureaucracy.

Thus the presidential system does not prevent the bureaucracy from being strong despite the fact that, in the American case – though essentially as a result of the historical conditions in which the political characteristics of that country emerged – the bureaucracy has not been dominant although it has been efficient. To the extent that in some of the East and Southeast Asian countries, the party system displays American features of marked decentralization and high localism rather than what can be regarded as European characteristics of centralization based on broad national cleavages, the presidential system appears to be the most appropriate formula to adopt. Given its traditional strength in East and Southeast Asia, the bureaucracy is not likely to be prevented by the existence of a presidential structure from steering the economy in the manner which made it possible for these countries to achieve the “miraculous” successes which characterized them in the last decades of the twentieth century.

The examination of the three models constituted by Japan, by consociationalism in Belgium and the Netherlands, and by the United States and other presidential systems, suggests that, if a number of conditions are respected, East and Southeast Asian polities can continue to see their economies steered by a strong bureaucracy while adopting a truly pluralistic political system in which a number of political parties play a significant part. One of the key conditions to be respected is that political parties should not be fully programmatic; but this is not likely to occur, as the party systems of East and Southeast Asian countries have so far been based either on dominant, near single-party systems closely tied to the government and the bureaucracy, or on a number of rather small and nationally divided or localized parties in which a multitude of leaders predominate.

Prima facie, the Japanese model is the one most likely to enable the bureaucracy to retain its power while parties gradually acquire greater strength where they were very weak, or more autonomy where they depend on the government; but the Japanese model may not be easily adopted by multicultural polities, and/or by those in which there has been a prolonged tradition of presidential rule. The consociational model of the Low Countries and the presidential system on the American pattern therefore have relevance for the area.

It remains to be seen whether or not the evolution of the polities of East and Southeast Asia indicates that in practice, these countries will move, and indeed are already moving, along the paths which would ap-

pear to be best suited to them, given their socio-political characteristics. The aim of the second part of this volume is to provide at least the beginning of an answer to this question by a close analysis of current developments in each of the countries concerned.

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