

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN U.S.A.

If one wishes to keep up with modern techniques in almost all phases of life, he should observe in America. That is taken for granted.

But there are a lot of archaic things here, too.

Recently the findings and recommendations of the Committee for Economic Development were very much in the news. The findings of the committee can best illustrate how outmoded some political institutions in the U.S. can be.

The committee found out, for instance, that most state legislators receive inadequate salaries. Some members are paid less than legislative doorkeepers or capitol janitors.

Yet in some states, like Massachusetts, the state legislatures have heavy work loads. In Massachusetts, there is the so-called "free petition system" whereby any citizen can file a bill in the state legislature. Furthermore, every bill filed must be discussed on the

floor. About 4,000 bills are filed in a year. Thus the legislature is loaded with work.

On the other hand, the legislatures in 29 other states meet in regular session once in two years!

Considering the fact that most of the laws that touch on the individual's life are passed by state legislatures, the situation has become a cause for concern.

Only the two newest states (Alaska and Hawaii), according to the committee, have patterns of local government deliberately designed to meet modern conditions.

Thus New England states emphasize their distinctive "towns." (In Wayland, a suburb of Boston, there is no mayor or town council. To pass ordinances or appropriate money, the inhabitants of the town hold meetings and take up the matter themselves.)

Southern states stress a multitude of counties, most of them archaic in structure.

Many other states have both town and townships and overlapping counties, in addition to independent school districts.

Says the committee report: "Seldom have states of the Union faced such urgent demands for solution of difficult problems, or had such challenging opportunities for constructive action."

But, of course, such problems are hidden from the eyes of the most curious tourist. One is very much impressed by the magnificent state house of Massachusetts with its big golden cupola and the massive halls inside.

It has a Memorial Hall in which are displayed the flags of all the units of the armed forces coming from Massachusetts since the Civil War. These flags were carried to the war fronts and later returned to the government to be displayed in the hall.

The same hall also display the bust sculptures and oil portraits of the famous sons of Massachusetts who include Webster, Holmes, Longfellow, the Adamses, Paul Revere, the Lowells, the Lodges, the Cabots. Massachusetts has contributed more famous names

to the Union than any other state.

The inscription below the picture of Thomas Dudley, 1576-1653, the first Deputy Governor, particularly caught our eye. It says, "A Puritan gentleman, well-born, well-educated, well-rounded, self-consistent, austere, sensible, honest, and a dependable servant of Massachusetts."

Probably, he did not have much fun out of life.

The session hall of the lower house of the state legislature is much bigger than the session hall of our House. In fact, that house has 240 members, while our House has only 204.

The names of the members are listed down in two big boards on the wall. When voting, the member presses a button for either "Yea" or "Nay" on top of his desk and his vote lights up the corresponding spots opposite his name on the board.

Governor Volpe is not much of a tourist attraction. He made us wait for about an hour in his anteroom.

Although it already has one of the biggest library systems in the world, Harvard University is about to build an-

other library — underground. Estimated cost: \$5 million.

The recent decision of Pakistan to do away with Peace Corps assistance is merely another manifestation of displeasure with U.S. policy on Pakistan, not a reflection on Peace Corps achievements. Pakistanis believe that the U.S. has been leaning more toward India than to Pakistan.

Religion:

1. The Christian Scientists (they do not use drugs) have the biggest organ among all

Christian denominations in the western hemisphere (more than 3,000 pipes).

2. The Unitarian Church in a town in Massachusetts existing since the 17th century does not hold services during summer.

3. The White Fathers of Africa who train priests for missions have a sizeable headquarters in Massachusetts, but the fathers themselves are seldom seen by the inhabitants living nearby. — *Apolonio Batalla, Manila Bulletin, July 23, 1967.*

### A TRUE SPORTSMAN

Winston Churchill has always manifested a bland disregard for railway schedules, and his habit of catching a train by the skin of his teeth has always worried his traveling companions.

A friend once chided the statesman for this little weakness.

"Winston is such a sportsman," explained Mrs. Churchill, "he always gives the train a chance to get away." — *Acme News.*