

County Manager Plan Aiming At Democracy To Be Tested

By HOWARD F. JONES
Central Press Staff Writer

NEW YORK, Dec. 4.—A model government for counties in which a manager runs things has just been designed by the committee on county government of the National Municipal League.

Substitution of business methods for political skulduggery and simplification of the government processes so that democracy will be effected are the two purposes of the plan.

Present county government is headless and necessarily undemocratic and inefficient, it is emphasized. There is no one upon whom responsibility may be centered.

Furthermore, so many laws have been passed, as our country

has grown and governments have had to perform additional services, that it is in rare county officials who know what his own duties are, the committee maintains.

Questions for You

If the official himself doesn't know, how can the voter be expected to know? And if the voter doesn't know, how can he tell whether the official is doing a good job or a poor job?

First, then, the county manager plan, as outlined by a committee of experts, headed by Professor John A. Fairlie of the political science department of the University of Illinois, is simple. The committee has been at work more than a year, and much of its work has been spent in clarifying and simplifying the county organization.

Responsibility is centralized so that either credit of blame may be placed upon the proper shoulders.

In a nutshell, this is all there is to it:

The people elect the members of a small board—three, five or seven in number, depending upon the size of the county. The board determines general policy, but keeps hands off the business of administration.

The manager is hired for that purpose. He has sole charge of running the business of the county.

May Hire New Manager

If he makes good, he keeps his job. If he fails, he is fired. The board has the authority to discharge him and hire a new manager whenever it sees fit.

The set-up of the organization is the same as that of every up-to-date corporation in the country. In a corporation, the stockholders choose a board of directors to determine policy and to hire a general manager to run the business. Essentially, all the county manager plan does is to substitute the voters for the stockholders.

There are a few knotty problems, of course, that are peculiar to government.

What are you going to do with the schools? That's one.

Well, most counties already have a board of education running the schools, so the model county manager law simply gives this body the power to delegate any of its administrative functions to the county manager.

The sheriff is frequently the

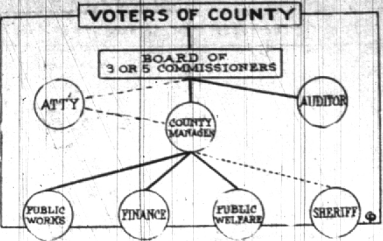


Chart shows form of government recommended for rural counties. The dotted line to the sheriff is used to indicate doubt whether he should be appointed by the state attorney general or the county manager. The broken line indicates that the county board and the county manager share responsibility for naming the attorney.

plum of the political pie in the county. What about him?

He should be an expert, trained for his job, and not an amateur, simply interested in feeding from the public trough. Whether he should be appointed by the county manager or by the state attorney general, the committee has not determined. The point that is insisted upon, however, is that he should be appointed rather than elected.

Just what can the plan accomplish for the taxpayer?

The committee has said nothing on this point.

An idea, however, can be gained from the report of the New York bureau of municipal research, which in 1927 made a study of county government in Virginia, at the request of the government.

A possible annual saving in the operating cost of the county governments of at least \$1,000,000 can be made to the taxpayers of Virginia, the bureau found. And that's only one state!

Its Importance Foreseen

Following the recent national conference on government held at Cleveland, much enthusiasm for the county manager plan was registered by experts from all parts of the country.

"The county manager plan will be of as much importance in the next decade as the city manager plan has been in the past two decades," Richard S. Childs, president of the National Municipal League, declared.

A real test of the plan is in prospect in the very near future. Arlington county, Virginia, at the recent election voted to adopt the plan. This will be the first county to try it without reservation, and the results will be interesting.

Several counties in North Carolina and Virginia have experimented with the plan in a modified form and invariably greater efficiency has accompanied the more centralized responsibility, with a resultant lowering of cost.

"More important, however, control of county government has been restored to the people."

Uphold Negative Side of Question

For the first time upholding the negative side of the chin store question, Baldwin High School's debating trio will oppose the Flint Northern High School team, Dec. 12.

The contest is scheduled to be held at the Baldwin Public Library, but if indications that a large crowd will attend are made, the scene of the debate will be changed to the school auditorium, H. Earle Curran, coach of the team, announces.

To be certain of entrance in the elimination contest with other high schools in the state, Baldwin must defeat Flint Northern. James M. O'Neil, head of the speech department of the University of Michigan, will be the judge of the debate.

Trowbridge Gail, Phyllis Huston and Joseph Huston again will compose the Baldwin debating trio.

Try an Eccentric Classified Ad.

BIG BEAVER

Mr. and Mrs. R. Hack and their sons, Robert and William of Detroit, were Thursday dinner guests of Mr. and Mrs. R. C. Howell of Rochester road.

Miss Ethel Howlett of the Sixteen-Mile road spent the weekend in Detroit as the guest of Miss Ruth Popkey of Brandon avenue.

Mr. and Mrs. James Truesdale and Mr. and Mrs. Harry Harrigan and their son, Billy of Farmer boulevard were Thanksgiving dinner guests of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Truesdale of Detroit.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Peterson and their daughter, Mary and Mrs. Flora Welch and her son, Edward of the Sixteen-Mile road were Thursday dinner guests of Mr. and Mrs. W. Binkley of Royal Oak.

Mrs. H. L. Schultz of Rochester road and Mrs. Ella Rankin of the Sixteen-Mile road were recent guests of Mr. and Mrs. Bert Dietrich of Saginaw.

The Misses Ruth and Mildred Miller of the Sixteen-Mile road were week-end guests of Mr. and Mrs. Albert Miles of Detroit.

Mr. and Mrs. William Fall of Clawson were Thursday dinner guests of the former's sister, Mrs. Mary Miles of the Sixteen-Mile road.

Mrs. Mae Hopkins, Mrs. Elmer Ford, Mr. Ray W. West, Mrs. Thomas Moore, Miss Ann Moore, and Mrs. Frieda Norton of Royal Oak will be present at dinner and barge at the home of Mrs. Myrtle Norton of Dearborn Tuesday, Dec. 2.

Mrs. Walter Miller will entertain the Thursday afternoon 500 Club at her home today.

Mr. and Mrs. A. Beaubien and son, John, and their daughter, Grace Mary, of Boyd avenue were Sunday guests of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Church of Warren.

Mr. and Mrs. Leo Hollis of Pontiac and Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Lealand of Detroit were Sunday guests of Mr. and Mrs. John Curvin of Rochester road.

Miss Isabelle Hempstead of Detroit was the guest of Miss Moran Ferguson of Rochester road.

Mr. and Mrs. William Hempstead of Detroit and Mr. Don McNaughton of Detroit were Sunday dinner guests of Mr. and Mrs. John Ferguson of Rochester road.

Mr. and Mrs. Joe Grattopp and their son, David, and Mr. and Mrs. Orville Stevens and their children were Thanksgiving dinner guests of Mr. and Mrs. C. Lamb of Rochester road.

Mrs. John Black motored with her daughters, Margaret and Dorothy, to Kalamazoo Sunday, where the girls resumed their studies on Monday after spending the holidays with their parents.

The evening 500 Club met at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Miller Tuesday, Nov. 25. Prizes were awarded to Mr. and Mrs. H. L. Schultz, Mr. W. Cornet, Mrs. F. R. Jackson, Mr. A. H. Miller and Mrs. L. Kilmer.

School

All grades have begun work on a Christmas program to be given near Christmas vacation.

The eighth grade Civics class is sponsoring a tuberculosis seal drive.

The honor roll for the month of November is as follows: kindergarten; Violeta Andrade, Dolly Ferguson, Mildred Gorski, Barbara James, Billy Penney, Mary Essie, Dorothy Spanke, and Marion Stewart, first grade; Donald Hammond, Jessie Ruth Martin, Homer McGrath, and Vila Panadakis. Thirteen were neither absent nor tardy for the month.

Second grade: Richard Andrade, Shirley Burgess, Donna Hicks, Irene Joseph, Jessie Ruth Martin, Homer Palmer, Madeline Rogers, Vern Shanburn, and Helen Witte, third grade; Walter Brown, Marie Wallace, John Nichols, Dolly Joseph, and Shirley Hammond, fourth grade; Helen Tucker, fifth grade; Clover Sutherland, Pearl Mapp, and Winifred Cleland, sixth grade; Jessie Scherf and Teddy Susin. Twenty students were neither absent nor tardy in November.

Seventh grade: Rita McGrath, Helen Placer, Arctia Esigle, and Mabel Cindler, and nineteen were neither absent nor tardy, eighth grade: Helen Basin, Howard Penney and Brakie Orr. Eleven in the eighth grade were neither absent nor tardy.

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