

Can Do to Improve Its Government ...

Thomas Eliot of Washington University in St. Louis, who discussed, "The State and Metropolitan Areas."

Constitution and Legislature

Ideas that were new to me, at least in emphasis were:

1. A state constitution almost inevitably has some "legislative" characteristics.

You recall that in the United States all power not otherwise delegated rests in the states.

This has made it possible for the states to give specific general powers to the federal government, without too much concern about details. The theory was that if there was much question about it the power still remained in the states.

In writing the state constitutions themselves, there was more hesitancy by the framers in each state to give unlimited general powers to the members of legislatures. For this reason it is probably impossible to get all of the restrictive details out of state constitutions.

The pure theorists who feel that a state constitution should be an instrument which merely grants broad powers to the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government are certain to be disappointed.

2. While Illinois is considered a "strong governor" state by comparison with others, there was almost unanimous support at the Allerton House meeting for making most of the presently elective state executive officers and the University of Illinois board appointive.

City Government

3. The Illinois Constitution is almost entirely silent in the area of city government, although Illinois is a growth state in which all of the new population is concentrating in metropolitan areas, Downstate as well as in Cook County.

The metropolitan area problems must be attacked on two fronts:

First, clear away the obstacles to the development of city government powers that appear in

the constitution in provisions for township government.

And, in the revenue section provision that no taxing body may obligate itself for more than five per cent of its assessed valuation.

Second, study out and propose to the General Assembly new powers for city government that will enable it to meet metropolitan area problems.

Another facet of this is my discovery that Downstate metropolitan areas will not get all the political help they might expect from Cook County.

This is because most of the Downstate metropolitan problems can be solved by consolidation of taxing body functions, forced consolidation of incorporated places that grow together, and extension of plat and utility control in periphery areas that will become parts of the metropolitan area.

Chicago and its satellite incorporated places represent more than half of the state's population. There is real reason to doubt if mere consolidation is a solution

in so large a complex of cities. Administrative efficiency may reach the point of diminishing returns after some size is reached.

In any case, the two problems—giant metropolis and small metropolis—must be considered separately, but the legislative solutions must be understood by the legislative representatives of each.

Revenue Reform

4. Revenue section reform became more insistent to me than ever before. In this is the solution for the need of more tax money for state and local government, with a better distribution of the tax burden.

The right to classify property for tax purposes would make it possible to have a genuine sales tax, reaching sales of tangibles in connection with services now exempt. This would broaden the base of sales tax collection and delay further increases in rate.

The alternative is a series of special occupational taxes.

There was nearly unanimous support for omitting the prohibition of a graduated state income

tax in a new revenue section amendment. Many who spoke for this said they do not favor a state income tax now.

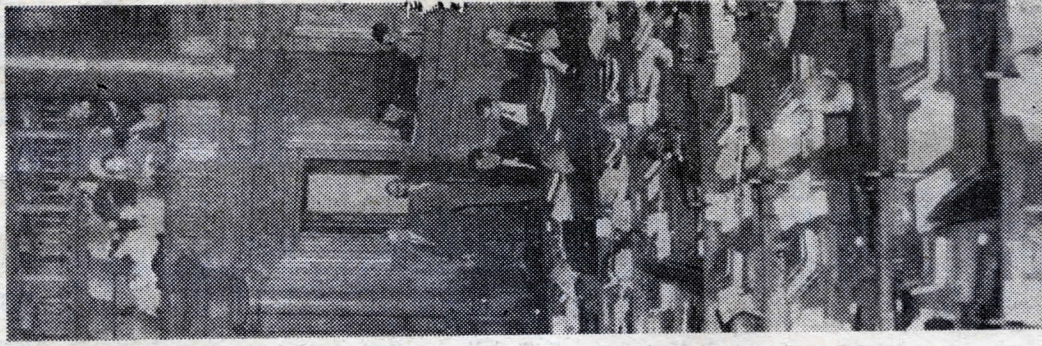
Constitutional Convention?

5. There was no real demand for a constitutional convention, although many thought an occasional convention would have the effect of getting wide public interest in governmental problems.

The most promising avenue for making the relatively few needed changes in the constitution seemed to the Illinois Assembly to be in permanent study commissions for constitutional amendment named by each house of the Illinois Legislature.

This would tend to avoid the imperfection that results from hasty consideration of Gateway amendments in the short legislative sessions, and make it more difficult to get frivolous amendments on the ballot.

Conclusion: Illinois citizens have reason to be proud of their careful but definite progress toward modern government.



What Illinois Can Do to Improve Its Government

By EDWARD LINDSAY
Editor, Lindsay-Schaub
Newspapers

ILLINOIS' Constitution of 1870, as amended, has become more of a living document to me as a result of participation in the Illinois Assembly on State Government.

The assembly, held at Allerton House, Monticello last month, was an Illinois development out of the American Assembly, established at Arden House in New York state by Columbia University when President Eisenhower was president of the university.

Political scientists, representatives of state and local governments and a cross-section of citi-

zens—with care to include labor, agriculture and business—made up the 40 men and women who discussed state government for three days at Allerton House.

The sponsors were the American Assembly, Columbia University and the University of Illinois.

Discussion was sharply focused and well organized to prevent one-idea hobbyists.

Background reports were put into the hands of each of the participants. These included "The Forty-eight States: Their Tasks as Policy Makers and Administrators," from the American Assembly, and "Illinois State Government: A Look Ahead," prepared by the Institute of Government and Public Affairs at the University of Illinois.

These represented the research of political scientists.

Evening session speakers included: Meyer Kestbaum of Chicago, special assistant to President Eisenhower, on "Intergovernmental Relations" and Prof.

Thomas Eliot of Washington University in St. Louis, who discussed, "The State and Metropolitan Areas."

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... Success of 11-Point Program Depends on...

THE PARTICIPANTS of the Illinois Assembly on State Government, meeting at Robert Allerton Park, Monticello, February 21-23, 1958, agreed to this summary of their findings at the conclusion of their discussions.

Since there were dissents on particular points, it should not be assumed that every participant subscribed to every detail of the statements contained herein.

AS THE state of Illinois begins the 15th decade of its history, the Illinois Assembly finds that the government of the state of Illinois has many outstanding features of which its citizens may be proud. Some of these features are such as to merit study and adoption by other states.

The vitality and effectiveness of the state government have been strengthened by such recent steps as the adoption of the "gateway" amendment facilitating revision of the state con-

sitution and the achievement of legislative reapportionment. There remain many problems requiring solution.

The social, economic and political developments of the past 75 years make changes in the Illinois constitution adopted in 1870 desirable.

The gateway amendment should be implemented by a continuing legislative commission to study proposals for constitutional change and to make recommendations thereon to the Legislature. Each of the two houses of the Legislature should establish a standing committee on constitutional amendments.

Revision of the constitution through the calling of a constitutional convention has advantages. One of these is the opportunity to effect a coordinated series of changes without the distractions that necessarily must be present when other legislative business is transacted.

The Legislature should at an early date submit an amendment

to Article 14 so that any convention convened would more evenly reflect the population distribution of the state than does the present article. The proposed amendment should also provide that the Legislature may at its option submit a call for a convention for less than complete revision of the constitution.

The assembly agrees that the proposed amendment to the judicial article should be ratified at the November, 1958 election.

The assembly favors annual sessions of the Illinois Legislature but believes that sessions meeting in even-numbered years should be for consideration of budgetary matters only, and should sit for limited periods. If the legislative article is amended the Legislature should authorize the expense allowances of its members.

The Legislature should be strengthened by providing adequate staff for and reorganization of its committees.

The assembly is opposed to the lengthening of the terms of the members of the House of Representatives beyond two years.

In order to provide for more effective administration of state government and for more orderly consideration of long range state policy, it is urged that the staff facilities available to the chief executive be reorganized and strengthened.

The present number of elective officers is unduly large; it diffuses responsibility and burdens the voter. The continuing commission mentioned in Section I should study the executive article with a view to reducing the number of elective officials.

As a minimum, appointment should be substituted for the election of the following: court clerks, superintendent of public instruction, state treasurer, auditor of public accounts, and members of the board of trustees of the University of

Illinois.

The assembly endorses a re-consideration of the statutory framework of state administration. Suggestions which merit consideration relate to a department of assistance to administer of public aid and welfare programs, a department of mental health, a single board of higher education and a state board of education for the common schools with power to select its own executive officer as chief state school official.

The assembly believes that the objectives of the new personnel system are worthy of commendation; the details have not as yet been tested and changes should await experience under it.

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The state and its local governments will require additional revenues for many purposes. To meet the need, the broadening of the base on which the sales tax is collected, and better administration of the property tax

are recommended; other taxes should be investigated as sources of revenue.

The Legislature should submit an amendment to the revenue article which would authorize the levy of taxes sufficient to meet future fiscal needs. Such an amendment should allow classification of property for tax purposes and should contain no language prohibiting adoption of a graduated income tax should the future needs of the state require it.

In revising the tax laws the Legislature should give particular attention to the equitable distribution of the tax burden.

The debt limitation contained in the revenue article should be revised so as to remove impediments to desirable reorganization of local governments.

The state programs of aid to local school districts should be further strengthened.

IX

The assembly recommends amendment of the constitution so as to abolish the township as

... WILL DECIDE

a governmental unit.

X

The assembly approves recent legislation requiring the registration of lobbyists.

Statutory effort to prohibit conflicts of interest can be best supplemented by a willingness on the part of public officials to disclose publicly such interests as they may have in policy decisions in the resolution of which they must participate.

XI

The assembly notes with approval the attention paid to federal-state relations by the joint committee appointed by the President and the Governor's Conference and by the predecessor Commissioner on Intergovernmental Relations.

The assembly encourages better exchanges of information between the legislative bodies of state and federal governments and between the legislative bodies of the several states.

Illinois Looks 25 Years Later



Decatur Herald, Founded 1880

Decatur, Illinois, Sunday

League Plans Candidates Meeting

League of Women Voters, a non-partisan group, is planning its 10th candidates meeting for Thursday at 8 p.m. in the auditorium of Stephen Decatur High School.

Open to the public, the affair

is scheduled to precede the April 8 primary election.

In the photo below, officials of the league meet with the two county chairmen. From left to right are: Mrs. H. W. Gibson, president of the League; Charles

Cassidy, Democratic County chairman; Mrs. Thomas L. Hurst, chairman of the Thursday meeting; Harry Taylor, Republican County chairman; and Mrs. James Leigh of the League committee.

Forty candidates for county,

state and national offices have been invited. They will be seated on the stage of the auditorium. Written questions from the audience will be directed to those who are seeking policy-making offices with the allowed for verbal answers.



(Left) Mrs. Thomas L. Hurst, right, and Mrs. C. F. Gebhardt of the League, check lists of county candidates with

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Section

Society

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ay, March 16, 1958.

Decatur Review, Founded 1878

eting

Printed programs containing pertinent information will be given to those attending. The programs will contain a biographical sketch of each of the office-seekers, the office, his party affiliations, length of term, and the salary involved.



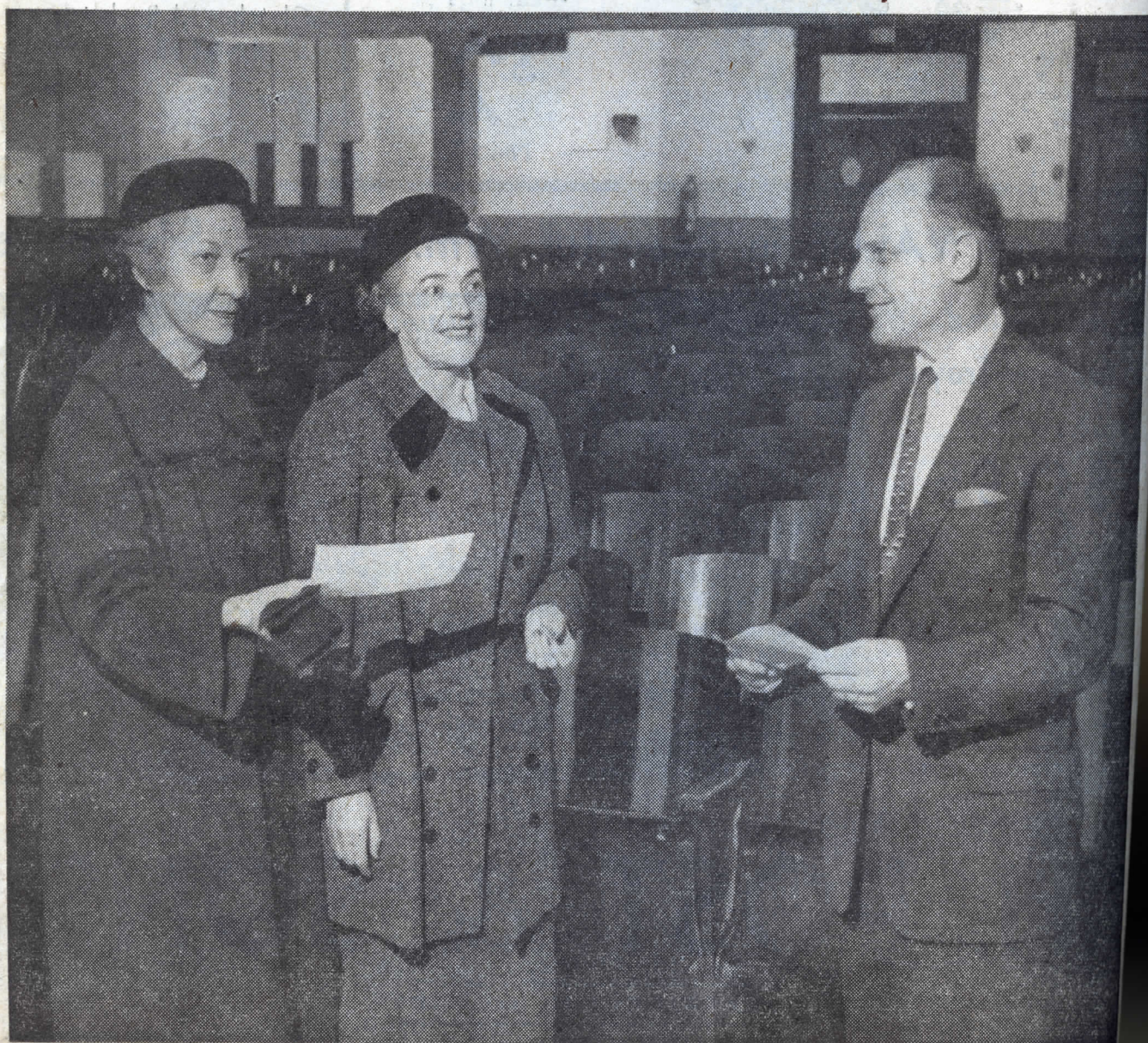
Mrs. Edward Booth, left, and Mrs. Lawrence Auby Jr. of the League, place information slips on "Your Date with the Candidate" at luncheon places

of a men's service club. Every avenue is used to make the voter aware that the meeting gives him an opportunity to see, hear and question candidates.



retary in the county clerk's office. A similar check is made in the office of secretary of state for federal and state office-seekers.

(Right) After checking names, and clearing dates with the Assn. of Commerce, the high school authorities and the two political parties, the League's committee on invitations gets to work. From left to right, Mrs. Thomas Protzmann, Mrs. E. C. Stivers and Mrs. William Miller send out notices about the candidates meeting to 115 heads of churches and other religious organizations, 124 non-member contributors to the League, and 64 teachers of social studies.





(Left) Making physical arrangements for the meeting in the empty auditorium which they hope to fill are, left to right, Mrs. Gerald Cox and Mrs. L. L. Davis with Raymond Newton, assistant in business affairs for the Decatur Schools. One third of the League's membership of 15 works on the candidates meeting in some capacity. Many work on advance preparations while others serve as ushers for the meeting.



(Right) Mapping the procedure for the evening program are, left to right, Mrs. Clifford Smith, Mrs. John J. Donovan and Robert L. Shade who will serve as moderator. Mr. Shade has helped the League with several previous meetings. (Photos on this page by Herald and Review)