

33 Vic., Cap. 24, the principle of "vote by ballot" was adopted.

Prior to 1792 there was no limit to the duration of the Assembly except that it was always dissolved on the demise of the sovereign. The first lasted for less than a year and held only two sessions; but the fifth lasted for more than fourteen years and held seventeen sessions. By 32 Geo. III, Cap. 10, its duration was

limited to seven years; and in 1833, by 3 Wm. IV, Cap. 4, its continuance was not to be affected henceforth by the demise of a sovereign. The seven year limit remained in effect until 1840, when the limit was fixed at four years, by 3 Vic., Cap. 4. This four year rule remained in force until 1897, when by 60 Vic., Cap. 1, the possible duration of the Assembly was extended to five years. This is still the limit as seen in 1 Geo. VI, Cap. 2., sec. 7.

The Place of Municipal Institutions in a Democracy

By K. G. CRAWFORD

THERE are many views as to what are the most significant features of democracy but the basic principle involved is the right of the majority of the electors to choose their own rulers and to change those rulers when they do not conduct the business of government in accordance with the wishes of that majority.

For such a system of government to operate satisfactorily several factors must be present to a greater or lesser degree, viz., an intelligent electorate to judge the merits of candidates and the merits of the policies advocated by those candidates, and a general understanding of the machinery of their government and the part which they play in its proper functioning.

It should be kept in mind that democracy or the democratic form of government is not an end in itself but merely a means to the end of good or "better" government. There may be better forms of government but we as a whole have not yet found any form of government which we are satisfied, will give us as satisfactory results and which, at the same time, will protect us against the development of those objectionable features of what might be considered as more

efficient forms of government. Regardless of our individual views as to the extent to which government should function the interest of the great majority is that, to the extent the government does function, it should do so with as high a degree of efficiency and satisfaction, from the viewpoint of the governed, as is possible.

From this basis we may now consider the place of municipal institutions in a democracy.

The field of government falls into two natural divisions comprised of those activities which must be dealt with on a national or even provincial basis because they are of interest to the larger unit and the greater community of people and those which may be dealt with on a local basis as they only affect the local community.

Aside from the exceptional conditions existing because of a state of war it is obvious, if one gives the matter careful analysis, that no unit of government performs services or enacts legislation and regulations which so vitally and intimately affect the day to day life of all the citizens as do those services and enactments which come within the field of the municipal authorities. Many of the services and enactments of the local authorities are so essential and so continuously operating, especially in urban communities, that they are overlooked

EDITOR'S NOTE: K. G. Crawford, M. A., a native of Nova Scotia, is Director of the Institute of Local Government of Queen's University, Kingston, Ont. He was for many years Town Clerk of London, Ont. The article is a summary of an address delivered at the 39th annual convention of the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities at Parrsboro.

being taken for granted almost as a part of the natural conditions of life. Like the air we breath they are given no thought until some unusual circumstance upsets or interferes with the normal supply.

Those services are in the main paid for at the expense of the local taxpayer. His knowledge of the local need is first-hand; he is on the job to judge the results of the local policies; and no unit of government operating at a distance can perform those services to give an equal degree of satisfaction nor to adjust the performance to the need to the extent or with the promptitude that is possible in the case of the local or municipal government.

In the performing of those services and the enactment of those regulations which so intimately affect the life of the individual it is imperative that the response to public or individual need and demand be both prompt and effective. This response can only be obtained from a governmental unit which is geographically accessible, that is in sufficiently close and continuous contact with its people to know their needs, and sufficiently at one with them in their thinking to respond promptly to their wishes. These conditions prevail only in the local unit of government which operates continuously in the midst of its constituency, where the elected representatives are in daily contact with the people and their problems and where the dignity of public office is not such as to remove the elected representative beyond the personal approach of the individual citizen.

It is interesting at this point to note the words of Lord Durham in his famous report following the Rebellion of 1837:

The utter want of municipal institutions giving the people any control over their local affairs, may indeed be considered as one of the main causes of the failure of representative government, and of the bad administration of the country. If the wise example of those countries in which a free representative government has alone worked well, had been in all respects followed in Lower Canada, care would have been taken, that, at the same time

that a Parliamentary system, based on a very extended suffrage, was introduced into the country, the people should have been entrusted with a complete control over their own local affairs, and been trained for taking their part in the concerns of the Province, by their experience in the management of that local business which was most interesting and most easily intelligible to them.

The function of municipal government in a democracy however is not limited to the carrying out of its essential duties in its own field.

As has frequently been pointed out the municipal government serves as the training school for democracy not alone for the governors but as well for the governed. An analysis of the public experience of most of our legislators in the provinces and Dominion will show that they obtained their initial training in public service in their local governments. Here, in the municipal field, the electors have the opportunity of seeing their fellow citizens at work as legislators and governors and it is frequently based on their performance in the local field that men are selected as candidates in the other levels of government. When such is the case members of legislatures and parliament take office much better equipped than would otherwise be the case for they have acquired some experience of the methods of government and the democratic "approach" which are markedly different from the methods of private enterprise. They come to office with a further advantage in their intimate knowledge of the basic unit in the governmental set up, the municipal government.

As Canadians have noted in the press in recent weeks, one of the problems in setting up civil government in liberated countries in Europe is to find experienced men to carry on the civil government who understand the democratic method.

Of even greater importance than the training of elected representatives is the training of the electorate in the methods of democratic government. Here

the municipal government plays an indispensable part.

Any democracy is as well governed as the majority of its people want sufficiently to do something about it. A democracy can only function satisfactorily if the great mass of the people understand its workings and are willing to take their share in government. The people can only learn to appreciate *their* part in government by practice and that practice they can best obtain in the municipal field.

It is here that they can fully understand and appreciate the various issues involved; here they know intimately the candidates for office; here they can compare, first hand, promises and results; and here they know enough of the facts to see through the well-intentioned misinterpretations which so often characterize the seekers after public office. Here, too, the more frequent occasions for the exercise of the franchise develop the consciousness of who is the ultimate ruler and the realization that the governed can discipline the governors.

Experience of this kind over the years develops in the great mass of the individuals the ability to play their part not only in the municipal field but in the larger fields of government in a democracy.

There is yet another and vitally important part which the municipal institutions play which reflects itself throughout the whole democratic set-up of government and that is in the maintaining of a moral standard in government.

Experience shows that with the individual the community pressure in a smaller place imposes more effectively than in a larger one the necessity of living up to a certain level of moral standards or code demanded by that community. So in the local unit of government the value of community pressure in demanding a high level of moral standard in the conduct of the local government is relatively more effective than in the other levels of government. This in turn, however, serves to maintain

a higher standard in those other levels of government. Because the unit of municipal government is more homogeneous, and the people therein have more community of feeling than in the larger units of government the decisions of the local government are more likely to be decided on the basis of fairness and equity, or, even right or wrong, than on the basis of expediency or brazen self interest. Close scrutiny makes for good behaviour. Inevitably this serves to raise the standard in the other levels of government if only to avoid invidious comparisons, for it educates the people as a whole to expect at least a minimum standard of equity and fair dealing in the conduct of public business in what are sometimes referred to as the higher levels of government.

There is a further purpose which the municipal institutions serve in a democratic form of government and that is to act as centres of resistance to the relentless, if undesigned, drive of the senior governments toward an increasingly high degree of centralization.

In any government there seems to exist an inherent urge to try to draw to itself as many as possible of the powers which lie within the jurisdiction of any other governing body. As is natural every governing group, be it Dominion, provincial or municipal, is confident that within its membership lies the summation of all wisdom in governmental matters and that hence it is in the interests of the people whom it represents that more and more of the powers of government should be centred under its control.

If government is to serve the great mass of the people, it must be kept as close as possible to the people. But the more highly centralized it becomes, the further it is removed from the people. The further it is removed from the mass of the people, the less their control and the less satisfactory from their angle will be the results.

Needless to say there are some matters such as educational standards, the control of communicable diseases, etc., which

may be sufficiently vital to the larger areas that they justify removal from the local field and placing them under the jurisdiction of some unit of government having wider authority.

There are also certain types of services which obviously cannot be handled by local units of government such as the maintenance of the armed forces, the regulation of immigration, or the postal services.

It will always be a debatable point upon which there will be legitimate differences of opinion as to where the exact line should be drawn between what might be classed as local matters and what might be classed as matters of wider significance.

However, without attempting to draw that line, it is well to realize that one of the main functions of a municipal government in a democratic system is ceaselessly, but with discretion, to resist the never ending pressure to narrow the limits of municipal jurisdiction.

As municipal independence and self reliance decline so does the interest of the municipal electors decline. As the *effective* units of government are removed further and further from the people governed so does their interest in their government decline. As the interest of the people in their government declines the invaluable check of close public scrutiny is reduced, the responsiveness of their government to the will of the people is impaired, the democratic quality of the government deteriorates and we are on the road to bureaucracy and eventually dictatorship. As someone has said "too much centralization of government results in apoplexy at the centre and paralysis at the extremities."

There is no question but that the senior governments can assist, guide, and to a degree help to raise the standards of performance of municipal governments under their jurisdiction, but to the extent that they unnecessarily take over the functions of the local authorities to that extent they are in the long run weakening our democracy even though they may

for the time being achieve a temporary improvement in immediate results.

To a degree the municipalities are themselves responsible for the continual inroads made upon their powers by the senior governments. It is a characteristic practice of local governments to assume responsibilities which are not theirs and to undertake to perform services which have no relationship to the financial sources of the municipal income. To relieve the resulting financial burden recourse is then had to appeals to the senior governments for financial assistance. It is a long accepted rule of life that the man who pays the piper calls the tune. Unless the municipalities do their part in maintaining their own independence, they cannot expect others to respect it.

The conditions of war have accustomed the Canadian people to a great increase in centralized control and regulation. Inevitably there will be an effort to retain that centralization in the post-war years. Vast plans for meeting the problems of those post-war years are being prepared by the national and provincial authorities. Those plans can and will succeed only to the extent that they have the general support and acceptance of our people as a whole.

While much of the post-war planning may be initiated in the higher levels of government, much of the execution of those plans and the larger task of interpreting them to the people and in keeping them in conformity with the wishes of the people will inevitably rest with the municipal authorities. The problems which arise to be dealt with will be problems which affect people, and people live in municipalities. It is at once the misfortune and the opportunity for municipal institutions that they are there where the actual problems arise and must be solved. It must therefore be apparent that for our democracy, in solving the problems of the post-war years, it is imperative that we maintain strong and virile municipal institutions.

The municipal institutions of Canada can make no greater contribution in our

democracy than to so maintain and improve the quality and increase the extent of their proper services to their people that any suggestion of encroachment on their functions would be obviously unjustified. In this way they can most

effectively resist that pressure for centralization which is one of the most serious and at the same time one of the most subtle of the perils facing a democratic form of government.

A Psychological Approach to Industrial Relations

By LYDIA GIBERSON

The term "misfit" as it applies to any job in industry describes only the end result of a series of circumstances. Since an individual in an industrial society, is in great measure a product of that society, the approbrium of the term then falls on him

The spawning ground of the "misfit" is a vast and intricate net-work composed of sociological, physical, mental and psychological factors originating—and it is important to remember this—with management as well as with the individual employee.

The concept of the job, since we do not live in the robot age, reaches into every facet of the employee's twenty-four hour a day life. Conversely, that life reaches every aspect of the job. It is therefore important to understand, before a discussion of causes and effects is undertaken, and to realize the interdependence of job and living. There are certain discernible conditions: heredity, background, education, home conditions, finance, status in community are sociological in nature; individual handicaps such as poor eyesight, defective hearing, chronic illnesses including tuberculosis, diabetes, etc., working conditions and occupational hazards are physical conditions nervous disorders—epileptic fits, sleeping sickness, mania depressive psychoses, etc., are mental conditions, while insecurity, anxiety, worry, fears, may be aptly classed as psychological.

This may seem like a formidable array of problems to harrass the smooth functioning of the industrial unit and in truth, it is—but it must be remembered it is the by-product of multiple effort.

The operation of sociological factors must be apparent to everyone since we all have our being under them. Let us suppose that you have a reasonably successful job. You are a plant manager making \$5,000 a year. There is the man in the maintenance department who makes \$1,400 a year. With the best intentions in the world, the man in the maintenance department will resent your obviously better position in life, and, you, in turn, may be slightly smug about it. You may be the proud possessor of a Dalhousie degree, the man in the maintenance department escaped from the second grade by the skin of his teeth or by possibly burning down the old red schoolhouse. You probably live in a modern, comfortable home. He is playing catch as catch can with his landlord, and the inference is obvious. The merits of these two cases is not under discussion, they are cited as factors.

Such a simple thing as defective eyesight may handicap an employee seriously by creating headaches and excessive errors. Illness such as tuberculosis, diabetes, glandular upsets, hardening of the arteries, etc., may contribute to job failure. These disorders lower the employee's productivity. All take a toll of physical strength, creating early fatigue, irritability, perhaps outbursts of temper and gross errors in judgment.