

potential element of danger. It involves, at any rate, a radical departure from a principle which has hitherto characterized not alone American government, but the governmental systems of the leading European states as well. In the successful administration of German cities, for example, this separation of the appropriating from the spending departments has always been strongly emphasized.

It is sometimes urged that the general adoption of the system of government by commission would encourage state intervention in municipal affairs. In every large city there come up, year by year, many important questions which demand broad legislative action. Now, whether their policy has been wise or unwise in this direction, it is an undoubted fact that state authorities have been extremely loath to entrust broad legislative functions to small boards whose jurisdiction is mainly administrative. The association of well-considered legislative action with large bodies is deeply imbedded in the American mind and will not be easily eradicated. If large municipal councils are eliminated from the framework of city government there would seem to be a danger that state legislatures would be tempted to assume for themselves some of the broader legislative functions which the councils have been accustomed to exercise. At any rate, we know from experience that where the legislative powers of municipal councils have been curtailed their former powers have usually been assumed by the state legislature and have not been transferred to some other organ of local government. That there has been, on the whole, too much state interference in municipal affairs most students of government are disposed to admit; this intervention has been on occasions salutary, but more often detrimental to the best interests of the cities concerned. It may properly be urged, therefore, that any step which promises to afford an incentive to greater inroads upon the principle of civic autonomy should not be taken hastily or without due consideration of its less immediate but none the less important consequences.

In weighing the respective merits and defects of the Galveston plan as these would probably work out were the system given general application, the burden of proof ought in fairness to be placed upon those who advocate the extension. A change in