

to its citizens by better attunement of complaint and grievance handling machinery. Many now call for a third party critic to make certain that a complaint receives a fair hearing for his grievance and, if justified, a proper remedy.

The most popularly current model of the third party for this purpose is the ombudsman. He can be characterized briefly as a high level officer, with adequate salary and staff, free and independent of both the agencies he may criticize and the power that appoints him, with long tenure of office sufficient to immunize him from the natural pressures concurrent with seeking reappointment, with power to investigate administrative practices on his own motion. He is a unique officer whose sole job is to receive and act on complaints without the necessity for charge to the citizen. He should have the power to subpoena records. He operates informally and expeditiously without formal hearing procedures. His principal corrective weapons are publicity, criticism, persuasion, and reporting. He does not have the power to either punish maladministrators or reverse administrative decisions.

With those understandings and in response to the committee's acknowledgement of our major interest being at the local level of government, I will move to the final phase of my presentation in discussing the utility of ombudsmanic concepts there. We see the ombudsman as a supplement to existing redress procedures which, if they exist at all, tend to be episodic, partial and selective; leaving an aggrieved citizen frustrated as a result of his dealings with administrative agencies that have been delegated quasi-judicial and quasi-legislative as well as executive powers.

Any discussion of the ombudsman, particularly at the local level, should be accompanied by the caution ably sounded by Prof. Walter Gellhorn who, while the ombudsman's most popular American proponent, is also a sober critic of those who think that the transplantation would create a transformation. While an ombudsman would, as he says, "substantially adorn the American Governmental scene, it would not remake the scenery."

The ombudsman is not a substitute for either civic reform or bureaucratic responsibility. An ombudsman can isolate aberrations; he can suggest better ways of reaching agreed ends; he can point out new applications of previously accepted concepts, but as Professor Gellhorn states "what he cannot do is force hesitant officials to embrace a philosophy created by him." (Gellhorn, "Ombudsman and Others," p. 439.)

A second note of caution emerges from the work of Rowat, Moore and others: An ombudsman will not be able to deal with many of the things that most deeply aggrieve some elements of the citizenry. He is, in short, not quite a combination of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Moses, and Will Rogers. The ombudsman is an administrator of administrative decisionmaking. He is neither a pathfinder for citizens through bureaucratic mazes nor an umpire tallying policy decisions.

Many citizen complaints clearly pertain to policy choices which must be made by bureaucrats and legislators. Should a city's view of the waterfront be cut off by a freeway in the furtherance of an interstate highway network? Should a Job Corps center be estab-