

UNIVERSITY OF IFÈ · NIGERIA

Inaugural Lecture Series 53

**ON
ADMINISTRATIVE
POWER**

by **LADIPO ADAMOLEKUN**

AZ:506.3

If2 Inl

No 53



UNIVERSITY OF IFÈ PRESS

ON ADMINISTRATIVE POWER

by

LADIPO ADAMOLEKUN

Professor of Public Administration

**An Inaugural Lecture delivered at the University
of Ife on 4th June, 1981.**

Inaugural Lecture Series 53

University of Ife Press, Ile Ife, Nigeria.

© University of Ife Press 1982



Bosude Printers Limited, SW8/910, Bateye Street, Oke-Ado, Ibadan.

For the Teachers, Friends and Students
who have stimulated my thoughts during
the past two decades.

1. INTRODUCTION

In a book entitled *Government and Politics for West African Students* (1977) which I co-authored with a colleague, I made the suggestion that the cry of *l'armee au pouvoir* (power to the army) which accompanies the incidence of *Coup d'etats* in several African States ought to go *pari passu* with another cry, *l'administration au pouvoir* (power to the administration). The obvious point that I was making is the widespread view that military rule in African States has increased the power position of career administrators.

Earlier on in 1969, I had written an article,¹ in which I examined how post-independence political leaders in West Africa were seeking to ensure that administrators do not become rivals in the exercise of political power. This question about the power position of career administrators in several African States has featured prominently in some other papers and articles that I have written during the past thirteen years.²

I wish to seize the opportunity of this Inaugural Lecture to draw together my thoughts on the subject. My basic thesis is that career administrators in the modern state are in a position of power which they can use for good or for ill. In discussing the different aspects of this universal phenomenon commonly referred to as administrative or bureaucratic power, references will be made to concrete illustrations in selected countries. After examining the nature of administrative power, (its sources and its essential characteristics) we shall proceed to tackle the critical problem that the concept of administrative power poses for conventional theories of democracy. The concluding part of the Lecture will highlight the implications of an emphasis on the concept of administrative power for the study of Public Administration.

II. THE NATURE OF ADMINISTRATIVE POWER

The considerable literature that exists on the concept of power still falls short of providing any reasonable degree of consensus on definition and usage. Fortunately, this broad problem of definition is not critical to the theme of this Lecture. Our concern here is to examine the major interpretations given to the concept of administrative power and highlight its characteristics.

In his important and controversial book entitled *The Managerial Revolution* (1943), James Burnham argued that managers would constitute the 'ruling class' in every modern state during the second half of the twentieth century. According to him, the position of power of public sector managers will become a reality in the following manner:

The managers will exercise their control over the instruments of production and gain preference in the distribution of the products, not directly, through property rights vested in them as individuals, but indirectly through their control of the state which in turn will own and control the instruments of production. The state --- will be the 'property' of the managers. And that will be quite enough to place them in the position of ruling class.³

The idea that career administrators exercise considerable power dates back to the turn of the twentieth century in France. In a book published in 1911 with the significant title, *Le pouvoir administratif (Administrative Power)*, a retired higher civil servant, Mr. Henri Chardon, observed as follows:

The continuity of parliament is not essential to the life of the nation. In contrast, the nation will cease to exist if the administrative services are discontinued. We are therefore obliged to recognize that administration exists and must have a life of its own, outside the realm of politics.⁴

Until we make a more rational distribution of jurisdictions between parliament and the administrators, we shall remain in a mess --- I ask you, therefore,

to recognize that a democratic republic, like ours, is necessarily composed of two powers: political and administrative; the latter being subordinated to the former, but existing nonetheless so that in each instance the citizens can easily judge the role of the politicians and the role of the administrators.⁵

About six decades after Chardon's observations, the consensus of opinion among students of the French administrative system is that career administrators have continued to exercise considerable powers:

There exists today a democratized political system whose jurisdictions have been reduced. There also exists an administration closed unto itself, exhibiting aristocratic tendencies, one whose powers have considerably increased.⁶

It is necessary, in the strict sense to nationalize the State, that is, to make certain that its identification with the Nation is no longer through the exclusive intermediary of *Civil Servants possessing all the powers* (italics added), charging themselves with all the responsibilities and attempting to domesticate the citizens, who possess a liberty that is more and more devoid of content.⁷

In Britain, it has always been acknowledged that career administrators occupy a position of power. Thus, they have been variously described as 'the ruling servants', 'statesmen in disguise' and 'the ruling class'. The most recent study of the phenomenon of administrative power in the British context bears the title, *The Civil Servants, An Inquiry into Britain's Ruling Class* (1980). According to the authors of this book:

(Civil Servants') power to influence governments and parliaments, their power to select their own successors, and their power to resist change directly shapes the Civil Service itself. Less directly, but more potently, it affects almost every aspect of Britain's National life.⁸

The influential British magazine, *The Economist*, commented on the phenomenon in an editorial in 1975 as follows: 'The power of Britain's bureaucracy is increasing --- and ought to be diminished'.

Although the idea of career administration took a fairly long time to develop in the United States of America, career administrators are recognized as exercising considerable power within the country's governmental system. The Nobel Prize laureate, Milton Friedman and his wife, Rose, have summed up the American experience as follows:

Elected Presidents and senators and representatives come and go but the civil service remains. Higher-level bureaucrats are past masters at the art of using red tape to delay and defeat proposals they do not favour; of issuing rules and regulations as 'interpretations' of laws that in fact subtly, or sometimes crudely, alter their thrust; of dragging their feet in administering those parts of laws of which they disapprove, while pressing on with those they favour.⁹

Writing of the Third World countries in general, Ferrel Heady, a leading American authority on Comparative Public Administration, has observed as follows:

Groups capable of competing for political influence or of imposing close controls over the bureaucracy are few and far between, so that often it (the bureaucracy) is able to move into a partial power vacuum.¹⁰

It is now widely acknowledged that in the Third World countries where the military have taken over power, the career administrators have generally exercised greater power than is the case with their counterparts who operate under a system of competitive politics. In the Nigerian experience, the Chief of Staff Supreme Headquarters between 1976 and 1979, Major-General Shehu Yar'dua, observed as follows in 1978: It is no longer a secret that civil servants have influenced major decisions in the last twelve years of military rule. They have enjoyed virtually unchallenged the exercise of power all these years....¹

The above quotations do not represent conclusive proof of the phenomenon labelled administrative power. Important questions can be posed regarding practically everyone of them. For example, who are the managers in James

Burnham's *The Managerial Revolution*? Is it not possible to present an alternative set of quotations that contradict the assertions relating to the specific countries mentioned? These are valid questions but the constraints of time and space will not permit us to probe them here. For our immediate purpose, the significance of the quotations is twofold. First, they suggest that the existence of the phenomenon is recognized in several modern states regardless of the differences in age, size and politico-economic orientations of each state. Second, and perhaps more importantly, they point up the sources from which career administrators derive their power.

III. SOURCES OF ADMINISTRATIVE POWER

One major source of administrative power is the permanence of career administration. Most countries have, at some stage of their evolution, experienced the disappearance of the representative institution (parliament, assembly or congress) for varying periods of time. In the Nigerian experience, there was no parliament between January 1966 and September 1979. On the other hand, there is hardly any example in history of a country that has survived the total collapse of its administrative services. The example of Congo (now Zaire) in the early 1960s was the closest to a case of total collapse of administrative services and it nearly led to the disintegration of the state. In the Nigerian case, it was the career administration that held the nation together during the few critical days that followed the *coup d'Etat* of July 1966. It was perhaps in the light of this experience that a former Head of the Federal Civil Service, Alhaji Liman Ciroma, observed as follows in July 1978: 'The Civil Service is the foundation of government and it can exist without government but not vice versa'.

With the possible exception of the Soviet-style states, practically every modern state today accepts the dictum according to which 'Governments come and go but the administration remains'. In some European countries, notably

France, the idea of the permanence of the administration has been developed into an administrative doctrine which formally recognizes career administrators as serving the 'state' or 'public' interest. Since the political functionaries in government usually serve for brief periods in succession (an average of six months in France between 1946 and 1958 and an average of two years in Britain between 1946 and 1979), it has generally become possible for the career administration to exercise a significant portion of what is traditionally described as the power of the political executive.

The special situation in Soviet-style regimes consists of an arrangement in which the political and administrative functionaries enjoy a permanent tenure as long as they are faithful to the party ideology. Thus, a political functionary like Andrei Gromyko who has been the Soviet Union's Foreign Minister since the 1950s is a veritable career official. Similarly, the late Chou-en-lai, was Prime Minister of China from 1949 until he died in 1976. However, the important point to mention is that all Soviet-style regimes subscribe to the view that the state including the administrative apparatus will eventually wither away. And when that happens, it is expected that the same citizen can be a farm labourer, a poet and an administrator.

Another major source of administrative power is the fact that during the past five decades, the modern state has ceased to be a 'night watchman' to become the welfare or service state. This development has meant the involvement of government in activities that were hitherto reserved for private entrepreneurs. To cope with these extensive new interests each state has had to expand the size of its bureaucracy and to increase the proportion of national income devoted to the production of public goods and services. A huge state bureaucracy with a huge proportion of national income at its disposal and with responsibility for the production and distribution of numerous goods and services is without doubt a veritable power base.

The following Table (Table I) highlights the significant increases in the state bureaucracies of Britain, France and

Nigeria for selected years between 1900 and 1975 in respect of Britain and France and between 1960 and 1980 in respect of Nigeria. During a period of about fifty years, the French civil service recorded an increase of 163.2 percent. In the case of Britain, the increase in staff strength between 1900 and 1975 was 161.4 percent. In Nigeria, the public sector personnel increased from about 200,000 in 1960 to about 2,000,000 in 1980, an increase of 900 percent.

TABLE I

SIZE OF STATE BUREAUCRACIES IN BRITAIN, FRANCE
AND NIGERIA FOR SELECTED YEARS
BETWEEN 1900 AND 1980

A. BRITAIN

YEAR	SIZE OF CIVIL SERVICE
1900	285,000
1950	694,000
1975	745,000

B. FRANCE

YEAR	SIZE OF CIVIL SERVICE
1914	494,000
1956	1,044,000
1968	1,300,00

C. NIGERIA

YEAR	SIZE OF PUBLIC SERVICE
1960	200,00 (Estimate)
1973	907,000 (Actual)
1980	2,000,000 (Estimate)

The Nigerian experience demonstrates clearly the special situation of the developing countries where the reality of underdevelopment has turned the states into big entrepreneurs. Thus, there has been a dramatic increase

in the total volume of public sector expenditure especially within the framework of the successive national development plans.

TABLE II

PUBLIC SECTOR SHARE OF EXPENDITURE OF
NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS IN NIGERIA

	A. TOTAL EXPENDI- TURE	B. SHARE OF PUBLIC SECTOR	C. B AS PERCENTAGE OF A
FIRST PLAN, 1962-68	₦2.4bn	₦1.6bn	67%
SECOND PLAN, 1970-75	₦3.3.bn	₦2.052bn	62.2%
THIRD PLAN, 1975-80	₦30bn	₦20bn	67%
FOURTH PLAN, 1981-85	₦82bn	₦70.5bn	86%

These tremendous increases in the scope and complexity of public sector activities together with the great strides that have been recorded in scientific and technological knowledge have literally forced almost every state to provide facilities for ensuring that its administrators possess adequate and up-to-date knowledge as well as the relevant and appropriate skills and techniques. Perhaps the most famous post-Second World War effort in this regard is the *Ecole nationale d'administration* founded in Paris in 1945. Today, most states have established formal institutions where serving and potential career administrators up-date their knowledge and acquire skills and techniques. The expertise that administrators acquire through this process of professional training has led some to describe them as technocrats. The important point here for our purpose is that the expertise of career administrators or technocracy, as some would like to call it, not only strengthens their power base as the key agents of development but also puts them in an advantageous position in their relationship with the formal holders of both executive and legislative powers.

This point can be vividly illustrated in respect of the key function of economic planning which state bureaucracies have

virtually confiscated in most countries leaving a very limited role for both the political executives and the legislature. This is true of France, for example, as of practically every developing country that has adopted the strategy of a planned economy within the framework of an economic structure that permits the co-existence of a public and a private sector. The dominant role of bureaucrats in the planning process appears to have been due partly to the acknowledged technicality of economic and financial issues and partly to the absence of genuinely competing sets of coherent strategies for economic development in many states.

Those who subscribe to Western liberal democracy accept the view that free elections within the framework of competitive party politics should throw up both the political functionaries who exercise executive power and the legislators who exercise legislative power. In most cases, the elected politicians are inferior to the technocrats in knowledge and in the mastery of the skills and techniques that are required in managing modern government which, as already mentioned above, has become big business. The result is that in the interactions between the career administrators on the one hand and the elected politicians in both the executive and legislative arms of government on the other, the career administrators become dominant. This means that in the determination of governmental policies, career administrators play a preponderant role. The following observation with regard to the British experience will be true of most states operating a liberal democratic governmental system:

The exact balance between ministerial and civil service power will very much depend on what is being decided, the political circumstances surrounding it, and the relative abilities of civil servants and ministers ... *The balance of ability can often, in the end, determine the balance of power.* (Italics added) ¹²

With reference to legislative power, it has been observed that in most countries, legislatures have lost ground to the executive. Since it has been argued that career administrators exercise a significant proportion of executive power, it follows

that administrators have benefitted at the expense of the Legislators. This observation is true of France since 1958 and of Britain since the 1960s. Even the American Congress now appears to be yielding some ground to the Executive. The legislatures in many Third World countries are very weak in comparison to the executive and this means that the gains of the career administrators in these countries are more substantial. The gains of career administrators in those countries without legislatures are naturally much more substantial.

It has also been observed that career administrators succeed in taking over aspects of the legislature's law-making power. The following is an illustration of the way in which this usurpation of power takes place:

In administration --- one first obeys the circular, next the departmental decision followed by the regulation and then the (Minister's) order or the (President's) decree, and finally the law. ¹³

It is perhaps the considerable powers that administrators wield in the name of adapting general laws to concrete practical problems that have led some observers to suggest that policy implementation could, in certain circumstances become a veritable policy formulation exercise.

As is the case with legislative power, there is also evidence that career administrators have taken over aspects of what is normally regarded as judicial power. In a country like France with a system of administrative courts, career administrators play an important role in the activities of the courts. In the Anglo-Saxon judicial systems, career administrators participate massively in the work of tribunals, councils or commissions which handle matters relating to the judicial interpretation of laws.

Finally, the weight of each bureaucratic organization together with some features of the organization's methods of operation constitute an important source of power. A state bureaucratic organization with the size, resources and functions that have been highlighted above is bound to be a dominant institution in any state. In most Third World

countries, Rene Dumond's observation ¹⁴ that the state bureaucracy is the principal industry remains valid today, two decades after. The features of the state bureaucratic apparatus that further reinforce its strength are the information that it stores and the cloak of secrecy that surrounds both the information and the ways in which the organization operates. It is not surprising that the reduction of the areas of secrecy in administration through the granting of public access to information has become recognized as an important method of curbing administrative power. I shall return to this point later on.

Predictably, as a heavy-weight institution, the state bureaucratic apparatus acts as a pressure group to project what it has and wherever possible, make further gains at the expense of other rival power centres. In some countries, notably the United States of America, where there exists a well-developed network of pressure groups, career administrators consciously nurture some specific pressure groups as 'constituencies' whose support become invaluable in any eventual power struggle with either the legislature or the executive.

In all, then, one can confidently assert that the concept of administrative power refers to something tangible; it is a living phenomenon that has been identified in states of varying sizes and different political and economic philosophies. Although a large proportion of what has been characterized as administrative power is derived from what traditional political theorists describe as executive power, attention has been drawn to aspects that are derived from legislative and judicial powers and other aspects that are acquired by virtue of the size, resource, function and features of a state bureaucratic organization. All this lead me to suggest that administrative power should be recognized as a major phenomenon of the twentieth century and notwithstanding the division of power prescribed by Montesquieu (the executive, legislative and the judicial powers), it should be recognized in its own right, outside the executive power.

I reject the dominant view in the literature on Public Administration which treats administrative power as

dependent upon and subordinate to executive power. Instead, I see administrative power as autonomous as executive or legislative power. (Judicial power is more generally recognized as distinct though not without varying forms of relationship to the three others). What is special about executive power is the visibility, the glamour, the prestige value and the probable glory associated with the posts of President, Prime Minister, Vice-President or a top-rate Minister. Without doubt, all the symbolism of government ceremonials, parades and mass demonstrations have been appropriate by the political executives. Regardless of the actual balance of power among political executives, legislative leaders and career administrators, History has always reserved the first row of honour for the political executives. In the circumstances, it is not surprising that career administrators and legislative leaders who have exercised real powers in their respective domains still struggle for the visible and flamboyant executive posts. Without pursuing further this comparison, we propose that Montesquieu's categorization of powers should be modified so that in addition to the three powers he identified, a fourth, administrative power, should be included. It is only the recognition of the autonomy of administrative power that can help to explain the extensive attention that students of Public Administration have paid to the question of how best to bring it under affective control. This aspect of the subject is examined in the next section.

IV ADMINISTRATIVE POWER AND THEORIES OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT

Instrumental Conception of Administration

Both Western liberal democratic theory and Marxist democratic theory agree on an instrumental conception of administration. The explanation for this convergence derives from the fact that both theories accept that sovereignty resides in the people. The definition of democracy in ancient Greece as 'government of the people by the people for the people'

is accepted by both schools of thought as the ideal. While Marx and his followers believe that the people must directly govern themselves, the Western style democracies accept that the sovereignty of the people can be exercised on their behalf by their representatives who constitute the parliament or assembly. In both conceptions there is no room for appointed officials to exercise power.

According to Karl Marx, administration is a major instrument of the state (the others are the church and the army) which in its turn is the instrument of oppression at the service of a ruling class. Thus, administration constitutes a vital part of the 'exploiting' ruling class. James Burnham¹⁵ was stretching the Marxian formulation to some kind of logical conclusion when he argued that the state would become the 'property' of the administration which will then become the ruling class. Whether as a second order 'instrument' of oppression or as an integral part of the oppressing class or as the oppressing class, all Marxists are agreed that the phenomenon of administrative power must be destroyed. This ultimate goal is taken care of at the theoretical level by the simple proposition that the state (including the administration) will wither away.

Under socialism, much of 'primitive' democracy will inevitably be revived, since, for the first time in the history of civilized society, the mass of the population will rise to taking an independent part, not only in voting and elections, but also in the everyday administration of the state. Under socialism, all will govern in turn and will soon become accustomed to no one governing.¹⁶

In practice, however, practically every Soviet-style regime has found that the state is waxing stronger instead of disappearing and the administration, too, becomes increasingly important in the life of citizens. Even at the level of local councils and agricultural cooperatives, direct administration by elected citizens (called 'social administration') has not been borne out by experience. According to a former Prime Mini-

ster of Hungary, 'there is actually an increasing demand for the chairmen of councils and cooperatives to be (technically) qualified people'.¹⁷

The interim solution that Soviet-style regimes have adopted is to develop a political (party) bureaucracy parallel and equal in expertise to the state bureaucracy with both subordinated to the direction and control of the party ideology. The 'Reds' who staff the political bureaucracy are elected to their posts because of their mastery of, and commitment to, the party ideology. The 'Experts' who staff the state bureaucracy are appointed to their posts because of their expertise. However, in order to reflect the supremacy of ideology while acknowledging that technical expertise (technocracy) is indispensable in modern government, the Reds are expected to double as Experts and the Experts to double as Reds. Predictably, what happens in practice is different from what this tidy solution suggests.

It has been found that whilst 'Reds' can become some kind of 'Experts' through training. 'Experts' need weekly ideological seminars at the place of work to ensure that they understand what it takes to be 'Red'. More importantly, the 'Reds' and 'Experts' could in fact develop exploitative tendencies similar to those that the Chinese 'Cultural Revolution' sought to exterminate in the late 1960s. These developments belie the instrumental conception of administration and suggest that the role of administration as part of the 'exploiting class' must be recognised so that appropriate methods of control can be devised.

In Western democratic theory, administration is the instrument of the political functionaries who exercise executive power. However, practically every state that claims to have drawn inspiration from this theory is characterized by manifestations that contradict this postulation. It is generally agreed that career administrators play a dominant role in governmental decision-making contrary to the ideal situation which expects them to be subordinates in the process. In Britain, the constitutional position prescribes that officials propose, ministers dispose and officials execute.¹⁸ From what

we have already said earlier, this constitutional position is a myth; in practice, officials 'dispose' almost as often as ministers.

In countries where the political executive changes frequently as was the case in France between 1946 and 1958 and in Italy from 1946 to date, it has been demonstrated that officials 'dispose' much more often than ministers. However, in an effort to defend the validity of the instrumental conception of administration, it has been argued that when the weakness and instability of political functionaries create a power vacuum, career administrators do not really succeed in collecting and exercising such powers; there is simply a total vacuum. This same point has been put differently by those who assert that the bureaucracy in the absence of strong political leadership merely maintains the *status quo* because it is incapable of initiating and effecting change.¹⁹ One answer is that the scientific axiom according to which nature abhors a vacuum also applies to the exercise of executive power. A second answer which has been provided with specific reference to the French experience is as follows:

The real problem is that when one deals with such questions as the ability of an institution to effect change or to preserve the *status quo*, one is left with almost no acceptable standard of measure: what represents change to one person is no more than the defence of the *status quo* to another.²⁰

On the assumption that the administration is effectively an instrument of the executive, the methods devised for controlling the conduct of administration have been directed primarily at the executive and not at the administrations as an autonomous centre of power. The logic of the argument advanced in the second Section of this Lecture is that such methods of control will prove largely ineffective. And this is what has happened in practice.²¹

Thus, it is only control through the administrative court which is focused directly on the work of administration that has proved fairly effective in France. Similarly, in Britain and in

the United States, it is the aspects of parliamentary and congressional control that focus specifically on the conduct of administration ('Question Time' in the former and Congressional Investigative Committees in the latter) that proved reasonably effective. It is also significant that during the past two decades, there has been an impressive inter-state borrowing of institutions and practices that are specifically focused on the control of administrative action. Thus, for example, the Ombudsman institution has been transplanted into at least twenty different countries during the past twenty years. During the same period, France has copied the British Parliament's 'Question Time' while Britain and Nigeria have adapted the investigative committee system of the Congress of the United States to the realities of their respective constitutional systems.

Although the instrumental conception of administration is consistent with both the Marxian and liberal theories of democracy, the effective control of administrative action can only be achieved if administration is recognised as a centre of power distinct from the executive. The acceptance of the existence of an autonomous administrative power will only amount to a realistic view of how power is shared and exercised in the modern state. More importantly, as far as the essence of democracy is concerned, this recognition will draw the attention of all to the need to ensure an effective control of administrative power.

Reconciling Administrative power with the Essence of Democracy

We have argued that the insistence on an instrumental conception of administration has led to the emergence of methods of control aimed at the administration as an instrument of the executive. We saw that in practice, it is only those control measures that focus specifically on the work of administration that have proved reasonably effective. Therefore, we propose that it is only a recognition of administration as an autonomous centre of power that can help to ensure its effective control.

Since the phenomenon of administrative power is relatively recent, it is not surprising that traditional theories of democracy cannot accommodate it. However, if the essence of democracy is that the people must be sovereign, the best way to reconcile administrative power with democratic theory is to ensure that administration genuinely serves the people. To develop this theme further, it becomes inevitable to resort to prescriptive analysis. Since a prescriptive analysis must take into account the realities of the society or polity to which it relates in order to be meaningful, the next few paragraphs will focus on Nigeria with reference to appropriate comparative examples.

Some existing measures of control of administrative action that are reasonably effective have already been enumerated: parliamentary control through 'Question Time' *a la Westminster* and American-style congressional investigative committees, French-style judicial control through a system of administrative courts and the widely transplanted Swedish Ombudsman. The available evidence from comparative studies suggests that in order to ensure that career administrators are constantly aware of the need to regard their work as service to the people rather than the exercise of power for achieving other goals, all these three methods of control must be combined.

In Nigeria today, the National and State Assemblies are expected to use the American-style congressional investigative committee system to keep the administrators on their toes. In this connection, the provisions relating to the Code of Conduct for Public servants in the 1979 Constitution (Fifth Schedule) explicate some broad standards of bureaucratic behaviour which are expected to serve as yardsticks for evaluating the actual conduct of bureaucrats. The Hansards of the National Assembly and of a few State Assemblies that we have consulted reveal that our legislators have started to use the powers of investigation provided for in the Constitution (Sections 82, 83, 120 and 121).

In 1975, the incumbent military administration of General Murtala Mohammed decided to adapt the Ombudsman

institution as an additional method of administrative control. This was in the form of a national network of Public Complaints Commission with the central organization in the federal capital and a state-level organization in each state capital. In a recent study of the institution we found that it makes it possible for citizens who suffer from acts of omission and commission in the hands of the administrative apparatuses to obtain redress.²² However, the institution can still be further strengthened so that it could make the work of administration more responsive to the citizens. The Public Petitions Committees of the National and State Assemblies appear to be performing similar functions and could therefore complement the work of the Commission.

In contrast to the investigative committees of the Assemblies and the Public Complaints Commission whose activities are directed specifically at the administration, the existing arrangements for judicial control of administration are directed primarily at the executive of which the administration is presumed to be an instrument. This British-inspired approach to judicial controls has been widely recognized as largely ineffective.²³ Fortunately, the 1979 Constitution, in Section 33(i), specifically enshrines the doctrine of justiciability of administrative action in a manner that is absent from both the independence (1960) and republican (1963) Constitutions:

In the determination of his civil rights and obligations including any question or determination by or against any government or authority, a person shall be entitled to a fair hearing within a reasonable time by a court or other tribunal established by law and constituted in such a manner as to secure its independence and impartiality.²⁴

In order to achieve the objective set out in this constitutional provision we must overhaul our existing arrangement for judicial control and establish a new system that will adapt suitable aspects of the French administrative court system which is universally acknowledged as the most effective

arrangement for ensuring judicial control of administrative action.²⁵

Having argued that the above three methods of control have been combined in varying degrees with the instrumental conception of administration, it follows that even when they are fully developed they would still be inadequate to serve as effective curb on administrative power. The real dangers of administrative power as an autonomous power in the way in which we have defined it in this Lecture is that unlike the other powers, adequate provisions have not been made to make it sufficiently responsible and responsive. Furthermore, unlike the provisions for citizen participation, however through representatives, in the exercise of executive and legislative powers, adequate attention has not been paid to how best to involve citizens in the conduct of administration.

At this juncture, it must be admitted that the broad issue of ensuring a responsible and responsive administration cannot be satisfactorily tackled by focusing attention exclusively on devising effective methods of administrative control. An alternative strategy which some might even argue is more promising consists of ensuring that the recruitment and training of administrative functionaries as well as the internal organization of the institutions within which they operate are capable of meeting the requirements of a responsible and responsive administration. We concede that this alternative strategy indeed has great promise and ought therefore to receive adequate attention from institution concerned with administrative reform and the education and training of administrators.

However, it must be emphasized that as preventive and curative medicine co-exist, so also must measures aimed at preventing the abuse of administrative power co-exist with those aimed at ensuring its responsible and responsive utilization. As an illustration, it is quite correct to say that efforts aimed at improving the education and training of officials could end up contributing to their irresponsibility and unresponsiveness. The obvious point to make here is that the professionalization of administration in the sense of adequate

knowledge and the possession of appropriate skills and techniques must be accompanied by the other sense of professionalism which emphasizes the need for administrators to possess humanistic values and high standards of integrity, honesty, fairness and impartiality.

For obvious reasons, what we have said about professionalism applies in particular to the apex of the state bureaucracy. In order to ensure that the professionalization of the top level of the bureaucracy would produce positive consequences for the society, two simultaneous actions are needed. First, the higher levels of the state bureaucracy must be re-structured such that the existing distinction between generalist administrators and professional specialists will disappear. The generalists must become specialists and the specialists must acquire the generalists' knowledge of the process and conduct of government. This will help to remove the unnecessary specialist-generalist conflict and improve the quality of services rendered by the state bureaucracy.

The second action to be taken lies in the realm of politics where the political functionaries who derive their power directly from the electorate remain the sole agents for transformational policies. In order to be able to perform this role in the face of a highly professionalized bureaucracy, each Minister must be provided with a corps of policy advisers (a maximum of five) whom he will recruit on the basis of their competence and their loyalty to his party and his person. Needless to add, these policy advisers who can be recruited from both within and outside the career service, will come and go with the minister. There is some merit in the idea that ministers should possess some measure of competence in respect of the tasks of their ministries/departments in order to enable them to benefit maximally from the support to be provided by the corps of policy advisers.

In the Nigerian context, the suggestions regarding professionalism and the need to end the professional-generalist conflict are straightforward and should not really arouse controversy. In contrast, our point about equipping Ministers, specifically at the Federal level, with a corps of policy advisers

re-echoes a recommendation of the Constitution Drafting Committee which the Constituent Assembly rejected. Although we have argued that the career administration constitutes an autonomous centre of power, the various sources of that power do not include the electoral mandate. We take the view that while career administrators could bring about change, such changes are inevitably *incremental*. It is only the political functionaries who can, in the name of electoral mandate, embark on *transformational* or *radical* change. An experienced British Minister put the case of career administrators succinctly recently when she asserted that civil servants only accept and initiate changes that build on things they have already done.²⁶

However, since both the career administrators and the political functionaries interact closely, the penchant of the former for incremental change could prevent radical change from occurring if the latter have no supporting staff. The ability of the political functionaries to push successfully for radical change is likely to be a function of their competence and something useful could be derived from carefully-designed training programmes for them. While some people reject the idea of training political functionaries as contrary to the true spirit of democratic government, others who support the idea are unable to agree on the appropriate education and training programmes.

On the issue of citizen participation, there are people who believe that efforts made to ensure some degree of direct citizen involvement in administrative work could help to control administrative power. Given the emphasis of socialist ideology on the eventual withering away of state bureaucracies, it is not surprising that Soviet-style regimes attach considerable importance to several participative devices like self-management and consultative management. In spite of the consistency with which a country like Yugoslavia has pursued the objective of self-management since the 1950s, the concrete results achieved have been very limited. Indeed, the on-going crisis in Poland that is centred around the trade union movement shows clearly that a wide gap still exists

between the 'governors' and the 'governed' in socialist countries.

Unlike the Soviet-style regimes, Western liberal democratic regimes have, on the whole, paid very little attention to the issue of citizen participation in administrative work. In some of these countries, some degree of consultation with groups of citizens through the device of advisory bodies is an established practice. During the past few decades, some more active participative methods like consumer associations and some aspects of self-management have been introduced in a few countries. However, there is no desire in any of these states to work towards the eventual withering away of the state bureaucracy.

While the practical limitations on the usefulness of participatory methods of administrative control must be acknowledged, two factors that are closely related to them deserve attention. The first is the extent of citizen access to government information and the second is the degree of political or civic education. The granting of citizen access to the quasi-totality of government information (excluding only matters related to state security and individual privacy) is without question a major pre-requisite to any meaningful involvement of citizens in administrative work. A few countries have made some progress in this direction by adopting legislation on freedom of information. Nigeria should join this group of countries. The purpose of political education is to determine the attitude of citizens such that they are able and willing to communicate with their leaders, to demand and obtain changes in institutional structures and processes. Because of the obvious difficulties of determining the content of such political education and the fact that it could actually strengthen the 'governed' in their relation with the 'governors', very few countries are genuinely interested in the subject. We can only hope that Nigeria will have a leadership that will be confident enough to pay attention to this subject in the near future.

To sum up, the problems posed by the concept of administrative power for traditional theories of democracy arise from

the fact that these theories postulate an instrumental conception of administration. In advancing the argument that administration must be recognized as an autonomous centre of power, our position must not be construed to represent a plea for greater autonomy. The thesis that we have advanced is that administrative power can be reconciled with the essence of democratic government through such specific control measures as we have highlighted. In other words, our advocacy is for a democratic administration.

V. CONCLUSION

The central message of this Lecture is that the phenomenon of administrative power looms very large in every modern state. Given this reality, the study of the phenomenon should henceforth receive greater emphasis in the literature on Public Administration. Indeed, we would like to argue that a focus on the concept of administrative power would resolve, in a definitive manner, the politics/administration dichotomy which has been a major preoccupation in the literature since Woodrow Wilson published his seminal article on 'The study of Administration' in 1887.

Instead of the debate on whether or not administrative functionaries perform an instrumental role vis-a-vis political functionaries as implied in the politics/administration dichotomy, attention should be focused on understanding the salient features of administrative power in each polity and on the appropriate methods of ensuring effective control over the conduct of administration. Among other things, systematic research should be conducted on the different sources of administrative power. Studies focused on this subject are likely to show the dynamic interactions and interrelationships between administrative and political processes with the inescapable conclusion that no rigid distinction can be maintained between them.

The study of the methods of controlling administrative action will include descriptive and prescriptive analyses of the experiences of individual countries as well as comparative

studies of the strengths and weaknesses of specific methods of control in different countries. It is important to mention that as the analysis in the preceding sections of this Lecture has demonstrated, an emphasis on the concept of administrative power in the study of Public Administration will help to highlight the usefulness and relevance of the comparative approach. And as Robert Dahl has rightly observed, 'as long as the study of public administration is not comparative, claims for a "a science of public administration" sound rather hollow' ²⁷

Arising from this point about a putative 'science' of Public Administration I should like to end this Lecture by commenting briefly on the quasi-permanent debate on the academic status of the subject, and the related question of the desirability or otherwise of establishing Departments of Public Administration. On the latter question, I should simply wish to observe that the emergence of University Departments as organization units for teaching, research and public service is purely a question of what the prevailing circumstances dictate in different societies. I am convinced that given the Nigerian realities of today and the foreseeable future, the existence of a certain number of Departments of Public Administration in our Universities is fully justified. Predictably, I have no doubt whatsoever about the desirability and viability of our Department of Public Administration here at Ife. Since its creation in March 1976, the Department has made tremendous contributions to the study and practice of public administration in the country. In spite of its relatively youthful age, the Department has graduated two Ph.D. candidates, one of whom is a rising star on the staff of the Department. We currently have 11 candidates enrolled for Ph.D. and M.Phil. programmes. During the same period we have graduated 35 students with the Master of Public Administration degree and 137 students with the Post-graduate/Ordinary Diploma in Public Administration.

Perhaps the most eloquent testimony to the progress of the Department is the fact that the 'demonstration effect' of its successes has led to the decision to establish an autono-

mous Department of Local Government Studies in the University during the 1981-85 plan period. The Local Government training programmes which the Department has nurtured over the past two years will be transferred to this new Department. These are no mean achievements. I wish to seize this opportunity to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of my colleagues in the Department as well as the useful contributions of our visiting scholars such as Professor V. Subbramaniam of Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada and Dr. Oye Oyediran of the University of Ibadan.

The first question regarding the 'academic' status of Public Administration is a more tricky one. Sometimes, it is no more than a 'game' or 'politics' when the epithet²⁸ 'academic' and 'discipline' are attached to University subjects.²⁸ The important point to make is that the issues that I have raised tonight are of the utmost importance and they deserve systematic study and enquiry. This, I submit, is the essence of what should constitute an academic discipline. Of course, it is true that in my exposition I have borrowed, in varying degrees, from other 'disciplines', notably Political Science, Economics, History, Philosophy and Law to mention the most obvious. The explanation for this significant borrowing lies in the fact that to grapple meaningfully with the issues with which I have been concerned, I have had to rely on insights derived from these other disciplines. And this leads me to the assertion that for a worthwhile study of the major issues in Public Administration, the interdisciplinary approach is imperative. This is particularly necessary in post-colonial societies like Nigeria where our hydra-headed problems cannot be solved through the limited insights of the individual disciplines.

I see as my major concern in the years ahead in this University and within my professional associations, the promotion of this interdisciplinary approach. In particular, it will involve the Faculty of Administration, the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Social Sciences at the centre with the other Faculties lying in the periphery in concentric circles.

The exact location of each will depend on the specific subjects being studied. However, it is essential to emphasize that because Public Administration focuses attention on matters that determine whether or not a society will achieve its objectives, its central and critical position in the interdisciplinary endeavour must be recognized and accepted.

I thank you all for your attention.

FOOTNOTES

1. L. Adamolekun, 'Politics and Administration in West Africa: The Guinean Model' in *Journal of Administration Overseas*. London, III, 4, 235 - 242.
2. I should like to mention in particular:
 - L. Adamolekun, 'Bureaucrats and the Senegalese Political Process' in *Journal of Modern African Studies*. Cambridge, 1971, IX, 4, 543 -- 539.
 - L. Adamolekun, 'Accountability and Control Measures in Public Bureaucracies - A Comparative Analysis of Anglophone and Francophone Africa' in *International Review of Administrative Sciences*. Brussels, 1974, XL, 4, 307 - 321.
 - L. Adamolekun, 'Parliament and Executive in Nigeria: The Federal Government Experience, 1952 - 1965' in C. Baker and M. J. Balogun (eds). *Ifé Essays on Administration*. Ile-Ife: University of Ife Press, 1975, 65-87.
 - L. Adamolekun, 'Towards Development-oriented Bureaucracies in Africa' in *International Review of Administrative Science*. Brussels, 1976, XLII, 3, 257-265.
 - L. Adamolekun, 'The Political Context (of Nigerian Administration)' Adamolekun and Gboyega (eds.) in *Leading Issues in Nigerian Public Services*. Ife University Press, 1980.
3. J. Burnham, *The Managerial Revolution*. Penguin, 1962, p. 74.
4. E. N. Suleimen. *Politics, Power and Bureaucracies in France: The Administrative Elite*. Princeton, 1974, p. 285.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 307.
6. C. Debbasch, *L'Administration au pouvoir: fonctionnaires et politiques* Paris, 1969, p. 10.
7. C. Alphadery *et al.*, *Pour nationaliser L'Etat*. Paris, 1968, p. 24.

8. P. Kellner and Lord Crowther-Hunt, *The Civil Servant An Inquiry into Britain's Ruling class*. London, 1980, p.
9. Milton and Rose Friedman., *Free to Choose*. London, 1980, pp. 295-296.
10. F. Heady, *Public Administration, A Comparative Perspective*. Englewood Cliffs, 1966, p. 72.
11. *New Nigerian*. Kaduna, of 5th August, 1979.
12. Kellner and Lord Crowther-Hunt, *op. cit.*, p. 238
13. R. Catherine and G. Thuillier, *Introduction a une Philosophie de l'administration*. Paris, 1969, p. 157
14. R. Dumond, *L'Afrique noire est mal partie*. Paris, t 1962. p
15. J. Burnham, *The Managerial Revolution*, First Edition, 1943, p.
16. V. Lenin, *State and Revolution* (New York), 1981 (First Published 1917) p
17. A. Hegedus, *Socialism and Breaucracy*. London, 1976
18. See, for example, the Editorial in *Times*, London of 15th February, 1977.
19. V. Wright, 'Politics and Administration under the French fifth Republic, *Political Studies*. 1974 XXII, 44-65.
20. E.N. Suleiman, *op, cit*, p. 387.
21. See, for example, G. Braibant *et al. le Controle de l'administration et la protection des citoyens; etude comparative* Paris, 1973.
22. L. Adamolekun, 'Nigeria's Ombudsman System; A National Network of Public complaints commission', forthcoming in L. Adamolekun (ed), *Nigerian Public Administration, 1960-1980: Perspectives and Prospects*.
23. L. Adamolekun, 'Accountability and Control measures in Public Bureaucracies: A Comparative Analysis of Anglophone and Francophone Africa', *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, Brussels,

- 1974, XL, 4, 307 - 321.
24. *The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria*. Lagos Department of Printing Division, 1980 (reprint).
25. L.N. Brown and J.F. Garner, *French Administrative Law*, London, 1973.
26. Royal Institute of Public Administration (RIPA), *Policy and Practice, The Experience of Government*. London, 1980.
27. Robert Dahl, 'The Science of Public Administration Three Problems in *Public Administration Review*. 1947, 7, 1-11.
28. S.J. Diner, 'Department and Discipline; The Department of Sociology at the University of Chicago, 1892-1920' in *Minerva*, XIII, 4(1975), 544-533.

REFERENCES

- Adamolekun, L., Accountability and Control measures in Public Bureaucracies, A Comparative Analysis of Anglophone and Francophone Africa', *International Review of Administrative Sciences* (Brussels), XI, 4, (1974) 307-321.
- Adamolekun, L., 'Nigeria's Ombudsman System: A National Network of Public Complaints Commission', forthcoming in L. Adamolekun (ed.), *Nigerian Public Administration, 1960-1980: Perspectives and Prospects*.
- Alphandery et al., *Pour nationaliser l'Etat*, Paris, 1968.
- Braibant, G., Quesiaux, N. and Weiner, C., *Le Controle de l'administration et al protection des citoyens. etude comparative* Paris, 1973.
- Brown, L.N. and Garner, J.F. *French Administrative Law*, London, 1973.
- Burnham, J. *The Managerial Revolution*, First Edition, 1843, Penguin edition, 1962.
- Catherine, R. and Thuillier, G. *Introduction a une philosophie de l'administration*, Paris, 1969.
- Chardon, H. *Le pouvoir administratif*, Paris, 1911.
- Ciroma, L., 'The Role of the Civil Service in a Period of Transition', Address delivered at Jaji, Kaduna, to Senior Military Officers attending a course at the Army Command and Staff College, Jaji, on 31st, July, 1978.
- Dahl, R., 'The Science of Public Administration: Three Problems', *Public Administration Review*, 7 (1947), 1-11.
- Debbasch, C. *L'Administration au pouvoir: fonctionnaires et politiques Sous la Ve Republique*, Paris, 1969.
- Diner, S.J. 'Department and Discipline: The Department of Sociology at the University of Chicago, 1892-1920', *Minerva*, XIII, 4 (1975), 544-553.
- Dumont, R. *L'Afrique noire est mal partie*, Paris, 1962.
- Federal Republic of Nigerian, *The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria*, Lagos Department of Information, Printing Division, 1980 (re-print).
- Friedman, M. & R. *Free to choose*, London, 1980.

- Heady, F. *Public Administration, A Comparative Perspective*, Englewood Cliffs, 1966.
- Hegedus, A. *Socialism and Bureaucracy* London, 1976.
- Kellner P. and Crowther-Hunt, Lord, *The Civil Servants, An Inquiry into Britain's Ruling Calss*, London, 1980.
- Lenin, V., *State and Revolution*, New York, 1981 (First Published in 1917).
- Royal Institute of Public Administration (RIPA), *Policy and Practice, The Experience of Government*, London, 1980.
- Suleiman, E.N. *Politics, Power and Bureaucracy in France. The Administrative Elite*, Princeton, 1974.
- Wright, V., 'Politics and Administration Under the French Republic', *Political Studies*, XXII, 1, (1974) 44-65.

