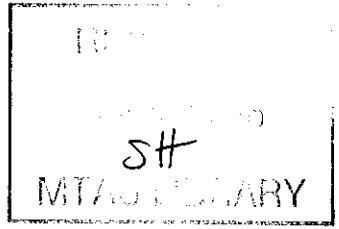


11



V-F

Metropolitan governmental adaptation and the lessons of reform



See from NASH/UK TRP

FOR GENERATIONS, the "textbook" solution to problems in metropolitan areas has been to institute metropolitan government. Theorists, critics, and reformers have maintained that order can be imposed, fragmentation eliminated and adequate services provided if existing units of government, including suburbs, are consolidated. This solution has appeared to be comprehensive and absolute. Should political forces resist the plan, reform still can be implemented through partial consolidation or even through two-tier governments, retaining most local units. However, consolidation in some form has been widely acknowledged as the most effective approach.

The only flaw in this "textbook" solution is its basic assumption that metropolitan problems are essentially problems of metropolitan government. If this were true, then problems could be solved merely by reorganizing government. Unfortunately, problems like crime and housing segregation are not so easily solved. These and other problems exist and will continue to plague urban areas with or without governmental reorganization.

However, even though it is too simplistic a solution for all metropolitan problems, reorganization may have many positive impacts. Consolidated government may improve program coordination throughout the area and provide services more evenly. A more rational division of services between urban and rural areas can be devised. Capital spending can be planned for the entire region, and certain regional functions such as sewage disposal can be provided. Finally, the new government may encourage the development of a regional consciousness among its residents.

These more modest accomplishments do not comprise an urban millennium. However, they promote governmental effectiveness and cooperative attacks on deep seated urban problems. This is no small achievement and certainly one that is worth pursuing. This chapter will describe how it has been pursued, in one form or another, throughout the past two centuries and still continues to be of interest today.

State legislatures were responsible for the first series of city-county consolidations including the merger of the city of New Orleans with the Parish of Orleans in 1805; the consolidation of the city of Boston with Suffolk County in 1882; the merger of the city and county of Philadelphia in 1854; the merger of New York City and New York County in 1874; and the consolidation of New York and Brooklyn and the counties of Queens and Richmond in 1898. The merger of the city and county of Honolulu was accomplished by the territorial legislature in 1907.

During the early years of the 20th century, municipal reformers wrested the power to make decisions concerning local government structure from the state legislatures. However, during this period, successful city-county consolidation was thwarted by the institution of reforms, which required constitutional amendments and/or referenda before local government could be restructured. Since 1907, over 21 city-county merger proposals have been rejected by voters. Numerous other efforts have failed to survive the necessary constitutional amendment process or to succeed in securing a revision of state statutes.¹

The second series of successful city-county consolidations is related to the growth of the suburbs that has occurred since World War II. The "famine" in the consolidation movement ended in 1947 when the citizens of the city of Baton Rouge and the parish of East Baton Rouge, Louisiana, voted to consolidate most of their governmental functions and to establish one governing body for the entire area. Since 1947, 15 consolidated governments have been created, 13 by local referendum and 2 by state legislative action. The areas that successfully secured mergers through the mechanism of citizen referenda include:

Baton Rouge-East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana	1947
Hampton-Elizabeth City County, Virginia	1952
Nashville-Davidson County, Tennessee	1962
Virginia Beach-Princess Anne County, Virginia	1962
South Norfolk-Norfolk County, Virginia	1962
Jacksonville-Duval County, Florida	1967
Juneau-Greater Juneau Borough, Alaska	1969
Carson City-Ormsby County, Nevada	1969
Columbus-Muscogee County, Georgia	1970
Sitka-Greater Sitka Borough, Alaska	1971
Suffolk-Nansemond County, Virginia	1972
Lexington-Fayette County, Kentucky	1972
Savannah-Chatham County, Georgia	1973

¹ Charlene Caile, "Bringing the City and County Together," *The American County*, February 1972, p. 9.

MTAS LIBRARY
UNIV. OF TENN. SEP 11 1987

In 1969, the Indiana General Assembly consolidated the governments of the city of Indianapolis and Marion County without any provision for a local referendum. According to the National Association of Counties (NACO), 36 areas currently are considering consolidation, indicating increased interest in the process in recent years.²

Several structural forms of government can emerge from city-county consolidation, the most comprehensive of which is the merger of two or more units of government into one. Through this process, one government becomes responsible for exercising all or most governmental powers for the area formerly included under the consolidation, thus replacing one or more existing governments. The new government that results from this merger is a metropolitan government—an areawide government with full municipal powers and functions. This type of geographic consolidation is exemplified by the merger of Nashville and Davidson County, Jacksonville and Duval County, and Indianapolis and Marion County.

Another structural form of city-county consolidation is the merger of specific functions into one areawide unit, while the existing governmental units within the consolidated area remain largely unchanged. Although there are differences between the two, the Baton Rouge and Miami-Dade governments illustrate a type of functional, or partial, city-county consolidation. Such functional consolidations differ from metropolitan governments since their scope of operation is considerably more limited. The primary city in the metropolitan area is still a functioning government, even though it has transferred some of its services to the county level.

A third form of city-county consolidation creates a federated system of government by establishing a new metropolitan corporation with area-wide powers, while maintaining government local municipalities. This two-tier approach to metropolitan government has no American model, but is illustrated by the Toronto metropolitan government of Ontario, Canada. The Toronto approach has been very attractive to U.S. reformers and is the basis of many proposed metropolitan reorganizations. It differs from a functional consolidation in that it involves creating a new jurisdiction rather than merely transferring functions to a revised county government. This two-tier format may call for eliminating some of the city's boundaries and for replacing the city's decentralized communities or boroughs. It resembles a metropolitan government since its powers throughout the metropolitan area are supreme and often cover the full range of municipal services. It differs from a metropolitan government in that it delegates the responsibility for providing those functions to submetropolitan districts. In the following sections, examples of each of these types of consolidation will be described.

² Ibid.

FUNCTIONAL (PARTIAL) CONSOLIDATION

Baton Rouge

The first major city-county consolidation of the post-World War II growth period occurred in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where business interests campaigned for local government reorganization. In contrast to a number of similar consolidations, the role of the state in this merger was limited to legislative authorization for a referendum on a constitutional amendment. In 1946, the amendment was approved by a margin of almost four to one.³

A commission succeeded in drafting a charter. In 1947, with only one third of the electorate participating, it was approved by a margin of just over 300 votes out of the 14,000 cast.⁴ The plan probably would not have been approved had there been a requirement for separate majorities inside and outside the city. City voters supported the plan by about four to one, but the rural voters strongly opposed it.

Implemented in January 1949, the plan was not a complete consolidation. Both the city and parish governments maintained their identities, as did two small municipalities. An interlocking directorate was used to combine the city and parish. The city had seven councilmen; at that time, the parish council consisted of the city council and two (now three) persons elected from the rural area. Unified control over administration was provided by a mayor-president, elected from the entire parish, who presided over both councils but had no vote. He was charged with the appointment of police and fire chiefs, while the parish council appointed major administrative officers in finance, personnel, and public works. City and parish shared certain departmental costs, such as operating the finance department. Consequently, although the government was interwoven, two identifiable and separate governmental structures remained.

The parish was divided into urban, industrial, and rural service areas and the boundaries of the city of Baton Rouge were extended so that the city would encompass the urbanized area. This increased the city's territory from 6 square miles to about 30 square miles and tripled its population.⁵

Throughout the consolidated area, taxing zones also were created. Since they paid both city and parish taxes, residents of the urban area

³ Thomas A. Reed, "Progress in Metropolitan Integration," *Public Administration Review*, Winter 1949, p. 8, and John C. Bollens and Henry J. Schmandt, *The Metropolis: Its People, Politics and Economic Life*, 2d ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), p. 299.

⁴ Bollens and Schmandt, *The Metropolis*, p. 299.

⁵ Ibid., p. 300.

were provided with the widest range of services. These included urban services such as garbage and refuse collection and disposal, sewers, police and fire protection, traffic regulation, street lighting, and inspection services. Uniform parish taxes levied in the rural and industrial zones financed the public works department, which provided bridges, highways, streets, sidewalks, and airports on a parishwide basis. In the industrial areas, any necessary city-type services were provided by the industries at their own expense. Unless it established special taxing districts, the rural area could not receive city-type services, except for the services of the sheriff's department. Further incorporations were precluded; but contiguous developing portions of the rural area could be annexed to the urban area with the consent of the city council and a majority of owners of the property in question.

By establishing tax and service differentials based on varying need, the new government achieved a degree of flexibility that previously had been lacking. The consolidation eventually resulted in a superior level of service in the incorporated fringe areas and a marked improvement in the city services.⁶ Comprehensive zoning, building codes, housing ordinances, and subdivision regulations were adopted throughout the parish. Public services, such as street maintenance, drainage, and waste disposal, were expanded. But the partial consolidation also had some shortcomings. The two law enforcement agencies remained separate, but had overlapping jurisdictions. Several other offices also remained outside of local control. In general, however, the reorganization seems to have worked well.

Miami-Dade County

The unique conditions of a resort area shaped the need for governmental consolidation to provide areawide services in the Greater Miami area. Foremost among these was the population boom in one of the fastest growing areas of the United States. In addition to its million permanent residents, Dade County hosted over 5 million tourists a year.⁷ Unfortunately, the provision of government services never kept pace with the population growth and the seasonal influx of tourists. Services were developed on an *ad hoc* basis from year to year, with little or no regard for orderly planning.

The origin of formal consolidation movements in the Greater Miami

area can be traced to the early 1940s. Functional consolidation began in 1943 when various municipal health functions were consolidated into the Dade County Department of Public Health. In 1945, all of the ten Dade County school districts were consolidated into one countywide system; and in 1945 a Dade County Port Authority was established and given jurisdiction over ports and airport facilities. Four years later, the city of Miami relinquished its hospitals to the jurisdiction of the county.

There had been several attempts to achieve geographic consolidation of governmental units prior to 1957, when the County Home Rule Charter was adopted. A study was conducted to determine the need for reorganization after the unsuccessful consolidation attempt in 1953. A constitutional home rule amendment for Dade County was passed in the Florida state legislature and ratified by the electorate in November 1956. The measure passed by more than two to one in Dade County, although unincorporated areas voted against the proposal. Fortunately, dual majorities were not required.⁸

The new charter provided for a two-tier form of metropolitan government, which incorporated, to a limited degree, the principle of federation. The existing municipalities, Miami and 27 suburban cities, were retained to perform purely local functions, while metropolitan functions were allocated to Dade County. The Metro government was designated the only local government for the unincorporated areas and was given the power to prevent new incorporations.

The Metro government gained jurisdiction over all countywide functions except state courts and public schools. These included powers to provide and/or regulate roads and traffic, transportation and transit systems, utilities, zoning, building codes, urban renewal and housing, fire and police, communications, hospitals, health and welfare, ports, parks, libraries, and museums. Metro also was authorized to provide and enforce comprehensive planning, to establish special purpose taxing districts, to set minimum standards of service for all governmental units, and to assume services if the cities failed to meet these standards.

The charter completely revamped the county government organization and established a council-manager type system. The county commission, elected on a non-partisan ballot, was designated as the policymaking and legislative body. It is composed of a chairman-mayor and nine members elected countywide, who must meet district residence requirements. The body has the power to pass local ordinances after public hearings and to appoint and remove the county manager, the county attorney, and the judges and clerk of the metropolitan court. The charter abolished the elective status of the assessor, tax collector, surveyor, purchasing

⁸ Edward Sofen, *The Miami Metropolitan Experiment* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1963), pp. 14-26.

⁶ Arthur W. Bromage, "Regionalism and the Allocation of Powers," *The Municipality*, August 1970, p. 176; and Bollens and Schmandt, *The Metropolis*.

⁷ U.S. Bureau of the Census, U.S. Census of the Population: 1960," vol. I, *Characteristics of the Population*, part II, Florida (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963), p. 11. Also, see Florida Department of Commerce, *Florida Tourist Study* (Tallahassee: Florida Department of Commerce, 1971).

agent, and supervisor of voter registration, and made these officials and department heads appointees of the county manager.⁹

Metro has produced a number of substantial accomplishments in its organization, processes, and functions. It has simplified countywide government by integrating a formerly complicated administrative organization, and has modernized and coordinated the accounting, budget, information, and personnel systems. A general land use plan has been adopted, along with improved zoning ordinances and a uniform subdivision ordinance to control the development of vacant land. Stringent air and water pollution regulations have been adopted, as well as uniform vehicle inspection and countywide traffic laws. The tax assessment and collection functions for all the cities have been assumed by the county. A department of housing and urban development was created to coordinate the efforts of agencies concerned with urban renewal, prevention of blight, and low-income housing. Generally, the area has benefitted from better fire protection, health, inspection, and sanitation services; more park and recreational facilities; and uniformity in fire, housing, and building codes.

Although the Dade County charter was a breakthrough in metropolitan county government, it has been subjected to continual harassment by various municipal officials and former county officeholders. Hundreds of law suits were filed against it. There were also attempts to secure adoption of anti-Metro charter amendments; one such amendment, providing for the direct election of the sheriff, succeeded.

The conflict concerning the metropolitan government of Dade County has centered largely on the division of powers between the county and the municipalities and on finance and leadership. The charter was ambiguous as to which powers were essentially local and which were areawide. Melvin B. Mogulof, a senior staff member of the Urban Institute, claims that the authority to enforce comprehensive plans for the development of the county on an areawide basis has been largely unusable.¹⁰ The county lacks adequate control over water supply and sewage disposal, often key factors in shaping area development.

Another source of dissention is Miami-Dade's financial situation. The constitutional amendment creating the new metropolitan government did not provide additional taxing powers. Consequently, the county government has had to utilize its traditional tax structure to finance municipal services to residents of the unincorporated areas. Municipal property owners have not received the same county services as those in unincorporated areas, yet they have been taxed by the county at the same

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Melvin B. Mogulof, *Five Metropolitan Governments* (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, 1972), p. 59.

rate as residents of unincorporated areas. This is because a state constitutional provision requires ad valorem tax uniformity. In a sense, these residents pay twice for the same services, since they also pay taxes to their municipalities.

While the severe limitations on taxing power, coupled with tax inequalities, are shortcomings of the Miami Metro, the institution of countywide tax assessment and collection of taxes has been regarded as an accomplishment. However, the county has been unable to implement the power granted by the charter to set minimum standards of service for all areas. It has not even had the resources to meet minimum standards in the unincorporated areas that it serves. Consequently, it is not in a position to enforce such standards with first tier governments.

COMPLETE GEOGRAPHIC CONSOLIDATION

Nashville-Davidson County

In the early 1950s, the Nashville metropolitan area was a community with serious, but not unique, governmental problems. The central city, which at that time had a population of 170,000 and covered 22 square miles, provided municipal services with the usual financial limitations. Nashville is located in Davidson County, which had a land area of 532 square miles. By 1960, the county was having difficulty providing services to its rapidly growing population, then totaling 400,000. Consequently, it was widely viewed as a divided and confused local governmental system.¹¹

The county was under great pressure to extend sewer systems to the developing suburban areas. The presence of heavy deposits of limestone was undermining the effectiveness of septic tanks. Additional county service problems included expensive water charges and inadequate suburban waterlines. Fire and police protection were provided only on a subscription basis. Certain services, including public health and hospitals, were duplicated, causing a further expense to both city and county taxpayers.

City residents resented the fact that county residents had the use of certain "free services" such as the municipal auditorium, airport facilities, libraries, and a comprehensive park system that located many of the parks in the suburbs. City residents also were paying expensive school taxes, part of which supported the county's school system.

Perhaps the most basic problem was the division of political responsibility within one cohesive economic area, which frustrated administration

¹¹ Herbert S. Duncombe, *County Government in America* (Washington, D.C.: National Association of Counties, 1966), p. 195; and Ed Young, "Three City-County Consolidations: A Case Study," Unpublished Research Paper, American University, July 1969.

and discouraged citizen participation. In addition to Nashville, Davidson County contained six municipalities and six special districts. Though this was a relatively small number of jurisdictions compared to other metropolitan areas, it was enough to fragment public authority at a time when unified action was needed. As the Nashville-Davidson County mayor, C. Beverly Briley, later stated: "I was a county judge in 1950 and saw that the system was wrong. The county had the jurisdiction but did not have the authority: the city had the authority but did not have the jurisdiction."¹²

The Tennessee legislature established the Community Service Commission in 1951 to study the problems of Nashville and Davidson County. In 1952, the commission recommended the functional consolidation of health services, hospital, welfare programs, and public schools; the annexation of a 69 square mile area of the County by Nashville; the authorization of county home rule; and the reapportionment of Davidson County to give more representation to the urbanized areas. City-county consolidation was not recommended because it was felt that the state's constitutional obstacles to consolidation were too great.¹³ The only tangible outcome of the study was the transfer of the city's public health department and a portion of its welfare functions to the County.

Following the Commission's report, two major changes were made. In 1953, the Tennessee Constitution was amended to permit home rule and the consolidation of city and county functions for counties with more than 200,000 residents. This affected only the cities of Nashville, Chattanooga, Memphis, and Knoxville. The implementation of consolidation was made subject to popular referendum and to concurrent majorities in the central city and the remainder of the county. In 1955, prodded by the Tennessee Municipal League, the legislature enacted a strong annexation law which allowed cities to annex contiguous areas without a popular referendum.¹⁴

A metropolitan government report, published in 1956 by the City and County Planning Commission, called for replacement of the separate governments with a single metropolitan government. State enabling legislation, passed in 1957, paved the way for the creation of a local charter commission in metropolitan areas with a population of 200,000 or more.¹⁵ According to Alan Campbell, it was sold to the legislators as a "local

bill," good for the state as a whole, rather than as urban policy. In effect, however, it became state metropolitan policy for Tennessee; each of the four metropolitan counties has tried to adopt the authorized form of government.¹⁶

In 1958, a charter commission, consisting of five members from Nashville and five from Davidson County, proposed a charter containing the following provisions: (1) consolidation of Nashville and Davidson County; (2) creation of a 21-member metropolitan council; (3) establishment of an expandable urban services district and a general services district; and (4) establishment of a tax rate for each district based upon services rendered. The chief executive would be a metropolitan mayor elected for a four-year term.¹⁷

The campaign for adoption was conducted by Nashville's two daily newspapers and by most community leaders, including Mayor Ben West of Nashville; County Judge Beverly Briley, later elected as the consolidated government's mayor; and a citizen's committee, which supplied speakers for civic clubs, distributed printed materials, and arranged for radio and television advertising. Emphasizing higher taxes and bigger government, local government officials, suburban small businessmen, and private fire and police companies opposed the charter. They also widely distributed handbills and appeared on radio and television. In June 1958, the proposed charter was approved in Nashville, but was rejected by the remainder of the county.¹⁸

Shortly after the referendum, Major West moved boldly to employ the strong annexation powers recently provided by the legislature. Nashville annexed 7 square miles of industrial property and 43 square miles of residential areas containing 82,000 persons. As Judge Briley noted: "This upset the people who were annexed, and the people who were not annexed were afraid they were going to be annexed next. . . ."¹⁹ The new residents were being taxed more heavily than before but did not experience a comparable change in the services they received. For example, the city was unable to provide immediately sewers for most of the annexed area. At the same time, the city council passed legislation to make suburbanites pay for using city facilities.

These actions triggered a new consolidation movement. Proponents

¹² Campbell, *The States and The Urban Crisis*, p. 69.

¹³ Nashville Metropolitan Government Charter Commission, "Proposed Metropolitan Government Charter for Nashville and Davidson County," May 1958.

¹⁴ The 1958 election and the failure of the Metro campaign have been analyzed by David A. Booth, *Metropolitics: The Nashville Consolidation* (East Lansing: Institute for Community Development and Services, Michigan State University, 1963); Daniel R. Grant, "Metropolitics and Professional Political Leadership: The Case of Nashville," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, May 1964, pp. 72-83; and Young, *Three City-County Consolidations*, p. 8.

¹⁵ Healy and Bancroft, "Three Mayors."

¹⁶ Patrick Healy and Raymond Bancroft, "Three Mayors Review Their Governments," *Nation's Cities*, November 1969, p. 26.

¹⁷ *A Future for Nashville*, A Report of the Community Services Commission for Davidson County and the City of Nashville, 1952, pp. 3-4, 13-5, 123-34, and 151-78, and Alan K. Campbell, ed., *The States and the Urban Crisis* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970), p. 69.

¹⁸ Young, "Three City-County Consolidations," p. 7, and Article XI, Section 9, *Tennessee Constitution*.

¹⁹ *Tennessee Public Acts of 1957*, Ch. 120.

of consolidation campaigned for and elected a state legislative delegation that was committed to the creation of a new charter commission. Such legislation was passed, subject to a favorable referendum, which was obtained in August 1961. In April 1962, the commission filed a charter that was not appreciably different from the one defeated in 1958. Nevertheless, it was approved in June by both city and county voters.²⁰ The second consolidation attempt was successful partly because of opposition to Nashville's annexation and tax measures. County residents wanted protection from annexation without services.

The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County is a strong mayor-council type. The mayor, who serves as the executive head, is elected for a four-year term and is authorized by the charter to appoint the heads of almost all important departments, boards, authorities, and commissions. He directs managerial operations, prepares a legislative program, submits an executive budget to the council, has an item veto over budgets, and is responsible for the functions and conduct of the executive and administrative officials.

The legislative body is a 41-member Metropolitan County Council, consisting of 35 district officials, 5 at-large councilmen, and a vice mayor, all elected for 4-year terms. Exercising broad legislative powers for the total area, the council enacts ordinances, reviews executive budgets, and oversees general administration. An Urban Council, composed of three members selected from among Metropolitan Council members, has the sole function of levying a property tax to finance urban services.

Some independently elected administrative officials were retained to comply with the requirements of the Tennessee Constitution. In addition to judges and officials whose duties are closely related to the court system, the other independently elected officials are the county trustee, the metropolitan tax assessor, and the sheriff. There is also a consolidated metropolitan school system with a nine-member board. The members are appointed for six-year staggered terms by the mayor, and they are subject to confirmation by a two-thirds council vote.

For the administration of services and for tax purposes, the county is divided into two districts. The entire area of Davidson-Nashville County is designated the General Services District (GSD), while the area of the city of Nashville as it existed prior to metropolitan government, including all annexed areas, is known as the Urban Services Districts (USD). Areas requiring urban services may be annexed into the USD only if such services can be provided within a year. All residents receive the same GSD services and are taxed at the same GSD rate. These include services ranging from police and courts, to urban renewal and planning.

²⁰ Brett Hawkins, *Nashville Metro* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1966), p. 151.

The residents of the USD pay the GSD tax plus a USD tax for the additional urban services of police and fire protection, water, sanitation, storm sewers, street lighting, street cleaning, and refuse collection. Six small independent municipalities outside the USD continue to zone their own areas and to maintain local streets.

Mayor Briley has claimed numerous substantive accomplishments for the new government, beginning with its very existence as a unified, responsive, and accessible structure, which eliminated intergovernmental conflict. Cooperative efforts on the part of numerous officials have ameliorated many potential problems. For example, the location of new sewer facilities was based on need and engineering feasibility, rather than on artificial political boundaries. Parklands for future recreational needs were purchased under a process whereby school, park, and street officials acted jointly to acquire land needed for coordinated development. Health, hospital, and welfare services have been improving in the old suburban area. The upgrading, integration, and consolidation of the school system have been considered top achievements of Metro. Finally, areas outside the city are served by branch libraries for the first time.²¹

The financial aspects of the new government are among its strongest features. Metropolitan Nashville is the only major Tennessee city that was able to stabilize its property taxes in the 1960s and early 1970s. Also, the consolidated bond structure of the metropolitan government has facilitated the identification and investment of surplus funds. The Tennessee Taxpayers Association estimates that the total savings to the taxpayers under consolidation will total \$18 million over a 10 year period.²²

The government still has a relatively long ballot, too large a council, and too little localized administration. It also has shown some insensitivity in race relations. In short, the new government has overcome most of the structural and service deficiencies of the predecessor governments, but it has been far less successful in providing a high quality social environment. It is not unique in this respect.

Jacksonville-Duval County

The problems that beset the citizens of Jacksonville and Duval county during the 1950s and 1960s comprise a virtual catalogue of all the woes of urban areas across the country. Because of a shrinking population and economic base, the city was stagnating. In 1950, Jacksonville had

²¹ Healy and Bancroft, "Three Mayors."

²² T. Scott Fillebrown, "The Nashville Story," *National Civic Review*, May 1969, p. 199.

a population of 204,517 and a budget of \$23.9 million. Fifteen years later, the city budget had quadrupled, while the population had dropped to 198,000.²³ Retail establishments were deserting the city and no new major industries were locating there. The area had ominous health and air pollution problems. There were serious water supply problems and city sewage was being dumped into the St. Johns River. Slums were spreading, traffic was clogged on inadequate streets, and the crime rate was spiraling. People in the suburbs were demanding that the county provide traditional water, sewer, street, fire protection, and garbage collection services. The structures of both city and county were so complicated that policy decisions were exceedingly time-consuming, if not impossible to obtain. The archaic governing arrangement included a five-member city commission and a nine-member city council, while Duval County had a five-member commission government. Finally, in 1964, the second annexation attempt by the city was approved by Jacksonville voters but rejected by Duval County residents.

In the face of such problems, the new president of the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce called a meeting of 23 prominent, but politically inconspicuous businessmen and lawyers who also believed that Jacksonville's government needed rejuvenation. They requested and received state legislative authority to form a Local Government Study Commission to investigate a new form of government for the metropolitan area of Jacksonville and Duval County. As the study commission began its deliberations, the local television station ran a series of highly publicized documentaries that revealed questionable activities of both city and county government officials. A 1966 grand jury investigation culminated in 104 separate indictments, and among those named were two of the five city commissioners, four of the nine city councilmen, the city auditor, the tax assessor, and the former recreation chief.²⁴ The last group of grand jury indictments coincided with the first public release of the Local Government Study Commission's report. Advocates of reform used these events to justify the need for change and to discredit potential opposition.

Entitled "Blueprint for Improvement," the official report of the Local Government Study Commission was released in 1967. The central recommendation of the report was to consolidate the city and county, abolishing all municipalities. The report was submitted to the state legislature. After more than two months of discussion and debate, during which proponents of the plan made substantial modifications, a charter was

²³ Richard Martin, *Consolidation: Jacksonville Duval County* (Jacksonville: Crawford Co., 1968), p. 39.

²⁴ Thomas A. Henderson and Walter A. Rosenbaum, "The Politics of City-County Consolidation," *New County Times*, August 8, 1972, p. 5.

drafted. A bill was passed calling for a referendum on the proposed consolidation.

The campaign that ensued was complex, involving political officials, citizens, local media, and most civic and professional organizations in the county. Disorganized and shifting opposition was voiced by city and county officials, government employees and some blacks. Aided by civic groups, all of the major daily newspapers and the radio and television stations, the Chamber of Commerce led the battle to secure voter approval. On August 8, 1967, the people of Duval County and Jacksonville voted overwhelmingly (64 percent) in favor of consolidation.²⁵

Even voters in four small municipalities containing a total of only 24,500 people voted in favor of consolidation, but chose to retain their municipal government rather than to become part of the consolidated government. The favorable vote created a consolidated government encompassing 841 square miles and a population of 507,200.²⁶

The consolidated government is a strong mayor-council form in which the mayor, limited to two four-year terms, is charged with administering the executive organization. He appoints all directors and deputy directors of departments, and all division chiefs, upon approval of the council. He also appoints a chief administrative officer to oversee staff functions. The mayor must submit an annual budget to the council, but has an item veto over appropriations. He also has the power to veto most council ordinances and resolutions, but may be overridden by two-thirds of the councilmen present. Eight executive departments report to him: finance, central services, health and welfare, public safety, recreation and public affairs, public works, agriculture, and child services.

Offices such as sheriff, supervisor of elections, tax assessor and tax collector remained elective. The 19-member council is composed of 14 members elected from districts and 5 elected at-large. Each has a four-year term. The council is responsible for reviewing budgets, making appropriations, and levying taxes on all real and personal property assessments.

As in the Nashville-Davidson County model, the consolidated area is divided into a general services district and an urban services district. The general services district encompasses the entire area of the county and provides services which are paid for by all county residents. The services include airports, child care, courts, fire and police protection, health, hospitals, libraries, recreation and parks, schools, streets and highways, and welfare programs.

Unlike Nashville-Davidson, which has only one urban services district,

²⁵ Martin, *Consolidation*, p. 224.

²⁶ Young, "Three City-County Consolidations," p. 22 and "Seminar in City-County Consolidation," *The American County*, p. 12.

Jacksonville-Duval has five. The first urban services district is the former city of Jacksonville, and the second, third, fourth, and fifth are defined as the preconsolidation corporate limits of the cities of Jacksonville Beach, Atlantic Beach, Neptune Beach, and Baldwin. Each of these cities retained their local governments to perform urban service district functions, including water supply, sanitary sewers, street lighting, street cleaning, and garbage and refuse collection. The general services district, in which the residents are also taxed, provides the other public services.

The council may expand the territorial limits of the first urban service district (Jacksonville) if particular areas require urban services. These services must be provided within a year after the area's inclusion. Should urban service districts desire consolidation, two-thirds of the council must approve an ordinance and the affected district must pass a referendum.

Although it is too early to evaluate conclusively the new government in Jacksonville, a limited number of tentative judgments can be made. There are already some impressive achievements, including: the initiation of a \$90 million water and sewer program to rebuild 133 miles of deteriorating sewers and to remove 72 outfalls that daily pour millions of gallons of raw sewage into the St. Johns River; the extension of full-time professional fire-fighting protection, which has resulted in reduced insurance rates; and the institution and enforcement of a model housing code, a model zoning code based on a county-wide land-use plan, and mechanical, plumbing, and electrical codes. Law enforcement has been extended and improved through the merger of city and county law offices and the establishment of one police communications center. The creation of a department of housing and urban development promoted the adoption of urban renewal enabling legislation. The development of a division of consumer affairs has fostered greater consumer protection.

Consolidation also has resulted in some intangible advantages. Foremost among these is the "rejuvenation" of community interest in local government, and better representation in the new government.²⁷ Services have been improved and more highly qualified professionals have been hired. For the first time in many years, a large industry has located in Jacksonville, a development that has been attributed to its more positive image.²⁸ Finally, officials of the new government are proud of its internal budget planning, internal audits, and generally improved fiscal management.

It is not clear yet how the black community will be affected by consolidation. It has been claimed that the creation of at-large seats

²⁷ Healy and Bancroft, "Three Mayors."

²⁸ Bollens and Schmandt, *The Metropolis*, p. 307.

on the council was an antiblack maneuver. At the same time, it was argued that whites favored district elections because blacks exercise the balance of power in at-large elections.²⁹

Melvin Mogulof has raised some questions about the Jacksonville changeover. He suspects that the consolidated government does not exert all its potential power and leverage over areawide and local agencies, which, to varying extents, are independent of the mayor and city council. He has accused Jacksonville of trying to "steer clear of conflict," of trying to conduct bargaining without an overall plan, and of failing to develop a central position in "conflicts over programs and the quality of the area's public life."³⁰ In spite of these questions, the citizens appear to support the new government. In 1969, a telephone opinion survey administered by a local television station found that about 79 percent of citizens rated the government favorably—an extraordinarily high rating.³¹

Indianapolis-Marion County

Indianapolis differed from Nashville and Jacksonville in that governmental change was not promoted by any serious economic crisis. The city was experiencing a building boom, the amount of taxable property was increasing and the inner city tax rates were decreasing. The citizens were enjoying a period of relative prosperity and low unemployment, although the city was facing the typical large city crime rate, traffic congestion, and service duplication problems.

There was also a need for more efficient and effective services in the metropolitan area. Marion County, once a wealthy agricultural area, was being transformed by new highways, housing subdivisions, small businesses, industries, and shopping centers. Increasing suburbanization required better mechanisms for controlling development. Some 58 separate governments in the area—including 20 towns, nine townships, 11 school districts, 14 special service districts and the county government—claimed a share of the taxpayer's dollars.³²

Lacking the powers of a responsible executive, the mayor served only as a ceremonial head. The county government had no single executive, but instead was run by two separate groups—a board of commissioners

²⁹ The old city government has a population 43 percent black, with 22 percent of the representation on the council (2 of 9); the consolidated government has 23 percent black within its boundaries and 26 percent representation on the council (5 of 19), according to Young, "Three City-County Consolidations," p. 24.

³⁰ Mogulof, *Five Metropolitan Governments*, pp. 89-91, 108.

³¹ "Seminar in City-County Consolidation," *American County*, p. 16.

³² R. Steven Hill and William P. Maxam, "UNIGOV: The First Year," *National Civic Review*, June 1971, p. 310.

and a county council. Three county commissioners had quite limited legislative power and general custody of county properties. The county council of five members had some control over the budget, but few other powers.³³ Special districts, over which elected officials had little control, intensified fragmentation of responsibility and undermined citizen control of government.

Mayor Richard G. Lugar, a young Republican businessman and the third Republican mayor of Indianapolis in 40 years, recognized that the local government was a divided and uncoordinated corporation. He wanted to insure public control and political responsiveness. He also wanted to increase Republican chances for election in this suburbanized county.

After his election in 1968, Lugar formed the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee Task Force on Improved Government Structure. This task force was composed of business and civic leaders, the president of the Marion County Council, the president of the Indianapolis City Council, and other local government executives. They held public hearings, considered various reorganization methods, and finally recommended city-county consolidation. Lugar and the Task Force decided upon a strategy of governmental reform through legislative action. This would avoid the necessity of securing a constitutional amendment, a lengthy and difficult process in Indiana.

Throughout 1968, Lugar and a large group of citizens, businessmen, lawyers, and the League of Women Voters worked on a bill that would provide powers for the proposed consolidated government. At the same time, Lugar used the state elections to gain support and to broaden his power base by vigorously campaigning for state Republican candidates, particularly state senators. After the election, he continued to "court" groups of legislators from outside Marion County, personally explaining the law to 91 of the 127 legislators.³⁴ With only two exceptions, the local legislative delegation supported the bill. It was passed and signed into law in 1969, and became effective in January 1972.

A strong partisan push appears to have been the most important factor in the consolidation of Indianapolis and Marion County Government, commonly known as UNIGOV. The Republicans simultaneously controlled the governorship, the state legislature, Marion County, and Indianapolis. They conducted a well-organized and unified campaign to push the consolidation bill through the General Assembly. Since many key Republican officeholders considered the bill good for the party, its party apparatus was utilized effectively to help secure the bill's pas-

³³ Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, "Regional Governance: Promise and Performance," *Substrate Regionalism and the Federal System*, vol. II (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973), p. 51.

³⁴ Healy and Bancroft, "Three Mayors."

sage.³⁵ Consolidation was described to the public as a method by which sound business techniques, such as functional consolidation and centralized decision-making, could be applied to make government more efficient and more responsive to its citizen stockholders.

The black community, according to Lugar, was sharply divided on the issue. A portion of those opposing the legislation had charged in federal court that it violated the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and was deliberately contrived to undermine the possibility of securing a black mayor. However, militant blacks supported the plan, because it would enable them to elect black officials in black districts, and thus to obtain leadership with grassroots support.

Certain governmental relationships were not changed by the new plan. The 11 area school systems remained entirely independent. Three incorporated municipalities (Beech Grove, Speedway, and Lawrence) with populations between 10,000 and 15,000, voted not to become part of the new incorporated government. Even the seven county officers provided for in the Indiana State Constitution were retained.

Day to day administration of UNIGOV, with 402 square miles and almost 800,000 inhabitants, became the responsibility of a mayor, elected at-large for 4 years and restricted to serving no more than 2 consecutive terms. The mayor was given the power of line-item veto of budget ordinances, which could be overridden by a two thirds vote of the entire council. His "cabinet" is composed of six departments: Administration, Metropolitan Development, Public Safety, Public Works, Transportation, and Parks and Recreation. The mayor appoints department directors, subject to council approval. A departmental board, composed of the director, two mayoral and two council appointees, govern the four latter departments. Three new departments replaced eight of the formerly independent, single-function, special districts. Five old special districts remained in operation, but the new government gained budgetary control over them.

The UNIGOV Council is comprised of 29 members, 25 elected from single-member districts, each containing about 30,000 residents and four elected at large. As the primary legislative body, the council is empowered to pass ordinances concerning all affairs of the consolidated government. It has the exclusive power to adopt budgets, levy general or special taxes, and make appropriations.³⁶

Agencies that operate independently of UNIGOV include the Indianapolis Airport Authority, the Health and Hospital Authority, the County Department of Welfare, the County Home Board, the Building Authority, the Capital Improvements Board, the County Library Board, and

³⁵ George L. Willis, "Indiana's UNIGOV Is a Consolidation Model of Reorganized Urban County Government," *County News*, June 16, 1972, p. 14.

³⁶ Hill and Maxam, "UNIGOV," p. 312.

the school system. The towns, townships, and existing sewer districts retain legislative powers relative to their territorial jurisdictions. However, they may not issue general obligation bonds or pass ordinances that conflict with or permit lower standards than those of the consolidated council.

Two types of special districts were authorized: a special service district and a special taxing district. The special service district includes only part of UNIGOV. It is a separate corporate body created to provide property owners with special urban services. It is governed by a council composed of City Council members elected from those districts encompassing any part of the special service district. This body may adopt ordinances, approve a budget, make appropriations, and levy taxes for its district.

Property owners in the special taxing district obligate themselves to pay for construction and maintenance of local public improvements. The council must adopt a budget for, and give prior approval to, a bond issue in this district, even if the district boundaries exceed those of the consolidated government.

UNIGOV does not have the power to annex territory beyond its limits, but included towns may annex territory which was unincorporated prior to consolidation. An excluded town and the consolidated government may exchange jurisdiction over territory upon petition of 51 percent of property owners in the affected area and the approval of the governing bodies.

It is much too early to appraise the impact of this new government. Proponents claim that it has enabled the mayor to coordinate and direct operations more effectively, supplied more political leadership for area-wide problems, afforded greater control over short- and long-range development, and provided the city and the suburbs with a common forum for discussing and resolving differences. Opponents point out that, compared with Nashville and Jacksonville, the consolidated government of Indianapolis-Marion County did not drastically alter the governmental structure. They claim that its most decisive effect was to bolster Republican control over what was once a Democratic city. If this assessment is accurate, perhaps enlightened state politics may yet lay the groundwork for more effective government.

MUNICIPAL CONSOLIDATION: TORONTO

The Metropolitan Toronto Federation must be examined in two phases. The first began in 1954 with the formation of an urban federated municipality, unique in North America. This period ended on January 1, 1967, when the Ontario legislature reconstituted the Metropolitan Toronto government.

The legislatively imposed two-tier government, which became operational in 1954, had jurisdiction over 241 square miles and over two million people. The Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto (Metro) was to exercise areawide powers over metropolitan scale functions, while continuing to grant control over purely local functions to Toronto and the other 12 municipalities.³⁷

The Metro Council, the areawide governing body, consisted of 24 indirectly elected members—12 from the city and 12 from the suburbs—each serving two-year terms. Council seats were filled by those holding elective office in the municipalities. The suburban delegation included the mayor of each of the 12 municipalities. Toronto's delegation also included the mayor, so that the area's primary decision makers were personally involved.³⁸

The council annually elects from within or without its membership a chairman who presides over the council meetings. Frederick Gardiner was appointed to his first term and was reelected annually until 1961. As a presiding officer, the chairman may vote only in the case of a tie.

In apportioning functions between the two levels of government, powers over certain local matters, including police, fire, public health, libraries, and licensing, were left as much as possible to the municipalities. Powers over other functions, such as property assessment, construction and maintenance of expressways, and the development of regional parks, were retained exclusively by metropolitan government. Provision of almost every metropolitan service—including water supply, sewage disposal, parks, roads, and traffic control—was based on shared responsibility between Metro and the municipalities.

Metro became a wholesaler for some functions. For example, it constructed and maintained water mains, pumping stations, and treatment plants. Metro also sold water to municipalities, which maintained their own local distribution system and locally determined prices. In other areas, Metro acted as a financial supervisor in the sharing of areawide programs. For instance, Metro and an independent metropolitan school board issued bonds and determined the amount of funds to be spent, while locally elected school boards operated the schools and levied local taxes for supplemental operating funds. The division of responsibility in some functions was based upon definite areawide need. For example, Metro assumed responsibility for the building and maintenance of arterial highways and for developing and maintaining large metropolitan parks, while the municipalities were responsible for local streets and parks. Metro was empowered to appoint the members of the Toronto

³⁷ Committee for Economic Development, *Reshaping Government in Metropolitan Areas* (New York: Committee for Economic Development, 1970), p. 70.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 73-74.

Transit Commission, the exclusive supplier of public transportation in the area. It was also authorized to undertake public housing and redevelopment projects and to adopt an area-wide general plan.

The operation of the metro system is based on the pooling of financial resources through metropolitan assessment and taxation. Metro annually levies its requirements for funds on the basis of each municipality's share of the total area assessment. Since Metro has power to collect taxes directly, the metropolitan and school board taxes are included in the local tax bill collected by each municipality. Since local municipalities were not granted the power to borrow money directly, they must submit their requirements for financing to the Metro Council. Each year, the council determines the total amount of money to be borrowed for local purposes and the proportion to be allocated to each municipality.

In 1957, the metropolitan government widened its jurisdiction to include programs not covered in the original legislation. The 13 area police forces were amalgamated into 1 metropolitan force, which was organized into five districts and which covers the entire metropolitan area without regard for local boundaries. The Metropolitan Licensing Commission was created in the same year to establish areawide standards, regulations and fees for various services and trades that each community previously had licensed separately.³⁹

During the first ten years, efforts of the metropolitan government concentrated primarily on expanding the physical services required to sustain a huge growth in population and in industrial and commercial development. Metro considerably improved the area's water and sewer conditions and produced a balanced transportation system. It financed an extensive road and expressway network and an effective public transit facility. A 5,500 acre regional park system was created, and more than 235,000 new pupil spaces were provided in the schools of the city and the suburban municipalities. However, fiscal disparities continued to exist between the municipalities, and a growing concern was expressed regarding representation on the council. Each of the suburban municipalities had only one seat, although they varied greatly in terms of population—from 360,000 persons in North York to 10,000 in Weston.⁴⁰

In 1963, the Prime Minister of Ontario appointed H. Carl Goldenberg as a one-man Royal Commission on Metropolitan Toronto. He was charged with providing an independent evaluation of all aspects of the metropolitan federation. The Royal Commissioner issued the findings of his inquiry in 1965, 12 years after Metro's establishment. He recommended that the two-tiered federated system of metropolitan government

be continued, that the constituent municipalities be consolidated into four cities, that the metropolitan school system be reorganized and that the Metropolitan corporation assume many new responsibilities and powers.

The Metropolitan Toronto Amendment Act of 1966 (Bill 81) became effective in 1967 and incorporated many of the Royal Commission recommendations. The area was reorganized from 13 municipalities to 6, with the following population distribution:

City of Toronto (Toronto, Forest Hill, Swansea)	720,000
Borough of York (York and Weston)	150,000
Borough of East York (East York and Leaside)	105,000
Borough of Etobicoke (Etobicoke, Long Branch, Mimico, New Toronto)	290,000
Borough of North York (North York)	475,000
Borough of Scarborough (Scarborough)	310,000

The Metropolitan Council was enlarged to 33 members including a chairman, elected on a representative basis. East York was given 2 members on the Council; York, 3; Etobicoke, 4; Scarborough, 5; North York, 6; and Toronto, 12. Significantly, the new formula gave the suburbs more votes than the central city. The term of office for these elected officials was extended from two to three years.⁴¹

The most important functional alterations were in education. The basic function of the Metropolitan School Board was expanded to include providing local boards, through a metropolitanwide levy, with funds necessary for a basic metropolitanwide education program. Thus, the previous disparities in educational financing were eliminated. The school board also was reorganized to give the suburbs greater representation.

The other significant functional transfer was in public welfare, which became the sole responsibility of Metro. This change provided a uniform level of service in all parts of the area. Other new responsibilities assumed by Metro included the administration of waste disposal, the establishment of metropolitanwide public ambulance service, the financing of regional libraries, and the authority to participate in urban renewal in conjunction with the area municipalities.

Since its inception in 1954, Metropolitan Toronto has been subjected to considerable analysis and evaluation. Admirers point to a long list of achievements that have resulted from the reorganized government. The highly critical need for water supply and sewage disposal has been addressed through construction of new treatment plants and pumping stations, and the installation of miles of water and sewer mains. Metro established an advanced transportation system, consisting of expressways, arterial highways, and a showpiece rapid transit facility. Improved

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

and unified law enforcement has reduced the crime rate and contributed to a more rapid disposition of cases. The construction of new public housing and homes for the aged, and improved library service and civil defense, are also considered achievements.

In the area of finances, Daniel Grant concludes that the new government did not produce an overall reduction of expenditures, partially because it contributed to a "costly revolution of rising expectations."⁴² However, through the pooling of financial resources, it did provide for expansion of services and produced dramatic savings in capital financing. Metro's handling of all capital financing has resulted in tremendous savings in interest costs on bonds, estimated to exceed over \$50 million in ten years. Metro Toronto has a "AAA" credit rating in Canada and an "AA" rating in New York City, the highest classification a foreign corporation can receive in the United States.⁴³ It is commonly agreed that one of Metro's most significant powers is its control over the sale of bonds by municipalities and areawide agencies. However, Melvin Mogulof has charged that the centralized bonding process has allocated approvals to communities on the basis of population rather than on the basis of project merit. This practice may have resulted in the authorization of some marginal projects.⁴⁴

Planning is another functional area that has been subject to criticism. Frank Smallwood and Melvin Mogulof note that there is still no official plan and that it is hard to discern how much decision making is influenced by the "unofficial" plan. They also contend that Metro's planning is "bottom up"; that is, it legitimizes local planning without attempting to apply metropolitan criteria. Mogulof argues that attempts at a "rational" division of functions have resulted in persistent duplication. Further, he sees the system drifting toward an accretion of functions and authority by the central government. Lyle Fitch is critical of the insufficient consolidation of functions and the parochial nature of the bargaining process in the council.⁴⁵

Despite these problems and the continuing issue of tax equity, Metro Toronto has a substantial record of achievement. It generally has accomplished its goals. Clearly, it has demonstrated that it is a more effective government for certain functions than the smaller local governments that make up its first tier.

⁴² Daniel Grant, "Metros Three Faces," *National Civic Review*, June 1966, p. 318.

⁴³ Frank Smallwood, *Metro Toronto: A Decade Later* (Toronto: Bureau of Municipal Research, 1963), p. 12.

⁴⁴ Mogulof, *Five Metropolitan Governments*, pp. 50-52.

⁴⁵ Smallwood, *Metro Toronto*; Mogulof, *Five Metropolitan Governments*, pp. 50-52; and Lyle Fitch, ed., *Partnership for Progress* (New York: Institute for Public Administrators, 1970), pp. 71-74.

THE VIRGINIA APPROACH

Distinct from, but often confused with, city-county consolidation is another form of metropolitan area adjustment, city-county separation. Under city-county separation, a municipality is detached from the county, sometimes with an enlargement of its boundaries. Within its boundaries, the new government usually exercises both municipal and county functions.

During the last half of the 19th century, city-county separation was employed to reorganize local governments in four major metropolitan areas: Baltimore, Denver, St. Louis, and San Francisco. There has been little recent interest in this device, except in the state of Virginia, where city-county separation exists on a state-wide basis. Virginia's approach has evolved through custom rather than by explicit constitutional or statutory provision. When a town's population reaches 5,000, it may become a city and thereafter exercise all city and county functions.⁴⁶

In 1967 the Virginia Metropolitan Areas Study Commission recommended the continuation of this system. Since, with the exception of Roanoke, all of Virginia's metropolitan areas (Washington suburbs, Norfolk, Richmond) contain more than two counties or cities, areawide county government would not be promoted by eliminating the process. Further, the commission stated that any slight advantage gained by abandonment of the present process would be offset by the confusion and the cost of overlapping levels of government, and the duplication of services that characterize local government in other states.

Although Virginia municipalities are not given additional territory when they separate from their counties, they can add territory from the counties that surround them by utilizing another uniquely Virginian procedure. In 1904, the Virginia legislature provided for a judicial panel to accept or reject annexation and consolidation proposals. When a city wishes to extend its boundaries, the case is reviewed by the panel as a civil suit. By this procedure, the issue is removed from purely political settlement.

The Virginia Code states that the statutory standard is "the necessity for and the expediency of annexation."⁴⁷ The judicial panels have been guided by the belief that cities should govern urban areas and that counties should govern rural areas. They examine the population and area of a city, the need for additional territory, the need for urban services, the existence of a community of interest, and the benefits to the remainder of the county.

Though the Virginia procedure has been acclaimed widely, some have

⁴⁶ Virginia Metropolitan Areas Study Commission, *Governing the Virginia Metropolitan Areas: An Assessment*, May 1967, p. 14.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

argued that circuit court judges are not suitably qualified to decide annexation questions. Further, the review body does not have jurisdiction over proposed incorporations, clearly a related power. On the whole, however, the system has been very successful.

Lately, however, with the increasingly rapid development of Virginia's urban areas, annexation has become less effective in resolving the metropolitan problems. Under current guidelines, financial reimbursements to counties for annexed territory often are too high for the cities to pay, undermining the entire process. Also, the high level of services provided by some of the metropolitan counties weakens a city's argument that it can best provide urban services for the area.

Because of increasing concern with the devices of city-county separation and annexation, more attention currently is being focused on city-county consolidation in Virginia. The statutory procedure for consolidation is basically a simple one and presents no legal barrier to merger. Either the governing bodies or the voters may initiate the process, but it must be approved by majority referendum vote in each affected jurisdiction. The statutes simply outline the procedures and allow the participants substantial leeway in resolving differences.⁴⁸ The question of consolidation is largely a political matter, in contrast to the quasi-judicial procedure used for annexation.

Virginia's record of consolidations has been remarkable; six have occurred in this century. The first Virginia consolidations were the merger of the cities of Richmond and Manchester, under a 1910 special act, and the merger of the towns of Waynesboro and Basic City in 1923, under a 1920 general law. Between 1952 and 1963, the greater Norfolk area had four city-county consolidations involving three counties, five cities, and one town. In 1952, the voters of the city of Hampton, the town of Phoebus, and the county of Elizabeth City approved consolidation as the city of Hampton. The county had been faced with the threat of repeated annexation. Evidently, the voters decided to join the city rather than face a succession of annexation suits. In 1958, the cities of Warwick and Newport News became the city of Newport News; in 1962, the city of Virginia Beach and Princess Anne County approved consolidation as the city of Virginia Beach; and in 1963, South Norfolk City and Norfolk County became the city of Chesapeake. As in Hampton's case, the two largest mergers produced completely consolidated cities and the fear of annexation played an important role in influencing voters.

Since all of these consolidations occurred in the Norfolk region, there are now seven contiguous major governments operating there. As of 1970, they had a combined population of a million residents, and were

beginning to engage in some interesting regional activities. Cooperation between the new consolidated cities of Newport News and Hampton has resulted in areawide approaches to meeting common needs. They are part of area districts to provide sewerage service, water supply, vocational education, and a regional airport. The two cities also operate a stadium and are members of regional housing and port authorities. Such cooperative actions suggest the wide range of untapped possibilities for solutions to common problems.

Further, the old major central cities—Norfolk and Portsmouth—no longer are able to dictate metropolitan policies and decisions. The two city-counties with the largest suburban populations and the greatest potential for future growth—Chesapeake and Virginia Beach—are exerting influence. Hampton and Newport News are now in a stronger position and the new city of Suffolk is likely to grow at a rapid rate and to participate in regional activities.

SUMMARY

City-county consolidations and federated systems, containing local and metropolitan tiers, can provide more flexible mechanisms for delivering services, adapting to growth, and coordinating areawide planning. Such metropolitan governments are alternatives to the kinds of intergovernmental cooperation described in Chapter 9. Decisionmaking becomes more centralized when an elected body is responsible for the entire area. However, there can be no assurance that these reorganizations *will* result in an improved quality of life for the citizens. It depends upon the manner in which government is implemented, the extent to which citizens participate, and the quality of the leadership.

Almost all of the models of these three governmental adaptations, each of which is potentially applicable to urban areas with significant suburban populations, have established special or urban service districts that provide more extensive services to more densely populated areas. In a sense, these systems provide for multipurpose special districts as an intricate part of the metropolitan government. They can be substituted not only for municipalities, which can extend their borders to cover the total urbanized area, but also for special districts already operating in the metropolitan area. Because the extra services are limited to specific areas, it is possible to fund the services by extra property taxes or user charges limited to the areas receiving the benefits.

Since suburbs generally are included in the special service areas, they are treated as urban areas. Thus, from a governmental standpoint, metropolitan governments such as Toronto and Nashville abolish the distinction between central cities and suburbs. However, in the federated systems such as Dade County, and consolidations, such as Jacksonville

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 31-32.

and Indianapolis, suburbs have been able to retain their identity as suburban jurisdictions. These plans, therefore, can combine some of the best features of *both* the urban and suburban systems, an attractive alternative to the traditional central city-suburban relationships.

Due to their larger size, metropolitan governments can develop and implement metropolitan plans in functional areas such as transportation, air and water pollution control, regional public facilities, solid waste disposal, water supply, and law enforcement. However, as indicated in Chapter 6, there is no guarantee that larger units will be more effective simply because they are larger.