

ences are incompatible with essential national policy objectives as determined by Congress.

A POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY FOR METROPOLITAN AREAS

These principles of State and Federal action can serve as the basis for recommending State and Federal action directed toward the problems of metropolitan areas. A more complete political philosophy for metropolitan action also requires a complementary set of principles applying to local governments within metropolitan areas. Some of the same principles concerning the distribution of governmental authority can be adapted to the local level, but other issues must also be considered. Among these are the values and limitations of local home rule; policies concerning special district governments; and the implications of social and economic disparities in metropolitan areas.

HOME RULE

Recent developments in metropolitan areas have divested the concept of home rule of much of the sanctity it possessed at various times in the past. The values of maximum citizen participation and local control implicit in home rule are in tension with the limited ability of small units of government to meet modern service standards, with the spread of public policy concerns to the metropolitan scale, and with the poor public performance that often results from divided authority. Effective local control—the goal of home rule advocates—often requires a larger jurisdiction than the typical local unit in a metropolitan area. The Kestnbaum Commission has noted:

Self-determination in one isolated local unit of a large community often restricts the opportunity for genuine home rule in the whole community.

Unfettered local control can be injurious to local as well as to broader interests. For example, it is generally agreed that houses cost more than they need to because local building codes, sanitary regulations and inspections, licensing requirements for artisans, and zoning and subdivision controls are often inadequate, outmoded, or conflicting. Complete home rule with respect to these matters by ill-equipped local units has been frustrating for the building industry and the public, and has produced complications for National and State housing programs.⁸

The case for local home rule rests upon such considerations as controllability, accessibility to the public, and citizen participation—all of which are held to be promoted most successfully by small units of government. These are important values, but they must be balanced against other considerations. First, it is not clear whether they are in fact best served by small home-rule units. Larger, more diverse communities also serve important political values in minimizing the likelihood that any one group will dominate the government and increasing the opportunity for all groups to have their interests respected. Other considerations center around economies of scale in performing urban functions and the need for adequate space to cope with many responsibilities. Still other limitations of local home rule arise from the close functional interrelationships that exist in metropolitan areas. Many problems have grown beyond

⁸ Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, *op. cit.*, pp. 54–55.