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It goes without saying that this is difficult to obtain when authority is equally distributed among a number of persons. Concentration of authority is the first requisite of the executive. A plural executive destroys responsibility, unnecessarily wastes time and is highly dangerous, particularly in times of emergencies. The advantages of a single chief, says Woolsey, " are obvious: he is able to bring unity and efficiency into the government, and being alone, he or his Ministry is responsible; whereas two Presidents would be apt to checkmate one another, if they were of different parties, and would be jealous and rivals if they were of the same party." The executive, Under a Parliamentary system the real executive is the cabinet, plural, no doubt, but the cabinet, headed by the Prime Minister, is a unit which provides political leadership. It comes into office as a unit, it functions as a unit and goes out of office as a unit, and collective responsibility is the method by which this unity is secured and enforced. The Cabinet is a policy formulating body and its members preside over the administrative departments of government.

Both for policy and administration, they are responsible to Parliament and they all act under the leadership of the Prime Minister. " The Prime Minister is," according to Lord Morley, " the keystone of the Cabinet," and occupies a position of exceptional and peculiar authority. " The Government", as Greaves puts it, " is the master of the country, and he is the master of the Government." He forms it he can alter or destroy it. He is the Chairman of the Cabinet, which formulates policy, and is the chief coordinator of the policies of several Ministers and Ministries. He is also the leader of the chamber to which the cabinet owes responsibility and that chamber looks to him as the fountain of policy. He is also recognised to have an immediate

authority to correct what he may consider the errors of omission and commission of his colleagues in the government. Their identity is unknown without the Prime Minister.

The Cabinet is, thus, a unity in collectivity and the question of divided responsibility does not arise. In the United States, the President is the real executive and his 'cabinet' works under his direction and guidance. They are his subordinates. His 'cabinet members' may make speeches in support of the general policy of the administration and may even initiate a line of policy, which having been approved by the President, may be described as their own contribution, but the ultimate source of policy remains the President. Laski remarks, "But, in general, the American Cabinet Minister lives and moves and has his being in the context of Presidential thought.

However able and distinguished, he is bound to be eclipsed by the major significance of his chief." States in the past had tried the experiment of a plural executive. In ancient Athens the executive power was divided among a number of officials, each independent of the others. Sparta, in early times, had two kings and the Republican Rome had two Consuls, both invested with the executive power, and each could veto the action of his colleague. France, too, after the revolution, established plural executive under several different constitutions. Till recently, Switzerland, Russia, Yugoslavia and other Communist countries of Eastern Europe presented systems of plural executives. The executive authority of the Swiss federation is exercised by a commission of seven men known as the Bundesrat or the Federal Council.

The Federal Council is chosen after every four years by the Federal Assembly and one of its members is annually elected to serve its Chairman and is designated as President. The office of President rotates among the members of the Federal Council according to seniority. The President is in no sense the chief executive, although he holds an office of some dignity and enjoys some precedence over his colleagues.

Nor is he the chief administrator. He has no more power than his colleagues and is not more responsible for the exercise of executive authority than other Councilors are. All decisions emanate from the Federal Council as a single authority. The President is simply chairman of the Federal Council and he presides over its meetings. As chairman he only exercises a casting vote and that, too, in case of a tie. Such official authority as he may exercise comes to him as a member of the Council and as head of one of the seven administrative departments. In the U.

S. S. R. there was no formal presidency.

The Presidium, a body consisting of thirty-nine members and elected for a term of four years by the Supreme Soviet, performed functions executive in character, which were the prerogatives of the chief executive head of the State in other countries with a single executive. The Presidium had its chairman, designated President officially though not constitutionally but he had neither any special privileges nor any individual authority. Stalin called the Presidium a "collegiate President." The Constitution described the Council of Ministers as the highest executive and administrative organ of State power. But under a system of one-party government the policy

determining and directing force was the inner circle of the Communist Party. The Presidium was, however, a unique institution indigenous to the Soviet system and without a parallel anywhere else.

The People's Republic of China, Yugoslavia and other Communist States patterned their executives on the Soviet model. Many advantages have been claimed for a plural executive. An executive organised on the collegial principle, it is claimed, does not afford temptations and opportunities for abuse of power. To vest the supreme authority of the State in a single person is a relic of absolutism and is, consequently, opposed to the spirit of republicanism. A plural executive, its admirers argue, may lack the advantage of unity and energy, which characterise a single executive, but a group of men are likely to possess more ability and wisdom than can be found in any single individual. The executive functions involve not merely the ministerial function of executing legislative command but also the formulation of policy. This onerous task can best be performed by a board consisting of the wisest and the talented.

Finally, plural executive renders more difficult executive encroachments on the legislative power and on the liberties of the people. The experience of plural executive has, however, demonstrated its inherent weakness. The practical working of the plural executive in Switzerland has been really admirable. But one single exception does not set a precedent. Its success there is mainly due to certain habits and traditions of the Swiss people. And then the executive in Switzerland is not a separate and independent organ of the government.

It is subordinate to the National Assembly, which is sovereign and functions on its behalf. In the USSR the directing force remained the Politburo, the inner circle, of the Communist Party and those who directed the Party had their due place in the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. Here, too, the Presidium functioned on behalf of the Supreme Soviet.

Modern political opinion is almost unanimous in favour of unity in the organisation of the executive. Plural executive lacks force, energy, unity of purpose and independence. It destroys responsibility, delays action by the necessity of consultation and hence establishes feeble government. Feeble government is another name for bad government. “ Energy in the executive,” Hamilton said, “ is a leading characteristic of a good government.”