

## *The Research and Service Program*

THE PROGRAM of the Bureau of Governmental Research and Services consists of three primary activities: research and information services, consultative and advisory services, the Institute of Government and other conferences and meetings; and a number of supplemental activities, namely, library reference services, news and publicity services, and teaching and training activities. Obviously, many of these activities, as classified above, overlap. For example, much research is involved in rendering consultative service, and consultative service is often carried out in relation to conferences and training programs. Research and advisory services are heavily dependent upon library reference facilities. One of the primary functions of the news and publicity service is the promotion of the Institute of Government. Moreover, as the Bureau program has evolved, each of the above activities has received different emphasis from time to time. With due recognition to this overlapping of function and varying emphasis, each of these major program areas will be discussed below.

### RESEARCH AND INFORMATION SERVICES

The major activity performed by the Bureau of Governmental Research and Services is research on problems

of state and local government, particularly municipal problems. While, for the most part, research projects are initiated by the director or associate director of the Bureau, not infrequently priority is given to projects requested by, and designed to help, some particular governmental agency with an immediate problem. The published research of the Bureau appears under several classifications, depending upon the consideration accorded the subject matter, permanency of value of the material, and the general interest or persons which the research is designed to reach. Publications which are comprehensive in scope and have a degree of permanency are issued as reports. Other studies which are less comprehensive and are deemed to have less permanent value, or which may be prepared especially for the Association of Washington Cities, are issued as information bulletins. In other cases when research is undertaken for the purpose of solving a special problem and where the interest in the result may be quite limited, the results are prepared as research memoranda, and serve primarily for office use in answering specific inquiries, and are not available for general distribution. In a few instances special studies have been undertaken at the request of certain governmental agencies. Because of the limited interest in them, they have not been published for general distribution. In its twenty-five years of research activity, the Bureau has published 140 reports and 202 information bulletins.

Most of the early reports published by the Bureau were mimeographed publications of from five to fifteen pages dealing with research matters of short-range, more immediate, interest to municipal officials. However, beginning about 1939, Bureau reports of a more permanent nature and general interest began appearing; today, some

of them reach book-length size. One manual prepared by the Bureau staff, *Civil Duties of the Sheriff of the State of Washington* (1953), numbers almost 500 pages in length. More frequently, Bureau reports average from 60 to 100 pages of printed or mimeographed material. These reports cover a broad range of subject matter from an *Accounting Manual for Small Cities in the State of Washington* (1946), to full-length treatises on *Washington State Government-Administrative Organization and Functions* (1948), and *Government in the Metropolitan Seattle Area* (1956). A complete list of the titles and prices of Bureau reports appears in Appendix I.

Information bulletins deal with matters of concern to municipal officials and are prepared for, and published in cooperation with, the Association of Washington Cities. Included among these publications are the annual reports of the executive secretary, coverage of regional meetings and the annual convention, final legislative bulletins, and numerous bulletins containing information of assistance to municipal officials in solving the daily problems which confront them. A complete list of the titles of information bulletins published by the Association of Washington Cities in cooperation with the Bureau of Governmental Research and Services is set forth in Appendix II.

One of the most valuable services provided by the Bureau of Governmental Research and Services is the answering of requests for information from municipal and other public officials. First inaugurated with the establishment of the Bureau, this service has steadily expanded until now some 500 to 600 requests for information are received and answered each year. Undoubtedly many potential requests became unnecessary by the

prior preparation and distribution of information bulletins and reports.

Inquiries cover all conceivable aspects of state and local government. Primarily, however, they are concerned with the day-to-day problems of municipal officials. For example, information may be sought about forms of city government, incorporation, annexation, nuisance control, swimming pools, building codes, library service, or parking meters.

Requests for information receive top priority. Upon receipt, each inquiry is given a number and recorded in a control book which notes the date received, its referral date, and the date answered. The inquiry is then assigned to the staff member best qualified by technical training and previous experience to provide the desired information. The executive secretary of the Association of Washington Cities suggests the person to whom the inquiry should be assigned. These are then routed to the associate director, who makes the actual assignment to the staff member in view of a staff member's work-load, training and experience, and possibly other factors.

The Bureau staff has a number of facilities at its disposal in its search for information with which to answer these requests. Carbon copies of all previous replies form the basis of two valuable research files; one is organized by subject matter; another, by the city or state agency served. When the subject matter pertains to municipal ordinances, a copy of the reply is placed in the ordinance file under the appropriate subject heading. This latter file is maintained in cooperation with the Association of Washington Cities. It includes thousands of current ordinances as well as many model ordinances. Contributions from member cities, information from other leagues,

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and the American Municipal Association, subscriptions to magazines and journals, and a newspaper clipping service help keep this file up-to-date. If the information is not readily available in the file, it may be found in other reports and publications which line the shelves of the Bureau offices. Further information may be obtained through the facilities of the Political Science Library, the Law Library, and other branch libraries of the University.

Many of the inquiries received may pertain directly to legal matters. In the past years an increasing number of requests for legal opinions has been made of the Bureau; Dr. Ernest H. Campbell has assumed major responsibility for answering them. In addition to the legal service, many research projects undertaken by the Bureau involve a study of constitutional provisions, legislative enactments, judicial decisions, charters, and attorney generals' opinions. These projects require the attention of personnel trained in law as well as in government. Both the director and associate director of the Bureau are members of the legal profession.

#### CONSULTATIVE AND ADVISORY SERVICES

Among the most important professional services rendered by the Bureau staff are the consultative and advisory services. From the beginning, Bureau personnel have performed this function, not only for the municipalities of the state, but also for various public and quasi-public organizations. They have been particularly qualified by reason of their training and experience. Collectively, their training embraces a wide variety of specialized fields including engineering, architecture, planning, sanitation, personnel, finance and taxation, law, and public adminis-

tration. Their collective experience represents actual service with all levels of government, federal, state and local, and, in addition, administrative experience in the armed services.

In recent years, in addition to working with public officials and citizens' groups in the conduct of studies on a variety of subjects, Bureau personnel have assisted in the preparation of legislation on metropolitan government, urban renewal, planning assistance grants, and public lands. Staff members frequently serve as members or consultants of various committees, boards, or councils engaged in promoting improvements in state and local government. These have included such diverse groups as the Washington State Tax Advisory Council, the Committee on Washington State Government, the Washington State Council for Highway Research, the Governor's Committee on Metropolitan Problems, the Metropolitan Problems Advisory Committee, the National Conference on Metropolitan Problems, the Pacific Northwest Library Association, the League of Women Voters, the Municipal League of Seattle and King County, and county and city charter commissions. In certain instances, Bureau personnel have been called upon by neighboring states or their political subdivisions to serve as consultants on special problems.

A great variety of consultative and advisory services is performed both in the office and in the field. Much consultation and advice is also given at gatherings held throughout the state. Illustrative of the advisory service is the aid given to cities in establishing planning commissions and planning programs, establishing standards relating to streets and street classifications, development of subdivision regulations, analyses of firemen's pension

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laws, methods of financing capital improvements, drafting charters, annexation, and development of safety codes and zoning codes. In recent years the Bureau has often been called upon to assist citizen groups in making incorporation studies to determine the feasibility of becoming a municipality.

#### THE INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENT, CONFERENCES, AND MEETINGS

Throughout its twenty-five years, the Bureau of Governmental Research and Services has sponsored and assisted in numerous educational conferences, institutes, and meetings. Chief among these is the Institute of Government. The Institute has been an annual summer function of the Bureau, in cooperation with the Division of Adult Education and Extension Services of the University of Washington, since 1936. This educational conference seeks to bring together public officials, citizens, and teachers for the purpose of considering current governmental problems, and thus contributing to their solution.

The original purpose and objective of the Institute was far different from that into which it ultimately evolved. Patterned after a similar Institute held at the University of Southern California, it started out as a conference and training school designed to provide intensive in-service training for local and state public officials. Its original purposes as set forth in the program of the first annual Institute of Government, which was held on the University of Washington campus on August 24 and 25, 1936, were as follows:

- (1) To aid individual employees in day-to-day problems.

- (2) To furnish the mechanism for the exchange of information concerning the best public administration practice.
- (3) To relate fundamental governmental principles to modern demands of efficiency and economy.
- (4) To create and identify standards of practice worthy of the requirements of present-day civilization.
- (5) To inspire to higher ideals of public service.

The program of the first Institute illustrates its "school" character. Courses were offered in budget making, taxation, municipal law, municipal reporting, municipal accounting, public personnel administration, and public health. Dr. Emery E. Olson, Dean of the School of Government at the University of Southern California, was brought to the University of Washington to direct the first annual Institute. One hundred and seventy-five public officials, teachers, and citizens attended this two-day conference.

The second Institute, a three-day affair held July 26-28, 1937, offered a new section on law enforcement, consisting of a specialized training course for police officials. The police school was an established part of the Institute until 1948. The section on law enforcement was last presented in 1949 when it assumed the form of presentation which other sections of the Institute had already adopted—that of panel discussions. It was not until the fourth Institute, in 1939, that the purpose and nature of the meeting had begun to broaden to serve both the community and the public official. Within the next decade, the Institute of Government evolved from a school for

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public officials to a town hall meeting for all who were interested in governmental problems.<sup>1</sup>

Beginning as a two-day meeting, the Institute grew to three days and then to five days. From 1945 until 1956 its length varied between four and five days, depending upon the demand of various groups for additional sections of discussion. The twenty-second and twenty-third Institutes of Government, held in 1957 and 1958, were both held for three days.

Attendance at the Institute has had a slow but steady growth through the years, with the exception of 1937 when over 1,000 persons attended the second annual Institute, and in 1942, the first year at war, when only 278 persons assembled. By 1949, when the fourteenth Institute was held, attendance passed the 1,000 mark for the second time. Attendance has averaged over 1,000 persons at each of the annual Institutes since 1949.

The Institute has continually served as a weather vane of public interest in current events. Its subject matter, from year to year, reflects the topical happenings and special problems that occur in a particular year. The twenty-third annual Institute of Government, held July 7-9, 1958, was no exception. Illustrative of the type of panel sessions held at the Institute was the 1958 program which featured discussions on state and local finance, library administration, public housing, probation and delinquency, public parks and recreation, and development problems of Washington Indian communities. In addition, several panel discussions on planning were held, including such topics as the impact of freeways on cities,

<sup>1</sup> "20-Year-Old Institute Serves as Major Governmental Conference," *Western City*, XXXI (June, 1955), 28-29.

and the implementation of the comprehensive plan. These panel sessions on planning, bringing together planning directors, members of planning commissions, city and county officials, members of the business community, and other citizens, have been a major section of recent Institute programs.

In addition to sponsoring the annual Institute of Government, the Bureau of Governmental Research and Services participates in, and assists in organizing, a number of conferences and meetings. Bureau personnel aid the Association of Washington Cities' staff with its annual conventions and in organizing and conducting numerous regional meetings held throughout the state. In addition to providing municipal officials with an opportunity to discuss mutual problems, the state convention is held for the purpose of formulating state municipal policy and electing new officers, while approximately twenty regional meetings held each year provide city leaders with an opportunity to discuss current developments and problems which might be more local and regional in character. Following the biennial municipal elections, Bureau personnel assist the Association of Washington Cities' staff in conducting one-day schools for new mayors and councilmen. This service was first instituted in 1952. Bureau personnel also participate in a number of national, regional, and local meetings and conferences each year. These include the annual meetings of the National Municipal League, the American Municipal Association, the American Institute of Planners, the Northwest City Managers' Association, the Western Governmental Research Association, the League of Oregon Cities, and the Washington County Commissioners' Association.

OTHER BUREAU ACTIVITIES

In addition to the Bureau's three main activities—its research and information program, its consultative and advisory service, and its sponsorship and participation in conferences, institutes, and meetings—a number of subsidiary, but nevertheless quite important, activities are carried on. These supplementary activities in large part assist and support the three primary activities. They consist of library reference services, news and publicity services, and teaching and training activities.

*Library Reference Services.* One of the most important of these supplementary activities is the library reference service carried on in cooperation with the Political Science Library, a branch of the University of Washington's main library. One of the first projects undertaken by the Bureau of Governmental Research in 1934 was the creation of a Governmental Research Library. The Bureau continued to expand its library facilities until, by 1945, an extensive collection of materials, particularly in the field of state and local government and public administration, had been acquired. However, without the services of a full-time librarian, much of the material was unclassified and thus not always readily accessible. In 1945, recognizing the need for improved library facilities, negotiations were carried on with the president of the University, the University librarian, and the chairman of the Department of Political Science, which eventually resulted in the establishment of a Political Science and Governmental Research Branch Library. This Library took over the quarters formerly housing the Bureau library. Under the direction of Miss Ruth Jeffries,

through well-planned acquisition programs and exchange relationships, the Political Science Library has developed an excellent collection of state and local source materials which constantly proves of valuable assistance to the Bureau research and service program. In addition to the services provided by the Political Science Library, Bureau personnel make frequent use of the facilities of the University of Washington Law Library, as well as occasional use of material available in the main University Library and other branch libraries. Valuable reference materials are also available in Bureau and Association collections and the private libraries of staff members.

*News and Publicity Services.* The news and publicity services of the Bureau of Governmental Research and Services are highlighted by the contribution of monthly news and feature articles to *Western City*, the official publication of the six western state leagues of Arizona, California, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, and Alaska. In addition to the regular monthly section devoted to news of Washington cities, the magazine also carries feature stories on individual cities and state-wide and regional surveys on problems of interest to municipal officials. For example, each of Washington's four All American City Award winners—Port Angeles in 1953, Bellevue in 1955, Tacoma in 1956, and Vancouver in 1957—received extended coverage in separate feature articles. Survey articles keep Washington officials informed on the latest developments in sewage control, water rates and service practice, refuse collection and disposal, urban renewal, and similar municipal activities.

In addition to writing copy for *Western City* magazine, news items and specialized releases are prepared for pub-

licizing programs of the Bureau of Governmental Research and Services and the Association of Washington Cities.

*Teaching and Training Activities.* The Bureau of Governmental Research and Services is a research and service agency rather than a teaching or training unit, and, as such, does not have direct responsibility for any instructional program. Its facilities, however, are utilized to a considerable extent by political science students engaged in studying problems of state and local government. Only the director of the Bureau, who holds the academic rank of professor in the Department of Political Science, has classroom responsibilities. The associate director of the Bureau holds the academic rank of assistant professor in the Department of Political Science, but at the present time has no fixed classroom responsibilities. Other staff members of the Bureau are occasionally called upon for assignments as guest lecturers to discuss matters within their individual fields of specialization.

The Bureau, itself, has been a training ground for persons interested in administrative careers. Among its "graduates" are persons serving as the executive secretary of the Washington State Legislative Council, the executive assistant to the city manager of Tacoma, the administrative assistant to the governor of the state of Washington, and budget examiner with the Washington State director of budget. Other former Bureau staff members have advanced to management careers in university administration, including the positions of administrative assistant to the chancellor of the University of California at Los Angeles and coordinator of state-wide activities for the University of Washington.

A LOOK AT THE FUTURE

The history of the first twenty-five years of the Bureau of Governmental Research and Services reveals a somewhat uncertain and insecure beginning, followed by a decade of very slow growth, and then, immediately following the war years, a period of rapid expansion in which the size of the staff was more than doubled to meet the rapidly increasing service demands. Since 1950 the number of staff members has increased by only one, but the service demands have continued to multiply.

The constant and progressive growth in the service requirements, which can be defined as not only the daily inquiries that must be answered by letter or telephone or conferences at the Bureau offices, but also by direct consultation in the field and at organized meetings, has materially pre-empted the staff time that earlier had been devoted to long-range research. This is indicated by the increase in the number of inquiries from cities alone from an average of 502 a year for the period of 1950-1954 to 630 per year for the past four years. Moreover, many of the questions now being addressed to the Bureau are becoming increasingly complex, and consequently often require a great deal more time and research than previously was the case.

One of the stated objectives of the Bureau is to foster and encourage the development of better government, particularly at the state and local level. The rendering of governmental service by the Bureau has operated to increase the service demands upon it, as the improvement of public administration requires better, accurate, and more complete factual data with which to work.

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Another basic reason for the substantial increase in service needs has been the fringe area problems resulting from rapid population growth just outside the corporate limits of municipalities. The Bureau has been frequently called upon to aid citizen groups and city officials in preparing and reviewing incorporation and annexation studies, respectively.

The first twenty-five years of the Bureau revealed the strength of the organization in helping to fill a need that existed in this state for comprehensive objective research and services in the field of state and local government. The unique working relationship with the Association of Washington Cities has proved to be a real constructive force in materially raising the standards and quality of government of municipalities in the state of Washington, and the Bureau also has contributed much, even though perhaps less dramatically and intensively than on the municipal level, to improving the government of the state and of its other political subdivisions. In addition, it has contributed significantly toward the cultivation and development of citizen interest and participation in public affairs at the state and local level, and toward making it possible for citizens, communities, and public officials to arrive at an informed judgment or opinion with respect to problems and issues confronting them. Experience during the first twenty-five years has demonstrated the soundness and general satisfaction with these practices and policy objectives. With necessary adaptations to changing demands, it appears that they will supply the guidelines for the future.