# Political Institutions Under Dictatorship: Jennifer Gandhi

Dictatorship is a form of government in which one person or a small group of people holds absolute power, without effective constitutional limitations. Dictatorships are often characterized by the suppression of political opposition, the use of secret police, and the control of the media.

Political institutions play a critical role in dictatorships. They can be used to legitimize the regime, control the population, and suppress dissent. In this article, we will examine the different types of political institutions that are found in dictatorships, and how they are used to maintain the dictator's power.



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## **Types of Political Institutions in Dictatorships**

There are a variety of different types of political institutions that can be found in dictatorships. These institutions can be divided into two broad categories: formal and informal.

\* **Formal institutions** are those that are established by the dictator and have a legal basis. These institutions include the constitution, the parliament, the courts, and the military. \* **Informal institutions** are those that are not established by the dictator but nevertheless play a role in the political system. These institutions include the secret police, the propaganda apparatus, and the ruling party.

#### **Formal Institutions**

The constitution is the supreme law of the land in a dictatorship. It sets out the basic principles of the government and the rights and duties of citizens. In many dictatorships, the constitution is written by the dictator himself and is designed to legitimize his rule.

The parliament is the legislative body in a dictatorship. It is usually composed of members who are appointed by the dictator or his supporters. The parliament's main function is to rubber-stamp the dictator's policies.

The courts are responsible for interpreting the law and applying it to individual cases. In dictatorships, the courts are often controlled by the dictator and are used to suppress dissent.

The military is responsible for maintaining order and defending the country from external threats. In dictatorships, the military is often used to suppress internal dissent and to protect the dictator's power.

#### **Informal Institutions**

The secret police is a powerful tool of repression in dictatorships. It is responsible for identifying and eliminating threats to the regime. The secret

police often uses torture and other forms of coercion to extract information from suspects.

The propaganda apparatus is responsible for controlling the flow of information to the public. It is used to promote the dictator's policies and to discredit his opponents. The propaganda apparatus often uses censorship and other forms of manipulation to control the media.

The ruling party is the political party that supports the dictator. It is often the only legal political party in the country. The ruling party is used to mobilize support for the dictator and to control the population.

#### **How Political Institutions Are Used to Maintain the Dictator's Power**

Political institutions play a critical role in maintaining the dictator's power. They can be used to:

\* Legitimize the regime. The constitution, the parliament, and the courts can be used to create the illusion of a legitimate government. This can help to quell dissent and to prevent people from questioning the dictator's authority. \* Control the population. The secret police, the propaganda apparatus, and the ruling party can be used to control the population and to suppress dissent. This can prevent people from organizing against the dictator and from demanding change. \* Suppress dissent. The courts, the secret police, and the military can be used to suppress dissent and to punish those who oppose the dictator. This can create a climate of fear and intimidation, which can prevent people from speaking out against the regime.

Political institutions play a critical role in dictatorships. They can be used to legitimize the regime, control the population, and suppress dissent. By understanding how these institutions work, we can better understand the nature of dictatorship and how to resist it.



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