LOCAL ADMINISTRATION IN VIET-NAM
ITS FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

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Foreword

The original plan for this final report on local administration included completing the descriptive and analytical phases and then proceeding into the area of propositions, guidelines, and suggestions regarding the question of improving local administration. Unfortunately, time has not permitted pursuance of this plan. Instead, the writer has had to seek a less time consuming approach, which would still present to the reader a fair view of the writer's thinking. Looking over the material set aside for the basis of this third report, the writer found a solution: develop a series of readings based on the references already collected.

Thus, in the following pages the reader has the task of "digesting" many of the "raw materials" from which the writer, with sufficient time, would have developed his own analysis. Perhaps this is an even more effective way to approach this final topic—the future development of local administration in Viet Nam.

Undoubtedly, there are other ways in which this topic could be approached. For the writer, however, the most logical includes four steps, which he prefers to call "needs"; first, the need for understanding the nature and implications (especially for a democratic society) of "local administration"; second, the need for understanding the existing system in Viet Nam; third, the need for acquiring a satisfactory perspective of the socio-economic setting of local administration in Viet Nam; and fourth, the need for studying proposals directly concerned with increasing efficiency through strengthening and altering the existing system.
While none of these needs have been fully explored in the following readings, the writer believes they will orient the reader and stimulate further reading, research, and contemplation. He would, of course, be highly pleased to learn some day that these materials, along with the first two reports - made a significant contribution to the study and improvement of local administration in Viet Nam. He hopes they will.
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I. THE POLITICAL NATURE OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

Most of the readings in this section have the common theme of democracy and local administration, although the views of this theme differ radically, especially between Professor Langrod and two others who criticize his views. The basic question for students of public administration in Viet Nam to keep in mind while reading this section is:

Can a democratic system be established without a strong system of local self-government?

Western Views of President Diem on Political and Administrative Mechanisms

NOTE: It is commonly recognized that President Diem strongly questions the adoption of Western political and administrative schemes by Asian countries. It is his argument that in these countries an Asian cultural approach must be made to the ideals of democracy. Before turning to the more extensive discussions by Professor Langrod and others, some observations of President Diem are well worth noting, as reminders of the need to view these writings as Westernized rather than as adapted to the conditions of Viet Nam and other Asian countries, except to the extent to which the writers themselves indicate their adaptation.

At the opening session of the National Assembly in October, 1959, President Diem included in his address several statements in which he in effect argued that Viet Nam should not rush to adopt Western ideas of government and administration, and that, instead, Viet Nam was more closely bound to the patterns evolving in the other Asian and African nations. He said:
"The trust which your electors have placed in you - and for which I heartily congratulate you - makes it your duty, honorable deputies, to invigorate the spirit of this democratic tradition and to hasten its maturity so that it will improve daily in its adaptation to the living reality of our country, and to the evolution of the Asian and African nations to which we are bound by a community of destiny.

"For democracy is not solidified once and for all into a collection of formulas and regulations conceived in other times, under other skies. Old western nations, richer and more experienced than we, have been obliged to reconstitute the very structure of their traditional parliamentary formula. More than one newly independent country has experienced immobility and disorder because it has adopted this formula; more than one nation is trying to free its democratic regime of what has killed it after having helped to bring it into existence.

"The history of the profound political upheavals which have taken place in many countries of Asia and Africa since 1955, that is, since the birth of our Republic, points to a constant evolution toward a new democratic cycle, more adapted to the aspirations of under-developed countries, without, at the same time, breaking with the essential community features of their traditions.

"Indeed, the inner logic of the technically and socially backward countries, West Falkland being one of them, demands of them an accelerated march which can be accomplished only at the cost of a strict community discipline and of the sacrifice of short-term interests. Such is the heavy price we have to pay to move quickly forward, for it is only at this pace that we can preserve our independence and solve our social problems, the result of an accumulation of many centuries. This accelerated march would not be possible without the will to break down the obstacles placed in our way by the anarchist and communist reactionaries. Thus we are witnessing a general regression of communist influence in the countries of Asia and Africa and also its violent reactions against an evolution which is no longer working to its advantage.

"It is in the stern realities of our conditions, both present and future, that the constitution has been elaborated. It is in anticipation of the immense difficulties which await the underdeveloped countries in the effort required of them to work out a balanced technical organization for their march forward while preserving individual freedom, that our constitution has been set up on the basis of the respect for the human being, the establishment of the common good, and collective progress.

"Thanks to the wisdom and the discipline of all, we have spared our country what the leader of a great Asian nation has recently admitted publicly to his people: fifteen years of 'liberal government' have led the country to political division and economic chaos. At the same time, with the help of our friends of the Free World, we have been able to achieve important and rapid progress which has attracted the attention and sympathy of sincere, competent and impartial observers.
"Internally, the government's efforts are continually directed at the erection of a democratic substructure, especially at the level of the villages, through economic and social progress.

"In the economic sphere, we have sought to develop the main natural resources and to create new ones in order to economize the foreign exchange for industrialization while raising at the same time the standard of living of the masses.

"In order to promote social justice and also to ensure an absolute minimum for a population living in a zone of great instability, as well as to increase the purchasing power of the rural masses, we have directed our main effort towards the agricultural sector.

"Thanks to a sustained effort against communist internal subversion and thanks to technical and social measures favoring small ownership and farming on a rational and community basis, we have successfully extended the cultivated area and improved productivity.

"It is on the basis of this hard and stern effort, both morally and intellectually, that our brothers of Asia, Africa and South America judge us, rather than on the basis of the more or less perfect manner in which we shall have imitated the way of living of the advanced nations of the East to the West. To accept the ways of living of these nations is to accept in advance the idea of a foreign protectorate."

B. The Values of Local Government

In the following discussion, which is headed "Why Have Local Government?", Professor Daniel Wit, in a textbook prepared for Thai students in comparative government, sets forth a well-balanced evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of a strong system of local government.

In addition, he points out some of the ways by which government functions may be arranged and administered. Although he has made no attempt to fully orient his thinking to the peculiar problems of Thailand as an Asian nation, it is evident that he has given this considerable thought in the preparation of this short, but well written section.
"All countries of more extensive expanse than city-states confront the necessity of developing some techniques and institutions to integrate their territory politically and administratively. There are a number of basic ways in which this fundamental problem of government can be treated. For one thing, it is possible to have each major functional department (ministry) of a central government administer its services directly throughout a nation. Finance, public welfare, public works, police, fire protection, public health -- all these and the many other domestic activities of government could be engaged throughout all of the territory of a state by each of the separate central ministries in charge of them. Quite obviously, even if these central agencies established regional field offices to provide some undoubtedly necessary administrative flexibility (in other words, deconcentrated), reliance just on this form of territorial organization would constitute the maximum in centralization.

Another method of dealing with the problem of bringing governmental services to the people in any large territorial area would be the application of a measure of administrative deconcentration which would provide some recognition of local diversity while still permitting the retention of political centralization. This can be achieved by the establishment of general regional and local administrative units responsible to the central government and assigned the task of coordinating all national services administered by the central agencies within their territorial confines, plus,
perhaps, providing some services directly, themselves. In neither this situation nor in the first would local government exist, yet, in both, the services of government could be brought to all parts of the nation. The existence of these two possible methods of binding the territory of a country into a single whole and providing its people with government and administration as well as the frequent use of some version of the second method (for example, in Thailand) sharply raises the question: Is local government, as defined above, really necessary and good? Why should a state attempt the degree of decentralization necessary to create real local government? It has been stated that the problem area under consideration, that involving territorial integration, is obviously the principal area in which the conflicting principles of centralization and decentralization struggle for supremacy... The validity of this characterization compels some consideration of the arguments both for and against territorial centralization and decentralization.

"The arguments for elaborate political centralization with some degree of administrative deconcentration are not unattractive in certain circumstances. For one thing, if a people is characterized by a great measure of homogeneity and is devoid of great regionally oriented diversity (economic, cultural, ideological, or religious), the reasons for organizing the state on a unitary rather than a federal basis also provide some justification for administrative centralization. A people of great uniformity, particularly if inhabiting a small area can be governed easily from a single center, with necessary administrative flexibility provided by a measure of territorial deconcentration. Uniform laws and relatively uniform administration are thus possible, and wide variations from one part of a
country to another in the number and quality of governmental services provided are avoided. A rational and well-integrated national governmental and administrative system is feasible.

"In addition to the benefits of efficiency and economy to be derived from uniform and nationally integrated administration, this combination of political centralization and administrative deconcentration also is attuned in some important respects to the demands of modern economics and technology. These two major forces of our age require broad geographical areas for their successful operation, and the related social and material problems which arise in their wake are also dependent for their resolution on broader areas than many traditional subsections of a country. Government can never afford to ignore the fact that a modern technologically oriented economy is at least national and actually even international in scope. Underdeveloped and semi-developed nations not only must create expanded domestic markets based upon the interaction of all parts of their territory, but they also require foreign manufactured goods, capital, and technical knowledge. Thailand, for example, imports an estimated 85% to 90% of all its consumer goods. To reduce this dependence on internationally derived imports, the country must develop its own manufacturing with international help.

"Moreover, the Thai economy depends almost completely upon the export of rice and such raw materials as tin and rubber in order to earn the foreign exchange necessary to buy all these consumer goods. Such interaction of the Thai and international economies is duplicated in a different fashion by the more developed lands, which also require foreign trade and imports from abroad for their own economic health. These facts of modern economic
life make it obvious that efforts to organize economic activity and foster industrialization locality by locality within a country without integrated national governmental action (planning of human and material resources) actually hinder economic development. Moreover, the local subdivisions of a country normally have neither the human, financial, or technical resources necessary either for significant independent improvement in material well-being or for the resolution of the great and complex problems generated by modern economic activity. Self-help on a community-by-community basis is important, but it cannot produce a solution to the major economic or social problems of contemporary states. As a result, even major industrialized western states with a traditional interest in decentralization and local self-government — such as the United States and Great Britain — have been forced into ever increased political and administrative centralization.

For, one of the outstanding characteristics of modernity is that people do not become more but become less isolated from each other as well as more dependent upon each other. This is the economic and administrative lesson to be derived from the fact that the world steadily grows "smaller".

The justifications for a significant degree of political and administrative centralization also include situations in which nations are seriously divided internally. For, where there is little social cohesion among the people of a country, and their will is fragmented by the absence of many common hopes and aspirations, administrative and possibly even governmental centralization frequently develop as artificial unifiers — as substitutes for basic mass agreement concerning values, beliefs, and ideology. It was in large measure because of such social fragmentation, for example, that modern France developed those centralized features of its
government and administration which traditionally have placed it in sharp contrast to Anglo-American practice.

"Where a nation is seriously threatened by internal disorder, or where it is marked by great mass illiteracy and political inexperience, still other arguments for some degree of political and administrative centralization are encountered. Rebellious localities cannot be allowed to overthrow the national government in the name of local self-government or even secede where this is judged detrimental to the interests of all the rest of the nation (the American Civil War is a case in point.) The ability of a central government to prevent such action, however, depends upon retention of majority support as well as preponderant power. In similar fashion, the principles of democracy do not demand the sacrifice of the general welfare and of all possibility for progress by requiring decentralization and local self-government where a people is still unready for such advanced political practice. In some Asian countries, such premature action has actually fostered local 'bossism' (near dictatorship), corruption, and increased incompetence. Good government and administration must adjust the application of principles and ideological goals to the actual realities of their setting at a particular moment in history. Such essential adjustment becomes evil only if it then is employed as a justification for establishing permanent tyranny rather than enlightened central governmental tutelage which works to prepare its people eventually to shoulder the burdens of self-government. So wise and ardent an advocate of liberty and representative government as the 19th century Englishman, John Stuart Mill, recognized this necessity to bring ultimate democratic goals and current actualities into balance.
While noting the existence, under certain circumstances, of justifications for political centralization and no more than administrative deconcentration instead of the establishment of a real local government system, it is also essential to recognize the distinct and impressive advantages which some significant measure of decentralization and local government offer. For one thing, political and administrative decentralization obviously erect important bulwarks against any dictatorship at the national level. It is thus not unimportant that the great totalitarian dictatorships of this century have refused to tolerate the existence of meaningful local government.

A decentralization of government and administration also permits experimentation and the development of new techniques by localities without compelling an entire nation to follow suit. Moreover, it permits the establishment of organizations and methods geared to the peculiar needs and problems of a particular locality, without forcing such organizations and methods upon the rest of a country, for whom it might be completely inappropriate. The recent series of territorial rebellions in the Republic of Indonesia because of the central government's failure to grant adequate local autonomy to ethnically and economically diverse islands, and its insistence on the maintenance of a centralized state whose leadership has failed to convince most of the territorial components that they were deriving any benefit from such centralization, is an excellent case in point.

Still another argument in behalf of the value of establishing a system of local government involves the contribution which is thereby made to the efficiency of operation of the central government itself. Such benefit derives from the separation of purely local problems and issues from things of national political concern. The national leadership, as a result, is
freed from the necessity to devote an improper amount of time and energy to issues which might better be treated by the territorial subdivision concerned. Decentralization also facilitates administrative efficiency because even local field offices of central administration often cannot be as conscious of local needs and peculiarities and certainly cannot be as responsive to the views dominant in a locality as can a unit of government derived from that locality.

"Lastly, there are some very cogent democratic arguments in behalf of some degree of political and administrative decentralization or deconcentration capable of establishing local self-government. For, only at the local level is it possible for citizens to feel a personal contact with government and give thought to problems of a specific and personal nature. Within the smallest governmental units, citizens have a chance to participate effectively to a far greater extent than at the national level in the process of self-government. Their political education is thus greatly enhanced, and those among them who aspire to political leadership are provided with an initial training and proving ground. Local self-government, therefore, presents the art of government more fully and on more intimate and personal terms than is possible at any higher level. The cause of democracy is thereby served.

"From the above survey of well-founded arguments both for and against the establishment of decentralization and a local government system, it becomes obvious that the modern and complex nation-state normally presents conditions which require an intermingling of techniques to promote territorial integration and management. Decentralization cannot be pursued to the point where it ignores the great contemporary need for uniform national treatment of many socio-economic problems. It cannot be urged without regard for the severe limitations which hamper local governmental efforts to promote the
wellbeing of their citizens on a piecemeal basis. The inequities which
are bound to arise because of diverse natural and financial resources in
the various regions of a country if the latter are not provided with some
equalized central assistance cannot be ignored for the mere sake of in-
creasing local government. In sum, a system of decentralization and
local self-government which fails to recognize that the general welfare
is more than the sum of local welfare, does not serve the cause of good
government. On the other hand, the imposition of a centralization which
stultifies experimentation, prevents local problems from being dealt with
locally, and places an entire nation in a rigid administrative mold in-
capable of effective adjustment and unresponsive to divergent local needs
also does considerable damage to the cause of good government.

"Within the limits of its special social, economic, philosophical,
and governmental requirements, therefore, central government must provide
considerable nationwide uniformity based upon the uniqueness of some vital
services, whose provision does not depend upon local differences, as well
as national administrative deconcentration based on the uniqueness of
various areas and capable of providing coherent administration and coordi-
nation of various central services within each of these different areas.
The central government must also provide reasonable uniform coordination
between such areas of the national territory. In these ways, it responds
to the centralizing tendencies and requirements of modern government.
Simultaneously, however, if it is interested in fostering democracy and
administrative efficiency, it must go beyond this blending of functional
and areal techniques in national administration in order to provide some
measure of local accountability in its governmental system. This requires
the introduction of a degree of both political and administrative decentralization — the establishment of some form of local government and administration. The variety of techniques available and utilized by the various states of the world indicates quite clearly that there is no single best solution to these problems of territorial management. On the other hand comparative analysis does provide important insight into both the problems and the possible solutions under various sets of circumstances."

* * *

C. Is Democracy Dependent Upon Local Government?

Professor Langrod says "No." In fact, he argues that local government may impede rather than aid the growth of a democratic society.

Two other writers disagree. One of these, it is interesting to note, presents his argument within the context of an Asian political setting — the people and government of India.

While Professor Langrod's article may be difficult to absorb because of its abstractness, it nevertheless remains a valuable item in a repertoire of views on local government. One might ask himself, "is it because Professor Langrod comes from a culture of French administration — in which less emphasis has traditionally been placed on local self-government, — and the others from Anglo-Saxon education and experiences that these divergent viewpoints have occurred? Is not Langrod, in short, defending French administration and the other, British?"
Local Government and Democracy

Professor Georges Langrod, "Local Government and Democracy," Public Administration, Vol. XXXI, 1953, pp.25-34. (less footnotes)

Public Administration Editor's Note:

(Professor Langrod is at the "Center National de la Recherche Scientifique," Paris, and is Professor of Comparative Administration in the Brazilian School of Public Administration, Rio de Janeiro. This article is based on a translation of a paper given by Professor Langrod to the Congress of the International Political Science Association at the Hague in September, 1952.)

"This study deals briefly with two concepts: First, there is the concept of local government as a basis for democracy, to be considered in the light of the questions: Is there really, as so often argued, a relation of cause and effect between a democratic regime and local government? Is political democratization of the state favorable to the existence and development of local government, or, in spite of certain misleading appearances to the contrary, is democratic evolution inimical to local government? Second, there is the concept of local government as a basis of civic education and as an apprenticeship in democracy to be considered in the light of the questions: What is the true role of local government in the work of the democratic education of the mass of the people, in the creation of a democratic "climate" within the whole machinery of the state, and in the formation of the future leaders of the political community?"
As the Basis of Democracy

"If local government really constituted the basis, or even one of the bases, of democracy, the logical result would be that the latter could not be conceived without it or that the whole democratic structure would risk collapse without it. On the other hand, the existence of local government would not be fully possible except within the framework of a democratic regime.

Such a conception, implied rather than clearly stated, is to be found in political literature and seems to be supported by a general conviction. Thus local government is often identified, for example, with 'communal democracy' in the sense of Thouret's pouvoir municipal, or of the German kommunale Selbstverwaltung (Gneist), with the 'grass roots democracy' of the United States (Lilienthal) or with the 'local self-government' of Great Britain. In the small European democracies, as regards extent of territory, e.g., Switzerland, democracy is generally considered to be based on the local commune. But there appears to be a characteristic tendency rather to integrate the institution of local government with the democratic regime than to examine the alleged dependence of the latter on the local government existing within itself.

Now it appears that there is here, fundamentally, a regrettable confusion of ideas. In actual fact, there appears to be no justification for asserting that there exists an inevitable tie of reciprocal dependence between democracy and local government. Democracy does not come into being where local government appears, nor does it cease with the disappearance of the latter. It is possible, on the contrary, for local government to continue and to develop under a regime which may be either clearly non-democratic or
only superficially democratic or for local government scarcely to exist or
to exist only superficially under a democratic regime. The opposite thesis
seems to result either from the fact that (a) one limits oneself to an
analysis of earlier historical evolution, or (b) that one confuses one of
the factors necessary for the creation of the democratic climate (the
essential basis for democracy) with the existence of democratic institutions
(the indispensable superstructure for any democratic regime), or (c) that
one unconsciously transposes the possible (but in no way indispensable)
democratic essence of the internal workings of local government on to the
higher level of democracy in the whole state (linking 'local democracy'
with the democracy of the whole community). It is necessary to devote some
attention to this threefold misunderstanding.

"It is true, indeed, that historically, the development of local
government in Europe has corresponded to an anti-authoritarian process
in the state, since in decentralizing the administrative system, emphasis
was at the same time being laid upon the importance of the periphery in
relation to the (territorial) center; by carrying into effect, in practice
and in law, centrifugal administrative trends, the centripetal trend, linked
historically with absolutism, was being fatally weakened. In the same way
it is true that this process has corresponded with a parallel evolution
towards democratization on the political-social level. It is consequently
ture also that not only on the institutional level, but, more important,
on that of the general climate, the development, stabilization and extension
of local government contribute towards the democratization of customs, to
the education of the masses and to preparing them in this way for an active
participation in public life. It is true, finally, that often, but not
always, local government helps to spread by its internal structure, the psychological bases and structural forms of democracy.

"But if the problem is studied more closely, none of these statements justifies the identification of local government with democracy. It must not be forgotten that the problem of local government is—in spite of this deceptive title—but a technical arrangement within the mechanism of the administrative system, a structural and functional detail, based on the adaptation of traditional forms of the management of local affairs to the varied needs of modern administration. Now in spite of efforts tending to add to Montesquieu's tripartite division a fourth power, namely, municipal power, and in spite of the various repercussions of the existence of local government, which go far beyond the level of the purely administrative, it seems clear that democracy cannot depend, at least directly, on the existence or non-existence of an administrative arrangement, whatever it may be. To make this picture more striking (although this is only a simplification) it could be argued that it is a question here of a difference of levels. A centralized administrative system, not democratic in so (as regards its composition, recruitment, structure, environment), helps to create a climate foreign to democracy, but—as is proved by various historical examples and by the comparative study of the administrative structure of contemporary states—it is not enough in itself effectively to stand in the way of the existence of democracy. The latter often tolerates within itself various non-democratic and even sometimes anti-democratic phenomena (for example in the army, in the machinery of justice, in the fiscal system, in education, in the organization of some professions, etc...), although in principle it tends to make them disappear.
"Democracy can never be considered as a total phenomenon, absorbing the whole life of the community and penetrating inevitably into every corner; to think so would be to approach the problem superficially and artificially. Consequently, even if one wanted to identify the democratization of the administrative system with local government (and this would be a debatable point), this would in no way justify the thesis that the existence of democracy depends on it, that it is one of the foundations of democracy.

"Even if the democratic climate plays an extremely important role in every democracy (it could even be argued that it conditions it, since democratic institutions alone are never enough for democracy to be achieved in fact and not simply in form), it is nevertheless not sufficient by itself—democratic institutions are also necessary. If, therefore, it is established that local government plays—directly and indirectly—a possible role in the creation of this general climate, this alone would still not be enough to make of it a foundation for democracy. On the institutional level, the existence of local government in no way excludes a high degree of bureaucratization as much in the centralized hierarchy (at all the stages of the administrative pyramid) as in the inner workings of the decentralized organs themselves. Indeed, local government can sometimes serve local oligarchies, political coteries, anti-democratic forces, rather than constitute a true reflection of the public will. In some countries local government, with its structural anachronisms, the high degree of its internal functionalization, the preponderance in practice of the permanent official over the elected and temporary councillor, its methods of work and its obstinate opposition to all modernization,
can, contrary to all appearances, act as a brake on the process of democratization. Further, it is also necessary to analyse the extent of the effective powers in every case under consideration, the real autonomy, the limits of central control and the way in which this is in fact exercised, the financial dependence of the local on the central government, etc. It is therefore a question of not taking words for realities, of not being content with a facade often fictitious and deceptive, but of going in each case right to the heart of the problem.

"If formerly there has been a certain parallelism between the evolution of local government and the development of democracy, it appears that this parallelism is due rather to fortuitous reasons, at least from the juridicotheoretical point of view. In other respects, this parallelism is less general than one may think. When a state has long since passed from the absolutist age to that of the constitutional regime, local government has often remained (for example in Austria from 1866 to 1918) a veritable fortress of anachronistic privileges. Side by side with parliamentary elections based on equality and universality, we find throughout half a century, and in the middle of the 20th century itself, electoral inequalities on the local government level, based upon purely material criteria and on a clearly anti-democratic spirit. Thus, local government has not always developed towards its own democratization, sometimes moving in a direction contrary to the trend in the state as a whole. Account must be taken of numerous examples of this kind.

"Thus, to sum up, even if the process of administrative decentralization was utilized by democracy in action as one of the weapons against absolutism and as a motive center of an adequate political environment, this is in no
way demonstrates the inevitability of their alleged interdependence, but
only their chronological co-existence on the one hand and the purely oppor-
tunist and sometimes even fortuitous character of this co-existence on the
other.

Is there a Fundamental Contradiction?

Furthermore, if democracy is studied in its dynamic, and not simply
in its static or historical, aspect, it can clearly be seen that there is, in
spite of appearances, a fundamental contradiction between these two
notions. Democracy is by definition an egalitarian, majority and unitarian
system. It tends everywhere and at all times to create a social whole, a
community which is uniform, leveled and subject to rules. It avoids any
splitting up of the governing (and at the same time governed) body, any
atomization, any appearance of intermediaries between the whole and the
individual. It puts the latter face to face with the complete whole,
directly and singly. On the other hand, local government is, by definition,
a phenomenon of differentiation, of individualization, of separation. It
represents and strengthens separate social groups enjoying relative inde-
pendence, sometimes autonomous, constituting parts of the public power.
It furthers, then, the relief of congestion, a certain disintegration, a
kind of local quasi-parliamentarianism, the multiplicity of local repre-
sentative regimes within a national representative regime. It constitutes
the direct historical reflection of a multiple struggle within the state:
a struggle of social and political forces
against centralist absolutism; a struggle of national minorities against
the majority and of the minorities amongst themselves within the multi-
national state; a struggle against the survivals of feudalism in the admin-
istrative structure; a struggle for cultural and economic regionalism.

"Thus, since democracy moves inevitably and by its very essence towards
centralization, local government, by the division which it creates, constitutes,
all things considered, a negation of democracy. It is true that this aspect
of the phenomenon only appears later, in the course of the process of effect-
ive democratization. Indeed, the closer the given state approaches a fully
democratic regime, the less chance local government has—contrary to the
general opinion—for development. Centralism becomes a natural democratic
phenomenon; decentralization is exceptional, and more or less artificial.
This was underlined in de Tocqueville's statements and prophecies of 120 years
ago.

"Bryce, the theoretician of the modern democracies, emphasizes this
characteristic analogy between the tendencies of the authoritarian regime
and those of democracy. As Radbruch says: 'When the management of communal
affairs is entrusted to the local majority, there is a risk of eliminating
the predominating influence of the majority at the national level over this
local majority (these two majorities being possible quite different); yet
the unlimited domination of the overall majority constitutes the very essence
of the democratic regime.'

"Democratization of the state tends to transform its government pro-
gressively into a self-government of the whole population—which must, during
the course of this evolution, make any local government, 'opposed' to the
central government, superfluous and devoid of any logical basis. Democratic
election on a national scale constitutes a guarantee of the representative
regime without requiring its repetition at all the less than national levels
or the partial personalization of the territorial sections of the state. As has already been mentioned, the democratization of public administration, a valuable complement to the democratization of the whole community, may be attempted by a series of different technical arrangements (without the creation of distinct moral personalities) and without recourse to anti-egalitarian differentiations.

"This state of affairs must be understood, or the picture as a whole will be unconsciously falsified. Local government and democracy triumphant represent indeed diametrically opposite tendencies. Democracy in action will claim, then, sooner or later, but inevitably, a breakaway from the fundamental idea of local government and will demand administrative centralization. That is one of the most important problems, and one which is so often unappreciated, although it is a general one in the light of the study of comparative administration. As has already been emphasised many times in published works, the incompatibility of democratic principle with the practice of decentralization is a phenomenon so evident that it may be considered as a kind of sociological law.

"As to the alleged democratic essence of local government, which is said to react upon the political-social structure and upon the form of government of the whole community, this would result from the fact that its deliberative organs are elected." French administrative doctrine even makes this a sine qua non of all territorial decentralization. Comparative experience seems to show that it is election, rather than nomination, which constitutes the principal method of recruitment for local leaders. To a casual observer, election can, then, in actual fact, appear as the differential specific of local government in relation to the formation of the
bureaucratic hierarchy within the framework of every centralized regime.

"But, as is demonstrated in the literature of administrative law (especially in Germany), this phenomenon, however frequent it may be, nevertheless appears in no way essential to the idea of local government. Administrative decentralization is reconcilable with every means of obtaining local leaders. Theoretically speaking, there is no serious reason why election, in public administration, should be considered as definitely characterizing local government.

"In practice, it is easy to find instances of election in a centralized administration or of nomination in local government. It is true that election seems better to maintain the idea of the independence of local government (independence in its subjective sense) and that historically—at the period of the integration of the former self-governing bodies in the administrative framework of the modern state—it constituted a catchword and a password directed against the bureaucratic hegemony of absolutist centralism, although the historical evolution of British local government has been quite different.

"In other respects, it would be in no way just to identify every electoral system with democracy. It has been demonstrated that sometimes administrative decentralization, although involving the process of election, remains nevertheless anti-democratic—just because of the way in which this process is carried out in law or in fact. Politically speaking, election can constitute a facade pure and simple with no real content; it can serve an authoritarian regime by concealing its dictorial character. From the administrative point of view, it seems more and more that the 'subjective' independence of the local representatives (in relation to the
central government) seems better assured by adequate processes of nomination (this leaps to the eye in the sphere of judicial power, but seems true also in the sphere of public administration).

'Democratic election, that is to say above all universal election, by introducing inevitably into administration the political element (falsified moreover by its local aspect) and the struggle between parties (in the framework of proportional representation), seems less and less to serve the idea of 'good administration'. Indeed, the more public administration develops (in size), improves (in quality) and becomes more technical, the less place there is for the preponderance of purely political factors; the unforeseeable results of an election risk, the destruction of continuity, may deprive local representation of its truly civic character and may set local government in opposition to the true popular will. It is thus, furthermore, that the preponderance of the bureaucratic element appears and develops and is inevitably stabilized in local government. In this way the essential difference between centralized administration and local government is progressively wiped out. Finally, comparative experience proves that in local government election is always balanced by a complementary system of nomination, the co-optation of part of the committees of the council, the appointment of local officials, etc.

'To sum up: the electoral system in local government in practice always oscillates between two poles: allowing the popular will to show itself and attempting to suppress the defects of this will. But the essence of local government seems to be not so much in an exclusive method of creating ruling organs as in a reasonable functional distribution and in a non-hierarchical structure. Thus the technical element of decentralization
far outstrips, in this connection, that of democracy. Local government lato sensu seems to correspond much more closely with liberal political ideas than with those of democracy.

As Education for Democracy

"Local government can play a very important part in the work of the democratic education of the people. If decentralization actually takes place and is not simply fictitious; if it is, then, a basis of very close co-operation between the individual and the 'local powers' and not a concealed bureaucracy; and if the influence of the individual on the formation of the body of local leaders is real, not superficial, local government can constitute a real school of civics, a way of bringing the citizen close to public affairs and a nursery of statesmen. Local government becomes in this way a sieve for the selection of future political leaders who become known in local affairs before gradually extending their field of activity. This selection has a chance of being more objective, more direct, more justified. The integration of citizens in this active political elite of the country and their promotion into its specific hierarchy of public offices is thus carried out by stages as their competence and their experience grows.

"But this picture has its shadows. On the one hand, comparative experience shows that it is possible for this apprenticeship for democracy not to be carried out within local government. Indeed, the practical role of the civic element is sometimes—in spite of the law and in spite of appearances—secondary, more or less formal and limited. The citizen acquires from it, under these conditions, a more or less profound knowledge of local affairs, of public administration at this level and of methods of working
together. But it is practically impossible for him to penetrate to the heart of the phenomena, to take them in their entirety, to achieve the idea of the public good. Guided, in fact, by a professional 'clerk,' the citizen only rarely has to take on real responsibilities and more often than not is only part of the scene, with no real influence on events. He therefore has no opportunity to learn administration or government. What he does learn can be reduced to terms of electoral or pre-electoral practices, oratorical demonstrations, and the strategy of small town politics.

"On the other hand, this form of 'local representation' comprises elements liable to lead to a certain narrowing of the horizons of local interests government leaders, contrary to the spirit of any democracy. Indeed, local/interpreted in a narrow way, are liable to cover up general interests by ensuring the predominance of 'parish-pump politics.' The apprenticeship can become, in practice, definitely anti-democratic in spite of the democratic character of local government. At this point it is necessary to consider a whole series of slightly differing factors which, in spite of appearances, prevent in fact the achievement of a democratic education of the people through the agency of local government. Comparative experience proves that the deliberative local government bodies (of whatever kind) are inclined to serve and represent private interests rather than the general interest (which goes beyond them). It matters little whether the electoral system is the same at both the national and the local levels: the practical results are very often quite different because of the difference in perspective and the peculiarities of the administrative task on the local level; the same problems are tackled there in another fashion. Thus it is possible for the citizen taking part in local government to know little or nothing of true
democracy in its political and social sense, and to confuse it in fact with a keen defence of sectional and piecemeal interests, with a permanent struggle against the center.

"Finally, this way of forming progressively, in stages, the future leaders of the political community has setting aside its merits—some undeniable defects as to access to democratic offices. Indeed, there is a risk that a fixed hierarchy of the said offices may be set up, making difficult any direct contribution from outside. The citizen finds himself in fact under an obligation to go through in turn a whole series of stages in this hierarchy. In consequence, there is only one means (at least only one main means) of access to the active exercise of political rights at the level of the state, that is to say the progress—obligatory in fact—through public office at the local level. And at this level, as has already been said, the basis of selection concerns private criteria connected with local preoccupations, not general ones. If, in this connection, we take into consideration peculiarities of political promotion within the popular political parties, the rigidity and narrow character of this hierarchy strikes one immediately.

"If then we confront the abstraction with the reality and in spite of the presumption usually favorable to local government as it concerns democratic education, we find that it has not, of itself and a priori, the pedagogic qualities attributed to it. It can prove itself particularly useful in preparing the citizen for public life, by constituting the first stage of his civic education. But everything depends on the way in which it is thought out and carried into effect, on its structure and its working, on its dynamics and creative elan, on its range of legal authority and on the
actual role played in it by the non-professional element. It is not, then, simply the outward appearance, but the content which is decisive.

"Yet it seems undeniable that local government can and ought to be included in the list of factors capable of contributing effectively to the creation of a democratic climate. By the very fact that it is directed towards the differentiation of the population into distinct divisions of the whole, towards the possible variety of solutions and towards the autonomy of the territorial divisions, it permits the attainment of a greater harmony between general regulations and the popular will than is the case in a centralized regime. In spite of the frequent defects of its organization and of its methods, in spite of its cost and of the sometimes unsatisfactory results of its administration, it tends to integrate more closely the power of the people being governed—a fundamental postulate of any democratic reform. By its local character (arising, as regards its early origin, from the ties of neighbourhood), it increases the chances of mutual understanding, of closer and more stable human relations; it prevents the work of public authorities from being an impenetrable mystery to the majority of mankind, which is the characteristic setting of a centralized autocracy. This increases the chances of the practical application of democratic conceptions, by contributing to the creation of an environment more favourable to them. If, then, this environment is not killed at its center by the possible anti-democratic character of the structure or working, undoubtedly it may play a practical role in the preparation of the future democracy."
Conclusion

"Finally, what precedes may be summed up by stating that local government plays a definite and positive part in the progress towards liberty and possibly a positive part in the process of democratization. But at the same time, even if decentralization contributes towards democratization, and this, we know, is not inevitable, it leads inevitably in the last resort to the achievement of centralism in democracy. This is, then, a complex picture, difficult to clear up at first. By facilitating the possible apprenticeship for certain types of democracy and by propagating the democratic climate (or, at least, the climate common to democracy and to political liberalism), local government has within itself, inevitably, the seed of its own death once the process of democratization is accomplished. Whoever studies local government, then, in all its possible aspects, must notice that—unless the picture is to be falsified—it cannot be analyzed from the point of view of democracy except in a very full manner." (Pages 25-33)

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Local Government and Democracy--A Rejoinder
By Keith Panter-Brick

Public Administration, Vol. XXXI, 1953, pp. 344-8

Mr. Panter-Brick of the London School of Economics and Political Science replies to Professor Langrod's article.

"In his paper 'Local Government and Democracy,' read at a meeting of the International Political Science Association at The Hague last summer..."
and subsequently published in this journal (Spring, 1953), Professor Langrod questions certain common assumptions about local government. He denies that local government is necessarily part of a democratic system of government, and he denies also that local government is an essential element in the political education of the electorate. It is acknowledged by Professor Langrod that local government and democracy have gone hand in hand in the past, indeed that local government played an important part in the creation of a democratic climate of opinion in various countries, but it is contested that there is any other connection than this one of historical association. Today local government and democracy can no longer be said to be inevitably interdependent. Professor Langrod goes further. He raises the question whether there is not an essential contradiction between the two.

"To be jolted into questioning one's beliefs about local government is certainly salutary, even if as a result they are only reaffirmed in one's mind. Moreover, if that be the result, then to have had attention drawn to practices which cast doubt upon one's assumptions should be a stir to action. Professor Langrod's remarks merit then careful attention.

"He is led to question the alleged necessary dependence of democracy upon a system of local government, first by certain factual considerations. These are that local government may in fact function in an undemocratic manner, even in a state that is as a whole democratic. Further, Professor Langrod reflects that local government is after all only a technical administrative arrangement. What is important for democracy is a democratic climate of opinion, and democracy may prevail even though certain institutions have in themselves nondemocratic features. A centralized administrative system for instance may be the instrument of democratic government."
"Having thus questioned whether in fact democracy and local government are to be found in a necessary relationship, Professor Langrod turns to a consideration of the nature of local government and of democracy. He then ventures to ask whether they have not come to be contradictory.

"Democracy is by definition an egalitarian, majority and unitarian system. It tends everywhere and at all times to create a social whole, a community which is uniform, levelled, and subject to rules. It avoids any splitting up of the governing (and at the same time governed) body, any atomization, any appearance of intermediaries between the whole and the individual. It puts the latter face to face with the complete whole, directly and singly. On the other hand, local government is, by definition, a phenomenon of differentiations, of individualization, of separation....thus, since democracy moves inevitably and by its very essence towards centralization, local government, by the division which it creates, constitutes all things considered a negation of democracy.....Democratization of the state tends to transform its government progressively into a self-government of the whole population—which must, during the course of this evolution, make any local government, 'opposed' to the central government, superfluous and devoid of any logical basis....Local government and democracy triumphant represent indeed diametrically opposite tendencies....the incompatibility of democratic principle with the practice of decentralization is a phenomenon so evident that it may be considered as a kind of sociological law.

"Finally—and largely in consequence of these definitions—Professor Langrod doubts whether local government plays a sure and indispensable role in democratic education, however closely it has been associated in the past with the growth of a democratic climate of opinion. Professor Langrod, talking of the local citizen, considers that 'it is practically impossible for
him to penetrate to the heart of the phenomena, to take them in their entirety, to achieve the idea of the public good. He speaks of local representation leading to 'a certain narrowing of the horizons of local government leaders, contrary to the spirit of any democracy' and claims that 'comparative experience proves that the deliberative local government bodies (of whatever kind) are inclined to serve and represent private interests rather than the general interest (which goes beyond them).'

"Here then is local government in the dock. It is for each and every one of us to recall the arguments in its favor; not however, in the manner of repeating well-worn maxims, but tested in the light of Professor Langrod's remarks.

"He bases himself in the first place, so we said, on certain factual considerations such as the non-democratic functioning of local government in a community nonetheless democratic; and he stresses the democratic climate of opinion, not the existence of local government, as being the indispensable factor in a democracy. Now it cannot and need not be disputed that local government may function undemocratically. It must be questioned, however, to what extent a country as a whole may be democratic despite local government being managed in an undemocratic manner. Professor Langrod generalizes his point when he says: 'Democracy can never be considered as a total phenomenon, absorbing the whole life of the community and penetrating inevitably into every corner; to think so would be to approach the problem superficially and artificially.' The extent to which one agrees with Professor Langrod on this point will depend upon one's conception of democracy. Not merely sensitivity to opinion on the part of the authorities, but also participation of some kind or another by the citizen may be stressed as being fundamental to democracy. It must then be doubted to what extent a country is democrati-
ic where some important part of the system of government functions in a characteristically undemocratic manner; that is, is not democratic in itself (as regards its composition, recruitment, structure, environment) as Professor Langrod himself puts it. This point needs further elaboration, but the question of the meaning of democracy has been raised, and it is convenient to consider Professor Langrod's contention that democracy and local government are essentially contradictory, before saying more on the part local government can and does play in a democracy.

"Professor Langrod may or may not commit himself personally to the definition of democracy he has given. He asserts it, however, as the prevailing conception, and he speaks of the tendency of democracy being in a certain direction. We are reminded of the language of Marx.

"By facilitating the possible apprenticeship for certain types of democracy and by propagating the democratic climate (or, at least, the climate common to democracy and political liberalism) local government has within itself, inevitably, the seed of its own death once the process of democratization is accomplished....Democracy in action will claim, then, sooner or later, but inevitably, a breakaway from the fundamental idea of local government and will demand administrative centralization."

"Now Professor Langrod is certainly drawing attention to an important tendency. Much of the centralization in this country is due not to the outmoded area of local government nor to the inability to devise a satisfactory source of local finance, difficulties though these be, but rather to the persistent demand for uniformity of standards throughout the country. But is this a democratic demand? Are we to accept the emphasis on uniformity as the hallmark of democracy? In many respects it is the Rousseauian conception of democracy. The emphasis is on self-government of the population
as a whole. Rousseau was hostile to any authority lesser than that of
the whole community. On this conception local government is necessarily
partial because on any question there is the interest of the wider com-

munity which must prevail. There is the same insistence on the inadequacy,
indeed the iniquity, of any viewpoint other than the general one, and on
the insidious influence of any lesser interest or groupings.

"It is an attractive theory; and it may be admitted that there are
few matters, if any, which can be said to be in themselves purely local,
and therefore outside the province of the general interest. This stress
on the general interest emphasizes, however, only one aspect of democracy,
and probably not the most important if only because it is the most abstract.
It is even only one side of Rousseau himself. Did he not favour the small
community, precisely because democracy is to be understood not only as the
supremacy of the general over lesser interests; but also as the free real-
ization of this? Democracy involves not only the determination of the
general interest by representative institutions, but also an awareness that
what prevails is the general interest. Otherwise there is no freedom. It
is not for nothing that democracy and self-government have been identified.
There is, however, no compulsion to accept this theory, not even if the
recent insistence on uniformity and the centralization that this involves
has in fact got the upper hand. Professor Langrod is right when he says
that the historical association of local government and democracy is not
necessarily proof that they are related in a more intimate manner. But it
could be said with equal force that democratic opinion having brought about
the greater centralization of government, it is no proof that democracy and
local government are incompatible, and that local government has now to be
abandoned as incompatible with democracy. There are indications in
Professor Langrod’s paper that he would distinguish between democracy and political liberalism, ascribing the latter the insistence upon liberty and to democracy the desire for uniform standards. This, however, is to abandon a highly emotive word to those who acquiesce in the sacrifice of liberty to uniformity, with all the dangers that involves, and it is also to resign oneself to what is considered to be the inevitable. If a stand is not made for liberty in the name of democracy then liberty will indeed be lost.

"It is meet at this point to consider what contribution local government can make to democracy, and thus to return to the earlier question we raised, in se, such as a centralized administrative system can be part of a democracy. Mr. C.H. Wilson has already made the relation of local government to democracy the theme of his excellent introductory essay to his Essays in Local Government, but since what is said there apparently cannot be said too often, this is my excuse for going over the ground again.

"As too much should perhaps not be made of the mere fact that local government allows for greater personal participation in the actual business of governing. Much more important is, that local government is not only historically associated with democracy, in that it helped to bring about a democratic climate of opinion, but is also an important element in keeping opinion favourable to democracy. Nowhere is democratic government so well entrenched that succeeding generations do not have to learn by their own experience. Democracy is not the egalitarian uniformity Professor Langrod seems to suppose. It demands that another’s point of view and another’s interests be mutually appreciated and taken into account. This is much more difficult to achieve. As Hume said about ethical conduct, it depends very much upon sympathy brought about by close personal contact.

Modern sociologists would talk of face-to-face groupings. If the apprecia-
tion of one another's standpoint is not learned in the local communities, it risks not being learned at all.

"Here we may be accused of exaggeration. Local government, it may be objected, is not the only way of establishing the necessary sympathy upon which democracy is based. There is, however, a further aspect to local government. It not only engenders sympathy; it also tends to guard against too much enthusiasm, against the disinterested but misguided benevolence which in its enthusiasm fails to count the cost. The administrative and financial difficulties of bright ideas can be learned at the parish-pump level, and the lessons learned there on the small scale are valid when one's thoughts turn to the greater possibilities of providing for the general interest. It is not denied that a similar caution and skepticism can be learned by participation of one kind or another in national politics, but the lessons learned on the grand scale are likely not only to be more expensive, but also less well-learned, in that 'they' and not oneself can more easily be blamed when it is the national government. In any case, if democratic government is an art, there is no harm in it being learned on as wide a front as possible. Indeed, since art is learned by a close attention to detail, local government is a vital training ground for democracy.

"Too much must not be claimed for local government, but the successful working of democratic government owes much to it, not only as a matter of past history, but at all times. Far from an attention to local interests rendering a man incapable of appreciating the general interest, he is indeed likely to conceive the general interest in highly abstract and dangerous terms if he has not the more intimate experience of government at the local level. The present disinterest in local government affairs is thus disquieting. "Local government will undoubtedly mean some sacrifice of uniformity
among the localities; as has been said already, however, the hallmark of democracy is not uniformity, even when understood in the special sense of treating only the alike in the same fashion. Democracy, to repeat, means the free acceptance of restraints as much as the supremacy of the general interest. Looked at from this standpoint, central and local government from a partnership, not a contradiction. Executive action is a constraining force, whether imposed centrally or locally, in the general or in the local interest. It is likely to be used better, understood better, and hence more freely accepted if at least some policy is left to be determined locally. Recent developments in this country have brought about a greater demand for direct and financial control over local authorities than has been known in the past. The dangers have often been decried. It would be unfortunate if anyone were to be encouraged by Professor Langrod to believe that an extension of that control until local authorities were indistinguishable from local agents of the central government was a matter of indifference from the point of view of democratic practice.

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Local Self-Government
A.B. Lal, The Indian Parliament,
Chaitanya Publishing House,
Allahabad-2, India, 1956

"It now remains to say a word about local self-government. It has recently been argued by Dr. Leo Moulin and Professor Langrod that local government is not necessarily an integral part of a democratic system of government, and that there may even be an intrinsic contradiction between the one and the other. Dr. Moulin, addressing the Congress of the International
Political Science Association at the Hague, in September, 1952, insisted that far from being the best training for the exercise of democracy at the state level, the realities of local political life are so little in conformity with the spirit and ethics of a democracy that they usually tend to distort and debase the processes of democracy, first at the municipal level and then at the national level. He pointed out that local authorities are extremely jealous of their autonomy and fall a prey to strong local pressures, that the local government is essentially a training in the defense of interests which are strictly and narrowly local and almost individual and that 'the higher interests of the nation—that community spirit which is also one of the features of democratic ethics—are usually overlooked or, if necessary, sacrificed.' He has quoted the cases of Greece in the fifth and the fourth centuries B.C., and of Italy and the Netherlands in the fifteenth century when 'an over-intense local life finally came into conflict with the evolution and application of a broad, overall policy and led to anarchy, the mother of dictatorship.'

"Similarly, Professor Langrod has suggested that the exercise of local government is not always 'the best apprenticeship for the practice of democracy at the state level.' Indeed, it can with some force be maintained that there are basic differences in the nature of affairs to be handled at the central level and those handled at the local level. The central government has to face the problems of defense, foreign policy, and national development, of which a local man has no understanding and which he can only approach in a most general fashion. 'A local administrator,' Dr. Moulin has written, 'no matter how energetic he may be, has not necessarily the making of a great statesman.' He may have skill necessary to deal with local issues but he may not have the mental equipment to handle broader national issues."
which call for a judgment which cannot be cultivated in the local arena.
Again, it has been argued that municipal government has never been democratic in the modern meaning of the word for it might have ensured the safety of the person but it has cared little about freedom and the Rights of Man.

"Now it is easy to meet most of these arguments. To the question of the inability of the local administrator to understand and handle broader national issues an answer has been given that 'participation in local politics, while it might at times detract from the wider issues, nevertheless adds to the sum of experience by which an individual forms his own judgment of what is just and is made aware of what others consider just; that those who are active in local affairs are normally not so parochial that they cannot respond to the just claims of others when these are pointed out to them; that an experience of administration on the local level can teach man some of the limitations of political action; that participation in the affairs of the local community will help man to know better what constitutes justice and will make it easier, not more difficult, for him to give a more sympathetic hearing to the overriding claims of the wider community; and finally, that a system of local government constitutes an effective basis for democracy as it affords 'invaluable opportunities' and gives an insight into political activity and political justice.

"Indeed the practical need of local government in modern democratic states is obvious. The population being large and complex and the area being vast, we come to have complex local problems and complex central issues. The two sets of problems, even if they do not require different sets of qualities for their solution, require different kinds of experience; and experience gained on the spot naturally leads to a much better and must quicker solution. The administration of local affairs from outside will lack 'the
vitalizing ability to be responsive to local opinion. It may be a little more efficient (although even that is doubtful) but it will very certainly fail to evoke either interest or responsibility. There is also the practical question of the incidence of taxation. If a service is exclusively applied to the benefit of a particular district it is obviously only fair that the inhabitants of the district should pay for it. But the most important argument for local government is its educative value. It may be correct that local problems are different from those of the center, but it is difficult to see how different sets of qualities are needed to solve the two kinds of problems. Basically there will be no difference. A consciousness of one's rights and duties, honesty, the desire to understand public issues and public spirit--these are some of the qualities needed as much for the handling of local affairs as for central. A man who realizes that his street is badly paved because a body of persons directly under his view and influence are inefficient begins to have a sense of the network of interest in which he is involved. Local government, in other words, is educative in perhaps a higher degree, at least contingently, than any other part of government.

Furthermore, in a backward country like India, which is committed to the establishment of a welfare state within the framework of parliamentary democracy, an effective and balanced system of local government can go a long way. It is bound to have a vital place in planning in India. On the one hand, there is the need of a strong centralized state in India and on the other hand, the association of local interest and opinion is an essential factor in the promotion of development schemes. Thus 'the pace at which progress should take place' is not to be sacrificed and at the same time the 'formidable pressure' of a centralized state is to be avoided.
Dr. Moulin has called our civilization 'a gregarious mass civilization which is unfavourable, if not hostile, to all forms of individual life.' We are living in a world in which the emphasis is on equality and justice at any price rather than on safeguarding freedom. In such a world local self-government has little hope of survival. But just as the growth of delegated legislation need not completely destroy the foundations of the Rule of Law, similarly equality and justice and a positive theory of state activity need not sound the death-knell of local self-government. There is no essential contradiction between 'a liberal democracy' and 'an egalitarian and majoritarian democracy.'

Our local government system is a western institution deliberately introduced here. In this sphere there was little room for adaptation. Mr. Hugh Tinker of London University in his recent study, *The Foundations of Local Self-Governments in India, Pakistan and Burma, 1954,* has pointed out that the local government system in India originated from two motives—administrative and political. Before 1882, it was intended to 'teach people not to look to government for things which they can do far better themselves,' and in 1882, Lord Ripon's Resolution was planned to serve 'as an instrument of political and popular education.' In this second phase, local self-government was to divert the new Indian middle class from 'less desirable directions' and 'to prepare them for greater responsibilities.' And since neither object was consistently followed, the result was the changing character of local self-government. The Montford Reforms envisaged local self-government as one of the fields in which an advance could be made towards 'the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration.' The inauguration of provincial autonomy under the Act of 1935, gave a fresh impetus to the development of local government and its democratization. After the trans-
D. Adaptations in Egypt and Pakistan

Two short news items point up two non-western views of the question of democracy and local administration. The Egyptian reference is interesting for its observations concerning the politically unfeasible nature of democratic processes yet points out the need for integrating local with national administration. Likewise, the view in Pakistan is that Western or British parliamentary democracy cannot be applied; still an integrating system must be established—the proposed solution was tagged "basic democracies."

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NEW MOOD FOUND IN NASSER's EGYPT

The New York Times, December 30, 1959

West's Democracy Alien

"If President Nasser's grip on the public imagination should be shaken by disappointment in economic expectations, Nasserism will be reinforced by social and political devices. One of the President's closest associates, who cannot be quoted directly, gave an explanation."

"'We have a concept of democracy, it differs from yours,' he said. If we had an election on the American plan, it would be foolish. You have evolved over hundreds of years. The Western community started evolving toward democracy when there were no Communists and no radios and other mass media, and perhaps not such an oppressive contrast between great and small countries. Your forefathers working in a rich land were not troubled by a cold war."

"'If we had your conditions we would accept your kind of democracy. But we woke up too late. We need something more dynamic, more realistic. We are going into the last part of the twentieth century with the equipment of the sixteenth.
"'If we use your system the Communists will succeed, because they can speak to masses.

'You can't have elections here in the form you Americans believe in. It can't be applied in Asia and Africa. There is no basis for it.

'We have, therefore, started a new experience here. It centers in the idea of a National Union.'

Denying that this was simply a one-party system, the Nasser aide explained that the idea begins in the villages and in social centers in the villages. The real revolution must come in the villages, he said, 'and the social centers are the places to reach the people.'

'For every five villages we are establishing a combined social center, with economic and educational branches,' he went on.

'The above centers are the points of departure for village elections. Every village has elected a council, replacing the old appointed mayor. The council constitutes itself a cooperative and works with the government's agricultural experts. It is up to the councils to make land reform work, by joint irrigation service, common seed supplies, cooperative marketing and so on. That in itself is revolutionary.'

'He said each council elected two of its members to a provincial council that would in turn elect the national union of 1,000 men.

'The national union will elect a parliament of 300 men.

'While the national union deals in general policies, the parliament is to approve the budget and to legislate. It will not be able to overthrow a government, but it is to have power to declare 'lack of confidence' in individual ministers.

'President Nasser's aides maintain that political parties could eventually grow out of this kind of democracy. It one calls it 'guided' democracy
they are not insulted.

"They say that President Nasser knows he will not live forever, and that he is seeking organizational forms that would insure continuance of his revolution through coming phases--the rooting out of corruption, modernization of all aspects of national life and reform even of marriage and divorce laws."

* * *

Pakistan: If Not Democracy, What?

Source: Time, 4 January 60, pp.21-22.

......Though Ayub is Amhurst-trained and an admirer of British he wants to be free of the methods inherited from the British. 'So long as I am alive and at the helm of affairs,' he said, 'there will not be parliamentary democracy in this country, because it cannot work. This country cannot be a testing laboratory for political theories any more.'

"Ending Parties. Last March Ayub settled himself in his teak-paneled study in the huge president's house at Karachi and wrote the outline for his 'basic democracies', which are intended to begin at the beginning and, after building a strong, democratic base, to construct the structure above. What emerged was a political system based on the ancient institution of the village panchayat (council of elders). Each council, with elected as well as appointed representatives, will represent 10,000 people. Working without salaries, council members will be expected to levy local taxes, maintain roads, operate police forces, register births and deaths, and handle some 30 other jobs, from the promotion of sports to the disposal of dead