

59. Public Welfare, Education, and Labor



Photo by Roger Sturtevant

PUBLIC WELFARE

PUBLIC welfare includes such governmental activities as social security, public health, public housing, and the regulation of domestic relations and of alcoholic beverages. Until recent times these welfare activities have been entrusted for the most part to private hands. Indeed, even today private individuals and organizations often play important parts in the solution of these problems: private doctors, hospitals, and medical research all contribute toward improving the health of the American people; private realtors and private building companies still erect the houses and apartment buildings of the United States regardless of the ownership of these structures; there are numerous private marital counseling agencies for husbands and wives who find themselves at odds with one another.

However, both because many citizens have demanded it, and because some government officials have become interested in it, public authorities

have interceded more and more into the problem of welfare. Furthermore, the personnel that deal with these affairs in the name of the government have become increasingly professionalized, and their organizations have become another source of pressure for the continuation and expansion of government welfare activities. Many of these activities involve cooperation on the part of national, State, and local governments; others are entirely, or almost entirely, State and local enterprises.

Social security

Social security comprises government financial aid for persons who, owing to one reason or another, cannot fend for themselves. National social security undertakings, such as old age and survivors insurance (OASI) and grants-in-aid to State programs of assistance for the aged, have been described in a previous chapter. The one important type of social security that is financed and operated solely by State and local governments is the so-called general assistance program. General assistance constitutes aid chiefly for the needy who are ineligible for any other form of social security; however, sometimes it is also granted to those participating in other programs who cannot subsist on that type of aid alone.

General assistance is administered by about 10,000 units of local government, usually township governments in New England and county governments elsewhere in the nation. In some States it is integrated with other programs of assistance; in other States it is not. The proportion of general assistance that is paid by the State government, and that paid by local governments, varies from one State to another. In ten States the State welfare department pays all costs; in fifteen more States this department pays at least half the costs. On the other hand, in fifteen States the local governments bear all the expense. The number of persons receiving general assistance across the country is relatively small; in October, 1954, there were 310,000 persons on the relief rolls.

Public health

Public health undertakings include both remedial medicine—that is, the curing of disease—and preventive medicine—the averting of disease. Both State and local governments carry out public health measures. In a majority of States there is a department of health; in a minority, there is a health board. The governments of many large cities contain a department of health. In a rather populous county where there is no large city, public health activities may be entrusted to a county health department. In sparsely settled regions, two or more counties may be united to form a single health district. State health departments are apt to have a considerable staff and substantial amounts of technical equipment. On the local level, especially in small communities, the tasks may be assigned to a single doctor of medicine and one or more visiting nurses. On the other hand,

health departments in large and prosperous cities may resemble those of State governments.

Remedial Medicine: Remedial medicine has only in recent years been accepted as a proper subject for government concern; indeed, even today most of the curing of disease is undertaken by privately employed doctors and technicians, and in privately supported institutions. However, national, State, and local governments all together have assumed increased responsibility in this area, particularly in the construction and management of hospitals for low-income groups. One of the most important types of public hospitals, which exists at both State and local levels, is that for persons suffering from mental ailments. State and local governments also maintain clinics and institutions for the cure of such ailments as tuberculosis and venereal diseases.

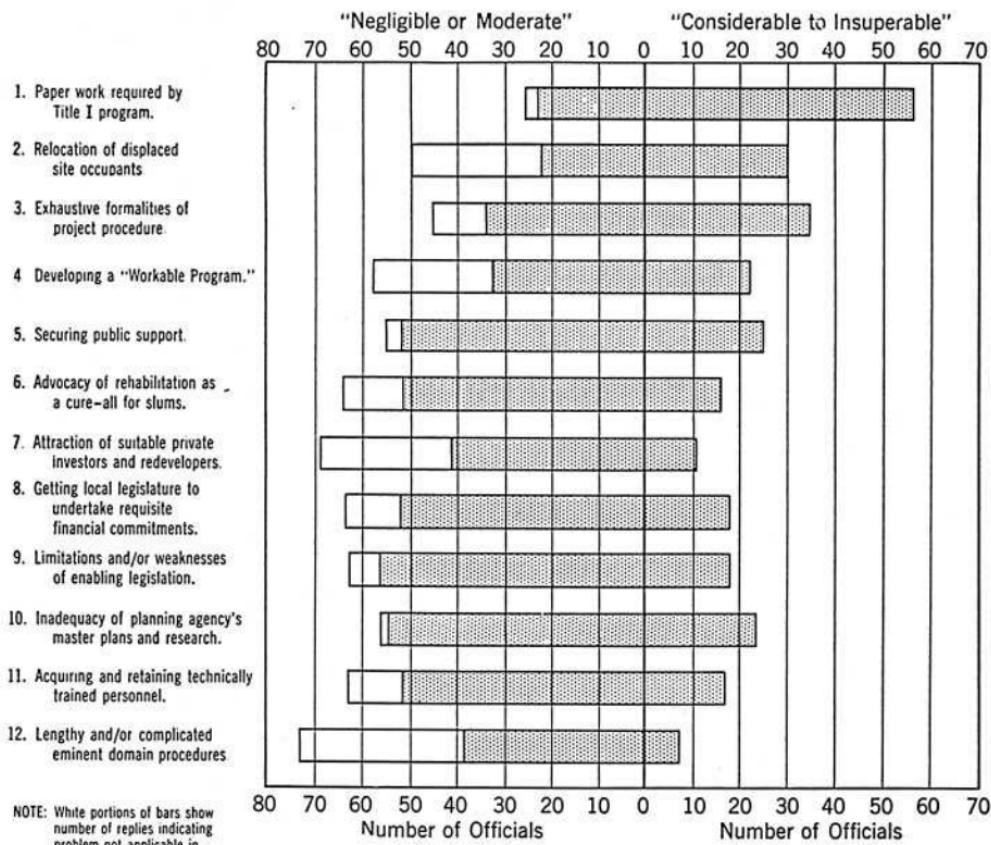
Preventive Medicine: Preventive medicine has been an obligation of governments far longer than remedial medicine has been, partly because governments are in a much better position than private organizations to finance it and because public preventive medicine, unlike public remedial medicine, is not the personal concern of the patient or his doctor. Preventive medicine actually includes two broad fields of activity: (1) the prevention of specific diseases; and (2) the creation of an environment that is inhospitable to any disease. One of the oldest public methods for the prevention of a specific disease is the quarantine (from Italian *quarantina*, "forty days") of any person suffering from a contagious disease, notably such children's ailments as mumps, chicken pox, and measles. In recent years the authorities of many communities have been adding sodium fluoride to the water supply in an effort to deter tooth decay, a proceeding that has aroused a hornets' nest of disputation regarding its alleged merits and defects. Among the numerous State and local programs designed to yield a healthful environment are those seeking to guarantee that the water supplied to the public is clean, and those aiming at the most effective disposal of sewage and garbage.

Public housing

Public housing consists of government undertakings that are aimed at assuring good residential facilities for low-income groups. Under congressional enactments of 1954, amended in 1955, the national, State, and local governments, and local organizations, cooperate to raze slum areas, prevent other areas from deteriorating into slums, and erect low-rent housing structures. Figures demonstrate that in slum areas the rates of criminality, juvenile delinquency, public assistance, and disease, are higher than they are in any other part of the city. Too, assessed property valuation falls in slum districts, so that municipal income is reduced. The upshot is that a slum area demands more in city expenditures than it provides in revenues. Ultimately the emergence of a slum menaces the value of adjacent real estate. Hence slums concern many agencies of a municipal government, not merely its police, welfare, and health departments, but also its financial authorities. Finally, the eradication and prevention of slums are one portion

of the task of the municipal planning commission and the local department of public works.

Slum Clearance and Urban Renewal: Slum clearance and urban renewal involve the destruction or rehabilitation of slum districts. These projects are inaugurated by the local government. They are programs whereby a city government buys a slum area, razes the buildings, and then sells the cleared area to a private organization that will erect new buildings, such as a housing project, there. Many obstacles, however, confront such programs, as Figure 137 shows. First, city officials must persuade the State legislature to pass an enabling act that permits them to undertake the project. Having obtained this permission, the municipal government must get funds from State and local sources, and draft plans for rebuilding the area. Actually, most of these funds come from local sources only; State governments generally, with a few exceptions such as that of Pennsylvania, have not contributed to these undertakings. If the local officials conclude that they need federal assistance, they submit their plans to the Urban Renewal Administration in the Housing and Home Finance Agency of the federal government. If



Morris R. Smith, Surveying the Barriers to Local Redevelopment Progress, "The American City," Vol. 71, No. 3, March 1956, p. 155

Figure 137. Major Obstacles to Urban Redevelopment. How local redevelopment officials rated their problems in a survey. The Title I program referred to is part of the national government's statute that offers assistance to localities. Sixty-two per cent of the nation's redevelopment directors responded.

the Agency accepts these plans, it pays up to two-thirds of the difference between what the local government has paid for the area and the price it will receive for it from the private organization that has agreed to construct a housing project there. The municipal government may pay its share either in money or in some other form, such as improvements for the district.

Occasionally municipal authorities will discover that the buildings already in the district are not beyond repair; indeed, the authorities may assume ownership of a zone to forestall its becoming a slum, if there is evidence of such a trend. Under these conditions the municipal government arranges for the rehabilitation of these buildings by plastering and painting, replacing the wiring and plumbing, and installing furnaces and sanitary facilities where they are defective or totally absent. Sometimes, where a district threatens to develop into a slum, the city government will not purchase the district, but will encourage or even require the property owners to improve their buildings, and may ease their way toward obtaining loans for this purpose.

Public Housing Structures: Public housing structures are apartment buildings erected by local governments for rental to low-income groups. A public housing project is built, owned, and managed by a housing authority, which is a local, quasi-corporate agency established by State law. The authority must draft plans for a project; then, if it wishes to secure federal aid, it must submit these plans to the Public Housing Administration of the federal government. Once the Administration has approved these plans, it contracts to pay the authority the difference between the cost of erecting and operating the project, and the income the authority receives in the form of rent. Since the properties of the authority are exempt from municipal taxes, the directors of the authority must agree to pay the city government a sum in place of taxes, that amounts to ten per cent of the rental income. The directors must also fix a maximum income that any person or family residing in the project may earn, and oust those whose income surpasses the maximum. Most States have not participated in financing these projects; a few—California, Connecticut, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin—have. It is noteworthy that most of these States have a high urban concentration, so that there are more delegates to the State legislature from cities than in most States. Probably the unwillingness of the typical rural-dominated State legislature to aid in the construction of such projects has been the chief factor that has impelled city governments to turn to the federal government for money. By contrast, in New York State by 1955 more housing had been erected with State aid than with federal aid.

Regulation of domestic relations

State and local governments today regulate many phases of domestic relations, that is, the relations among the members of a family, that were once the concern of private secular agencies and the church. For example, local governments, as well as or instead of churches, register all births. A church ceremony now does not suffice to legalize a marriage; State govern-

ments generally demand that the man and woman obtain a marriage license from civil authorities prior to the wedding. Only a few States now recognize the validity of common-law marriages, which result from the simple fact that a man and woman have lived together for a certain period of time. Furthermore, most States require that both parties to a proposed marriage first submit to a physical examination, to determine whether either is suffering from a venereal disease. Moreover, each State provides a minimum age at which persons may enter marriage. Finally, many States fix a minimum period that must elapse between either the obtaining of the license or the taking of the physical examination, and the marriage itself. These various requirements are designed to lessen the possibility of hasty marriages and, in the case of the physical examination, to prevent the spread of disease. It is important to bear in mind that a marriage is a civil contract as well as a moral agreement and is involved in such matters as the disposition of property.

Governments are also concerned with the position of children in the home. For instance, a husband and father is obligated to support his family. However, in the recent past, one who was disappointed in his home life might desert his family, cross a State line, and escape responsibility for his dependents. Today, by contrast, it is difficult for him to flee his legal duties, because all but two States have uniform reciprocal enforcement of support laws; hence a man who has deserted his family may be arrested in all but two States and compelled to send money for the support of his family. State and local governments also seek to guarantee children a stable home; if government officials discover that for some reason the parents of a child or children are incapable of rearing them, the officials in many jurisdictions may remove the children from the home and assign them either to a public institution or to a foster home. Finally, many married couples for one reason or another are unable to have children of their own. There are many children under the immediate control of the State who are potentially available for adoption. Childless couples may seek out such children for themselves; the authorities subject these couples to a searching test to determine whether they can become desirable foster parents.

In the long run it may turn out that some couples find themselves so unsuited to one another that one or the other partner seeks a divorce, or legal dissolution of the marriage. Every State in the nation permits divorce for one or several causes. Generally the grounds for divorce are the same for men as for women, except for non-support, which is a ground for women alone in twenty-one States. Adultery is a ground for divorce in every State; the next most common grounds are cruelty, desertion, and alcoholism. There are many other grounds that appear in fewer States. Every State legislature has prescribed a minimum period that a person must reside in the State to qualify for a divorce there, ranging from six weeks in Nevada and Idaho to as much as a year or even more in some States. Courts generally at their discretion may decide whether the wife (in rare instances, the husband) shall receive alimony (Latin *alimonia*, "sustenance"), to replace the support she will lose because of the divorce.

Alcoholic beverage control

Alcoholic beverage control since the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment to the federal Constitution has been the task of State and local governments. The federal government now has few duties with regard to alcoholic beverages. It does establish whether a whisky is "bonded," that is, whether it has a particular content of absolute alcohol. Too, because it gathers considerable revenue—\$10.50 per gallon from such distilled beverages as whisky—the federal government takes great pains to seek out those who produce alcoholic beverages without paying federal taxes. Finally, the Twenty-first Amendment provides as an assurance to the States that it shall be a federal offense to bring alcoholic beverages into States or localities that have laws banning such beverages; this provision of the Amendment is rarely enforced.

State laws and local ordinances in general, where the sale of alcoholic beverages is permitted, have to do with what sort of beverage may be sold and until how late an hour the selling may go on. The laws also prescribe the minimum age at which an individual may be served alcoholic beverages; sometimes it is a criminal offense for one under age to represent himself as old enough to drink legally. In various places there are laws that forbid women to work behind bars, and laws that prohibit women from sitting at bars to drink. A number of State governments have a monopoly on the sale of beverages by the bottle at stores, so that in these States there are no private liquor stores.

One of the most important aspects of alcoholic beverage control today is the institution known as local option, a device whereby the residents of a locality may determine through an election whether alcoholic beverages

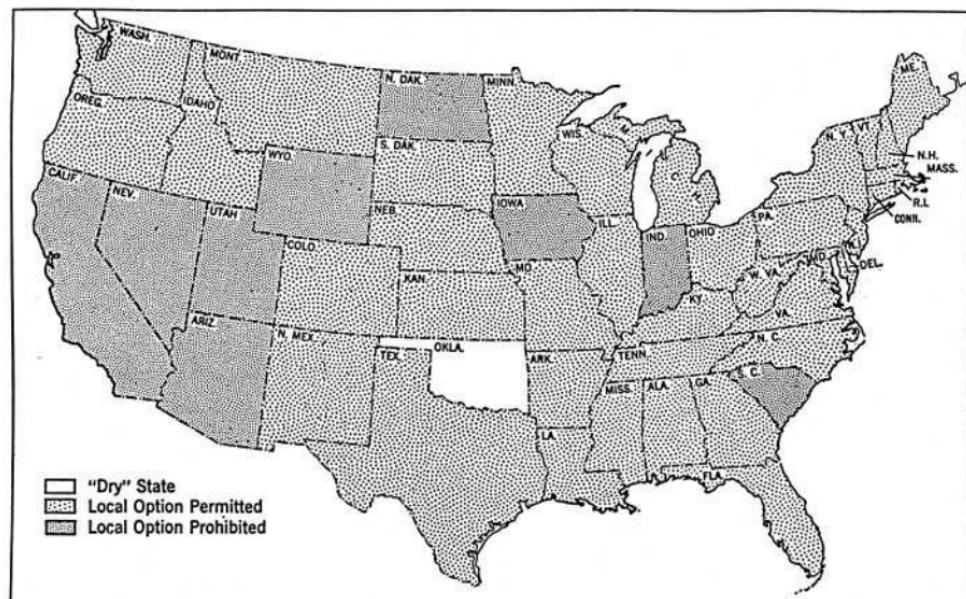


Figure 138. States Providing Local Option for Control of Alcoholic Beverages.

shall be sold in their locality. In most States the citizens have one form or another of local option; the map in Figure 138 shows in which States there is local option. Depending upon the State, local option may apply to the county, the city, or as small an area as the precinct. Through local option the voters may fix the hours of sale and the type of beverage that may be sold. Local option has been widely employed. It has been estimated that 26,000,000 people live under State and local option laws that ban the sale of distilled beverages. (It would be foolish, of course, to assume that none of these people drinks alcoholic beverages; "dry laws" are often badly enforced.) Table 50 lists the percentage of people living in areas in which the sale of alcoholic beverages has been outlawed by local option, in States with the greatest use of local option enactments.

TABLE 50. PERCENTAGE OF STATE POPULATIONS LIVING
UNDER LOCAL OPTION DRY LAWS (17 STATES)

Georgia	60	Florida	17
Tennessee	60	Virginia	11
Kentucky	55	Minnesota	11
Alabama	47	West Virginia	8
Texas	45	Wisconsin	8
North Carolina	37	New Hampshire	8
Maine	35	Ohio	8
Vermont	30	Pennsylvania	7
Michigan	23		

For the entire country it is reported that there are 865 counties dry for spirits, 786 dry for wines, and 561 dry for beer. There are 2,336 cities and towns dry so far as spirits are concerned, 2,334 dry for wines, and 1,974 dry for beer. One State, Oklahoma, is dry by constitutional provision; another, Mississippi, is dry by statutory provision except for four per cent beer, and wines. Because in large cities a single block may be a precinct, one may find a situation such as that in Chicago, where along a main street there may be first a "dry" block, then a "wet" one, then a "dry" one, and so on. In addition to the foregoing "dry" areas, there are some municipalities whose charters contain "dry" provisions. This is one way of restricting the sale of alcoholic beverages in States in which local option is not permitted. One instance of this method is found in Pacific Grove, California.

There are powerful groups that influence the enactment of liquor legislation. On the one hand is the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), which everywhere urges the adoption of laws forbidding the sale of alcoholic beverages. On the other hand are the various associations of beverage producers, intent not only on assuring freedom of sale in as many areas as possible but also on keeping their taxes low.

Governments today are also becoming concerned with an ailment that arises in connection with alcoholic beverages—alcoholism. Neither the causes nor even the true nature of this disease have yet been isolated; however, it is generally agreed that it is manifest in an uncontrollable desire for any sort of liquor. Government handling of alcoholism varies. In the State

of Oregon, for instance, the authorities publish a list of individuals who have shown themselves to be suffering from alcoholism, and to whom the law forbids the sale of liquors. In a few areas the government supports an institution for alcoholic research; however, few persons reach such institutes save when they are referred to one by a court after having been arrested for common drunkenness. Indeed, owing largely to the fact that most Americans regard alcoholic addiction as a moral or criminal offense, persons who are found to be frequently under the influence of intoxicating beverages are more likely to be sent frequently to jail than to an agency that might cure them.

EDUCATION

The pattern of American public education

Public education is the largest civilian undertaking of government in the United States. There are over 25,000,000 students enrolled in public schools at all levels; there are one million teachers and supervisors. During the 1955-1956 school year, federal, State, and local governments spent more than \$12 billions for public education. Public schools include primarily the eight-year elementary schools and the four-year high schools, capped in every State by one or more public colleges and universities as well as by municipal, county, and district junior colleges, colleges, and universities. In each locality the elementary and secondary schools are "articulated," so that a student completing work in the elementary school is automatically admitted to the secondary school without question of his being prepared for the higher level of schooling. Furthermore, in most jurisdictions the student who has completed secondary school can be admitted without question to a public college, provided that he has satisfactorily completed certain "college-preparatory courses" such as English grammar and mathematics.

Administrative structure

The keynote of the administrative structure of public schools is the predominance of State and local governments. Although, it is true, there is an Office of Education in the federal Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, the federal government in the main does not operate schools save on military bases or for Indians on government reservations; the Office of Education is primarily an advisory body. Public education is one of the reserved powers guaranteed the States by the Tenth Amendment to the Constitution. Besides, in most States the actual administration of the schools is performed through independent units of government termed school districts. School authorities have almost everywhere won political independence of other units of government; many members of the public have endorsed this set of relations with other governments, if only because they believe that political independence is essential for intellectual independence. The fact is that in spite of their independence, public school systems may be rife with politics and that the same group that predominates over a city or county may likewise predominate over a school system.

State Agencies: In certain respects the most important State agency connected with the public schools is the State legislature. This body establishes the school system, determines its underlying pattern and administrative structure, appropriates money for its operations, and exercises a general supervisory function over the system. In many States it grants more money to the schools than to any other agency of the State government. The chief State school agencies are the one or more education boards that exist in every State, and the chief executive officer at the State level, who is known usually as either the superintendent or the commissioner.

REGULATORY EDUCATION BOARDS. There are two general types of State education boards: regulatory or supervisory, and governing. The most significant of these boards, which is termed the *board of education* (to distinguish it from the general term *education board*) is essentially a regulatory agency. Its principal tasks are to coordinate the various school systems across the State, to set forth educational policy, to establish standards for local schools and teachers, sometimes to prepare a list of approved textbooks, to issue credentials to teachers authorizing them to teach in schools of the State, and to conduct an unending survey of local school operations.

Membership of these boards ranges from three, in Mississippi, to twenty-three, in Ohio. These members are selected by various means; depending upon the State, they are appointed by the Governor, elected by the people, elected by the legislature, serve ex officio, or, in two cases, are chosen by other methods. In seventeen States some or all of the members serve ex officio, most frequently the chief State school official and the Governor. Table 51 shows the number of members in each State and the mode of their selection.

Terms of these boards vary among the States; often they are overlapping, so as to make policy continuous. Moreover, in a number of States the members are chosen from different parts of the State, so that all portions of the State may be represented. Board of education members serve without pay, and in many States it is forbidden that the members have any professional connection with schools. The principle is that the people, and not professional educators, shall determine school policies. Actually, State teachers' associations may have considerable influence upon the choice of board members.

SUPERINTENDENTS. The office of a chief executive for the State public schools, commonly termed the superintendent or commissioner, exists in every State. His primary function is to carry out the decisions of the State board of education; in States in which there is no board, he executes the decisions of the State legislature. Superintendents and commissioners are also chosen in various ways, as shown in Table 52. Appointment by the State board of education is being installed in a growing number of States; the reasoning is that, because the chief tasks of the superintendent are to execute the directives of the board, the superintendent is responsible to the board and should be elected by it.

State law sometimes requires that the superintendent have professional training and experience in education; however, in a number of States there

TABLE 51. SIZE AND SELECTION OF STATE BOARDS OF EDUCATION

State	Chief Method of Selection					Number	
	Elected by People	Named by Governor	Named by Legislature	Wholly ex Officio	Miscellaneous	Total	Ex Officio
Alabama		x				11	2
Arizona				x		8	5
Arkansas		x				9	0
California		x				10	0
Colorado	x					5	0
Connecticut		x				9	0
Delaware		x				6	0
Florida				x		5	5
Georgia		x				10	0
Idaho		x				6	1
Illinois				State has no board			
Indiana		x				19	1
Iowa	x					9	0
Kansas		x				7	0
Kentucky		x				8	1
Louisiana	x					11	0
Maine		x				10	0
Maryland		x				7	0
Massachusetts		x				9	0
Michigan				State has no board			
Minnesota		x				7	0
Mississippi				x		3	3
Missouri		x				8	0
Montana		x				11	3
Nebraska	x					6	0
Nevada	x					7	2
New Hampshire		x				7	0
New Jersey		x				12	0
New Mexico		x				7	2
New York				x		13	0
North Carolina		x				13	3
North Dakota				State has no board			
Ohio	x					23	0
Oklahoma		x				7	1
Oregon		x				7	0
Pennsylvania		x				10	1
Rhode Island		x				7	0
South Carolina		x				9	2
South Dakota		x				7	0
Tennessee		x				11	2
Texas	x					21	0
Utah	x					9	0
Vermont		x				7	0
Virginia		x				7	0
Washington				x		12	0
West Virginia		x				10	1
Wisconsin				State has no board			
Wyoming				x		7	1

is no such requirement. In Ohio he may not have any connection with any textbook firm. Informally the State teachers' association has a powerful voice in the choice of the superintendent, as do the professors of education in the various State colleges and universities. Here is another reason why appointment is often by the board of education: the sway that these groups have over that body. Terms of superintendents are of various lengths, or are for an indefinite period. The office carries a rather high salary, which in some States exceeds that paid any other State executive official save the Governor.

GOVERNING EDUCATION BOARDS. In most States there are other education boards, for both supervisory and governing tasks. However, in some instances the State board of education not only regulates the public elementary and secondary schools but also governs some institutions. In California, for example, the board is the governing agency for the nine State colleges, the State school for the blind, and the three State schools for the deaf. The Louisiana State Board governs thirty-six State institutions. In a large number of States there are public schools for the blind and the deaf that are administered by the State board. Under such circumstances the board is saddled with a dual responsibility, for of course as governing body it must select the chief administrative officials and teachers of these schools.

Many State legislatures have instead created additional boards to handle the governing of State schools. In some instances a single additional board deals with all State institutions; in other States each institution has its own board. In Pennsylvania, for example, there is a State board of education, a board of trustees for the Pennsylvania State University, and a separate board for each of the seventeen State teachers' colleges, making nineteen boards in all. Members of these boards are selected in various ways; the vast majority of them are appointed by the Governor.

PROFESSIONAL STAFFS. The members of all these State boards must rely to a considerable extent upon the professional staffs that the legislature provides for them. Usually these staff members have had professional training in education. The consequence is that although State law may forbid the appointment of any person who has had any professional training or experience in education as a member of one of these boards, so as to insure popular control of the schools, professional educators have a great deal of influence over them through staff personnel. Other avenues for the influence of educators are legislative committees before which educators may testify with respect to proposed school laws, and the office of superintendent, which, even though the law does not require it, may be held by a professional educator.

Local Agencies: The chief agencies for the public schools at the local level are the local boards of education and local superintendents. Usually these agencies, and the district they administer, are independent, but sometimes they are dependent. An independent school system may be described as one that functions as, and is classed by the Bureau of the Census as, an actual unit of government that is authorized to establish its own policy and to provide for its own finances. A dependent school system,

TABLE 52. SELECTION OF CHIEF SCHOOL OFFICIAL
IN EACH STATE

State	Appointed by Board	Elected by People	Appointed by Governor
Alabama		x	
Arizona		x	
Arkansas	x		
California		x	
Colorado	x		
Connecticut	x		
Delaware	x		
Florida		x	
Georgia		x	
Idaho		x	
Illinois		x	
Indiana		x	
Iowa	x		
Kansas		x	
Kentucky		x	
Louisiana		x	
Maine	x		
Maryland	x		
Massachusetts	x		
Michigan		x	
Minnesota	x		
Mississippi		x	
Missouri	x		
Montana		x	
Nebraska	x		
Nevada		x	
New Hampshire	x		
New Jersey			x
New Mexico		x	
New York	x		
North Carolina		x	
North Dakota		x	
Ohio	x		
Oklahoma		x	
Oregon		x	
Pennsylvania			x
Rhode Island	x		
South Carolina		x	
South Dakota		x	
Tennessee			x
Texas	x		
Utah	x		
Vermont	x		
Virginia			x
Washington		x	
West Virginia		x	
Wisconsin		x	
Wyoming		x	

by contrast, is one that is a department in some other government, notably that of a city or of a county. According to an enumeration made in 1952, there were then 67,346 independent school systems and 2,409 dependent systems. In five States—Maryland, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Rhode Island, and Virginia—all systems were dependent. In twenty-six other States, all systems were independent. Finally, in seventeen States there were both dependent and independent systems.

LOCAL SCHOOL BOARDS. The principal officials in local school agencies, whether independent or dependent, are a school board and a local superintendent. Usually the board in an independent system is elected by the voters of the district. Boards of dependent systems are apt to be chosen by some other means; for instance, most boards in Maryland are appointed by the Governor. Yet the dependent boards in both Massachusetts and Rhode Island are elected. The hallmark of a dependent school board is the fact that its financial structure and needs are administered by some other agency of the government.

Where school districts are independent, they provide for their monetary needs under little if any outside, formal supervision. School administrators prefer such an arrangement, for it allows them the freedom to plan for the future without having to submit to the control of other government agencies. By contrast, where the system is dependent, school officials must compete with other government departments for appropriations of money. The tasks of all boards are to set the policies for the schools, employ teachers, and often to choose textbooks.

LOCAL SUPERINTENDENTS. The chief executive official for the district is the superintendent, who ordinarily is appointed by the board. State law generally requires that he be a professional educator who has completed a minimum number of hours or courses in school administration studies and that he hold an administrator's credential issued by the State on the basis of his preparation. Presumably the superintendent is subordinate to the board. However, he often in fact leads or directs the board. He is, after all, a professional person; furthermore, he enjoys the advantage conferred by the unity of his office, whereas the board members may be divided in their opinions. Finally, a superintendent, in the case of a dispute with the board, may almost always count on the support of the association of school administrators as well as that of the teachers' association.

SIZE OF DISTRICTS. School districts vary widely in both size and population. They may contain only one school, one teacher, and a handful of students; on the other hand, they may include dozens of schools reaching from kindergartens to colleges, hundreds of teachers, and thousands of students. The New York City school system, with nearly a million students, is by far the largest single system in the country. It is noteworthy that dependent systems on the average have far more students than independent systems have; in 1952 the more than 67,000 independent systems included about twenty million students, making an average of about 300 per system, whereas the 2,400 dependent systems included more than six million students, for an average of about 2,500 per system. School administrators

contend that a district with but 300 students is far too small to assure the best educational services; indeed, they feel that a single school should contain more than 300 students. Nevertheless, as Table 53 shows, five out of six independent school districts have no more than 300 students.

State governments have made strenuous efforts to reduce the number of school districts within their boundaries. One method has been to make the awarding of grants contingent upon unification of two or more districts, or upon some minimum population or school enrollment in the district. Yet at the same time many school districts are outstanding illustrations of how a government that is so small and so inefficient that it cannot provide the funds for its operations can be revived and sustained by injudicious grants from the State treasury. Without such grants, in fact, a throng of school districts would vanish. However, school boards usually oppose any plan that would abolish them; moreover, the people in a school district argue that consolidation might deny them the freedom they now have in determining education policies.

Financing

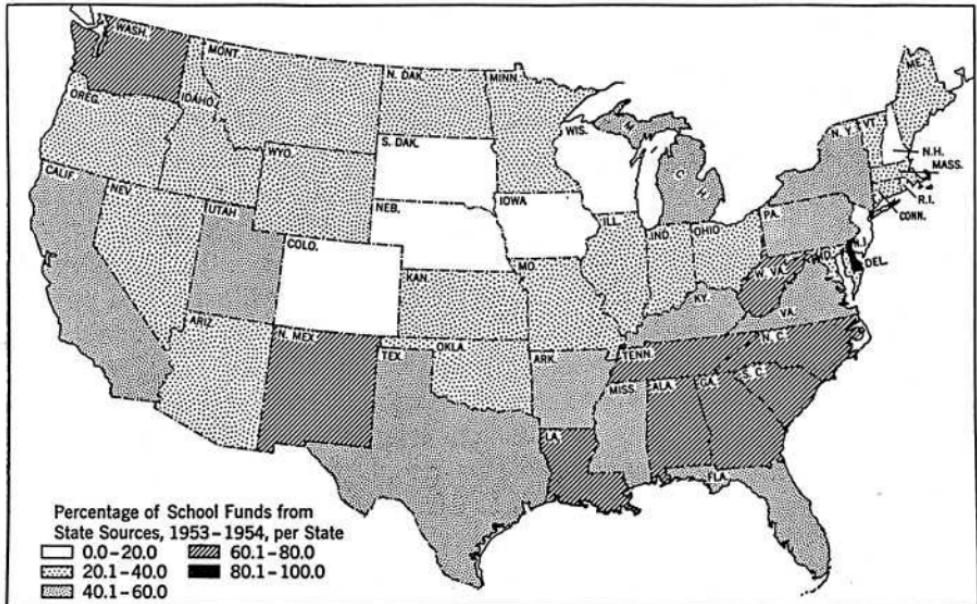
The financing of schools traditionally has been the duty of local governments, fundamentally that of the school districts themselves. However, in recent years State governments for various reasons have been playing a larger and larger role in supplying money for school systems, so that in some States the bulk of all school money comes from State funds. Yet on the average, local sources still provide most of the money used by school districts in the United States. The map in Figure 139 shows what percentage of school funds come from State sources in every State.

Local Financing: The majority of local funds for education come from the property tax. This tax is one that does not fluctuate very widely in response to business conditions; indeed, it is a quite inflexible tax. Hence

TABLE 53. NUMBERS OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS OF VARIOUS SIZES¹

Enrollment Size Group	Number of School Districts	Enrollment of School Districts (in Thousands)			Per Cent of Total
		Per Cent of Total	(in Thousands)	Per Cent of Total	
U.S. Total	67,346	100.0	20,241	100.0	
More than 25,000	58	0.1	3,852	19.0	
12,000–25,000	97	0.1	1,638	8.1	
6,000–12,000	265	0.4	2,091	10.3	
3,000–6,000	611	0.9	2,568	12.7	
1,500–3,000	1,300	2.0	2,711	13.4	
750–1,500	2,294	3.4	2,417	11.9	
300–750	5,379	8.0	2,541	12.6	
150–300	5,047	7.5	1,093	5.4	
50–150	7,902	11.7	704	3.5	
Less than 50	44,393	65.9	625	3.1	

¹ United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Governments in the United States in 1952*. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1953.) P. 4.



Hutchins, C. D., and A. R. Munse, "Public School Finance Programs of the United States" (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1955), p. 14.

Figure 139. Percentage of School Funds Obtained from State Sources, 1953-1954 by State.

it does not react to changed conditions that demand more money for schools. As a result, local governments are turning to other sources for school money, and are awarded ever-rising grants by the State governments. So far as the other taxes are concerned, there are only five States—Indiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Pennsylvania, and Vermont—in which they supply as much as ten per cent of the total school revenues. School district officials may levy such taxes only when authorized to do so by the State legislature. Moreover, State law usually limits the rate at which the property tax may be levied; an increase above this rate is permissible generally only when supported in a referendum election. Local officials also may raise money through selling bonds. State laws or the State constitution also tend to restrict borrowing, by such means as setting a percentage of the assessed valuation of the district that the total debt of the district may not exceed. The fact is that local school administrators depend more and more upon the State governments to provide them with money.

State Financing: State financing of education for the school year 1953-1954 amounted to nearly \$3.2 billions, which was 41.4% of all school revenues. Of this sum, a little more than one per cent was appropriated for the State departments of education, and between five and six per cent was appropriated for the State contributions to the educational retirement system. The remainder, ninety-two per cent in all, was expended on State aids to school districts.

GENERAL-PURPOSE AND SPECIAL-PURPOSE GRANTS. State aids fall into several classes. They may first of all be divided into general-purpose grants and

special-purpose grants. A general-purpose grant is one that is made with little or no specification by the State legislature as to the purposes to which it shall be devoted. A special-purpose grant is one that the legislature makes for a stated end, such as teacher training, the education of exceptional children, vocational education, or textbooks. School administrators prefer general-purpose grants, if only because they feel that they are better qualified than the legislature to determine what shall be the use of State aid. Legislatures often prefer special-purpose grants, particularly when they have little or no faith in the discretion and wisdom of school administrators. School administrators, however, seem to have triumphed over the diffidence of legislators; in 1953-1954, general-purpose grants amounted to 78.9% of all State aid, and special-purpose to only 21.1%. In every State but Delaware there was at least one general-purpose grant, and in only four States did such grants comprise less than ten per cent of all State aid. By contrast, in eighteen States general-purpose grants totaled more than ninety per cent of all State aid; the government of Nevada made no special-purpose grants.

FLAT GRANTS AND EQUALIZING GRANTS. State aid may also be classified according to whether it takes the form of a flat grant or that of an equalizing grant. A flat grant is one that is made to all school districts on the same basis, such as population or average daily attendance—called *ADA* by schoolmen. An equalizing grant, on the other hand, is one that is adjusted not only according to population or *ADA* but also according to the wealth of the district, that is, according to its ability to support educational institutions. In 1953-1954, flat grants amounted to 54.6% of all State aids, and equalizing grants to 45.4%. In Arizona, Delaware, Maine, Nebraska, South Carolina, and South Dakota, there were only flat grants; in eight other States, flat grants made up more than ninety per cent of all aid. By contrast, in no State did all aid take the form of equalizing grants; in six States—Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Utah, and West Virginia—equalizing grants accounted for ninety per cent or more of the total.

Equalizing grants are usually administered in conjunction with a so-called “foundation program.” A foundation program, which is established by State law, constitutes a statement of the minimum services that each school district shall furnish for its residents. In a State in which a foundation program has been installed, State authorities compute the ability of each school district to finance the program. They then distribute equalization funds to each district unable to carry out the program. Sometimes equalizing grants are made for general purposes; in other instances they are offered for special purposes. In any event, equalizing grants are becoming more and more common as local districts prove incapable of supplying all the educational services that State officials feel they should provide. The consequence of these grants is two-fold: in the first place, school services throughout each State are becoming uniform from one district to another regardless of the financial resources of the individual districts; in the second place, through its authority to offer or withhold such grants, the State board of education is acquiring increased influence over local school policies and conduct.

LABOR

State governments today regulate various aspects of labor. The aspects that will be discussed in the following section are (1) industrial accident compensation; (2) wages, hours, and working conditions; (3) industrial relations; and (4) fair employment practices commissions.

Industrial accident compensation

Industrial accident compensation is insurance against the medical costs that may arise from an injury that an employee suffers in the course of his work; it also guarantees that the employee will have some income while he is recovering from his injury and is unable to work. Until the fairly recent past it was quite easy for an employer to escape all responsibility in connection with an injury to a worker; the employer need merely show that the worker himself had been negligent in some way, or that some fellow-worker had been negligent, or that the injury was a reasonable expectation because the work was hazardous, to be relieved of all obligation in the matter. In short, the employee was assumed to be responsible unless the reverse could be demonstrated. Today, by contrast, in every State the law provides that in the case of injury or accidental death suffered by a worker the employer shall be presumed to be responsible.

Industrial accident compensation is the principal form of workingmen's insurance that is financed and administered exclusively by State governments. This insurance system is usually financed by a State tax on employers, based on the payroll of the particular business; in some States employers may take out policies with private insurance companies. This tax, or the cost of the insurance, is normally added to the price of the employer's goods or services, so that it is ultimately paid by the consumer; thus it may be said that accident compensation is now the burden of the entire public, which pays for it. The core of the program is the weekly payments made to the injured worker, generally some specified percentage of his average earnings, for some period of time that may be as much as ten years or more. Frequently the employer must make a lump sum settlement to the worker's survivors in the case of death. In a few States the survivors are also entitled to weekly payments for a certain time. States differ with respect to the sort of injuries that they cover; in some States compensation is paid for occupational diseases as well as for injuries.

Wages, hours, and working conditions

State governments have enacted a host of laws regulating the wages, hours, and working conditions of employees. It must be noted first of all that these State enactments apply chiefly to workers in intrastate business only; those in interstate business fall under the provisions of the national Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 and its amendments. In general these State laws are not so exacting as federal laws; for example, State minimum wages are lower than the \$1.00 per hour minimum that Congress has established for workers

who are under federal jurisdiction. This circumstance is probably due largely to the great influence that agricultural and manufacturing concerns have over State governments. Both State and local authorities play an important role in supervising the conditions of work, particularly in the enforcement of safety in dangerous occupations.

States also carry out numerous functions related to woman and child labor. Every State government has fixed a minimum age at which a child may work in a factory. Moreover, State governments often require that an adolescent have a work permit before he can be employed. Too, children of school age commonly are forbidden to work during school hours. State laws sometimes ban employment of children, and of women as well, after a certain hour in the day; they may also prohibit the employment of women and children in stipulated hazardous industries. Furthermore, State laws may require that women be given a rest period after a certain time of work; commonly, State laws prescribe the maximum number of hours per day and per week that women and children may labor.

Industrial relations

State governments have passed a group of laws concerning industrial relations. Again, a considerable fraction of this task has been undertaken by the federal government through the Wagner and Taft-Hartley Acts, which relate to interstate commerce. However, some State governments have enacted statutes resembling the federal laws, to control the industrial relations of intrastate businesses. To maintain industrial peace, some State governments have established mediation and conciliation services. However, only a few State governments have installed agencies for the arbitration of industrial disputes, partly because both employers and employees tend to dislike the compulsory features of arbitration.

Some State and local governments have attempted in various ways to restrain labor organizations. For example, in about one-third of the States the legislature has enacted a so-called "right-to-work" law forbidding the union shop. These State laws specify that no person may be compelled to join any organization as a condition of employment. Most of these States are predominantly rural, so that labor unions have comparatively little political influence at the State capital. In five States—New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Wisconsin, and Texas—the legislature has forbidden labor unions to contribute to political campaigns. Some State and local laws that restricted unions have been overthrown by the courts; for example, the courts have ruled that a statute outlawing peaceful picketing is an unconstitutional denial of the freedom of speech and the freedom of assembly.

One other phase of industrial relations that concerns State and local governments is the fact that these governments themselves are employers on a large scale. Many employees of State and local governments belong to unions. Some belong to unions whose membership is limited to government employees, such as the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees; others belong to unions open also to those in private business, such as the teamsters' union. Some small cities, particularly in the South,

either forbid or discourage their civil service workers' joining unions. Table 54 shows the number and percentage of cities in each of several population groups that have at least some employees who belong to one or more unions. This table, which applies to municipal employees as of January 1, 1955, does not include those who belonged to unions that were not designed solely for government workers.

TABLE 54. UNION MEMBERSHIP AMONG MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES

Population Group	Cities Reporting	Cities with Employees in Organizations	Percentage of Cities with Employees in Organizations
More than 500,000	18	18	100.0
250,000-500,000	23	22	95.7
100,000-250,000	65	65	100.0
50,000-100,000	113	108	95.6
25,000-50,000	231	194	83.9
10,000-25,000	535	285	53.3
Totals	985	692	70.3

State and local government employees conduct their relations with their employers much as employees of private corporations manage their relations with corporation executives. However, public employees do not have so much freedom in going on strike as private employees do. In some States and municipalities there are statutes prohibiting strikes by government employees. In other jurisdictions, whereas most employees may strike, members of the police and fire departments may not, probably because of their connection with public security.

Fair employment practices commissions

Fair employment practices commissions, which have been established by a number of State and local governments, are agencies that strive to prevent discrimination in employment on the ground of religion, race, or nationality. Those interested in outlawing discrimination have persuaded officials in about a dozen States and in several municipalities to adopt appropriate laws. In some cases, however, there is no instrument for enforcing the laws, so that they are of little if any effect. On the other hand, in some places there are commissions to investigate complaints that some person has been denied a job because of his religion, race, or nationality. Often an offender, when threatened with unfavorable publicity, will comply with the law, whether or not the government can impose a material penalty. Also, some States have fixed penalties for the violation of these laws. Some of these laws also prohibit the officials of labor unions from denying union membership to any person on these discriminatory grounds. Finally, some State and local governments have deleted all reference to race, religion, and nationality from application forms for civil service posts.

QUESTIONS AND PROBLEMS

1. What reasons are given for maintaining the "political independence" of the schools? In what ways are schools politically independent or not independent?
2. Compare the extent of unionism among the employees of the federal government with the extent among local government employees.
3. If cities had complete powers over slum clearance and removal and the erection of public housing, do you think there would be more or less of these activities? Explain your answer.
4. Describe the several major areas of State regulation of working conditions and industrial relations, distinguishing in each case whether the activity is reserved to the States, joint, or concurrent with respect to the federal government.
5. Define briefly: "board of education"; "superintendent"; "dependent school system"; "general-purpose educational grant"; "equalizing grant."
6. How are the Board of Education and chief State school official chosen in your home State? What different methods of selection are found in other States?
7. To what extent is the United States "dry" today with respect to alcoholic beverages? What several forms of "dry" legislation has the Twenty-first Amendment permitted?
8. Explain as best you can why chlorination of drinking water is not a heated political issue but fluoridation is.
9. Is your home State characterized by dependent or independent school systems? Is it typical of the nation in this respect?
10. Using the materials of this chapter and those of the related chapters on the federal government, prepare a list of public welfare activities carried on mostly by State governments, mostly by the federal government, mostly by local governments, and jointly by a combination of governments.
11. If you desired federal money for your home State school systems, but wished absolutely no federal control, what kind of grant system could you conceive, and what conditions would you seek to avoid?
12. What percentage of school funds come from State sources in your home State? Is this proportion typical of the nation as a whole? Is it typical of the States of roughly similar population and degree of urbanization?