

PREFACE

"Depend on it," Dr. Samuel Johnson observed, "when a man knows he is going to be hanged in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully." Unfortunately, most of the critical problems in urban areas are more in the nature of a quiet or creeping crisis. The problems that face our urban communities are too often illustrated by long-term trend lines: the economic decline of central cities, the physical and social disintegration of slum areas, increasingly fragmented and overlapping patterns of government, urban sprawl, housing problems and school problems in all parts of the urban complex, inadequate transportation facilities, and growing confusion and ugliness where there should be beauty. Yet, behind these statistics and population patterns, are individual personal and community tragedies.

In a democratic society, the role of government—Federal, State, and local—in meeting these problems will always be crucial. The Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations has performed a major service by weaving together in *Metropolitan America: Challenge to Federalism* a number of its major reports and recommendations for improving intergovernmental relations in our metropolitan areas. This volume relates in a meaningful way the problems posed by contemporary social and economic development in metropolitan areas, the ways available for reorganizing government to cope more effectively with their problems, and develops the beginnings of an intergovernmental strategy to utilize effectively the resources of the federal system in support of metropolitan objectives.

The major themes for a new urban federalism are developed here: the strengthening of our general units of government, the cities and counties and in New England the towns; the use of the broad and equitable Federal and State tax base to help local governments meet their needs; consistent comprehensive planning procedures to better relate Federal, State, and local and private development activities in urban areas; and State action to remove past restrictions and play a new role of oversight and assistance to their urban governments.

President Johnson has pledged his support for a "creative federalism" to meet the problems of urban development. In his last two annual messages on the cities, the President has requested legislation specifically designed to show how regional goals can be achieved and intertwined urban problems can be attacked through coordinated use of Federal, State, and local programs. I have been working, at his request, with the Nation's mayors, county officials, and city managers to deal with our metropolitan problems. They are the same problems that I had to face as mayor of Minneapolis and as a member of Senator Edmund S. Muskie's Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Relations of the Government Operations Committee when I repre-