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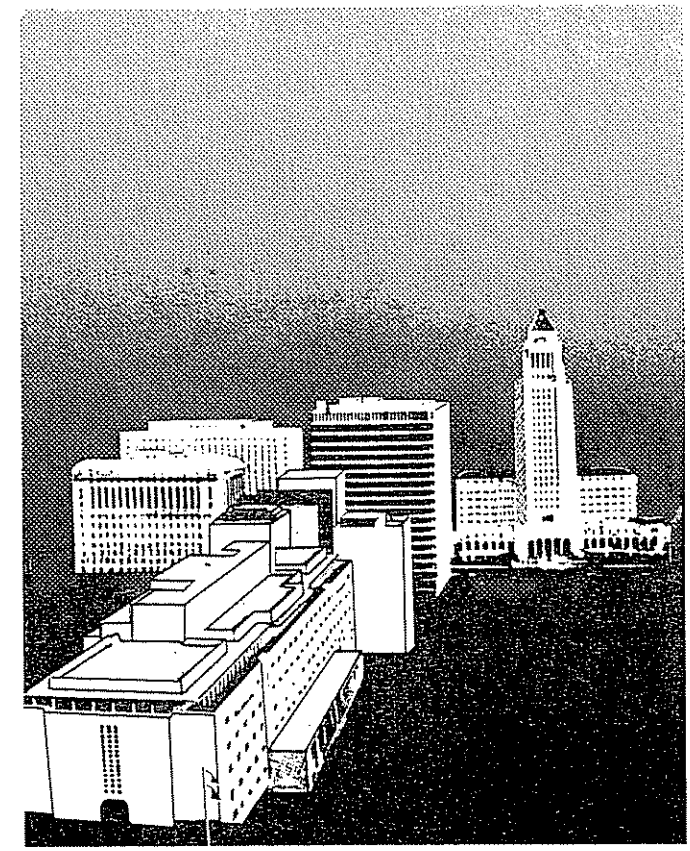
The John C. Bollens Lecture Series



County Hall of Administration *City Hall*

STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT: WHERE THE ACTION IS

Hale Champion

The John C. Bollens Lecture Series

The aim of the John C. Bollens Lecture Series is to bring together the worlds of academic exploration and practical politics so that the work of those who serve the public will be illuminated by discussion of the broader principles and ideas of representative government. Such a synthesis is true to the spirit of the lecture's namesake, the distinguished Professor of Political Science at UCLA, John C. Bollens. Born in 1920 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, John Bollens earned his bachelor's degree at the College of Wooster, his master's degree at Duke University and his doctorate at the University of Minnesota. He began his association with UCLA in 1950 and became a full professor in 1960. He established himself as a most productive and influential thinker on local government. Not only did he write 26 books, including profiles of Mayor Sam Yorty and Governor Jerry Brown, and inspire hundreds of students, but he also held important positions with Los Angeles County, Los Angeles City and the cities of Seattle and Chicago. These positions included Civil Service Commissioner of Los Angeles County, member, Los Angeles Citizens Committee on Zoning Practices, and director, Town Hall Study of the City of Los Angeles' Charter and Governmental organization, which led to many changes in the City's charter.

We who know and worked with Professor Bollens as students, colleagues and friends began this lecture series as a legacy not only to the man, but to his unique brand of scholarship.

EDMUND D. EDELMAN
Supervisor, Los Angeles County
Third District

MARVIN BRAUDE
Los Angeles City Councilman
11th District

MARVIN HOFFENBERG
Professor, Political Science
University of California, Los Angeles

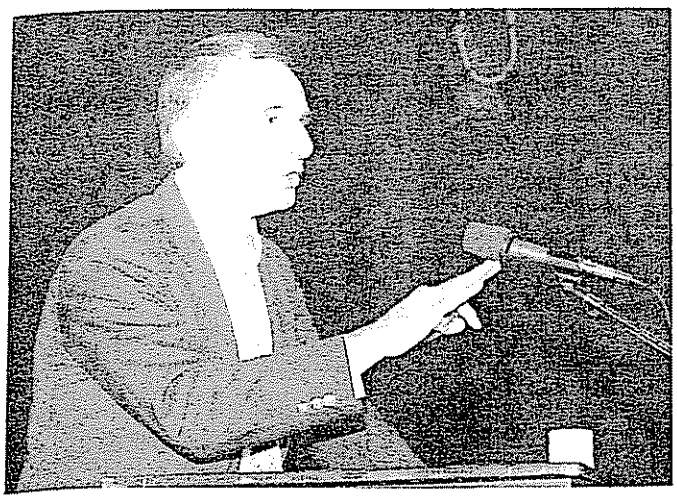
Second Annual Bollens Memorial Lecture

Hale Champion
Harvard University
John F. Kennedy School of Government

State and Local Government: Where The Action Is

We had the right candidate for Governor that year; we just had the wrong year. Thank you Governor Pat Brown for that, for a lot more. Mrs. Bollens, Ed Edelman, Marv Hoffenberg, it's good to be here with you on this occasion. I am more than pleased to have been asked to deliver this lecture. I am honored, and largely because Pat is here, also moved. As one gets older, memory may not always be accurate, but it becomes increasingly powerful. And my memory of eight years in Sacramento with Pat and our other colleagues there (and some of them are here tonight) is of most of the best years of a public life. You must understand that this event is a step up in academic class for me: a lecture established in the name of John C. Bollens, whom I did not know, and inaugurated by James Q. Wilson, whom I do know quite well. They are two truly distinguished scholar/teachers whose contributions display a sophisticated, if different, sense of the realities of public life and possibilities. Although I didn't know him, I think I am probably a little closer in my views to John C. Bollens than to Jim Wilson. I am a little more sanguine about government activity than Jim even though some of the evidence does turn up on his side. For those of you who heard him last year, I might add that the California water plan would appear to be on the government's side even though it didn't do anything for Jim's ten ancestral acres out in Lancaster. You should also know that where I come from now, Deans come somewhere in the pecking order just ahead of auditors, and just behind those members of the faculty whose principal activity is consulting. I do have a special distinction at the Kennedy School, however. While most of my colleagues have been content to offer dubious advice in private, I have ac-

tually made a lot of mistakes right out in public. So much for credentials. But, before testimony, a caveat or two. I now know even less about California government and politics than when I last lived and worked here some twenty years ago. I do not often share feelings with Richard Nixon, but I think I know how uncomfortable he must have been when he came back briefly to run for Governor on a ballot filled with initiatives, referendums, and bond issues of which he had heard only distant rumors. Thus, if what I have to say about state and local government generally tonight doesn't always square with the specifics of what is going on here, I wouldn't be surprised. One of the remarkable things about the eighty thousand subnational jurisdictions in this country is how truly diverse they are in character and behavior. To generalize about them at all either currently or over time, is risky, even fool-hardy. To do so about California as a state or about its jurisdictional jungle of counties, county cities, contract cities, mosquito control districts—you name it—is likely to be fatal. My aspiration therefore tonight is simply to approximate my version of the truth about a number of national factors and trends that I think are producing major and long-term changes in the intergovernmental life of this unique federal system— then escape with my life, if not remnants of reputation. If I were to attempt to be comprehensive in this effort, I would fail even that. I will try simply to identify and thrust, and indulge in some speculation about the future. That is probably all about as useful as reading bird entrails, but people have done it for a long time. If you want to question me at the end, I will be happy to answer the questions I am really glad you asked and to evade the ones I am sorry you asked. Since I am not a scholar and teach largely from case materials, my testimony comes from about four sources, none of them being the literature. I read quite a lot but I seldom take notes.



Supervisor Edelman introducing former Governor Pat Brown

First, as you may have gathered in the introduction, I have moved around—more even than Pat knows. I have been all over the map for forty years: prowling the corridors of City Halls, Court Houses, State Capitals, as a reporter wearing out campaign trails since Truman beat Dewey, getting my governmental education on the hill in Washington, with Pat in Sacramento, with a mayor in Boston, and with Joe Califano at HEW not to mention the various pauses at a number of universities. That adds up to only one source: my experience.

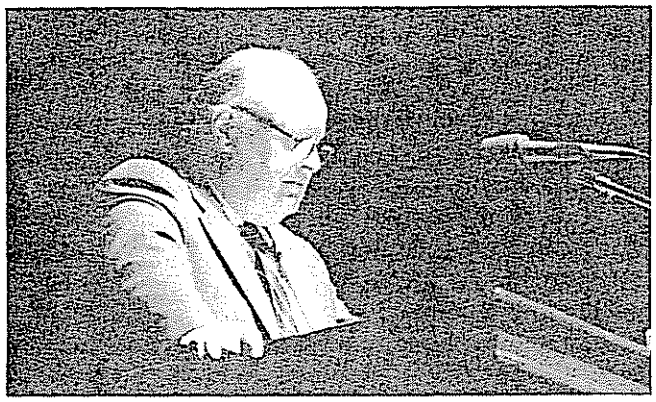
A second source: I have been teaching a course at the Kennedy School for three years now called "Managing in the Intergovernmental System." There is more managing than there is system in the course, but the students are mostly mid-careerists in domestic programs from federal, state and local agencies from throughout the country, including a substantial number from this side of the great divide. They average about ten years of experience and I have thus found our classroom not only a good lab for testing ideas and materials, but a place to find out what's going on in what somebody used to call the "church of what is happening now."

Third, we are in the early stages of a new focus of activity at Harvard known to the faculty as the State, Local and Intergovernmental Center and to the students as "SLIC." The Center's belated recognition that the numbers of both students and faculty at the Kennedy School who are coming from or going to state and local government now outnumber Feds for the first time. The most important current project in SLIC is a three-year commitment to the Ford Foundation to operate a multi-million dollar three-year program on innovation in state and local government. We are not only servicing Ford's new annual major awards competition in this arena, but it includes components of public education, case studies for dissemination to the world of practitioners and students and research into the political and governmental environments which stimulate and encourage creativity and innovation—or thwart it. It is too bad John Bollens is not here to help us. More about this project later. My fourth source, which also informs the other three, is the effort of a number of Kennedy School faculty to establish and expand an intellectual framework, if not doctrine, for the theory and practice of public management at all levels of government in this country. Under the leadership of Professor Mark Moore, we

have been evolving not only such a framework but a new curriculum which goes perilously beyond the traditional boundaries of public administration—you know planning, budgeting, POSCORB, and all that other reaching for some kind of neutral administrative science. This new curriculum has several strands: an effort to use political and institutional analysis, not just for policy but for management; an exploration of flexible, political and operational strategies for developing, sustaining, and positioning organizational capacity for more than a year or one political term or whatever, and, perhaps most subject to counter attack, some free-wheeling ideas about the care, feeding, and shaping of political mandates and public values in an increasingly volatile and dynamic society—a society in which the iron whims of public opinion change even faster than the technologies by which the public will can be carried out. The implications of all this for discretion and risk, for action and accountability, are important for everyone in public life, but especially for non-elected appointees and career managers, I believe, at the state and local level. If, of course, we turn out not to be on the right track. We are already using many of this new public management curriculum's cases in our three-week summer programs for senior executives in state and local government, both appointed and elected—and, surprise, given that it's the Kennedy School, for a series of seminars for sub-cabinet officials of the Reagan Administration. It is less surprising to me that it is the state and local officials who seem to be responding with the most enthusiasm, and, I should add, the best understanding of the inadequacies of the old curricula and the doctrine on which they were based. I intend to close my remarks tonight by returning to this subject, because it seems central to me if we are going to turn the trends of this decade into long-term gains instead of long-term losses for those of us who believe in activist problem-solving government.

Let's turn now, however, to some specific and often cumulative signs and portents out there in the intergovernmental system, and thus to the trends I foolishly promised to discuss at the outset. First and perhaps most important, I see as undisputed fact that state and local governments are the scene of what really significant domestic action there is these days. They increasingly are the place where most citizens have to go to get their problems addressed if their problems are to be addressed at all. That isn't exactly news to most of us, or at least many of us here, perhaps to many other Californians. But I have to tell you that there is still a cultural lag in much of the nation and among many of my old friends, especially those who live in the District of Columbia. And with

exception of a few perceptive journalist – print journalists usually—people like Neil Pierce, John Herbers, Dave Broder, Bill Boyarsky here, the media have been terribly slow to recognize and report the really astonishing degree and rate of change in state and local government, and the resulting cumulative shift of energy and vitality to those governments. The truth is that right now the seat of our federal government is a flat, depressing, deadlocked place, given over largely to foreign policy impasse and domestic no-win games for people not already riding around in stretch limousines. It's become a place largely of shadows on the wall, political entertainment, and futility. Inside the beltway (for you foreigners, that's the Washington beltway), you see a presidential budget arriving at the Congress in a mock dead-on-arrival ceremony in which the corpse springs from a casket– unlike the real budget I should add. The fact is we can't have a real budget any more; just a patchwork of continuing resolutions and top-down decisions. You watch a stage leprechaun dancing around on the cabinet table on St. Patricks' day at the very moment old Somozans in Nicaragua are being hailed on television as freedom fighters. You hear of a plan floated to eliminate the headstart funding—because it doesn't seem to be able to carry, almost by itself, the whole mounting burden of coping with poverty and generational dependency in the nation. But what do you see if you look at the public sector out in the country, out in the provinces and the boondocks where the rest of us live? Not perfection by any means. No utopias. Not even uniformly high standards of commitment and competence and performance. But you do see and hear a lot that makes old government hands like me, including some die-hard "feds" feel better. Far more of the best students, for example those who combine intelligence with concern for others, are going into or through state and local political and governmental careers. Heeding at least for now the famous advice that of decentralizing sage Louis Brandeis to young men in Washington—two words "go home." And, back home, those students are finding and/or giving the kind of leadership and commitment to problem solving which is now so rare in Washington itself. Whether they are mainstream Democratic governors like Dukakis of Massachusetts or Graham in Florida or Republicans like Kean in New Jersey or Alexander in Tennessee or Democratic mavericks like Babbitt in Arizona, those who look are finding governors who don't think government is the problem and keep getting reelected because they use government to solve problems. Californians, especially



Hale Champion delivering the Second Annual Bollens Lecture.

Pat Brown, would love watching Bob Graham struggle with the same problems of growth and change in Florida in the eighties that California faced in the sixties. Nor is it governors alone. There are a lot of like-minded activist mayors. My favorite happens to be George Lattimer, the mayor of St. Paul, Minnesota, one of the innumerable places my wife has lived for too short a time. He is now in his eighth term because he recognized that the collapsing family life in this country brought new obligations of support in community life to government, especially in the big cities. Like everybody else in urban government, he has spent a lot of creative time and energy on public/private partnerships in economic development downtown, but he has spent even more time and energy being creative and building community structures and individual capacities in the neighborhoods, and in delivering services through those structures and with those capacities.

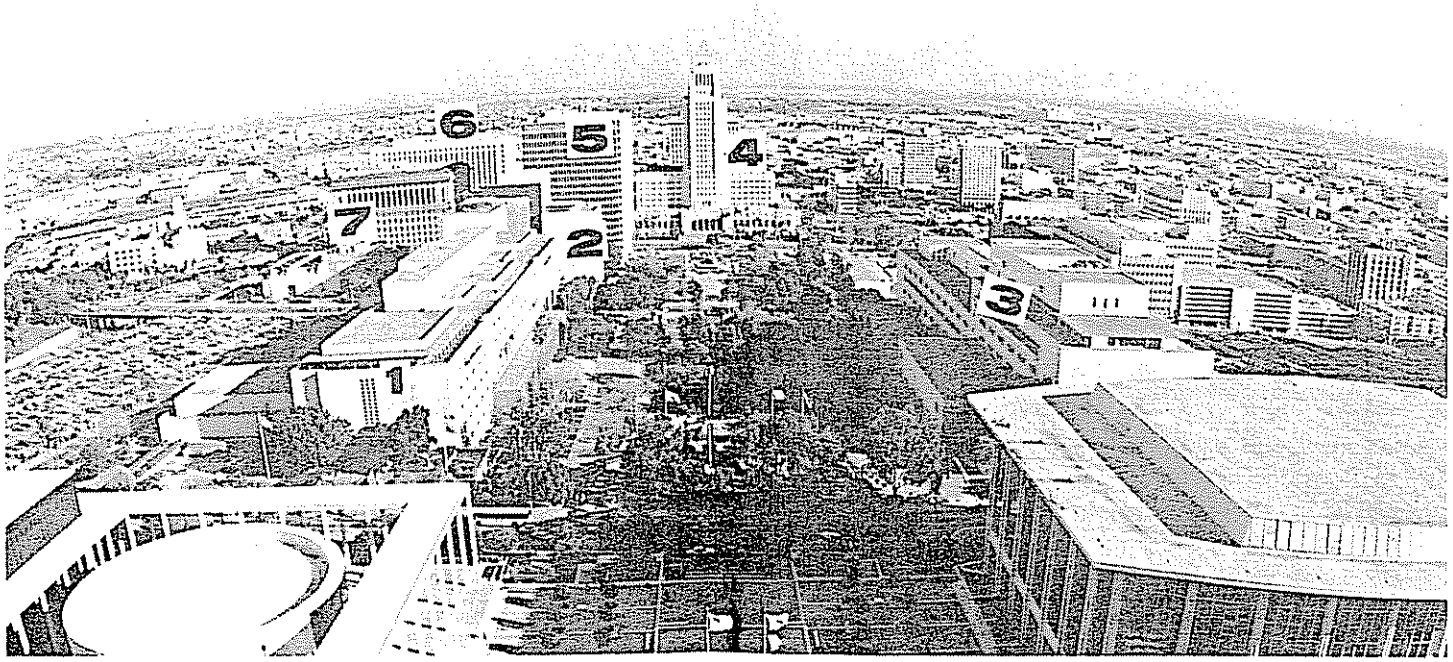
There are always a few stars around, you may protest, but does that mean a significant change of season? Fair enough, but I think I see plenty of other convincing evidence of spring. For instance, let's turn briefly to that Ford Foundation program I mentioned earlier. When we began discussing the awards part of that project with Ford last fall, the maximum estimate that anybody could come up with was that we would get four or five hundred applications– and that would have been more than any comparable competition of that kind in the history of the country. Well, when we closed the entry list for the first year about two months ago, we had more than fourteen hundred nominations for creativity and innovation in state and local government, and not very many clinkers either. Our screening sessions have turned out to be not an elimination of the unworthy, but a selection of the worthier, and even many of these are going to have to be investigated carefully in the field to be sure the Ford selection committee which is headed by former Governor Milliken of Michigan ends up with the ten worthiest. Actually the committee faces an impossible choice. There are more than ten worthiest. We are not finding the elimination of any of these innovations a very easy task. Further, the remarkable geographic and jurisdictional and substantive area distribution of both the applicants and the survivors to date is evidence of how much creative activity there is at state and local levels throughout the country. In case Ed Edelman and others may be concerned, I haven't mentioned county participation yet. Let me note that not only are counties well represented, but that counties and cities alike are much better represented here in California than the state government itself. I will now stay out of California politics by not offering any explanation of that fact. I learned how to do that from watching Earl Warren when he visited California as a neutral Chief Justice during the Brown/Nixon contest in 1962.

The varieties of innovation we see in these entries are as striking as the diversity of the areas and jurisdictions from which they come. They not only bring fresh perspectives and techniques to such old problems as school dropouts, health, education, housing integration, job training, hazardous waste disposal, protective services for children, almost anything you can think of. But, further, they take advantage of community and consumer service opportunities offered by computerized data bases, online information systems, cable TV networking and various physical and social engineering inventions to enhance independent life for the disabled. Most people, whether in government or outside, simply no longer take their ideas and inventions to Washington for financing and encouragment as they had been doing in the half-century since the advent of the New Deal. They know things now have pretty much stopped happening there, so they are working it out in state capitals or in county courthouses or in city halls. That is where the creativity is; the vitality and enthusiasm and more and more frequently, the political will and governmental capacity. No state can hope to do much about acid rain by itself, but the New England states together have done more than the whole federal government. Unfortunately, state and local activity is not enough whether it is in respect to acid rain or any other major national problem. Even when those governments act together wisely and well, there are still grave problems of equity, effectiveness–yes, sometimes efficiency. What works one place does not always work another because of different practices, different outlooks, and different constraints of capacity and funding. But what

works in one place is very likely to work in quite a lot of other places with appropriate modifications. It would be splendid, if without federal involvement, we could find ways of getting not only the word about useful ideas around, but also the critical details of how to make them work in other places. Frequently, it is not just what you do but how you do it, that determines success. It was not just the idea of tax amnesty that worked for a number of states beginning in Massachusetts, but what went with it in terms of the details of timing, coupled with enforcement and follow through. The program was not known as REAP for nothing. It added hundreds of millions of dollars to state income and actually reduced tax rates. But typically I should note that while a number of major states already are busy emulating this success with an amnesty program, the federal tax collectors are still saying that it won't work for them instead of figuring out how it could and getting on with the job. Fortunately, the associations of state, county and city officials are doing an ever better job of letting each other know about what works for them and how, and places like the Ford Foundation are putting up money to help—that being one of the major reasons for our project. The fact is, however, that there should be a federal role here, and more would be happening better and faster if that federal role were being played.

The return to the days of greater state and local innovation and experiment—the old laboratory theory—is not only healthy and productive, but I think, back to stay. But that can't mean abdication of national purpose and equity. People who live where they live, who like where they live, shouldn't have to vote with their feet every time there is an unsolved problem in their vicinity which has been solved or at least ameliorated somewhere else in the country. Before turning to the next trend, I offer for your consideration, the increasingly central role of the fifty states, the return to state centered federalism in a somewhat different way. I just want to add that there is much more than the Ford project evidence in support of the view that not only creativity and innovation but a serious commitment to purposes of democratic government has migrated to state and local levels.

I sit on the board of the National Academy of Public Administration in the heart of fed country. The best study sessions the academy has conducted in years were on what is happening in state and local governments. Those sessions not only surprised some of the most distinguished living federal practitioners, but it gave them new heart and hope about the future of government in this country. It made me nostalgic for California where some of this has been around for a long time. Bob Biller at USC recently sent me some



1 - County Hall of Administration, 2 - Hall of Records, 3 - County Courthouse, 4 - City Hall, 5 - Criminal Courts Building, 6 - Federal Courthouse, 7 - Hall of Justice

evidence of what has been happening lately—some of Bill Boyarsky's pieces, in the *Los Angeles Times*, but also some long lists of successful projects being disseminated by the League of California Cities as further evidence that California has long been among the leaders in modernization and innovation at local level. I won't try to guess or rehearse all the reasons. There are those in this room who would know them better than I, but I do remember the League going back to the days of the leadership of people like Dick Graves and Bud Carpenter. That is certainly one of the reasons—and people like John Bollens were another. It would not be impossible to find true counterparts elsewhere in the nation, but it isn't easy either. When in the Carter Administration, for instance, Joe Califano was looking for ideas and innovations in welfare administration reform, he really found nobody that had as much interesting to say as Keith Comrie and the people in LA County.

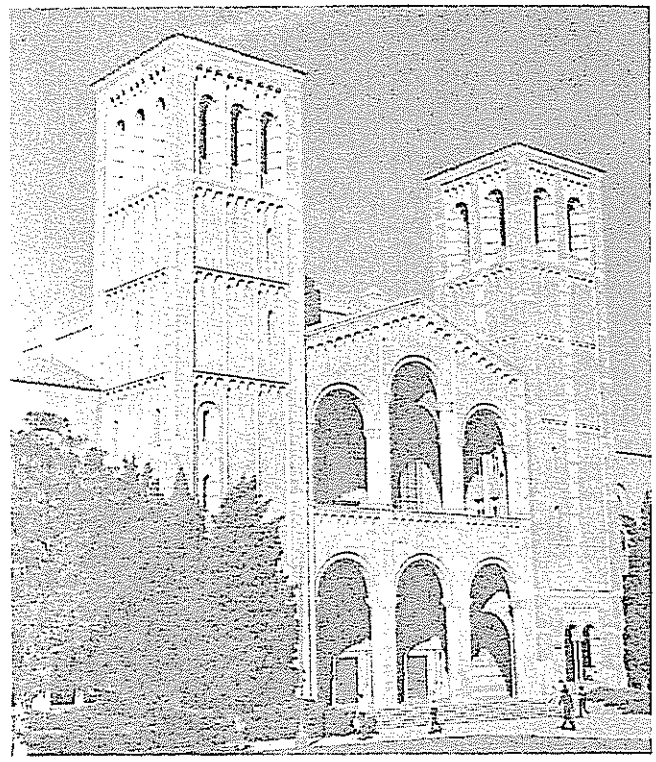
Now, to go on with major theme two: that new improved state-centered federalism. It certainly has a strong relationship to theme one: Federal indifference and impasse and renewed energy and vitality at the state level. But I think it stems from much more than that. It is also the result of the financial squeeze on city and county governments that could not help but create increased political and governmental tensions within many states. Ronald Reagan has always said that he preferred government closest to the people, but he generally has been anxious to stop short of assisting the local governments which have the most people and the most problems. Instead he had done business almost solely with state governments. Fiscal disparities have always been as great or greater within most states as among the fifty states. But the long period of pre-Reagan federal activism and direct financial support to cities had tended to ease and somewhat obscure the tensions there. No more. Direct federal funds to localities are almost gone. Federal funds to state as well as local government are still decreasing, but those which still flow substantially almost all come through the states. Further, California's Proposition 13 and its Populist echoes across the country have greatly constrained localities' use of their principal revenue source—the property tax. And the suburban legislators who were the swing vote in most states often have denied local governments adequate access to other potential sources of revenue, especially those affecting commuters—for some strange reason. Many, but not all states, are hurting a little, but the cities in most states have felt or are about to feel the real pain. States generally are having to make very hard political decisions and deal

with difficult tradeoffs, especially those with troubled one or two industry economies—right now in some of the oil and farm states, for instance. But few cities are even being permitted the luxury of making their own desperate fiscal choices. I suspect that in many parts of the country, all the state and local ingenuity and vitality we have already discussed will not compensate for the financial problems that are headed in their direction—sent them by an avowedly friendly administration.

And the end is not yet. Now we have federal tax reform which the administration at least had hoped would help be paid for by—guess what?—ending or reducing federal deductability of state and local income taxes, yes, and perhaps drastic reduction of the tax exemptions for state and local borrowing. With friends like that, state and local officials must worry about whether they can afford friendship. Not only with Washington but with each other. Just when they have summoned new political will and built new governmental capacity, they are being told to pay the equivalent of two-hundred dollars or go to jail. Consider just two of the troublesome issues already beginning to emerge between states and cities and counties as a result of this increased federal pressure on what are already, in some cases, very delicate state and local relationships. The federal government has cut not only poor but middle class housing subsidies and support to cities to such an extent that responsibility for housing is becoming a prime political problem in a lot of places—a real issue between state and local governments as to who is to do what and who is to pay for it. So we have not only even more homeless poor people, but fewer young families with any hope of home ownership and stability.

Rapid transit subsidies reductions are again heating up the old urban/suburban hostilities and you could go with example after example. Trend two has not yet offset trend one, but the threat is there. The writers of the Constitution were looking at a very different society and a very different set of circumstances when they made the states the center of domestic universe and the cities their creatures. The federal government did much to redress the balance over the last half century, but now it is withdrawing from the field, and this new and different state-centered federalism will either come to the rescue of the cities or fail its own promise. Given better state performance and the exhibition of more political will in many states in recent years, the prospect is not hopeless, but the fiscal facts are not very encouraging. Reagan certainly will not ride to the rescue. I suspect his administration has been even somewhat surprised, as have many students of intergovernmental affairs, by how many

state governments have made a real effort to rise to this challenge—especially since their efforts largely support governmental activities the Reagan people would prefer to see diminish or disappear. The result is likely to be even more federal fiscal restraint rather than a renewed matching of effort by the federal government. Nor does the eventual passing of the Reagan Presidency offer any automatic or even likely solution. The national deficit inherited from these years is and will be a massive constraint, or at least an excuse for failure far into the future. And the fact is that public opinion in this country is far from certain to support a renewed federal role. That, I suggest, is a third major element out there right now, and has been around long enough that I have consciously avoided calling it a trend. It has been there for too long. The public for more than a decade has been either convinced, or at least suspicious, that the intergovernmental delivery system in this country is a wasteful, maladroit way of providing the domestic services they still clearly want. The public doesn't make any nice distinctions about who struck John or how, when or where. Surprisingly, many of my mid-career students who come from out there in this intergovernmental non-system tend to agree with the public's conclusion although not with its reasoning or lack of it. They too feel that even if there were a renewed federal cornucopia of some kind there still would be urgent need for major changes both in the relationships between levels of government and the institutions at each level of government if we are to make the system effective and reasonably efficient. Congress and the Executive Branch would have to define national purpose in performance rather than process terms, thus helping to reduce litigation and at least some of the more non-productive judicial interventions which are so large a part of the problem. More discretion would have to flow, not only from federal to state government, but from states and their executive and legislative branches to cities and counties. What we have now is an administrative morass in which no one's responsibility is quite clear, and in which there is thus no clear accountability. As it is now, everyone in government shares the blame, whether innocent or guilty. The ordinary citizen can't ever see his way through or out of this mess—and unfortunately most experts can't either. Anybody who has witnessed one thousand and one other large and small failures of program design or execution in these programs knows that there should be no return to intergovernmental business as before—even if the public would support it. And we know very well that the public is very unlikely to support it. The system, however much or little money



University of California at Los Angeles, Royce Hall

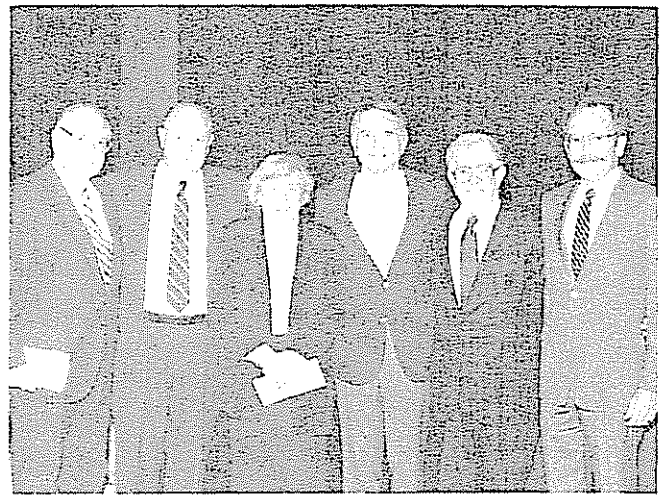
flows through it, will not be easy to straighten out. It is a convoluted and tangled thicket, frustrating to work in, and boring to look at.

One student of the system likes to use Daniel Boone's brave statement after returning from the Kentucky wilderness in describing the sensation you get when dealing with the intergovernmental non-system. What Boone said was "I was never lost, I just didn't know where I was for weeks at a time." I offer no detailed prescription for reform this evening, just two general directions for a way out. The first is that all the institutions involved at all levels of government beginning with the Congress reread and reinterpret the constitutional intent of all the checks and balances. They were not designed to invite habitual adversarial behavior, but instead assumed cooperative and compromising behavior, except when the highest principles are in jeopardy. Having made an appropriate and wise constitutional decision that nobody was ever going to be in charge did not mean that the founders did not want the system to work at all. They just wanted to be sure it wasn't easy, and in modern circumstances, they have succeeded in the latter beyond their dreams and wishes. Lawyers and auditors and inspector generals and mutual recriminations will not lead us to improved functioning, nor I think, to increas-

ed public trust. A sense of mutual purpose would be more like it.

One way out has been offered a number of times, mostly by political scientists like Martha Duthick. They have suggested that a sense of mutual obligation and commitment to work things out by the public managers and professionals at the various levels of government is the central hope of successful program management. That would require authorizing action by political officials which would let them use flexibility, discretion, and delegation rather than penalizing it. That means the Congress and State Legislatures first would have to change abiding notions about accountability for process rather than performance. But it also means that Executive Branches and bureaucracies will have to break some very bad long-standing habits of their own, which also hinder negotiation and accommodation among those who have to get the work done.

Now there is another element which requires attention—a lot of people are pushing a third way out called privatization. And it does have its uses. The dynamic nature of modern society and technology has broken down a lot of old fixed fences and boundaries whether in the relationship of national economies to international markets, or of national governmental promise to local governmental interpretation of public purpose, or of the use of private products and services for public purposes. Privatization has its merits as a corrector, indeed as a commitment to a kind of competition that is so central to the American view of the world, but it also has its pitfalls. Whenever anyone says public/private partnership to me, I am reminded of a clearly apocryphal story of Henry Kissinger's difficulty in finding a suitable line of work after President Ford was defeated in 1976. The story is that Henry couldn't find work anywhere. So a committee of his friends got together and said "we have to find something that is suitable for Henry." And they searched the world over and they found only one suitable job; it was running the Tel Aviv Zoo. And they went and talked to Henry about it and he said, "Well, if that's all that is available, I'll try it." So they said, "OK, try it for six months and we will meet afterwards and see how you've done and how you like it." And they came back in six months and Henry gave them a tour of the zoo. Fantastic. Everything was in wonderful order, and as they came down to the last cage in the tour, there was a lion lying down with a lamb. The committee was properly awestruck. As they went on, however, one curious member kept thinking about the scene. He just couldn't believe that even Henry could pull that off, so he went back and he said,



Left to right: Former Governor Pat Brown, Hale Champion, Mrs. Virgene Bollens, Supervisor Ed Edelman, UCLA professors Marvin Hoffenberg and Chuck Ries.

"Henry, how did you do that?" And Henry said, "Easy, fresh lamb every day." Needless to say, few experienced persons would identify the public section with the lion these days. Consider Cap Weinberger's efforts to cope with General Dynamics, for instance, or EPA's efforts to have the creators of hazardous waste cope with its disposition. Privatization, like so much else, is a matter of horses for courses. For many purposes, I think the horse of privatization simply won't trot. We are experimenting with it for prisons for example, and most of the informed analysis I've seen indicates that for-profit prisons may do all right in feeding and housing the inmates, but it will not serve the multiple other purposes of our criminal justice system over time. If one wanted to be flippant, he might call it just another cop-out.

So much for the intergovernmental system itself. State and local renewal and strength. The prospect for new tensions which will test it to the the limit, and the distant dim prospects for fundamental reform of the spirit and practice of intergovernmental programs. Is there anything left to say that would make one more sanguine? I think there is. First, although this is a determinedly anti-historical time, and California is sometimes an ahistorical place, our national history is reassuring. Most students today don't seem to remember much of anything before Viet Nam and the impeachment of Richard Nixon, certainly not of the earlier times when the nation looked to government to rescue it from private market failures—but that did happen. You could look it up if you do not remember. Some of us do remember, and the clear symbol of American history is that of the pendulum. Our history

is on the side of periodic swings to and fro, some sooner, some later, some longer, some shorter. But history isn't automatic, it needs human help and that brings me back to the struggles at the Kennedy School and elsewhere to see whether transforming the old doctrines of public administration into the new and more productive doctrine of public management might help. What do I mean by that? Certainly not abandoning all the tools and techniques we have been using and improving for years, and certainly not the effort to bring the newest and still improving information and communication technologies to the support of getting public work well and truly done no matter by whom. What I do mean is that better technique is not a sufficient response to our public problems. Just as much of the private sector has sought and obtained deregulation, and has moved to decentralization and delegation to be more responsive to its clients and customers, so must the public sector. The traditional conception of public adminstration has been that public managers are to be strictly held to the efficient administration of policies, indeed methods, established by legislators and/or elected executives. The old assumption was that policy mandates and program designs would be relative, coherent, stable, and precise, and that public officials had and needed little room for initiative or flexibility. The emerging concept of public management advanced by Mark Moore and his associates, for which I must express my unrestrained enthusiasm, rejects the traditional assumption that policy mandates and program designs at any level of government are now coherent, precise, or stale. Instead, what they observed for academia is what I have observed in practice, that in many of the most important areas of governmental activity, whether foreign or domestic, the mandates are inconsistent, vague, and constantly changing—as are the environments in which the mandates are being carried out. I am not saying anything here, I might add, which has not been known to sophisticated city managers and other so-called neutral public managers for a long time—and on which knowledge they have sometimes acted reluctantly at grave risk and sometimes with serious personal consequences. The fact is that those risks have been so grave and the consequences so serious that most public careerists increasingly have chosen not to accept them. They too often have failed to take the kinds of risks that were necessary to try the things that might have turned things around. What is now being urged then is that public officials openly be instructed to exercise more discretion not only to make greater good sense in their deployment of public resources, and that they be provided an opportunity at the same

time to involve themselves openly again in the political debates surrounding their areas of responsibility. They cannot make the ultimate decisions of course, but they should participate on their own initiative in helping to shape the debates in both substantive and process terms—to be concerned with what is true public value, as well as with the techniques to bring it into being. Does this pose serious threats of anti-democratic behavior or lessen the accountability to the political process? A lot of people would argue that it would do both.

Certainly it could if not watched and balanced by both elected officials and the interested public. But I really think there is little danger of that. Actually, I think we would be better served by better informed debates and more coherent, stable and precise policy mandates and program designs that would emerge from their involvement in our political debates. Public managers would not escape accountability. In some ways their accountability would grow greater, because they would openly participate in determining the terms of accountability. And having arrived at that, take the risks that go with a more visible system of accountability. This set of ideas goes far beyond the simplistic statement of it that I offer you quickly here tonight, and it has far reaching implications not only for the behavior and education of public officials but for the future of the intergovernmental system and public trust in its performance. I won't go on, however, except in response to your questions, but simply close with a few questions of my own.

Does this fledgling doctrine offer a possibility to take advantage of the new surge of creativity and vitality at state and local government? Does it have some potential to unknot some of our intergovernmental tangles over time? Is there an opportunity here to restore public trust in government at all levels as an effective and efficient instrument of democratic choice which people can understand? Would this argument give our governmental institutions a new way to reduce the increasingly adversarial character of legislative, executive and judicial interventions? Don't mistake my enthusiasm, I expect no utopian reforms in any of these areas. Life in government is changing incrementally at best, but it does change. And ideas and doctrines do make a difference. So, as usual, I end up being more sanguine than the evidence would permit. One of our current President's greatest assets is that he is usually sanguine in the face of all evidence to the contrary. I don't see why some of us who disagree with him shouldn't permit ourselves the same luxury, and perhaps the same luck. You've been patient; I appreciate it; it is your turn. Thank you.