

## Transvaal Students' Society

## SOME ASPECTS OF ADMINISTRATION IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

*From an Address by COUNCILLOR P. R. B. LEWIS, M.P.C.*

WHEN I was asked to speak to your Society on my trip to America I readily accepted because I had seen and learnt so much which I thought might be of interest to you. However, when I got down to preparing the speech I found great difficulty in deciding what to put in and what to leave out, because there is so much to tell.

I think I should first tell you how I came to undertake this trip. The State Department of the United States Government arrange for visits to their country by people from all over the world, and I was fortunate enough to be given one of what they call their "Leader Grants" for last year. Under this Grant the air fare to and from the States is paid by the State Department, and while in the States one's travelling expenses are paid, and a per diem grant of 20 dollars is made. No provision is made for the expenses of one's wife. I was fortunate, however, in that my wife was able to accompany me as, besides the companionship, my wife was able to keep up the correspondence with the family, to write the "thank you" letters to the people who gave us hospitality, and my laundry bills during my whole trip came to under 5 dollars, so my wife has qualified for her merit certificate as a laundress. The length of the Grant is for 60 days. Prior to my departure for the States I was asked what I was interested in studying, and whether there were any particular things I wanted to do and see. Under this Grant no report is required at the end of the trip, and that I can say was a very great relief.

On arrival in the United States we were met at the airport and escorted to our Hotel in Washington. I had chosen to go to the Conference arranged by the International Union of Local Authorities which was held in Washington in mid-June, as I felt that Conference, which was dealing with local government in the United States of America would give me a general background to their civic administration prior to taking up my grant, which started from the 1st July. On arrival in Washington I interviewed the Office of Cultural Exchange in the Department of State, and they passed me on to the Governmental Affairs Institute with whom they had arranged to do the detailed programming, so that during the time the Conference was being held I was able to plan what I was to do and see.

I asked that they arrange the trip on the basis of my visiting cities where I could find examples of the various methods of civic administration. I also told them of my interest in forestry and that I would like to see some of their forestry methods. I also wanted to see some of their Indian Reservations. I had been invited by a friend to visit the factory of

his parent company, Norton Abrasives, in Worcester, Mass., and I wished to accept the invitation of Professor Stephen Bailey, the Dean of Syracuse University, who had asked me to join him at his hideout on one of the lakes in Maine during his vacation. I naturally wanted to see as much of their country as was possible within the limit of the 60-day period.

A Mr. Eldridge was the programme officer at the Governmental Affairs Institute, and while I was attending the I.U.L.A. Conference he got busy on making the arrangements. My itinerary finally included the visiting of cities in New England on the east coast, and then up into Maine. We then crossed to the Niagara Falls, visited Chicago and then went to Minnesota, which is one of the extreme northern States, and then went right down to the mid-West to Denver at the foot of the Rockies from where we went by train, the Californian Zephyr, across the Rockies to San Francisco. This journey started early one morning and went on until 6.15 the following evening, passing through magnificent country. We then went south through California to Los Angeles, from where we started heading west again, our first stop being at the Grand Canyon. This was an unforgettable experience. We then headed south-west to Oklahoma City. Lest you think that my trip was a grand holiday, I would just like to give you my two days' programme in Oklahoma City.

We had just come from the Indian Reservations and we were at a little place called Albuquerque waiting for our plane, which happened to be very late. We left Albuquerque at one o'clock in the morning, arrived in Oklahoma at four, and found that a huge programme had been arranged for me for the next two days. The person who was my host in that city knew that my plane was late, and I was quite sure he would have altered my programme for the next day, but nothing doing. The telephone rang at 8 o'clock in the morning, and I was told that I would be called for at 8.45 a.m. The first appointment arranged for me that day was to go to what was called an "Urban League," that was a joint White and Negro Organisation, and they wanted to tell me about their Black-White relations. I spent an hour and a half with these people, not having had any breakfast; I was then rushed to give a television interview which was unrehearsed, and therefore quite a strain. I was then rushed back to have lunch with a banker, a judge and some other people, and immediately after that I had to interview a hotel proprietor who had some race problems. From there I went to see the Mayor, and after that visit I had to go to see a newspaper editor who had met some South Africans. From there I went to a dinner arranged by the Lions

Club, and after the dinner I had to go to a home where I was cross-examined by a bishop and some other people—getting home at 12 o'clock. The next day was the same again. So that was the sort of programme we had.

From there we went right down to New Orleans near the mouth of the Mississippi. This area is very swampy, and the water table is so high that people cannot be buried underground, so that mausoleums are built above ground. From New Orleans we went to a city called Atlanta in Georgia, another of the south-western cities, before visiting Williamsburg in Virginia. Williamsburg is near Jamestown, which was the first place occupied in Virginia in 1607. Jamestown proved such an unhealthy spot that the people moved inland to Williamsburg. Largely through the generosity of Mr. Rockefeller, it was decided some years ago to try and restore Williamsburg to its original character in the colonial days. The old plans were found, and the buildings restored to their old-time character. Period furniture has been installed and as many relics and antiques as possible have been placed in the village. On arrival at the reception centre, a film is shown of the occasion when the Colonials resolved to sever their ties with Great Britain. It also depicted the life at that time. After leaving Williamsburg we returned to Washington where, after a few days, we left for New York and home.

Before we left Washington on our trip we were handed our itinerary which scheduled our daily programme, giving details of our travel arrangements, the hotel accommodation, our sponsor in each city and the things laid on for us to do. The sponsors were people with whom the Governmental Affairs Institute were in contact, who acted as guide, philosopher and friend to visiting persons such as ourselves. The sponsor arranged the contacts in the cities with the particular persons we were interested in visiting. In some cases the sponsors would be private individuals—in Buffalo it was the Buffalo World Hospitality Association, in Chicago the Institute of International Education, in Maine the International Centre for Students and Visitors, and in Los Angeles it was the Los Angeles World Affairs Council, and so on. These Hospitality Associations are something I think we could copy. They set out to welcome newcomers to the city, students from foreign lands and travellers from abroad. In very many cases they were voluntary organisations, with people giving freely of their services.

Normally when we arrived at our hotel we would have a letter of welcome from the sponsor, saying what had been arranged for us, and what private hospitality had been laid on. This meant that we were meeting people in their homes in most of the cities we visited, and while this proved a bit strenuous and exhausting, it did give us an insight, and did establish contacts which would not have been normally available to the visitor. We stayed in Minneapolis for a week and had six dinner dates in a row, at each of which the host and hostess had asked their friends

to meet us, all of whom were interested in what was going on in South Africa. This proved rather exhausting, as one had to go over the same ground time and time again, and one's waistline also began to feel the strain.

To understand the civic set-up in the United States one must have a broad background of the relationship between the Federal Government, State Government and the Cities. In America their standpoint is that the essence of good government lies in the division of power: their classic phrase is the system of "checks and balances." This standpoint was inherited from the 17th century when King and Parliament were fighting for supremacy. America's first Constitution was in 1788, and any law, either Federal, State or City, can be challenged if not in accordance with that Constitution. The American Constitution enumerates the Federal powers and gives the residual powers to the States, quite contrary to our Constitution where it is the Provinces whose powers are limited to those conferred upon them under the Act of Union. In America the Federal Government cannot veto a State Law unless the matter deals with a specific responsibility allocated to the Federal Government.

In the United States Senate each State elects two representatives, who hold office for six years. Every two years one-third of the Senators retire so the Senate gets new blood every two years, but there is continuity through the retention of two-thirds of the old members. The 437 members of the House of Representatives are elected for two years—each voting constituency consists of approximately 300,000 voters. The President is elected for four years. He is the Chief of State and the Chief Executive Officer. He appoints his own Cabinet, with the consent of the Senate, and this Cabinet holds office at his pleasure. Members of the Cabinet are not members of Congress and have not collective responsibility. The President, as Chief Executive Officer, is responsible for the enforcement of laws, but he does not make them—it is Congress and the Senate which does that. The members of the Cabinet have no right to participate in the deliberations of Congress or the Senate, but the President can address joint sessions of the House of Representatives and of the Senate, and he can also send messages to Congress. Where the President and the Legislature meet is in Congressional Committees which deal with various aspects of Government, and it is at these Congressional Committees that the President's representatives would put forward the President's proposals. The extraordinary aspect of American politics, from a South African point of view, is that the voting in the House of Representatives and the Senate is not on strict Party lines. A motion will get votes from some members of the Democratic Party and some members of the Republican Party, but on another motion the alignment may be representatives of the North vs. representatives of the South, and so on. In a book comparing the Constitution of the United States with that of Canada, this statement is made:

"Just as the framers of the American Constitution intended, national government in the United States depends on a perpetual process of adjustment and compromise between independent political authorities. As a matter both of law and of practice, the President, the Senate and the House of Representatives have powers which enable each to balance and check the others. The art of American politics is to bring them into mutual agreement. When the two Houses of Congress come up with different versions of a new law, the only thing to do is to iron out the differences in a joint conference committee. When the President and Congress are at loggerheads, the President must use all his resources to bring the Congressional leaders around, at least in part, to his own way of thinking. He can try to influence them both directly and through the medium of public opinion; he can also use the veto as an ultimate threat to lend force to his arguments. Like any bargaining process, this all takes time, and the outcome is always uncertain. The United States, with its extreme devotion to the principle of the separation of powers, is a remarkable demonstration of the fact that government by negotiation can also be made to work.

The American concept of democracy is complex. Relying, as usual, on the principle of checks and balances, it regards the will of the people with a nicely balanced mixture of respect and suspicion. It believes, on the one hand, that a democracy should be continuously responsible to the electorate. To allow a government, as in South Africa, to go for as long as five years without having to renew its popular mandate would be quite out of keeping with this particular side of the American democratic tradition. It is very much concerned, on the other hand, with the dangers of absolute majority rule. Although minorities should not rule majorities, it does not follow that majorities should have an unlimited right to rule minorities. To make government immediately responsive to the will of the people, and at the same time to prevent it from degenerating into majority tyranny, is the goal.

These ideas are fully embodied in the American political system. The principle of continuous responsibility is reflected in Congress. Every two years the whole House of Representatives, and one-third of the Senate, have to face the electorate. This prevents the legislature from ever getting very far out of touch with public opinion, but provision is also made, as in Canada, to counteract the disadvantages of a government too responsive to popular whims. Since the President is elected for four years, it is possible for him, like the Canadian Prime Minister, to stand somewhat apart from current opinion and take a long-range point of view. The six-year term of Senators also works in the same direction. Thus the balance of powers between President and Congress, and between the two Houses of Congress, insures a continual com-

promise between short-term and long-term considerations.

The American system also imposes many restrictions on the principle of absolute majority rule. The disproportionate power of small States in the Senate (each State, no matter how small or large, has two representatives in the Senate) and the special majorities required for the confirmation of treaties, for the over-riding of a presidential veto, and for the adoption of constitutional amendments, are obvious cases in point."

I felt it necessary to give this broad resumé of the Central Government in the United States in order to have a general background of how things tick.

In America the cities in many ways have far more independence than the cities in South Africa, and yet the citizens withhold from their civic rulers much authority which would be readily given here. Most cities of any size have their own Charter, in which the citizens have agreed on the particular form of local government that they want. These Charters endeavour to set out in detail the way the city is to be administered, and how changes can be effected. The main forms of city management are generally referred to as—

- (i) *The strong Mayor system*—By this is meant a system in which a Mayor is appointed who is the Chief Executive with wide powers. He often has the power to hire and fire staff, and would be regarded as the City Boss. His strength lies in the authority given to him in terms of the City Charter.
- (ii) *The weak Mayor system*—is where the Mayor is largely a ceremonial head—a "meeter and greeter"—who has very limited powers. Often he is not a member of the Council, nor would he be present at Council Meetings.
- (iii) *The City Manager system*—under which there is a Mayor and Council, but the City Manager has very wide administrative powers. The Mayor and Council would be the legislative body and the City Manager would generally have wide powers regarding the engaging of staff, and he would prepare the budget for the Council's approval. Increasingly the persons appointed to the position of City Manager are trained administrators specialising in civic management.
- (iv) *The Commission form of City Management*—This is used in Washington, D.C., where the Federal Government appoints three persons as Commissioners to administer the city. It may surprise you to know that there are no municipal elections in Washington. This form is also used in other cities where Commissioners are elected to administer various sectors of civic activities, and are normally full-time persons.
- (v) In some of the New England States the focal point of Town Government is the Town Meetings. These meetings, held annually, are attended by all qualified voters of the community. Here

Town Officers are selected, funds appropriated, taxes levied and local ordinances enacted. The Town Meetings were designed to facilitate participation in government by all citizens of the community. The population growth has rendered this system of direct democracy impracticable in some towns. As a result many towns have instituted representative or limited Town Meetings whereby the voters select a group of representatives, sometimes reaching as high as 200 people, to attend the meetings and act in their name. The government of the town is often entrusted to three or nine selected men chosen at the Town Meeting. Generally there is no Chief Executive. The selected men do not have power to levy taxes, the prerogative remains in the hands of the Town Meeting.

Of the larger towns 53.7% have a Mayor and Council system—8.8% the Commission form, and 37.5% the Council and City Manager form.

The Mayor of the city is usually subject to direct election by the people. This happens in 76% of cases. In a few cases the councillor who gets the highest number of votes in the elections is the Mayor, but in most other cases the Mayor is selected by the Council. The term of office of Mayor is usually for two years, but often for four years.

The form of election to councils differs. In 60% of the cities councillors are elected at large, that is, they do not stand for a ward—they are just elected as councillors for the city as a whole. In 23% of the cities the councillors are elected to represent wards, and in 17% of the cities there is a combination of the wards and at large systems.

In addition to the elections which take place for councillors and mayors, in a large number of the cities officials are also subject to election. Very often, when I commented on the fact that our officials were permanently appointed, and remained in office, I drew gasps of horror. The remark usually was, "How do you get rid of them?", the theory in America being that if a person remains in office too long he becomes a dictator, gets to know too much, and would probably be looking after his own interests anyway.

The following table may be of interest to you:—

- In 29.6% of the cities the Treasurer is subject to election.
- In 23.4% of the cities the Clerk of the Council is subject to election.
- In 12.2% the Assessor, comparable to our City Valuer.
- In 10.1% the Auditor.
- In 8% the Attorney.
- In 4.3% the Police Chief.
- In 3.8% the Comptroller.
- In 1.4% the Public Works Director.
- In 51.8% of the cities none of the above officials are elected.

You will probably envy the officials in America in that the number of Councillors is usually far less

than here. In the cities with a population of over half a million the average number is 15—only in one city is it as much as 50. In most of the cities below half a million population the average number is nine.

However, the functions of the City Council vary considerably from those in force here. For instance, the cities have their own Police Force, but then again many items which we would regard as civic responsibility are taken over by separate Boards. For instance, there may be a Library Board, a Park Board, a Housing and Redevelopment Authority, a Civil Service Commission which makes all appointments to the staff. Here it is interesting to note that very often promotion is subject to examinations set by the Civil Service Commission. A Fair Employment Practice Commission, a Planning Commission, a Capital Long-Range Improvements Committee. In some cities they have a body called The Charter Reform Committee, which is a body on which there would be Council representatives, who would constantly investigate whether the City's Charter needs revision. Should such a revision be considered necessary it would, in nearly all cases, have had to be submitted to the electorate by means of a vote, to determine whether the Charter would or would not be amended. Charter amendments are very difficult to obtain as the populace are very conservative, especially if part of the Charter amendments contain any suggestion about the increase of remuneration of Councillors or Mayors.

I have here some of the proposed Charter Amendments for the City of Los Angeles, and the voting paper issued to the Electorate. The suggested Charter changes are set out, followed by the arguments for and against the amendments, and a list of prominent people supporting and opposing the amendments. In the actual amendments I have in the voting paper before me, the first one was whether a Sewer Bond should be raised. The next one was not a Charter amendment, but a matter which, in the Charter, required the approval of the Electorate. This item was to get authority to specify the officer to act in proceedings for public off-street parking. Another matter for which authority was required was establishing public parking facilities and the issuing of Revenue Bonds to finance the project. Another item was extending the period of presenting claims against the Council for one year. Another item was the designation of the General Manager of the Department of Traffic as City Traffic Engineer. In South Africa the Council itself would have the authority to do these things, and having to get approval by means of a referendum slows down the City Management, and it was amazing to me the limitations placed on the authority of the Councils.

In the City of Minneapolis they had a Board called the Board of Estimates and Taxation which consisted of seven members, two of whom were elected at large for four-year periods, the Mayor, the City Comptroller, the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee and representatives from the Parks and School Boards. This Board's functions were to determine the maximum of tax levies and the authorisation and

sale of City Bonds. Each year the Departments of the Minneapolis Council submit budgets of their income and expenditure for the following year. The Board of Estimates and Taxation would have hearings on these estimates, to which the public are invited to come and comment. The Board then fixes the maximum tax levies that can be raised by the City Council for the ensuing year.

I attended many council meetings and found these to be very much less formal than ours. It would be unthinkable in America for councillors to wear gowns—they would feel that this was too pompous and that the councillors would be giving themselves airs, and making themselves different from the ordinary people. Many council meetings started with prayer by the local parson. I was quite surprised at the number of members of the public who attended these meetings, and in many cities the public participated in the council meetings. In Long Beach, California, a separate time was set aside, at the beginning of the meetings, for the public to address the council on matters they thought important. At others the public were invited to participate in the discussion on the items on the agenda. It seemed strange to me, at Compton, when the acceptance of a tender was being considered, in which the town engineer had recommended that the lowest tender be not accepted, the tenderers themselves addressed the council on the merits of their wares, and remained in the council while the decision was taken. Council agendas were not accompanied by reports in as great detail as we are accustomed to receiving.

I found that South Africa is not the only country with problems. By and large I would not care to exchange our difficulties for some of the staggering problems with which America has to deal.

We all visualise America as a land of great wealth, prosperity and opportunity for all. A problem with which nearly all the large cities in America are grappling is the problem of what they call "blighted areas." What has happened is that with modern transport the older suburbs have been vacated by the more well-to-do people who establish new homes in new suburbs. Sometimes these suburbs are outside the boundaries of the mother city, and have their own civic administration. The houses vacated in many cases would be too large for occupation by the people moving in, and the home would then be shared by more than one family. In many cases, over the course of time, these formerly good areas would probably be occupied by Negroes or Puerto Ricans. Remember that a number of cities in America are over 300 years old, and that when the cities were designed they were not designed for modern traffic. These areas become depressed, the rating value has decreased, and in many cases the heart of the City has become dead. In Boston, for instance, they embarked on a 90 million dollar redevelopment plan. The Mayor, in a statement on this programme, had the following remarks to pass:

"Boston is one of the great cities of America.

None has made a finer contribution to the history, the culture, the way of life of this nation of ours. Yet too much of Boston's greatness lies in its past. Today Boston has far more than its share of slums and blight. This decay is sapping the great strength and beauty, vitality and charm which it still possesses in such abundance.

"Boston has all kinds of slums and all kinds of blight. It has overcrowded slums and half empty slums. It has bad housing and badly run-down commercial areas. It needs lots of slum clearance but it offers great opportunities for rehabilitation.

"You also will see some of the worst slums in the City plus enough shabby, run-down commercial buildings to make you uncomfortable about the future of downtown."

The City of Chicago has exactly the same problem as Boston. The University of Chicago was faced with the problem that the immediate surroundings of the University had become a blighted area, affecting the student life of the University; so much so, that I believe at one time serious consideration was being given to changing the site of the University.

The Federal Government in America has come to the aid of the cities, and under approved development programmes the city expropriates the area to be re-developed, decides on the lay-out of the replanned area, making provision for modern transport, and tenders are then called for to undertake the redevelopment plan, and because in America they believe very earnestly in private enterprise, the city itself would not undertake the redevelopment work. The loss between the figure at which the ground has been expropriated, and the price at which it is disposed of to the private entrepreneur, is shared as to one-third by the city and two-thirds by the Federal Government. The city endeavours to make up its loss by recovering increased rates on the redeveloped area.

I visited some of the slums in Haarlem in New York, and some of the new housing schemes, and what a transformation, but the officials who were showing me around told me that the problem was so vast that they did not know when they would be able to catch up on the backlog. In a survey entitled "The Exploding Metropolis" by the Editors of Fortune, it is stated: "Today some 17,000,000 Americans live in dwellings that are beyond rehabilitation—decayed, dirty, rat-infested, without decent heating or lighting or plumbing. The problem afflicts all our metropolitan cities, but it is most severe in the biggest, richest, most industrialised cities. Block on block the slums are spilling out into once respectable neighbourhoods as the middle-class leaves for suburbia."

Part of this problem in the Northern cities is due to the migration of the Negro population from the depressed areas in the South. While in theory there is no discrimination as to who can or cannot reside in various residential areas, in fact, the bulk of the people such as Negroes and Puerto Ricans reside in areas which we shall say are recognised Negro

suburbs. These expand from time to time, but not at the same rate as the population has been expanding, with the result that the overcrowding has accentuated the bad conditions in these areas.

I would like to give you some population figures. Take New York City for instance. There the non-White population in 1940 was 497,000—in 1950 it had increased to 775,000 and by 1960 it was over one million. During that time the total population of New York City had only increased by 330,000, whereas the Negro population increased by 610,000. In other words, the Negroes were moving in and the Whites were moving out.

The same pattern is observed in Philadelphia, where the Negro population, which was 252,000 in 1940, had doubled by 1960, while the total population had remained the same. In Chicago the Negro population of 282,000 in 1940 had increased by 200% to 812,000 in 1960, the total population remaining about the same. In Washington the Negro population of 188,000 in 1940 had increased to 411,000 by 1960, and the total population only increased during that time by 100,000, and, in fact, over the last five years the total population decreased by 40,000. Today the Negro population of Washington is 53% of the total. For the United States as a whole the population increase over the last ten years was 18.5% and that of the Negroes was an average of 25.5%, and during this period the Negro population in the Southern States increased by 9%, while in the Northern States it increased by 50%. Most of the Negroes who move from the South to the North have little or no capital. Many of them have only been trained as farm labourers and have had no factory experience. Very much the same comments apply to the Puerto Ricans, who arrive by plane loads in New York and other eastern seaboard towns. There was more than one official I met who envied our Influx Control Regulations.

Another feature of American outlook, which I found strange, was the desire of the smaller communities outside the boundaries of the mother city to have their own local authority, which meant their own civic administration, Police Force and their own Fire Brigade, which was very often manned by voluntary workers. People seem very reluctant to combine with a bigger authority in case somebody else tells them what they must do. The result was that grouped around the old city one had a tremendous number of small satellite towns, each with their own set-up. Between 1950 and 1955 the total number of people living in metropolitan areas increased by 12 million. Within the city limits, however, the number increased only by 2,400,000, the main increase in population being in the new sub-divisions outside the city limits.

In some instances metropolitan schemes have been developed. I attended a meeting of the Sanitary Board in Los Angeles. There the townships have come together to form a joint Sanitary Board, and at this meeting a proposal was put up for increasing the capacity of the pipelines in a certain area. The

immediate reaction of one of the councillors was that as this pipeline would not serve his area he did not see why they should be called upon to make a contribution.

Another problem with which councillors and officials have to deal is the League of Women Voters! These bodies of women are very active in civic affairs, and publish pamphlets on the government of the city for the information of all citizens. They attend council meetings to keep a watching brief, and generally make their presence known and felt.

There are some items of information which I gathered which I thought might be of particular interest to your Society. One was in the City of Minneapolis when the city was wishing to raise loans, invited tenders. The city stated the amount it required and the period for which the money was wanted and the purpose for which it was required, and asked people to submit offers on the basis on which they would lend the money. In the City of St. Paul, an official was elected called the Comptroller. His function was to prepare the budget for the ensuing year, and once the budget was approved, to see that the money expended was in terms of that budget. Remember, he was an elected official and once he had prepared his budget it was submitted to the Council, the Council then had to submit it for public hearing for a certain number of days, and after the public hearing the Council framed the budget, but in framing the budget the Council was not allowed, in terms of its Charter, to vary the Comptroller's budget by more than 10%, and if it did vary it, it had to balance the budget by increasing the source of income. If a budget is not agreed to by a certain date, the last year's budget applies.

In Los Angeles, where the city has a council of 15 full-time councillors who receive a salary of 12,000 dollars each, they have a senior official who is called the City Administrative Officer, who has under him Budget Control Officers. These Budget Control Officers are responsible for the scrutinising of the budgets proposed by departmental heads. In so far as is possible these Budget Control Officers remain responsible for the control of the budgets of the same departments for a length of time so that they get thoroughly conversant with the working of that department. A manual is issued to these Budget Control Officers on the method to be adopted in assessing the budgets. One of their functions is to scrutinise the number of staff employed, and in the preparation of the budgets departmental heads have to show the number of employees under their various categories over a period, so that any increase is readily ascertained. Once the budgets have been approved, the Budget Control Officer's duty is to scrutinise monthly returns to see to what extent the budget is being maintained. These latter budgets are called performance budgets.

In many of the cities great reliance is placed on these monthly returns to see how performance is matching the budget, and I would like to hear mem-

bers' views, as it occurs to me that very often, once an item has been placed on the estimates and approved, we tend to lose sight of whether we can provide the facility budgeted for at less cost. If expenditure is exceeded a fuss is raised, but do we pay sufficient attention to whether the same result could have been achieved at a lesser expenditure. I have a shrewd suspicion that a certain Professor Parkinson has expressed some views on this matter.

What were my main impressions after my quick flit around that vast country? First and foremost was the friendliness of the American people. I found them extremely easy to get on with; they were very informal; very intelligent and very courteous. It struck me very forcibly that when a person was speaking no one would interrupt, and if two persons started to speak simultaneously, one would immediately defer to the other.

I was surprised to find the extent of the Karroo-like areas in America—vast wastelands. We found the climatic conditions very trying—being there in the height of summer, the humidity and heat were overpowering. When one considers that a lot of these areas which suffer from heat in the summer become frozen up in winter, one realises how lucky we are in South Africa, and I felt after my trip that I would never again complain of the Transvaal climate. The thought had not occurred to me before how low-lying most of the large cities are. We were in Denver, which calls itself the "Mile-high" City, and it was the highest of the large cities. The next highest was Atlanta, with an altitude of approximately 2,500 feet. Most of the other large cities are either at sea level, on the lakes, or in low altitude positions.

We were naturally struck by the wealth of many Americans and by the amount available for research and education. We often felt that money was too easily available and often wasted on apparently needless research.

The Americans are essentially a people who want to be liked, and who are very anxious to be well thought of by the peoples of the world. I have told you about the hospitality associations and the reception committees who welcome students and visitors. We found the women took a greater part in public affairs than here. Amongst the middle class and upper class people a tremendous number of women had University degrees. When we visited Harvard University in Boston we were struck by the fact that it had been founded sixteen years after the Pilgrim Fathers had landed. It was considered necessary by the early Settlers to establish a place of learning so that the standard of their ministry would be maintained. In South Africa it was not until the 1820's that our first College was established—170 years after the first settlers arrived.

The Americans are very air-minded and airways are used almost as buses. There are a tremendous number of airlines covering virtually the same routes. In one of the Papers delivered at the I.U.L.A. Conference we were told of the steps taken by New York City to enforce regulations about the noise created

by aircraft. As a result of this the air companies had to modify the jet planes to minimise the noise nuisance.

We visited the Indian Reservations and felt that some of the conditions were very similar to those in our Native Reserves. Americans have a very keen sense of guilt about what the early Settlers did to the Indian population. This population had been reduced to very small numbers. In the last twenty years the Indian population has increased from 357,000 to 523,000. The Americans are endeavouring to improve the conditions of the Indians, and to get them to leave the Reserves and migrate to the cities, where they have agencies who help them to get placed in employment, and who give them grants until they can get established in their new surroundings. The hogans, which is the name given to the huts occupied by the Indians of the Navajo Tribe, were larger than our Native huts, but in many ways not much superior. In the City of Oklahoma it is a political advantage to have Indian blood in one's veins, and no stigma attaches to such people.

Another thing which struck me in a city such as New York was the fact that next to a huge building like the Rockefeller Centre were dilapidated one and two-storey buildings, and then vacant plots let for parking. If our rating system of taxes on land only had been effective, I think there would have been much more uniform development.

I am afraid I have only been able to sketch some of the highlights of my tour. I came back feeling that our management of cities bore favourable comparison with that of the United States. I think we have a fundamental difference in outlook towards city management. I think it would be fair to say that our system of permanent officials is superior to that of having persons elected to office. That does not mean to say that there are not occasions when I wish it were easier to make changes in staff, but by and large I think we have created a respect for city officials, which is not apparent in the United States. Also, a career in municipal service in South Africa is far more respectable than in many of the American cities. In America, as in South Africa, it is often very difficult to get the right people to seek election as councillors, but I do not think that something that happened in Boston could occur here. There, one of their mayors was found guilty of fraud in connection with municipal matters, and was sentenced to a period of imprisonment. When he came out of prison he resumed office and was re-elected in the next elections.

I found that people were very interested in our rehousing schemes and were very impressed by the fact that we gave each person a plot of ground. I wish that many of our non-European people could see the conditions under which many of the Negroes exist in the cities of America, as I think our conditions bear very favourable comparison.

While we have problems to face in South Africa, I do not think we need be ashamed of the way our cities are run. I think for the size of our population,

and the means at our disposal, we have done well, but there is a lot to learn from what has happened in the older countries. When one attends a Conference such as the I.U.L.A., one realises that the basic problems of city management are very much the same the world over, and South Africa would probably do

well if it stopped regarding its problems as being so unique.

I am now waiting for somebody else to make me another grant, as with the background information I have now obtained, I feel I could make much more beneficial use of the next trip. Any offers?

## WESTERN PROVINCE TREASURERS' ASSOCIATION

THE final meeting of the year of the Association, which was held at the Pavilion Hall, Strand, on Thursday, 15th November, was opened by the Mayor, Dr. C. T. Morkel, who gave a warm welcome to the members assembled from the various regional towns.

The meeting proceeded under the chairmanship of Mr. Bouchier, Deputy Secretary of the Provincial Administration. He thanked Mr. Tindale, Under-Secretary for Local Government, who had acted during Mr. Bouchier's absence on long leave. Mr. Bouchier remarked upon the small agenda, reminding members that the Association's primary purpose was that it should constitute a forum for discussion of treasurers' problems. It was perhaps regrettable that many members were not availing themselves of the help the Association and fellow treasurers could give them by bringing forward their difficulties. On 15th February, 1963, the Administration would communicate with town treasurers requesting them to submit items for discussion. The date for the next meeting would only be decided after the agenda had been agreed upon.

Appended is a resumé of the meeting under the various items of the agenda.

1. Submission of a 6-monthly extract of balances of Main Books of a Local Authority. (Circular letter No. 5 of 1962 by the Provincial Auditor.)

It was immediately apparent that this Circular had caused a certain amount of dissatisfaction amongst treasurers, who felt that the terms were too stringent as many treasurers or town clerks did not comply with auditor's requirements.

As against this the Provincial Auditor pointed out that shortly (possibly next year) he would commence Interim Auditing (Tussenouditeerings) and treasurers would be compelled to see that Councils' books were kept up to date. While he agreed that most treasurers complied with the law, many did not, and no exceptions could be made. In any case a full statement of ledger balances was not required; a trial balance as at 30th June would suffice.

2. Control of Capital Issues — Exchange Control Regulations, 1961.

One of the treasurers expressed the opinion that, while the very small and very large municipalities were not affected by the restriction on borrowing to a million rand a year, the "growing boys" were perhaps unduly handicapped. Particularly was he concerned

with the interpretation of the words—"no person shall during *any* period of twelve months"—(Section 16(1) of the Exchange Control Regulations, 1961) and sought clarification whether it referred to a calendar, financial year or any other period of 12 months.

In the Cape the financial year coincides with the calendar year, Transvaal 30th June, O.F.S. and Natal 31st March. It was suggested that the City Treasurer of Cape Town at his convenience obtain a ruling from the Treasury.

3. Appointment of Certain Officers of a Municipality.

It was held that, in view of the provisions of Section 8(2) of Ordinance No. 4 of 1911, it was perhaps wiser at all times for a local authority to minute a resolution naming persons to act as treasurers, dog licence inspectors, etc., while the permanent occupants of the post were excused from duty for any reason.

4. Pension Benefits to employees who are not eligible for Membership of existing Pension Funds.

It would appear that Section 80(2) of Ordinance 19 of 1951 gives a Council very wide powers to cater for employees ineligible for its Pension Fund. That section empowers a Council to create a special fund for such persons on a rand for rand basis—no employee to pay a greater percentage than allowed for in his age group. While the Administration would be prepared to consider any amendment of this section if it were justified, it was not in favour of making this permissive power compulsory.

5. Basis on which the Administration established a Revolving Fund.

Mr. E. A. Bouchier, Deputy Provincial Secretary, addressed the meeting, his subject being "The Establishment of the Provincial Working Capital Fund and the Provincial Revolving Loan Fund by Ordinance 3 of 1962." He maintained that the establishment of these funds proved that the Administration believed in the principle of the Revolving Fund, i.e. it was not just foisting something on local authorities; it practised what it preached. He thought that the idea behind such a fund, which could perhaps be called "self-generated capital", was sound and had many possibilities, which would be realised as both the Administration and the local authorities gained experience in using the respective funds. As the Provincial Fund was still only in its infancy, the full benefit would only be reaped in a few years.

In conclusion, Mr. Bouchier gave a resumé of how the Fund would be used by the Administration.



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