The term bureaucracy is derived from the French term ‘bureau’ meaning a desk, means a desk government. It is a government by bureaucracy, but now the term has been given different interpretations by different writers. In the words of H.J.Laski “bureaucracy is the term usually applied to a system of government, the control of which is completely in the hands of the officials that their power jeopardizes the liberties of the ordinary citizen”.

E.N.Gladden defines bureaucracy as “a government of officials”.

Marshal E. Dimock is of the view that” bureaucratization means specialization, hierarchies and long lines of communication”.

Max Weber describes it as a system of administration characterized by expertness, impartiality and the absence of humanity.

Technically the term is used in two senses. In its larger sense, it is used to describe any personnel system where the employees are classified in a system of administration composed of a hierarchy of sections, divisions, bureaus, departments and the like. In its restricted sense it is used to describe, “a body of public servants organized in a hierarchical system which stands outside the sphere of effective public control”. Bureaucracy is a system of administration in which professional class of expert civil servants administers the affairs of the state in an impartial manner and is organized in a hierarchical way. The rise of capitalism resulted in the increased functions of the state. The emergence of socialist state also compelled the state to enter the new fields of administration such as the public ownership of industries. All these factors really increased the importance of bureaucracy. The introduction of merit system attracted able and efficient men to bureaucracy. Moreover, the adoption of carrier system gave the civil servants a position of permanency.

According to Max Weber there are three characteristics of bureaucracy. They are the following.

1. The regular activities required for the purposes of the bureaucratically governed structures are distributed in a fixed way as official duties.

2. The authority to give the commands required for the discharged of these duties is distributed in a stable way and is strictly delimited by rules concerning a coercive means, physical, or otherwise, which may be placed at the disposal of officials.

3. Methodical provision is made for the regular and continuous fulfilment of these duties and for the execution of the corresponding rights.

Max Weber further says that there is hierarchical principle in all bureaucratic structures; a reliance on written documents, field, records and the apparatus of the modern office management; the formulation of general rules of practices for the management of the office. The characteristic features of bureaucracy, explained by Max Weber can be summarized as separation of office and its incumbent, selection by merit, fixed remuneration of officials, the
official is subject to discipline and control while performing his official function, hierarchy of office, allocation of the activities of the organization needed to fulfill its objectives, allocation of authority required to discharged these activities and strict adherence to rules.

According to Ferrel Heady a well-defined hierarchy, division of labour based on functional specialization, a system of rules covering the rights and duties of the positional incumbents, a system of procedures for dealing with situations impersonality of interpersonal relationship, and selection for employment and promotion is based on technical competence are the structural features of bureaucracy. Apart from these structural features there are some behavioural features and they are objectively, precision, consistency, and discretion. According to him bureaucracy is “an organization that maximizes efficiency in administration or an institutionalized method and organized social conduct in the interest of administrative efficiency.

Prof. Frierdrich gives six criteria of bureaucracy. They are differentiation of functions, qualification for office, hierarchical organization and discipline, objectivity of method, precision, and consistency or continuity involving adherence to rules and keeping of records, and lastly the exercise of discretion involving secrecy in regard to certain aspects of government.

Thus bureaucracy is a type of administrative organization or a government by civil servants for their own aggrandizement or a professional class hierarchically organized. Bureaucracy is indispensable in a democratic system; but it should not be irresponsible and unresponsive. The civil servants should be always co-operative with the general public in understanding and solving their problems. The anti people attitude of the civil servants persuade many to think against bureaucracy in a democratic system.

TYPES OF BUREAUCRACY

According to Morstein Marx, there are four types of bureaucracy and they are the guardian Bureaucracy, the Cast Bureaucracy, the Patronage Bureaucracy and the Merit Bureaucracy.

Guardian Bureaucracy

Guardian Bureaucracy is that which is dedicated to the general welfare of the community. It acts as champion of justice and custodian of community’s welfare. The ancient Chinese administrative system was of this type.

Caste Bureaucracy

This type of bureaucracy has a caste base. Most of the civil servants belong to the aristocratic families. Thus in this system civil servants are taken from the upper strata of the society. It is prevalent in oligarchic political systems.

Patronage Bureaucracy
If public appointments are made on the basis of personal favour or as political rewards, it is termed as patronage Bureaucracy. The spoils system prevalent in the U.S.A provides for such a type of bureaucracy.

**Merit Bureaucracy**

If the civil servants are appointed on the basis of merit, through a competitive examination, it is termed as Merit Bureaucracy. It aims at an efficient public service and is taken as a carrier open to talent.

**Evils of Bureaucracy**

It is a fact that many look at bureaucracy with ridicule and the civil servants are contemptuously called “bureaucrats”. Harold Laski in his definition of bureaucracy sees the danger of jeopardizing the liberties of individuals in the hands of the officials. Ramsay Muir says bureaucracy thrives under the cloak of ministerial responsibility. It is ruinous when it becomes the master. The defects of bureaucracy may be briefly summarized as follows.

**Circumlocution**

The greatest criticism of bureaucracy is about its lengthy and roundabout way of doing the work. The bureaucrats are very particular in following the formal rules and regulations. Even if the matter is of an urgent nature it has to pass through all the stages of its official procedure. In the words of Bagehot “it is an inevitable defect that the governments will care more for routine than for the results”.

**Red-tape**

Closely associated with circumlocution there is the defect of red-tapism. It means blind trained in rules and regulations they give undue importance to them rather than to the genuine needs of the community. They forget the fact that the rules and regulations exist for the service of the community. Following the prescribed rules is not itself bas, but the blind attachment to them certainly impairs the efficiency of work.

**Formalism**

Another defect of bureaucracy is it excessive adherence to formalism. Too much use of forms and formalities makes the official lose his sense of judgment and initiative. The language and the forms of official letters and the method of making note on the file and sending it upwards, all are fixed beforehand and each office acts mechanically in the prescribed manner.

**Unresponsiveness**

Bureaucracy is not usually responsive to the needs of the people. It considers itself as the self-appointed guardian and interpreter of public interest. It keeps on following its old standardized procedures and does not react to the changing political climate of the country. Even in India we can find civil servants who think themselves as a separate and superior class to all other
people whom they are destined to govern. As a result of the day-to-day routines civil servants develop special preferences, antipathies and discriminations. Bertrand Russell says that bureaucracy tends to develop a negative psychology perpetually prone to prohibitions.

Despotism

Since bureaucracy craves for power it has been condemned as despotic. It usurps the powers of the legislature on the one hand and side-tracks the courts on the other. In fact the government services are taking more and more powers to themselves. The power hungry bureaucrats have an inherent lust for power. They are really becoming despotic and their despotism wears cloaks of ministerial responsibilities and delegation by the parliament.

Corruption

Corruption is the malady of Indian bureaucracy. Corruption has gone into the very root of the bureaucratic structure. The civil services are in general prone to illegal extortion of money from the people before doing their work. The spoils system, which prevails in America, also has corrupting influence on the American political system in particular and public in general.

Empire building

Bureaucracy perpetuates the evil of dividing the work of government into many isolated and self-dependent sections, each pursuing its own ends. These units thus develop the tendency of being independent units.

Yes-man ship

The top bureaucrats who are political favourites become perfect yes-man of their political boss. In their turn they expect yes-man ship from their subordinate officers. Such blind obedience of the bureaucrats will weaken the efficiency of administration and lower the morale of the honest employees.

The former American president, Hoover once observed that there are three defects in bureaucracy and they are self-perpetuation, expansion, and demand for more powers. At the same time it is a fact that in the modern age bureaucracy is a necessity and its outright condemnation is irrational. It is highly necessary that the system should be built in such a way as to avoid unnecessary delay, red tapism and formalism. Checks also should be devised in such a way as to keep the bureaucrats always loyal to the people. There should be proper safeguards for keeping the bureaucrats under proper control without sacrificing its virtues.