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*Regional Government —  
the Key to  
Genuine Local Autonomy*

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## *This Bulletin in Brief — Its Observations and Recommendations*

In a January, 1968, Bulletin entitled *Local Government and the Report of the Ontario Committee on Taxation*, which dealt with the first 22 chapters of that Report, the Bureau indicated that OCT's regional government proposals as set forth in Chapter 23 would be the subject of a separate Bulletin. This current effort is our analysis of OCT's "excursion into the field of government structure".\* The January Bulletin expressed our agreement with OCT's decision that the full discharge of its assignment required that it propose a scheme of regional government reform to end the present atomization of local government in Ontario.

Chapter 23 could have been considered from several directions. As will be seen, the Bureau has adopted a somewhat statistical approach to test many of the generalizations and assumptions made by OCT. It is our hope that the dialogue, so necessary and so certain to ensue over Chapter 23, can evolve more productively with the aid of the Bureau's particularized approach.

This summary of our observations and recommendations dealing with the 29 regional governments proposed by OCT follows roughly the same sequence as the Bulletin proper, to which the reader is referred for a more thorough treatment of the points covered.

Ontario is governed, or over-governed, by 964 multi-purpose municipalities plus more than 3,000 special districts and authorities. This multiplicity, while appearing to facilitate access by the public, has the double disadvantage of rendering such access largely meaningless and of leading to geographic and functional fragmentation. Probably foremost in OCT's mind was the need to rationalize the existing system of local government in order to provide a much-needed foundation for provincial policy.

OCT is clear in explaining that its proposed regions are tentative and represent what it hopes will be a starting point for further and detailed analysis. It recommends that the provincial Cabinet, assisted primarily by the Department of Municipal Affairs, plan and schedule detailed studies as to boundaries, functional allocation, and forms of municipal organization "to establish a comprehensive system of regional government within five years".

Not all would agree that the situation so clearly dictates the need for comprehensive reform, or, if it does, that OCT's recommended procedure is the most appropriate to achieve that result. Views as to the proper next step, if any, depend upon how one assesses the current situation. These views may be summarized as follows: (1) there is no need for change; (2) the subject is so fundamental to our system that it would be premature to move in the absence of greater political consensus; (3) the Cabinet is aware of the need for some type of comprehensive

\*Bureau Honorary Chairman E. A. Jarrett, F.C.A., and President F. Warren Hurst, F.C.A., refrained from normal participation in the review of this Bulletin since the former is a Commissioner of the Hamilton-Burlington-Wentworth Local Government Review and the latter served as Executive Director of the Ontario Committee on Taxation.

regional reform, but, since it has not sufficiently clarified its thinking, a task force should be employed under the Cabinet; and (4) the Cabinet knows the direction in which it wants to move but must define the implementing details.

*The Bureau believes that Ontario is ready for either the third or fourth step, and hopes that the three guidelines which we put forth at the conclusion of this summary will receive consideration.*

The following factors prompted OCT to examine the question of regional government: the need for greater efficiency in raising property tax revenues; the impossibility of achieving equity in provincial grant programmes under the present fragmented local structure; the current inability to develop non-property revenue sources; and substantial and wide-spread recognition that reform is needed at the local level.

OCT makes few specific proposals regarding the internal organization of local units following regional reform. It does believe, however, that upper-tier reform (i.e. the creation of regional governments) would enable lower-tier reform to proceed with greater coherence in those regions where a federated system would be appropriate. OCT also states forcefully its preference for direct election of regional councils.

It appears that the fundamental belief upon which OCT proceeded was its commitment to the objectives of *access* and *service*. OCT stated that "an appropriate blending of the two objectives . . . should determine" the size of regional governments. Rather than accept, as OCT did, the axiom that local governments must be small if public access is a prime consideration, the Bureau statistically tested this inverse scale-participation axiom.

*Our research, set forth in considerable detail covering several pages of this Bulletin, indicates that access, as measured by participation at the local level, is not an inverse function of municipal size. It is instead a direct function of size, or nearly so, with public participation (measured by the formal indices of standing for the highest local office, contested versus acclaimed elections, uninterrupted and prolonged elective tenure, and voter turnout) increasing progressively as one moves from less populous to more populous municipalities.\**

*The Bureau suggests that the two remaining examples of citizen participation cited by OCT — joining publicly-oriented organizations and writing, phoning, or visiting elective representatives — be subjected to empirical study as they relate to municipal size in Ontario. It may be found that the inverse axiom is substantiated by these less formal means of participation.*

\*Since the Bureau's purpose was to test a particular axiom, we have not speculated as to the reasons for our finding — that more populous municipalities have higher participation records. Among the possible answers, some of which might provide the basis for fruitful research, are: voters of larger municipalities may be subjected to more get-out-the-vote campaigns; they may benefit from better articulation of election issues by an urban-oriented press; their wider variety of civic programmes may attract greater electoral response; this response may be generated also by the generally higher tax rates which apply; the urban political stakes may be more meaningful, particularly in terms of the future political aspirations of candidates; and/or urban politics, being more volatile and unpredictable, may promote turnout.

*Our research lends support to the inverse scale-participation axiom at the provincial and federal levels. Electoral districts with the largest and smallest voter turnouts at the 1963 provincial general elections were examined, together with the share of total local revenue which each received in 1964 in the form of provincial grants.*

*Although the observation must be qualified in the absence of analysis of other variables,\* the positive correlation we found between voter turnout and provincial aid suggests that turnout is influenced by aid. It would appear that smaller municipalities compile better participation records than do urban areas because provincial elections are substantially more meaningful in fiscal terms to smaller (i.e. rural) municipalities. Yet there are theoretical and practical disadvantages to this heavy reliance of smaller municipalities upon provincial financial support, disadvantages which more viable and more self-sufficient regional governments could reduce, to the benefit of local autonomy.*

*Results of the 1965 federal election in Ontario's 85 electoral districts indicate that the 15 primarily rural districts had a moderately higher voter turnout than the 34 primarily urban districts.*

Desirous of restoring a balance between access and service, which OCT sees as having become distorted to the disadvantage of access by the proliferation of *ad hoc* authorities, OCT considers the criteria of "community" and "balance" as they flow from access. These criteria are thought by OCT to be reciprocal at the local and regional levels. OCT appears to favour representation by population for its regional scheme, with people rather than units of government represented on the regional council. Reconciling this 'rep by pop' principle with OCT's balance criterion might have created a problem. If its regions were drawn rather widely, then urban and close-in suburban voters would overwhelm rural voters under a one-man, one-vote principle.\*\*

*The Bureau believes that the relatively tight boundaries which OCT would draw around larger cities could accentuate urban and rural differences and delay needed common understanding which contact on the same legislative body would foster.*

*We would point out that the Government's reorganization plan for the Ottawa area, which will become the second "metro" in Ontario, while an improvement over the original Metro Toronto as far as its representational base is concerned, represents an unsatisfactory compromise between unit and population as the bases for representation, since insufficient emphasis is given to the population factor.*

\*Among these other variables which it is generally believed influence voter turnout are educational level, age, ethnic origin, and home ownership. Each of these factors, and others, can vary significantly according to particular provincial and federal electoral districts, as well as among wards in larger municipalities. It is our belief that two additional variables are largely cancelled out in voter analyses as broad as those in our research at the provincial and federal levels — the presence of "name" candidates, and pockets of one-party strength.

\*\*On April 1st, 1968, the U.S. Supreme Court extended this principle (which is the U.S. equivalent of 'rep by pop') to all units of local government "having general government powers" (see *Hank Avery v. Midland County, Texas*, October Term, 1967, No. 39).

OCT sees three criteria as stemming from the objective of service—financial, functional, and co-operative. Its discussion raises the matter of economies of scale, about which so many have said so much without specific evidence that such economies exist.

*The Bureau suggests that studies be undertaken to assess: the potential economies of scale that might be possible in Ontario under regional government; the requirements of scale and population density; and the record compiled by special districts with respect to each aspect. This recommendation should not be interpreted as meaning that the Bureau would suggest delaying regional reform until the studies are completed. It certainly does not imply that reform not proceed if such studies indicate that economies of scale would prove minor as a result of regional reform. We would, however, caution against placing too great an emphasis upon possible economies of scale and upon the potential for specialization and the application of modern technology as arguments in favour of regional government. To the extent that these three advantages are realizable, they can be obtained (with the possible exceptions of the health and welfare fields) by co-operative agreements, leasing, pool purchasing, and other contractual arrangements. The case for regional reform can be made, with sufficient strength, on other grounds.*

*OCT's co-operation criterion raises some interesting questions. As proposed for southern Ontario, the 22 regions would result in 80 contiguous borders, with the Metro Highlands Region alone touching seven other regions. Interregional compacts and agreements — which OCT would encourage, especially in the areas of conservation, hospital facilities planning, roads, and water supply — thus could become a tangle not much better than the existing multiplicity of ad hoc authorities.*

Naturally, the delineation of the 29 regions and their classification are basic to OCT's work. Southern Ontario would be divided into 22 regions — seven Metropolitan (Metro Toronto plus Ottawa, Hamilton, Niagara, Four Cities, Windsor, and London), three Urbanizing (to the east, west, and north of Metro Toronto), and 12 County (areas of least population density). Northern Ontario would have seven regions — two Metropolitan and five District. Areas not contained within regions would receive services on a contractual basis. Excluding Metro Toronto and Ottawa, three of the remaining five Metropolitan Regions in the south would be uni-centred and relatively small in area, with the central city of each containing from 84% to 98% of the population of its proposed region.

*The Bureau believes that since most of the population of the proposed Metropolitan Regions of Hamilton, Windsor, and London would be in the central city, and since each of these is relatively small in area, consideration should be given to one-tier regional systems achieved by amalgamations and/or annexations. Metropolitan Niagara and the Four Cities Metro appear well-suited to the two-level or federated system because they are multi-centred and rather large in area.*

*While we do not feel qualified to recommend alternative boundaries, nor to second-guess OCT's lines, we suggest that a thorough re-examination be made of OCT's proposals (and lack of proposals) for Metro Toronto and the Urbanizing Regions adjacent to it — Inter-Metro, Oshawa Central, and Metro Highlands.*

OCT's suggestions as to the regional-local allocation of functions and services under a two-tier system agree in general with allocations proposed by others. The

Bureau would describe the division as basically one under which policy-oriented responsibilities are assigned to the region and housekeeping functions to the local units. (It should be mentioned, however, that OCT feels that "substantial and important" responsibilities would be left to the lower-tier under its proposals.)

*The Bureau is concerned over the negative impact which OCT's proposed assignment of functions and services would have upon formal citizen participation at the lower tier. The present relative lack of participation in smaller municipalities would be further damaged if only what are basically housekeeping functions were to remain locally administered. This situation adds to the advisability of eventual elimination, as a product of lower-tier reform, of the smallest municipalities. We would not suggest that the problem be "solved" by either indirect election to regional councils or by the failure to assign truly regional functions and services to the regional level.*

*We do suggest, however, that citizen interest in the activities of the local level need not be destroyed by regional government if appropriate functions are divided into their component parts and assigned to both levels on a shared basis. The Bureau recommends that the basis for such sharing be regionally determined standards (with regional financing where appropriate), local implementation, and regional review. We believe that land-use controls and welfare programmes are examples worthy of consideration under this sequence of sharing.*

*The Bureau has several suggestions to make concerning the allocation of specific services under a two-tier system. These include: adoption of regional or joint responsibility for any service or function where studies show that economies of scale can be realized; treatment of police and fire protection — their coordination, and development of minimum standards relating thereto — as related functions to be administered jointly by both levels; consideration of whether weed and pest control can be internalized effectively at the local level; and determination of whether proper uniformity in standards of licensing and permits can be realized without transferring these to the regional level.*

*In our view, the most important and interesting feature of OCT's functional assignment is that several "soft" or socially-oriented services, such as health and welfare, would become regional responsibilities. This emphasizes the need for direct election of regional councils and strengthens the case for developing a true regional consciousness built upon regional constituencies.*

OCT would transfer assessment, tax collection, and borrowing to the regional level, viewing them as particularly suitable to computerization and the first two as requiring uniformity of treatment.

*The Bureau agrees that assessment, tax collection, and borrowing should be regional responsibilities. Indeed, these functions may constitute the strongest case for economies of scale, with greater equity and efficiency demanding their transfer from the local level.*

OCT rejected both the Province's economic regions and counties as possible units of regional government, although it recognized that as much consistency as possible between economic and governmental regions would be advantageous.

*The Bureau examined those factors which we thought relevant in evaluating the counties' suitability as the basis for regional reform. While they have the advantages of legitimacy and of being known by the public, we found counties to be*

completely unsuitable for this purpose. The plan of the Ontario Association of Counties would violate the principles of representation by population, leading to a partial disenfranchisement of urban residents. In addition, the wholesale changes which would be required in structure, boundary, finance, function, and service make it preferable to start fresh rather than to attempt to apply a basically rural instrumentality to an urban problem.

We agree with OCT's belief that regional reform would put true meaning into the oft-used phrase "local autonomy".

The Bureau points out that staffing these regional governments, and their remaining local units, would be difficult. Yet eventual reduction, through regional reform, of the total number of multi-purpose units and special districts should prove helpful in this regard.

We suggest that three guidelines govern the evolution of a system of regional reform in Ontario: (1) a comprehensive approach should be made to the problem; (2) this comprehensiveness of approach should not force uniformity of regional reform itself; and (3) full use should be made of modern technology, especially the building and testing of models with the aid of such devices as automatic data processing, to pretest the impact and effects of proposed changes before they are fully implemented.

## Regional Government — the Key to Genuine Local Autonomy

The term region connotes different things to different people. The economist, the planner, the geographer, and the political scientist each defines and draws a region in his own way. Nor is there widespread agreement within any of these knowledgeable groups as to the characteristics of a region. To a political scientist, for example, the term may suggest different concepts — a region for the administration of a service provided by a senior level of government, a region or a special district for the provision of one service or related services (often associated with local government), or a new tier of multi-purpose government established between the provincial level and the local municipalities.

It is into this latter category that the regional government proposals of the Ontario Committee on Taxation fall. And it is OCT's 29 proposed intermediate jurisdictions which provide the basis for the Bureau's examination in this Bulletin.

### GOVERNMENTAL FRAGMENTATION ON A GRAND SCALE

The provision of local services in Ontario presents a very complex picture. Not only are there more than 900 multi-purpose municipalities, but also in excess of 3,000 *ad hoc* authorities or special districts. In addition to these units, there are provincial departments and agencies which are actively engaged in the provision of local services throughout the Province. The numerical picture of multi-purpose units looked like this as of January, 1968:

Metropolitan .....	1 <sup>1</sup>
Cities .....	33
Boroughs .....	5
Separated Towns .....	6
Towns .....	146
Villages .....	155
Townships .....	562
Improvement Districts ....	18
Counties .....	38
<hr/>	
Total .....	964

For administrative purposes, Ontario is divided into northern and southern sections. In the southern section, municipal organization is complete with 38 counties comprised of separately incorporated municipalities. Except for the cities and separated towns, these local municipalities send representatives to the county council. Although they do not participate in county government, cities and separated towns are required to contribute to the costs of certain services which the county provides for its entire geographical area. In northern Ontario, there are 17 districts which provide local government services with the help of several provincial departments. Where there are incorporated municipalities within these districts, the latter provide the municipal services.

The more than 3,000 school districts and *ad hoc* (usually single-purpose or one-service) authorities and special districts,

<sup>1</sup>The Ottawa area is scheduled to become the second in January, 1969.

governed by boards and commissions, break down as follows:

Utility Commissions .....	360
Planning Boards .....	225
Community Centre Boards .....	250
Park Commissions .....	150
Public Library Boards .....	220
Health Boards .....	270
Police Boards .....	93
Police Villages .....	158
	1,726
Public School Boards .....	777
Separate School Boards .....	482
Secondary School Boards .....	235
	1,494
Total .....	3,220 <sup>2</sup>

The result of providing services on an *ad hoc* basis is increased fragmentation, which can make access to local government devoid of much of its meaning. If the goal of local government is a compromised combination of access and service, it appears that *ad hoc* authorities achieve the latter at the expense of the former. Larger units in terms of territory and population would permit the provision of these services by multi-purpose governments with an increase in access and little or no decrease in efficiency of service.

Current proposals, to be placed before the provincial legislature in 1968, seek to combine the public elementary and secondary school boards and reduce their number from 1,012 to 168 (84 in southern Ontario and 84 in northern Ontario). The structure of separate school administration would remain unaltered, at least for the time being, due to constitutional factors.

<sup>2</sup>Figures for agencies other than police villages, police and school boards are as of 1964, and are rounded to the nearest ten. (See *Fourth and Final Report of the Select Committee on the Municipal Act and Related Acts, Appendix M, March, 1965.*) Figures for the school boards are as of September, 1967. *The Reorganization of School Jurisdictions in the Province of Ontario, A Guide for Southern Ontario, January 9, 1968, p. 3.*

At present, then, there are more than 4,000 units providing local governmental services in Ontario — 964 municipalities, about 1,700 special districts and 1,494 school boards. Immediate plans are to reduce this number to just under 3,200. It is difficult to ascertain what effects lower-tier reform might have on the number of multi-purpose units of local government. Three studies give some indication of what might be expected. In the case of Metropolitan Toronto, the number of municipal units was reduced from 14 to 7; the Peel-Halton Local Government Review suggested a reduction of from 20 to 6; the Niagara Local Government Review from 28 to 13.

It is conceivable, therefore, that lower-tier reform, in conjunction with the creation of an intermediate jurisdiction, might reduce the number of multi-purpose municipalities by 50%. Also, the creation of an intermediate jurisdiction would reduce the need for many of the *ad hoc* authorities. On this basis, it is possible that the total number of local governmental units in Ontario could be reduced by 75%, *i.e.* to about 1,000 or fewer units.

It is a consideration of these questions in general, and the proposals of the Ontario Committee on Taxation in particular, which provide the focus for this Bulletin.

#### WHY OCT MADE ITS EXCURSION INTO REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

Because OCT was not charged with responsibility for devising a system of regional government, it is interesting to speculate as to the relationship between its regional proposals and the remainder of the Report. Although the regional proposals appear at the end of Volume II, "The Local Revenue System", it is most unlikely that it was the last to be written. Throughout the earlier chapters of Volume II, numerous references

are made to "regional government". OCT determined to devise its regional proposals on the grounds that they would facilitate creation of a "tax and revenue system [that] is as simple, clear, equitable, efficient, adequate and as conducive to the sound growth of the Province as can be devised".

While it is impossible to determine the exact impact that the regional proposals would have on many of the other recommendations, there can be little doubt that implementation of regional proposals would facilitate recommendations dealing with municipal assessment, taxation and collection, borrowing, and grant programmes. One purpose of the regional proposals was to provide a needed foundation for provincial policy. Having said this, OCT recommends that "the provincial government plan and schedule the detailed studies of boundaries, functions and forms of municipal organization needed to establish a comprehensive system of regional government within five years of the publication of this Report". With the regional proposals being tentative, and with the exact effects of regional government on many recommendations being unknown, the relationship with the rest of the Report is uncertain.

Chapter 23 begins with a discussion of the four considerations which caused OCT to examine the whole question of regional government. Firstly, OCT contends that only if property assessment and property-tax collection are carried out on a regional basis can greater efficiency be secured in raising property tax revenues. (Yet, as pointed out by the Bureau in its January, 1968, Bulletin dealing with the first 22 chapters of the Report, and as conceded by OCT itself, regionalization has not solved this problem. Metro Toronto, long benefiting from larger jurisdiction, increased professionalization of assessors, and automation, has failed to compile a distinguished assessment record.)

Secondly, OCT argues that it is impossible under the present structure of local government to achieve greater

equity through provincial grants to municipalities. To use OCT's own word, the present grant structure in Ontario is "chaotic". Not only is there a bewildering assortment of grants (some 90 to 100) administered by the several provincial departments, but these grants are available to municipalities as well as to a number of special authorities. Because of the multitude and complexity of the grant programmes, it is often difficult for local officials to be aware of those grants for which they qualify.

Grants are neither co-ordinated at the provincial level, nor related to local or general fiscal conditions. Since the property tax has a limited capacity to generate revenue increases as private income rises, OCT suggests that provincial grants should provide to municipalities a measure of income elasticity with respect to revenue. Grants are the key to public policies grounded in equity and general economic considerations.

When dealing with close to 100 grants and a multitude of municipalities and *ad hoc* authorities, annual reassessment of the situation is most difficult. In order to rectify the existing confusion, two steps are required: a consolidation and co-ordination of the grant programme at the provincial level, and a substantial reduction in the number of authorities to be dealt with at the lower level. OCT has suggested that its regions could serve as the intermediary for purposes of grants, and in so doing greatly reduce the number of grant recipients to 29. These two changes would certainly simplify the overall picture.

The third consideration introduced by OCT indicates that the present limited territorial jurisdictions inhibit the capacity of local governments to develop non-property sources of revenue. While this may be true, OCT's performance in demonstrating its case lends little support to its argument. Its investigations revealed only two sources "that could possibly be advocated on theoretical and practical grounds" — a motor vehicle tax and a shared income tax. The benefits

of the motor vehicle tax would be small, although OCT indicates elsewhere (Chapter 21) a preference for the Province meeting the total road-user portion of the costs through its grants to the municipalities. A shared income tax, which would be feasible only if the number of units were reduced substantially, could be used to replace the present method of indirectly sharing the proceeds through grants. This would allow fiscal equalization to be effected on a more diversified revenue base.

The fourth consideration is the spate of literature and discussion on the question of local governmental reform in general and on regional government in particular. This ferment in favour of reform is not limited to academic circles. All major political parties endorsed regional government in Ontario's October, 1967, provincial election. In addition, all four of the local government reviews which have thus far reported have recommended some form of regional government. Not only does interest exist, but, as OCT realizes, its Report would shortly become obsolete if regional factors had not been taken into account.

#### CONSIDERATIONS RE INTERNAL ORGANIZATION

Having justified an "excursion into the field of government structure" because of its implications on equity and efficiency of local tax and revenue systems, OCT turns briefly to the question of internal organization. Since OCT regarded this area as beyond its jurisdiction, coverage was confined to several comments. OCT does not regard regional reform as a panacea, but believes that, together with lower-tier reform, it can lead to great improvement of the overall performance of local government. Priority is attached to upper-tier reform, since many existing local municipalities do not have the financial strength or technical expertise to fulfil their present responsibilities. (Municipalities with total annual revenues well below \$100,000 are quite common, and

there are nine municipalities with populations of less than 100.)

Since OCT feels that many serious financial shortcomings would be overcome by its regional scheme, it suggests that once this has been accomplished lower-tier reform can begin from this new plateau.

Two definite points are made regarding internal structure. Firstly, in keeping with its philosophy of 'no taxation without representation' OCT states that "whatever the actual boundaries or functions of a regional government, the representative officials of that government should be directly elected". The Select (Beckett) Committee of the Legislature stated that the basis of this direct election should be "as nearly as practical on the principle of representation by population".<sup>3</sup>

Secondly, there is the question of a one- or two-tier arrangement for the regions. Although OCT states at the outset that "in most circumstances two levels of government can be both manageable and appropriate to current service needs", an examination of the text throughout the remainder of Chapter 23 leaves one with the impression that the choice is still to be made depending upon local circumstances. In the case of the County Regions and Northern District Regions, OCT leaves little doubt by recommending not only a two-tier structure but an assignment in detail of functions to each level. The seven Metropolitan Regions in southern Ontario and the two in northern Ontario are more open to further discussion. Since some Metropolitan Regions are uni- and other multi-centred, OCT is content to leave the matter open to discussion as to "wherever a two-level municipal system is deemed desirable". For Sault Ste. Marie, a two-level system is by-passed in favour of that city's amalgamation with Prince Township or the former's provision of services to the latter on a contractual basis. For the Lakehead Metro, OCT appeared willing to await the recommendations of the Local Government Review for that area (which have

<sup>3</sup>Fourth and Final Report, *op. cit.*, pp. 174-5.

since been made public). Other than suggesting a modified allocation of functions for the Urbanizing Regions, when compared to the Metropolitan Regions, OCT remains silent as to their internal structure.

#### THE OBJECTIVES OF ACCESS AND SERVICE

The regional proposals of OCT rest in part on a theoretical foundation. Local government exists because it fulfills certain general objectives or values of a political community. OCT sets forth two prime values "for whose fulfillment local government exists in a constitutional democracy such as Ontario". These are *access* and *service*. To OCT, access means "the most widespread participation possible" by citizens. OCT expresses agreement with the belief that "the capacity of government to promote access is in part an inverse function of size". Service is "the economical discharge of public functions [and] the achievement of technical adequacy in due alignment with public needs and desires". Since service demands local government of a size sufficient to take full advantage of economies of scale, OCT argues that a "true reconciliation of service and access must be the fundamental concern of those who would restructure our local institutions". OCT even suggests that (italics added) "*it is an appropriate blending of the two objectives [service and access] that should determine*" the size of regional governments.

#### The Relationship Between Participation and Municipal Size — Analysis of an Axiom

The Bureau decided to test the validity of the "oft-cited axiom of traditional democratic theory that where public access is a prime consideration, local governments must be small". OCT accepted

this axiom without statistical challenge, referring instead to hoary generalizations of Plato, Toqueville and J. S. Mill. The Bureau might have been similarly inclined to uncritical acceptance had we not an inkling from previous Bureau research that the inverse scale-participation axiom was not supported by Ontario experience.<sup>4</sup>

We selected two of the four examples of participation cited by OCT—voting and standing for office — as the most measurable indices of access. Naturally, fragmentation of local government creates a larger absolute number of elective offices. Our analysis thus was directed to determining the frequency of meaningful challenges for the chief elective office in municipalities of varying population size.

The results of our research indicate that *access, as measured by participation at the local level, is not an inverse function of size* judging from recent Ontario experience.<sup>5</sup> It is instead a direct function of size, or nearly so. Clearly, there is a point of diminishing returns in small municipalities with minimal (or in the case of acclimation, non-existent) voter turnouts; where none among the handful of eligible voters is motivated to run for office, in part because that office is rather meaningless; and where any semblance of rotation in office is lacking, and incumbents are so rarely tested at the polls that the highest local elective post becomes pre-ordained.

<sup>4</sup>See *Who Voted* (Bureau of Municipal Research, December, 1966) which showed that the City of Toronto regularly has larger turnouts than most of the other Metro Toronto municipalities.

<sup>5</sup>For analyses of the scale-turnout relationship in Canada see *Nation-Wide Survey on Municipal Voting in Canadian Cities and Towns* (Canadian Federation of Mayors and Municipalities, May, 1957), which covered 122 municipalities, and *Survey on Municipal Voting in Fourteen Canadian Urban Centres of 100,000 or More Population* (The Federation, May, 1967). While the 1957 study supported the inverse relationship hypothesis, that of 1967 found "notable exceptions" to the general trend (see p. 1).

TABLE I

ONTARIO MUNICIPALITIES WHOSE MAYORS OR REEVES WERE ELECTED BY ACCLAMATION OR BY CONTEST

1966 Population	Total Municipalities with Reported Returns	Municipalities with Elections by Acclamation Number	%	Municipalities with Election Contests Number	%
10,000+	60	19	31.6	41	68.3
5,000-9,999	77	44	57.1	33	42.8
1,000-4,999	422	304	72.0	119	28.2
-1,000	222	183	82.4	38	17.1
Totals	781	550	70.4	231	29.6

Source: 1967 Clerks' Returns to the Department of Municipal Affairs, 1966 elections or 1965 or 1966 acclamations.

Table I indicates that access, as measured by standing for the highest local elective office, is a *direct not inverse* function of municipal size. This is indicated by the fact that, by proportion, progressively and significantly more mayors and reeves are elected by contest each time one moves up the population scale from smaller to more populous municipalities. Conversely, more than four-fifths of mayors and reeves were elected by acclamation in municipalities with less than 1,000 people, almost three-fourths were acclaimed in the 1,000-4,999

classification, substantially more than half in the 5,000-9,999 group, but less than one-third in municipalities above 10,000 population.

Although the population range within each type is very substantial, the types of local government in Ontario are clearly differentiated by their relative size. Because of this, we decided to test the findings of Table I by determining the percentages of contested elections in each type.

TABLE II

ONTARIO MUNICIPALITIES BY TYPE WHOSE MAYORS OR REEVES WERE ELECTED BY ACCLAMATION OR BY CONTEST

Type	Average 1966 Population All Municipalities in Type	Total Municipalities with Reported Returns	Municipalities with Contested Elections Number	%
Cities and Boroughs	105,671	34	26	76.5
Towns	5,863	130	48	36.9
Townships	2,725	495	134	27.1
Villages	1,102	122	23	18.9
Totals		781	231	29.6

Source: Clerks' Returns to Department of Municipal Affairs, 1966 elections.

Once again, it appears that the larger the municipality (in average population by

type of government) the greater the percentage of contested elections.

TABLE III

ONTARIO MUNICIPALITIES WHOSE MAYORS OR REEVES HELD CONTINUOUS OFFICE FOR 5, 10, 15 AND 20 YEARS THROUGH 1967

(Municipalities in Metro Toronto and in Districts Excluded)

1966 Population	Total Municipalities in Classification	Municipalities with Same Mayor or Reeve for							
		5 Years		10 Years		15 Years		20 Years	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
10,000+	55	13	23.6	3	5.5	1	1.8	....	....
5,000-9,999	80	24	30.0	9	11.3	1	1.3	....	....
1,000-4,999	408	141	34.6	36	8.8	10	2.5	1	0.3
-1,000	153	70	45.8	23	15.0	11	7.2	5	3.3
Totals	696	248	35.6	71	10.2	23	3.3	6	0.9

Source: 1948 to 1967 *Municipal Directories* (Department of Municipal Affairs).

Table III does much to explain the figures found in Table I. It shows that access, as measured by rotation in office, is also a *direct rather than inverse* function of municipal size. Stating this in its obverse form, with only one variation each in the 10- and 15-year continuous terms, a mayor or reeve is more likely to hold uninterrupted office over a long period of time in a smaller municipality. Almost half of the chief elective officials of municipalities below 1,000 population held office for five continuous years through 1967, 15% did so for 10 years, over 7% for 15 years, and in 5 of the 153 municipalities in that classification the same person held office for 20 years or more. The corresponding percentages for municipalities with greater than 10,000 population were 23.6% (5 years), 5.5% (10 years), 1.8% (15 years) and none for 20 or more years. This record of longevity in smaller municipalities was compiled even though one-year (as opposed to two- or three-year

terms are more common in such municipalities than in larger ones.

We are not suggesting that rotation in office, in and of itself, is a virtue. Indeed, some tenure is helpful in mastering the complex and demanding responsibilities of high elective office. But this is particularly true in larger municipalities, while the data show that longevity is much more pronounced in smaller municipalities where meaningful challenge is either infrequent or, as seen from Table I, nonexistent.

Having examined the relationship between population size and election by acclamation or contest, and between size and prolonged tenure in office, we now turn to the other of OCT's examples of access to be tested by specific Ontario experience — voter turnout as a function of participation.



TABLE IV

**VOTER TURNOUT IN ONTARIO MUNICIPALITIES  
WITH CONTESTED ELECTIONS FOR MAYOR OR REEVE AND  
% DISTRIBUTION BY POPULATION CLASSIFICATION**

Voter Turnout by % Category	Contested Elections by % Turnout Category	Municipalities by 1966 Population Classification							
		10,000 plus Contested No. %		5,000-9,999 Contested No. %		1,000-4,999 Contested No. %		-1,000 Contested No. %	
Up to 9	2	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	2	5.3
10-19	18	1	2.5	6	18.2	6	5.0	5	13.2
20-29	32	6	14.6	5	15.2	12	10.0	9	23.7
30-39	40	8	19.5	5	15.2	23	19.3	4	10.5
40-49	58	10	24.4	7	21.2	32	26.9	9	23.7
50-59	37	10	24.4	6	18.2	17	14.3	4	10.5
60-69	25	6	14.6	3	9.0	15	12.6	1	2.6
70-79	11	.....	.....	1	3.0	9	7.6	1	2.6
80-89	7	.....	.....	.....	.....	4	3.5	3	7.9
90+	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	0.8	.....	.....
Totals	231	41	100	33	100	119	100	38	100

Source: 1967 Clerks' Returns to Department of Municipal Affairs, 1966 elections.

Table IV enables us to make a more direct evaluation, by voter turnout, of the axiom that local governments must be small if public access is to be a prime consideration. Results indicate that in Ontario this generalization is invalid. Consider the percentage of municipalities in each classification which had a voter turnout for mayor or reeve of 50% or more of the registered voters: 10,000 and over (39.0%); 5,000-9,999 (30.2%); 1,000-4,999 (38.8%); and under 1,000 (23.6%). If weighted averages over the full range of distribution are considered, municipalities in excess of 10,000 population had larger voter turnouts than those in both the 5,000-9,999 and under 1,000 classifications.

Thus we have statistical evidence relating to two important indices of formal local participation, namely voter turnout and standing for the highest local public office. Since the purpose of our exercise was limited to the testing of an axiom, we will limit our observations to our finding in that regard — access is a direct function of municipal size in local Ontario elections with participation progressively as one moves from less popu-

lous to more populous municipal classifications.

Were we to speculate as to the reasons for this direct relationship, our hypotheses might include the following: voters of larger municipalities are subjected to more get-out-the-vote campaigns; they benefit from better articulation of election issues by an urban-oriented press; their wider variety of civic programmes attract greater electoral response; this response is generated by generally higher tax rates; urban political stakes are more meaningful, particularly in terms of the future political aspirations of candidates; and/or urban politics are more volatile and unpredictable.

In view of our findings, the Bureau suggests that the two other examples of citizen participation cited by OCT—joining publicly-oriented organizations and writing, phoning, or visiting elective representatives — be subjected to examination as they relate to municipal size in Ontario. Such examination may well show that these less formal methods of participation support the inverse scale-turnout hypothesis.

**A Note on Participation  
at Senior Levels**

While the inverse scale-turnout hypothesis is not supported by results in local Ontario elections, it would appear valid when tested at the provincial and federal levels. The latest provincial general election for which completed returns were available is that of September 11th and 25th, 1963, when 2,165,773 votes were polled, out of the 3,437,834 names on the voters' lists, for a turnout of

63.0%. The 10 districts with the largest (see footnote \* to Table V) and the 10 with the smallest turnouts were analyzed. The former had a turnout range of from 81.3% to 70.8%, while the low-turnout districts showed a range of from 50.1% to 56.3%.

Next, 1964 provincial grants (exclusive of education grants) were calculated as a percentage of total local revenue for each of the 20 districts. The results are set forth in Table V.

**TABLE V  
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VOTER TURNOUT AT 1963 PROVINCIAL  
GENERAL ELECTION AND 1964 PROVINCIAL GRANTS (EXCLUDING  
EDUCATION GRANTS) AS % OF LOCAL REVENUE**

Electoral District No. Name	% Voter Turnout 1963	Number of Municipalities Comprising District	1964 Prov. Grants as % of Total Local Revenue
27 Huron-Bruce	81.3	19	22.85
61 Renfrew South	79.1	20	24.67
4 Bruce	76.1	23	22.84
45 Northumberland	75.7	14	20.03
32 Lambton East	75.2	18	15.61
29 Kent East	74.8	15	12.93
15 Glengarry*	74.3	.....	.....
17 Grey North	72.9	11	17.66
12 Essex North	72.7	13	10.90
52 Parry Sound	72.6	27	23.34
57 Prescott*	71.4	.....	.....
13 Fort William	70.8	7	10.39
86 districts with voter turnout of from 70.7% to 56.4%			
49 Ottawa South	56.3	a	8.25
76 Wentworth East	56.2	b	9.57
94 Riverdale	55.5	c	9.43
62 Russell	55.3	d	8.99
107 Yorkview	55.2	e	9.43
38 London South	54.98	f	10.72
8 Dufferin-Simcoe	54.96	15	19.12
21 Hamilton Centre	54.93	g	9.71
34 Lanark	53.8	18	21.02
86 Downsview	50.1	h	9.43
Province-wide turnout	63.0	.....	.....

\* Excluded because district bisects municipalities.

a City-wide Ottawa figures used to calculate grants as % of revenue.

b District comprised of part of Hamilton plus two adjacent municipalities; city-wide Hamilton figures used for the Hamilton segment to calculate grants as % of revenue.

c Metro-wide figures used.

d District comprised of part of Ottawa plus five adjacent municipalities; city-wide Ottawa figures used for the Ottawa segment to calculate grants as % of revenue.

e Metro-wide figures used.

f City-wide London figures used.

g City-wide Hamilton figures used.

h Metro-wide figures used.

Table V indicates that a positive correlation exists between voter turnout at the 1963 provincial election and 1964 provincial aid as a proportion of total revenue. Districts ranking high in each characteristic are comprised of several small (i.e. rural) municipalities. Conversely, eight of the 10 with low ranking in turnout and provincial aid are completely or largely urban.

Although the observation must be qualified in the absence of analysis of other variables (such as educational level, age, ethnic origin, home ownership, etc.) the positive correlation we found between voter turnout and provincial aid suggests that turnout is influenced by aid. With such aid amounting to as much as one-quarter of local revenue in smaller municipalities, and, as we have seen, with the infrequency of contested local elections in Ontario's smaller municipalities, it is not surprising that this higher participation exists in provincial elections.

This heavy reliance of smaller municipalities upon provincial financial support (notably in highway and health grants) has both theoretical and practical disadvantages. A provincial-local partnership based upon financially more viable and more self-sufficient regional governments appears preferable to a partnership whose multitude of "autonomous" units cannot exist without massive subsidization (and thus are not autonomous).

The inverse scale-turnout axiom (which, to repeat, suggests that heavily populated municipalities have relatively low election turnouts while less densely populated municipalities experience correspondingly greater participation) also appears valid when tested at the federal level. The 85 federal electoral districts in Ontario were divided by the Bureau into three categories — primarily rural, mixed, and primarily urban. In the first group are 15 districts lacking at least one municipality with a population of 10,000 or more, while 34 districts, each composed of either a single municipality with a majority of the district's total popula-

tion or a portion of a municipality having such a majority, were classified as primarily urban.

The rural districts had a voter turnout at the 1965 federal election ranging from 86.4% (Renfrew South) to 70.1% (Hastings-Frontenac), with an average turnout of 79.5% for the 15 districts. These participation figures were moderately higher than those for the 34 urban districts, which ranged from 83.9% (Peterborough) to 67.9% (Essex West) for an average turnout of 75.9%.

#### Achieving Service at the Expense of Access

In terms of service, it would appear that urbanization, industrialization, and rapid technological advances have expanded or focussed the demand for public services. While great strides have been taken to meet these new needs and demands, little has been done to ensure that the balance between access and service has been retained. One response has been the creation of *ad hoc* authorities to discharge a specific function or related functions, frequently over a larger area than an existing municipality would permit. Usually they are governed by appointed or indirectly elected officials, and are empowered to requisition operating funds from the municipalities to which they provide services. In OCT's own words "these devices have doubtless generated improved levels and standards of services". This view has been concurred in by others in their studies of special districts in the U.S.<sup>6</sup> Yet the proliferation of these agencies has resulted in a fragmentation of governmental authority and has tended to make access devoid of meaning. The complaining citizen has few effective avenues of redress. Functional fragmentation has replaced geographical fragmentation without a certainty that, on balance, the former is to be preferred to the latter.

<sup>6</sup>John C. Bollens, *Special District Government in the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957), and Robert G. Smith, *Public Authorities, Special Districts and Local Government* (Washington, D.C.: National Association of Counties, 1964).

#### THE COMMUNITY AND BALANCE CRITERIA

In order to restore this balance of access and service, OCT considers the implications of each objective for the size and form of the governmental unit in question. Certain criteria flow logically from each of the twin objectives and provide a theoretical guide to the delineation of regions.

Access gives rise to OCT's "community" and "balance" criteria. The sense of community demands, to a reasonable degree, a combination of historical, geographical, economic, and sociological characteristics. It is a feeling of oneness that reformers should seek to preserve in the creation of a regional government. Participation and community are thought to be essentially reciprocal, with a sense of community seen as conducive to popular participation in government. Since participation is meaningful only if each interest has an opportunity to have its view accepted, it is felt that a reasonable balance must exist among the diverse interests within each jurisdiction. Thus, a region should be so structured that the diverse interests within its boundaries are reasonably balanced and give promise of remaining so in the future.

OCT appears to favour representation by population in its regional government scheme. Yet it was faced with a problem in reconciling this principle with its balance criterion. OCT's solution was to draw relatively tight boundaries around our larger cities, since wider boundaries would have included inhabitants who "would have virtually no voice in any democratically representative [i.e. based on representation by population] regional government". What OCT meant was simply that rural inhabitants would be outvoted by city and close-in suburban voters.

OCT's solution has some unsatisfactory results. To the extent that urban and rural interests would be kept apart, their differences would tend to become petrified and further exaggerated. Any opportunity for

reason and compromise through contact within the same legislative body would be lost. By segregating the larger cities, OCT may have proposed a short-term solution which avoids any confrontation with the medium- and long-range problems of urbanism and regional government. Yet, as will be seen in Table IX, sufficient space *per se* has apparently been allowed for urban growth.

#### Whether People or Units are to be Represented

Just how the principle of 'rep by pop' is to apply generally in regional governments is undergoing (re)consideration. Under the original allocation for Metro Toronto, the 12 suburbs each had one council seat on the theory that units of government, and not people, were to be represented. Yet the reverse applied with the City of Toronto, which was given 12 seats in recognition of its having 56.8% of total 1953 population. By 1966, not only had the City slipped to 35.4% of Metro's population, but inequality among the 12 suburbs had grown from substantial to tremendous. A resident of Swansea (9,409 assessed population) received 41 times the representation accorded to a North York resident (390,456 assessed population) since each had one council vote. Metro reorganization under Bill 81 substantially rectified such inequities through amalgamations and a new allocation of council seats which took municipal size into consideration.

Yet Ontario is still uncertain as to the degree to which representation by municipal unit is to be discarded in favour of representation by population. The Government's recently announced reorganization plan for Ottawa, Eastview and Carleton County shows this uncertainty. Although the smallest municipalities would be denied individual seats on the regional council, "the 16 communities will continue to exist for the present time".<sup>7</sup> Notwithstanding these partial mu-

<sup>7</sup>Address of Minister of Municipal Affairs, Province of Ontario (delivered at Ottawa, February 2, 1968) p. 7.

municipal groupings, Rockcliffe Park would have seven times the representation given Ottawa (one seat for that Village's 2,500 population, as compared to 16 seats for Ottawa, or one seat for each 18,000 of Ottawa's 288,000 residents). Again, Ottawa, with over 70% of the region's population, would be restricted to 53.3% of the council seats (16 of 30, excluding the chairman). Mindful of what happened in Metro Toronto, it has been announced that there will be provisions for periodic review of representation.<sup>8</sup>

#### THE CRITERIA OF FINANCE, FUNCTION AND CO-OPERATION

The criteria of community and balance stemmed from the objective of access. OCT's financial, functional and co-operative criteria emanate from the service objective. Every region should possess an adequate tax base so that it can achieve substantial service equalization through its own tax resources, thus reducing and simplifying the provincial task of evening out local fiscal disparities. Each region should be so constituted that it has the capacity to perform those functions that confer region-wide benefits with the greatest possible efficiency, efficiency being understood in terms of economies of scale, specialization, and the application of modern technology. (An examination of the three factors of efficiency raises a number of questions, as discussed below.) Each region should be able, where advisable, to enter into inter-regional compacts and arrangements. (See Table VI and discussion.)

While economies of scale—by increasing the scale, the per unit cost will fall, up to some limit—are known to exist, no definite proof has come before us which demonstrates that they will apply generally to the provision of local government services in Ontario. This is another area in which special studies could be undertaken—to determine to what extent these economies of scale would apply in the specific Ontario context, and

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 9.

to ascertain how effective special district government has proven to be in this regard.

In terms of specialization and the application of modern technology, there are two aspects to be considered—*requirements* of scale, and standards of service provision. Examples of requirements of scale can be cited: a subway system, or computers for taxation and assessment, may be practical necessities in a large metropolis, while there would be no real need for them in a small city or a town. In the case of these requirements of scale and population density, the regional government argument, as well as the escape to special district government, may be in part irrelevant. If, on the other hand, one is speaking of a requirement which affects the standard or level of the service being provided, it is important to realize that many specialized services and most modern equipment can be rented or contracted for, either on a short- or long-term basis. Planning and engineering consultative services, and various types of computers and electronic equipment, are being utilized by smaller communities in this manner.

This gives rise to several questions which require further study. For example, would it pay smaller municipalities or many of OCT's lesser populated regions to purchase a computer as part of their capital equipment, or would it be better to contract for such a facility? How does the rapid pace of technological advancement affect this argument? Is there a significant difference in the quality of the service when equipment is wholly owned or contracted?

With the availability of many of these services on a contractual basis, and with the uncertainty about the benefits to populations in the 100,000 to 200,000 range, the Bureau suggests that this whole area of efficiency in providing services be thoroughly examined. In relation to personnel, equipment and facilities, we were hard put to find examples, outside of the health and welfare fields, where scale permits the economic use of specialization which could not otherwise be obtained on a contractual or part-time basis. For

these reasons, the Bureau cautions placing too much reliance on economies of scale in arguing the need for regional reform.

The co-operation criterion suggests that the administration of certain functions will require an organization which will allow for their co-operative discharge as an integral part of overall responsibility. While the prescription for co-operation is made to sound very simple, perhaps because OCT gave no details or specifics, further investigation led us to some interesting findings.

TABLE VI  
THE NUMBER OF CONTIGUOUS  
REGIONS (COMMON BORDERS)  
IN OCT'S PROPOSALS FOR  
SOUTHERN ONTARIO

OCT Region	Number of Contiguous Regions
<b>Metropolitan</b>	
Windsor .....	1
London .....	2
Niagara .....	2
Toronto .....	3
Ottawa .....	3
Hamilton .....	3
Four-Cities .....	6
<b>Urbanizing</b>	
Oshawa Central .....	4
Inter-Metro .....	5
Metropolitan Highlands .....	7
<b>County</b>	
Ottawa Valley .....	2
Border Country .....	2
Quinte .....	2
Maitland .....	3
Upper Erie .....	3
Rideau Lakes .....	4
Kawartha .....	4
Upland .....	4
West Country .....	4
Champlain .....	5
Grand River .....	5
Talbot .....	6

From Table VI it is evident that there are potentially 80 places where co-operative agreements might exist if OCT's regional scheme was implemented. While Metropolitan Windsor would have to co-

operate only with Upper Erie, the Metropolitan Highlands would have intergovernmental relations with Inter-Metro, Metro Toronto, Oshawa Central, Kawartha, Champlain, Upland, and Four-Cities. OCT singles out conservation, hospital facilities planning, roads, and water supply (the latter two relate particularly to Metropolitan Regions and the areas beyond) for interregional co-operation. It is possible, then, that as many as 200 interregional agreements would be involved. If OCT had a more simplified answer in mind for its co-operation criterion, it might be useful to know along what lines it was thinking. Without this knowledge, however, it appears that a tangle of interregional agreements could replace the existing *ad hoc* authorities.

#### OCT'S REGIONS

OCT's regional proposals are both specific and vague. OCT attempted to provide a foundation for provincial policy, which necessitated some fairly specific ideas, but, because it was uncertain of the repercussions of some of its proposals (i.e. uncertainty with the Metropolitan and Urbanizing Regions), OCT decided not to make public its exact boundary lines and other details. OCT is more certain about the County and District Regions and lists definite functional allocations for these two classifications.

The boundaries of OCT's 29 regions, and their classification, are among the most specific and most provocative features of Chapter 23. In its regional proposals, OCT has retained the north-south division of the Province. In the south there would be 22 regions—seven Metropolitan, three Urbanizing, and 12 County; in the north, seven Regions—two Metropolitan and five District. Those areas not contained within regions would receive their services on a contractual basis.

#### Metropolitan Regions

As shown in Table VII, OCT has proposed seven Metropolitan Regions, including Metro Toronto as presently drawn, for the most urbanized areas of southern Ontario. Excluding Metro To-

ronto and Ottawa, the latter because of the Government's announced reorganization, three of the remaining five are uni-

centred, with the central city of each containing most of the population of its proposed region: London — 98.1%;

**TABLE VII**  
**OCT PROPOSED REGIONS FOR SOUTHERN ONTARIO**  
**CENTRAL CITY(IES) POPULATION AS % OF TOTAL POPULATION**

Region	1965 Estimated Population to Nearest 5,000	Central City(ies)	Central City(ies) 1965 Assessed Population	Central City(ies) Population as % of Total Population
<b>Metropolitan</b>				
Metro Toronto	1,780,000 <sup>1</sup>	Toronto	675,219 <sup>2</sup>	37.9
Metro Ottawa	370,000	Ottawa	284,480	76.9
Metro Hamilton	335,000	Hamilton	280,591	83.8
Metro Niagara	300,000	St. Catharines	91,376	
		Niagara Falls	53,611	61.0
		Welland	37,892	
Four Cities Metro	220,000	Kitchener	86,616	
		Guelph	43,624	86.3
		Galt	31,637	
		Waterloo	27,953	
Metro Windsor	210,000	Windsor	185,958 <sup>3</sup>	88.6
Metro London	185,000	London	181,396 <sup>4</sup>	98.1
<b>Urbanizing</b>				
Inter-Metro	275,000	Burlington	65,376	
		Oakville	50,836	54.5
		Brampton	33,713	
Metro Highlands	170,000	Richmond Hill	19,474	11.5
Oshawa Central	150,000	Oshawa	73,770	49.2
<b>County</b>				
Quinte	175,000	Belleville	32,857	
		Trenton	14,115	26.8
Rideau Lakes	170,000	Kingston	52,937	
		Brockville	19,053	42.3
Champlain	160,000	Barrie	24,010	
		Orillia	14,824	24.3
Grand River	155,000	Brantford	57,338	
		Woodstock	23,018	51.8
Upper Erie	150,000	Chatham	30,875	20.6
Talbot	145,000	St. Thomas	22,691	15.6
Border Country	145,000	Cornwall	44,006	30.3
Upland	140,000	Owen Sound	17,955	12.9
West Country	130,000	Sarnia	51,547	39.7
Maitland	125,000	Stratford	22,327	17.9
Kawartha	125,000	Peterborough	53,029	40.2
Ottawa Valley	100,000	Pembroke	16,089	16.1
Totals	5,715,000		2,720,193	47.6

<sup>1</sup>OCT lists 1965 population as 1,725,000.

<sup>2</sup>Includes amalgamations of Jan. 1, 1967.

<sup>3</sup>Includes amalgamations since 1965.

<sup>4</sup>Includes annexation since 1965.

Windsor — 88.6%; and Hamilton — 83.8%. As mentioned above, it is our belief that OCT was led to draw these rather tight boundaries around large cities because OCT wished to maintain balance (i.e. not place rural interests in a numerically disadvantageous position) without being forced to compromise on the principle of representation by population. If such regions are to be created, however, it would appear that one-tier systems achieved by amalgamations and/or annexations, as have occurred recently in London and Windsor,<sup>9</sup> are preferable

<sup>9</sup>See Table VII and footnotes 3 and 4 therein.

to the complexities of federated systems. This is because the central cities would constitute the overwhelming proportion of total regional populations and because the proposed areas are relatively small in extent.

The remaining two Metropolitan Regions — Niagara and Four Cities — appear well-suited to the two-level or federated system. They are multi-centred and they have relatively larger geographic extents.

The general trend, as indicated by Table VIII, is for the Metro Regions to

**TABLE VIII**  
**PROPOSED SOUTHERN ONTARIO REGIONS: ESTIMATED AREA IN SQUARE MILES AND POPULATION DENSITY PER SQUARE MILE**

Region	1965 Estimated <sup>1</sup> Population	Square Miles <sup>2</sup>	Persons/Sq. Mile <sup>3</sup>
<b>Metropolitan</b>			
Toronto	1,780,000	240.0	7,416.6
Ottawa	370,000	363.5	1,017.8
Hamilton	335,000	205.5	1,630.1
Niagara	300,000	674.7	444.6
Four-Cities	220,000	395.9	555.5
Windsor	210,000	89.1	2,469.1
London	185,000	221.0	837.1
<b>Urbanizing</b>			
Inter-Metro	275,000	590.8	465.3
Metropolitan Highlands	170,000	1,691.0	100.5
Oshawa Central	150,000	369.9	405.4
<b>County</b>			
Quinte	175,000	2,471.1	70.8
Rideau Lakes	170,000	2,643.1	64.3
Champlain	160,000	3,265.9	48.9
Grand River	155,000	1,362.3	113.8
Upper Erie	150,000	1,746.2	85.9
Talbot	145,000	1,621.4	89.4
Border Country	145,000	2,116.8	68.4
Upland	140,000	4,160.2	33.6
West Country	130,000	1,900.9	68.3
Maitland	125,000	2,247.5	55.6
Kawartha	125,000	2,380.1	52.5
Ottawa Valley	100,000	2,386.0	41.9

<sup>1</sup>Population based on OCT figures, except for Metro Toronto, which OCT lists as 1,725,000 assessed population for 1965.

<sup>2</sup>Area is estimated; density figures are based on these estimates, and should be judged accordingly.

have the smallest area with the highest density, while the County Regions have the largest areas and the lowest densities. The Urbanizing Regions fall somewhere in between. Inter-Metro, an Urbanizing Region, ranks ahead of three of the Metro Regions in population size, and ahead of one in density. The Metropolitan Highlands, another Urbanizing Region, has the largest area and the lowest density of the ten Metropolitan and Urbanizing Regions in southern Ontario. It also has the smallest urban centre of these ten regions, both in absolute and percentage terms.

OCT's Metropolitan Regions ranged in population from 1,780,000 (Toronto) to 185,000 (London); Metropolitan Niagara has the largest area (an estimated 674.7 square miles) and Metropolitan Windsor the smallest (an estimated 89.1 square miles). As might be expected, Metro Toronto has the highest density — 7,416 persons per square mile. Metro Niagara has the lowest, with an estimated 444.6 persons per square mile.

The County Regions are, in relative terms, the most uniform in both population and density. Population ranges from 175,000 (Quinte) to 100,000 (Ottawa Valley); density from an estimated 33.6 persons per square mile (Upland) to an estimated 113.8 per square mile (Grand River). The Upland Region is the largest in this classification (4,160.2 estimated square miles) and Grand River the smallest (1,362.3 estimated square miles).

The Metropolitan Regions in both southern and northern Ontario contain the largest urban concentrations in the Province. Although the two northern Metro Regions have considerably smaller populations (70,000 and 105,000), OCT found their patterns of development similar enough to those in the southern part to place them in the same category. Table IX indicates that sufficient room has been allowed for potential urban and suburban development in the Metropolitan Regions, notwithstanding the rather tight boundaries proposed by OCT.

TABLE IX

PROPOSED METRO REGIONS IN SOUTHERN ONTARIO  
1967 CENTRAL CITY(IES) SQ. MILEAGE SHOWN AS % OF TOTAL AREA

City(ies)	Square Miles in Central City(ies)	Est. Sq. Miles in Region	City(ies) Area as % of Region's Area
London .....	68.3	221.0	30.9
Windsor .....	49.4	89.1	55.4
Hamilton .....	49.6	205.5	24.1
Four-Cities <sup>1</sup> .....	71.3	395.9	18.0
Ottawa .....	47.6	363.5	13.9
Niagara <sup>2</sup> .....	77.3	674.7	11.4

<sup>1</sup>Kitchener, Waterloo, Guelph, Galt.

<sup>2</sup>St. Catharines, Niagara Falls, Welland.

#### Urbanizing Regions

The three areas abutting Metropolitan Toronto were put in a special class called Urbanizing Regions. The area to the west of Toronto — Inter-Metro — is subject to the influences of Toronto, Hamilton, and to a lesser extent to those cities found in the Four-Cities Metro Region.

This area, in particular, is subject to the competitive interaction not only of the urban centres within its boundaries, but also to those of the abutting regions. (The Goldenberg Report suggested that consideration be given to developing a smaller "metro" to the west of Toronto.) There are in Inter-Metro three urban

centres with 1965 populations of more than 25,000 — Burlington (65,000), Oakville (51,000), and Brampton (34,000). These centres are expanding in population, and, according to the Peel-Halton Local Government Review, are becoming more self-sufficient commercially and industrially, and less dependent upon the urban centres to the east and west.

The Oshawa Central Region lies to the east of Metro Toronto. The City of Oshawa, with a 1967 population of 80,000, and its close neighbour, Whitby, with over 23,000 people, are both growing rapidly, with the automotive industry providing the basis for much of the development.

To the area north of Metro Toronto is the very large Metropolitan Highlands Region. Unlike the other two Urbanizing Regions, the largest urban centre has a population of less than 20,000, and is situated within ten miles of the northern boundary of Metro. More than any of the other centres in these three regions, Richmond Hill might be considered a dormitory suburb, as its industry and commerce are at present limited.

Few would dispute Toronto's sphere of influence, which extends over much of the Province and is particularly strong in these three Urbanizing Regions. The Metropolitan Toronto and Region Transportation Study (MTARTS) defined the transportation region as including Oshawa, Barrie, Guelph, and Hamilton.<sup>10</sup> Thus all of OCT's Urbanizing Regions fall within the scope of the MTARTS study area.

While it is not difficult to appreciate OCT's reluctance to discuss the boundaries of Metro Toronto, since an evaluation of Metro had recently been completed by the Goldenberg Commission which had argued against any extension of Metro boundaries at the time of its Report (June 1965), this reluctance has questionable results. Both Inter-Metro

<sup>10</sup>Metropolitan Toronto and Region Transportation Study: Growth and Travel Past and Present (Province of Ontario, April, 1966).

and Oshawa Central have urban centres which act as focal points, and exercise a countervailing influence to that of Metro Toronto on their immediate environs. This does not appear to be the case with the Metropolitan Highlands, however. While it is possible to conceive of a sense of community — one of OCT's five criteria — developing in Oshawa and Inter-Metro, no foundation for this seems evident in the Highlands.

OCT was particularly concerned about the boundaries it drew for the Metropolitan and Urbanizing Regions. The Bureau shares this apprehension, particularly for Metro Toronto and the three Urbanizing Regions. While it might be possible to put forward alternative suggestions, we are reluctant to do so without having more information at hand. What sounds feasible in theory does not always work in practice. OCT's discussion of these proposals leaves one uncertain as to whether they are meant to be permanent or merely temporary.

The Bureau would therefore recommend a complete re-evaluation of the philosophy behind, and the specifics of, the regional proposals for Metropolitan Toronto and its environs.

The County Regions in southern Ontario and the District Regions in northern Ontario provide us with the most concrete examples of OCT's proposed regions. Because of similarity in population and assessment within each of these classes of regions, OCT discussed them in greater detail, and even went so far as to allocate functions specifically. These regions appear to approach satisfying the five criteria set forth by OCT, with the possible exception of that dealing with community, and to allow sufficient scope for development.

#### Excluded Municipalities

At some point, distance, low population density, and lack of communications routes make it difficult to include some areas in regions if there is to be any meaningful sense of community. When such a situation results, as in much of

northern Ontario and in the area south of Algonquin Park in southern Ontario, OCT has opted in favour of excluding these municipalities temporarily from any region. Exclusion is not intended to result in abandonment, since all regional services would be provided on a contractual basis with the Province paying the extra costs arising as a result of distance. While it is important that these outlying municipalities receive the benefits of higher standards of services, and while it is proper that the Province help to pay the burden of higher costs, it appears that these contract municipalities will suffer

**FUNCTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY UNDER A TWO-TIER SYSTEM**

Table X indicates which functional and service responsibilities would be

from the loss of certain services which cannot be satisfactorily transported.

OCT has described many of these areas as being slow-growth and depressed. But how are they to plan for the future, and by what methods is development to be stimulated unless they are included in regions so that they can receive some additional financial aid and be made part of an overall plan for the future? Perhaps some combination of regional inclusion for services such as planning and development, and exclusion for services which are of a more transportable nature, might be feasible.

assigned to the regional level by OCT and by two other studies.

**TABLE X  
ALLOCATION OF FUNCTIONS TO REGIONS BY OCT,  
THE BECKETT COMMITTEE, AND THE U.S. ADVISORY  
COMMISSION ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS**

Function	OCT			County	District	Beckett	ACIR
	General	Metro	Urbanizing				
Assessment	R	R	R	R	R	Rm	
Tax collection	R	R	R	R	R	Rm	
Non-property taxation	R	R	R	R	R		
Capital borrowing	R	R	R	R	R		
Primary education		R		L	L		R14
Secondary education	R	R		R	R		R14
Libraries	R	R		RL	RL		R12
Planning	R	Rc	Rc	PRL	PRL	Rm	R3
Pollution						Ro	R1
Hospitals	R	Rc	Rc	PR	PR	Rm	R5
Public health	R			R	R	Rm	R10
Public welfare	R			R	R	Rm	R6
Water supply	R	Rc	Rc	RL	RL	Ro	R2
Sewerage	R	R	R	RL	RL	Ro	R2
Storm drainage	R	R		L	L	Ro	
Police protection	R	R		RL	RL	Rm	R11
Fire protection	R	R		RL	RL	Ro	R15
Conservation	R			R	R		
Parks and recreation				R	P	Ro	R7
Garbage disposal	R			RL	RL	Ro	R13
Housing							R8
Urban renewal		R					R9
Arterial roads	R	Rc	Rc	R	P	Rm	R4
Public transit	R	R		L	L		R4
Traffic control		R		L	L		R4
Parking		R		L	L		R4

**General** — OCT, Paragraph 57, Chapter 23, for its generalized discussion. These are the prime candidates for regional administration under a two-tier arrangement.

**Metro, Urbanizing, County, District** — These are the functions specifically allocated to each type of region under the OCT scheme. It should be assumed that where a function is indicated as regional in the general category, with no specific indication in the regional category, that that function will be administered by the region. "R"-regional; "L"-local; "P"-provincial; "Rc"-interregional co-operative arrangement.

**Beckett** — *Fourth and Final Report of the Select Committee on the Municipal Act and Related Acts*, pp. 177-184. "m" indicates those functions which the regions would administer; "o" those functions which the regions might administer.

**ACIR** — U.S. Advisory Committee on Intergovernmental Relations, *Performance of Urban Functions: Local and Areawide* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963) pp. 9-23. Based on a study of 15 services: R1, most suitable for regional administration, scaled down to R15, least suitable.

With the exception of pollution, which is presently a provincial responsibility in Ontario, there seems to be general agreement on the functions which should be administered by a region. The ACIR rankings were for more populous urban centres, which explains some of the discrepancies with OCT's allocation to the County and District Regions.

For the County and District Regions, OCT places the following functions, in addition to the five listed in Table X, in the exclusively local category: local planning, zoning and building by-laws, licences and permits, police, fire, weed and pest control, street lighting, local roads and streets, sidewalks, garbage collection, local parks and recreation, community centres and arenas, markets and weigh-scales, cemeteries, electricity, and other utilities.

Following both this listing and the general list, OCT suggests that "substantial and important" and "highly important" responsibilities have been left to the lower-tier municipalities. Yet pertinent questions can be raised. What is the basis of the terms "significant" and "important"? Is there some index or standard by which to judge significance and importance? And if there is other than a generalized basis for these statements, why was it not made known?

**Function Allocation and Participation**

Presently, it would appear that both interest and participation in local govern-

ment in the Province is very low-key, especially when compared to that at either the provincial (63% voter turnout in 1963) or federal levels. By dividing the functions among two-levels of local government, is interest and participation going to be generated, and if so, is it going to affect one level positively and the other negatively?

In the case of OCT's division, it appears to us that the basis is largely one of housekeeping versus policy-oriented, with the majority of the latter being assigned to the regional units. Before deciding upon a two-tier structure, it is important to consider whether or not the functions allocated to each level are meaningful enough to generate sufficient interest to justify the existence of two levels of government. In this case, is it possible that the functions assigned (or perhaps left) to the lower-tier units are not sufficiently important to attract the day-to-day interest and participation which is so essential to democratic government? Perhaps the one-tier region, with provisions for decentralized administration of various functions, warrants consideration as an alternative.

The Bureau believes that the ramifications of the functional allocation on the long-term development of the lower-tier units should be considered carefully in respect to their effects on interest and participation in local government. This concern assumes even greater significance when one considers the lack of formal participation now experienced in small

municipalities. (See above, especially Tables I and IV.)

While we have little quarrel with those functions assigned to the regional tier, we are concerned with the allotment to the lower-tier level in OCT's two-tier arrangement. It is appropriate to ask whether these more routine housekeeping functions are sufficient to stimulate interest in the activities of the lower-tier in order to justify its existence, even if lower-tier reform should eventually lead to elimination of the smallest municipalities. On the other hand, we would not suggest that the problem be "solved" by either indirect election to regional councils or by failure to assign truly regional functions and services to the regional level. Citizen interest in local-level activities need not be destroyed if regional reform includes functional sharing such as we propose in the following section.

#### Other Considerations

Returning to a discussion of Table X, there are several comments to be made about OCT's functional allocation. The most important and most interesting is the fact that a considerable number of "soft" or socially-oriented services would be assigned to the regional level. Usually, the upper level has been given responsibility for "hard" services such as sewerage, water, and highways. For example, it was not until 1967 that Metro Toronto was assigned a substantial degree of "soft" responsibilities. OCT's proposed allocation of "soft" programmes to the regional level emphasizes the need for direct election to regional councils in order that a regional consciousness can be developed from regional constituencies.

Another general observation relates to the concept of shared functions. While OCT recommends the sharing of responsibilities for some functions, it does not go into any detail as to the proposed bases for such sharing.

The Bureau suggests that the most logical and potentially fruitful basis would entail regionally determined standards

(with regional financing where appropriate), local implementation, and regional review. We believe that this sequence is best suited to functions and services characterized by uniformity of concept, multiplicity of incidence or intimacy of programme impact, and desirability of detached administrative review. Two functional areas come to mind — land-use controls and welfare programmes. (It is interesting to note that, only 16 months following transfer to the Metro level in Toronto, considerable attention is being given to returning some welfare responsibilities to the local level.)

In the case of certain services, such as local roads and sidewalks, garbage collection and storm drainage, the ACIR study has indicated that economies of scale may exist in all or part of their provision. Should this prove to be the case, for these or other services assigned to the local units, consideration should be given to assigning them to the region or having them administered on a joint basis.

OCT's discussion of fire and police services is somewhat confusing. In the County and District Regions, they are assigned to the local units, while the co-ordination and determination of minimum standards of protection services, and the emergency measures organization, would be placed in the exclusively regional category. Only because of the distance and time factors is local discharge necessary. To completely separate aspects of the same service is of no great benefit.

The Bureau recommends that police and fire protection, and the determination of their minimum standards and their co-ordination, be regarded as related functions, and that they be administered jointly by the region and the local municipalities.

Whether weed and pest control can be internalized within an area as small as many of the local units now occupy is questionable. This service might require the regional level for efficient discharge.

In Chapter 17, the Committee discussed the role of the power to license

and issue permits as a regulatory measure, rather than as a means of raising revenue. Goldenberg found, in the case of Metro Toronto<sup>11</sup> that it is often necessary to have uniform standards across the region, rather than to have them locally determined.

Should this prove to be the case for many of the services to be licensed within the regions, then the Bureau would recommend that this function be turned over to the region or shared.

Following the discussion of its regional proposals in detail, OCT turns to a discussion of the financial role of regional governments. It states that while some of the services it assigns to regions may be described as tentative, that adjective cannot be applied to assessment, tax collection, and borrowing, which are to be administered by the regions in all cases. The report of the Data Processing Committee, appointed in February, 1966, and the subsequent publication of a *Data Collection Instruction Manual*, will eventually result in all municipalities using this process. At present about 50% of the Province's municipalities are using at least parts of the standard assessment forms, with the majority contracting the data processing facilities as they are required.<sup>12</sup>

Data-processed assessment information can be used similarly for taxation purposes. While this computerization will simplify filing, it will not, by itself, improve assessment and collection. There is hope that centralization (presently at the county level) of assessment will improve the standards, and will in the long run reduce costs.

The commendable record of Metro Toronto in borrowing at favourable rates suggests that regions can be the responsible party for all their municipalities. Here may exist the best single example

<sup>11</sup>H. C. Goldenberg, *Report of the Royal Commission on Metropolitan Toronto* (Province of Ontario, June, 1965) pp. 62-3.

<sup>12</sup>Information obtained from the Assessment Branch, Ontario Department of Municipal Affairs. These are estimates; no precise figures are available at the present time.

of a true economy of scale. Yet, even this is uncertain, because the City of Toronto had the highest attainable credit rating before Metro came into being. Thus the suburbs received the benefit of being associated with the City.<sup>13</sup> It cannot be calculated to what extent the benefits of regional borrowing will accrue to all regions, although it seems safe to assume that the new regions will be in a better position because of their larger and more diversified tax bases.

OCT discusses the relationship of its governmental regions to the existing economic regions, leaving little doubt about the unsuitability of the economic regions for purposes of regional government. OCT is aware of the desirability of coterminous economic and governmental regions, but this would involve an alteration of the boundaries of some of the economic regions.

Because such functions as planning, tourist development and industrial promotion have both governmental and economic aspects, coterminous boundaries would be advantageous. OCT believes that powers and boundaries of the present counties are inadequate for these functions.

Two recent proposals of the Government of Ontario run counter to the recommendations (stated either formally or informally) of OCT. The proposals for the reorganization of the Ottawa area, while creating a federated system, do not provide for the direct election of the representatives to the regional council, which OCT argued for in no uncertain terms. And, as commented on above, representation will not be based upon population but upon a compromise that leans toward unit representation.

The proposal for school reform, recently announced by the Government, has used the present county unit as its basis for reform. Opinion varies as to the suitability of the county as the best unit for achieving greater equalization of oppor-

<sup>13</sup>Frank Smallwood, *Metro Toronto: A Decade Later* (Toronto: Bureau of Municipal Research, November, 1963) pp. 12-17.

tunity in education, because of the wide discrepancy in population and territorial size. The recommendation of OCT, however, that school boards levy their own taxes rather than requisition funds from the municipality, has been incorporated into the new legislation. OCT recommended that secondary schooling be placed under the jurisdiction of the regional council. While the new legislation ties primary and secondary schooling together within the same board, and increases the area of the units, it still leaves education under the auspices of a separate jurisdiction. What effect this legislation will have on the perpetuation of the existing counties and their boundaries is open to speculation.

#### INAPPROPRIATENESS OF COUNTIES FOR REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

As the counties are receiving consideration as possible units of regional government, the Bureau felt it appropriate to give some attention to this proposal. OCT rejected the counties as being unsatisfactory, both in territorial size and fiscal capacity. The Provincial Treasurer stated: "The present size and composition of county units pose some difficult limitations as regional governments."<sup>14</sup> He went on to say that the most serious

<sup>14</sup>The Honourable Charles MacNaughton (A talk to the County Engineers Association, printed in *The Municipal World*, December, 1967) p. 383.

TABLE XI  
DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION BETWEEN SELECTED CITIES  
AND THE COUNTY IN WHICH EACH IS LOCATED

City	1966 Population	County	1966 Population	City Pop. as % of County Pop.
London	187,269	Middlesex	239,933	78.1
Hamilton	283,345	Wentworth	368,469	77.4
Ottawa	288,377	Carleton	404,624	71.3
Windsor	187,418	Essex	272,878	68.7
Peterborough	54,064	Peterborough	78,853	68.6
Brantford	58,395	Brant	85,222	68.5
St. Catharines	94,817	Lincoln	143,218	66.2
Kingston	54,086	Frontenac	85,165	63.5

Source: 1966 Annual Report of Financial Statistics (Ontario Department of Municipal Affairs, July, 1967).

drawback was the small assessment base.

The Bureau attempted to examine some of the factors which we thought relevant to evaluating the counties' potential as regional governments. While OCT's regions tend to partially segregate rural and urban interests, the Association of Ontario Counties, in its *Blueprint for Local Government Re-Organization*, would merge these two interests by bringing the cities and separated towns back into the counties, and using the latter as the units of regional government.

While it cannot be denied that the county has the advantages of legitimacy and of being known by the public, the AOC plan, in our opinion, has at least two major weaknesses. The first weakness is its total violation of the principle of representation by population. Since rural people would be in a minority in most of the regional county governments in southern Ontario, AOC proposes that no one municipality be awarded a majority of votes on the regional legislature. An indication of the undemocratic results can be had from Table XI. In the eight instances shown, one municipality has from 63.5% (Kingston of Frontenac) to 78.1% (London of Middlesex) of the total county population. To limit these cities, which have from two-thirds to more than three-quarters of the total county population, to less than 50% of the seats on the regional legislatures would be to at least partially disenfranchise their residents.

The second weakness of the AOC proposal in particular, and of any reform based upon counties, stems from a fundamental fact — the county in Ontario (and in most of North America, with the exceptions of the Pacific Coast and Southeastern regions of the U.S.) has become increasingly an instrumentality of rural government. Their use as the basis of reform to attack the problems of urbanism would require wholesale changes in structure, boundary, finance, function, and service. This being so, it would be preferable to adopt a less encumbered approach, since, as OCT cautions, "if particular counties, singly or in combination, are given the status of regional units despite inadequate qualification from the balance criterion or any other standpoint, they are likely nevertheless to remain part of the system and to detract from its effectiveness for as long as the regional government arrangement remains in being".

#### REGIONAL GOVERNMENT AND MEANINGFUL LOCAL AUTONOMY

OCT suggests that lower-tier reform should await the new financial base which regional government would bring about, but it is silent on some of the possible effects of its regional scheme. It does point out that there is every likelihood that provincial supervision could be reduced and local autonomy increased. For, if regional government were to improve the fiscal capacity of the lower tier, which would be able to provide the services assigned to it at a satisfactory level, then there would be less need for aid through conditional grants and provincial supervision. (See Chapter 21.) While there can be little doubt that conditional grants have helped raise the service standard, they do affect the priority-setting function of the local council. All in all, the changes brought about by regional government as forecast by OCT would leave the regions in a much more independent position, and local autonomy would be significantly increased.

Presently, many of the smaller municipalities rely heavily upon provincial financial support. (See Table V and comments related thereto.) Should regional governments prove to be financially more viable and self-sufficient, then the whole sphere of intergovernmental relations would assume a new quality. Regional governments could become "autonomous" in fact, and not in name alone, as is largely the case with municipalities today.

The whole question of staffing remains an unknown. Is there enough personnel with sufficient training to staff the regions in order to enable them to administer the functions which have been assigned to them? And if there are enough to staff the regional administrations, what about the lower-tier governments? Again, there is the need to investigate this whole situation, and more particularly so if a two-tier structure is to be the norm. By way of an untested generalization, based on a perusal of the Clerks' Returns and comments of observers and administrators of local government in Ontario, the question of staffing a two-tier system of local government would be one of the most serious problems facing the Province and its citizens. Even at present, there exists a severe shortage of qualified personnel. Yet eventual reduction of the total number of units through regional reform should prove helpful.

Should the Government of Ontario decide to work out a programme for the drafting and implementation of a scheme of regional government, and, as expressed in the concluding section, we hope it will, the Bureau would suggest that the following three guidelines be given consideration:

(1) The approach should be comprehensive, rather than involve the selection of an area here and one there for special study and action.

(2) Comprehensiveness of approach should not force uniformity of regional reform itself. In terms of state of development, Ontario's areas may be classified as urban (developed), urbanizing



(suburban and/or developing), and rural (underdeveloped and static or underdeveloped but developing). Not only does each area have different needs, but the most appropriate pace of change also differs. Services once regarded as necessary only in urban centres can no longer be withheld from, or inadequately provided by, other areas. Adequacy of public services should not depend upon the happenstance of where people live. In a province as diverse as Ontario, no one regional formula can produce effective solutions or appropriate minimum service standards in either growth or static areas.

(3) Living in the computer age affords us the opportunity to assess the viability of proposals before they are implemented across the Province. Any procedure for the drafting of a regional scheme would involve the gathering of data relating to population, development, assessment, land use and other factors. Another step would be projecting these factors in order to gain some idea of future growth patterns.

The Bureau suggests that computerized data be used to build and test models in order to see what the future holds based on present statistics and growth predictions. If these models prove viable, then another precautionary step might be taken — that of setting up one or two regions (should there be three or more basic classifications of regions, as is the case with the OCT proposals, then one of each might be used) and carefully observing how they function over a two-year trial period.

Throughout the course of this Bulletin, we have suggested certain topics which require further investigation. While many things sound satisfactory in theory, their performance in practice is unknown. We can only suggest that any regional scheme should be pretested in every available way. While model-building and testing can indicate the answers in certain spheres, this technique cannot answer all the unknowns. But the element of chance, we suggest, can be minimized by

calling upon modern methods and modern technology.

#### WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

OCT explains that its proposed regions are tentative, representing what it hopes will constitute a starting point for further and more detailed analysis. It recommends that the provincial Cabinet, assisted primarily by the Department of Municipal Affairs, plan and schedule detailed studies as to boundaries, functional allocation, and forms of municipal organization "to establish a comprehensive system of regional government *within five years*" of the publication of its Report (italics added).

This indicates clearly that OCT is convinced of the need for comprehensive regional reform and feels that such reform can and should be brought about with deliberate speed after further study as to details. But not all agree that regional government is necessary, and, even among those who do agree, there is considerable disagreement over the most appropriate procedures to achieve that result. Views as to what the next step (if any) should be depend upon how one assesses the current situation. These views, and the Bureau's comments thereon, may be summarized as follows:

(1) There is no need for change. The adaptability of local government, supplemented by purely informal arrangements, can be relied upon. The Bureau has previously indicated its disagreement with this position.

(2) The subject is so fundamental to our democratic system, involving what are basically political issues demanding political decisions, that it would be premature to move to its resolution in the absence of greater consensus. Alternatives might include awaiting the formation of a broader consensus or forming an independent commission or task force to further determine the need for, and type of, reform. Since such a body should be

empowered to determine boundaries and allocate functions, it would be prudent to require that it hold public hearings.

(3) The Cabinet is aware of the need for some type of comprehensive regional reform, but since it has not clarified its thinking as to basis or approach, a task force working under a single minister or under a committee of Cabinet should be employed. If this approach were adopted, it would be preferable to have the task force report to a committee of Cabinet rather than to a single minister.

(4) The Cabinet knows the direction in which it wants to move but must define the implementing details. In this eventuality, the most appropriate course would entail creation of a task force of experts in the absence of sufficient and appropriate provincial staff.

The Bureau believes that Ontario is ready for either the third or fourth step, and hopes that the three guidelines which we put forth in the previous section will be given consideration.



## BUREAU OF MUNICIPAL RESEARCH

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Founded in 1914 by a group of public-spirited citizens — operating since then under provincial charter as a non-partisan, non-profit research agency — staffed full time by well qualified personnel — the Bureau of Municipal Research keeps local government operations in Greater Toronto under constant scrutiny.

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