



## League of Women Voters of Minnesota Records

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## INTRODUCTION

It is the intent of this study to point out the ways in which principles of administration can be applied to a civic organization of volunteer workers. In general, it might be said that administrative techniques can be utilized in the same way that they are in private enterprise or government. However, the principal subject of concern in this paper is to show what are the necessary adaptations with regard to a volunteer situation.

The Minnesota League of Women Voters was chosen as the subject of research for two reasons: (1) the author's familiarity with the organization as a former paid staff worker and current member; and (2) the League has a high degree of formalized structure within the organization and, therefore, lends itself to administrative analysis. The underlying motivation might be stated as an appreciation by this writer of the necessary, indeed imperative, work that the League is doing to encourage citizenship responsibility. The peculiar nature of our times renders this objective a vital one if democracy is to be successful in the struggle against communism. Certainly, every definition of democracy includes a recognition that participation by individuals in policy formulation and decision is a major element of the democratic process. The purpose of the League of Women Voters might thus be stated, "to encourage the development of practitioners in the precepts of democracy."



If the experience of one state League will aid not only the Minnesota and other Leagues but also civic improvement groups generally to become more effective, then perhaps this effort will be justified. If it can be said that one of the strengths of our democracy has been the willingness of Americans to join together in voluntary association to accomplish a given objective, it may also be said that one of the necessary concomitants of organizations, i.e., administration, has all too frequently been neither efficient nor economical and hindered rather than facilitated the achievement of the stated goals. We know that a policy, no matter how ideal on paper or in mind, is of little value if it cannot be put into effect. So, once again, it is the purpose here to show the "how" of a voluntary organization, and to ascertain if there are any administrative characteristics peculiar to the operation of civic improvement groups.

## CHAPTER I

### HISTORY

It is necessary in setting the scene for an administrative evaluation to describe in brief the over-all development of the League and its current frame of reference. To understand the organization of today, an appraisal of the factors which have gone into its making is here presented.

Evolution of the League from the National American Woman Suffrage Association. -- The League of Women Voters grew out of the suffrage movement. With the victorious achievement of this objective assured, Carrie Chapman Catt speaking before the National American Woman Suffrage Association, proposed "a league of women voters to finish the fight and aid in the reconstruction of the nation." The fight to which she referred was the almost-won struggle for national woman suffrage. The reconstruction of the nation referred to democracy's need in a critical post-war period.<sup>1</sup> Another League member has said that the proper function of this new organization was to "Let the people know, make the people care, help the people act."<sup>2</sup> How to implement these objective was conceived in terms of

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1 Kathryn H. Stone, 25 Years of a Great Idea. (Washington D.C.: League of Women Voters, February, 1946), p. 5.

2 Address by Anna Lord Strauss, President, League of Women Voters 19th National Convention, Atlantic City, New Jersey, April 24, 1950, quoting Mrs. Dyke, p. 2. (Miscographed)

three specific steps. First, to educate themselves, the twenty million new voters. Second, to work for "needed legislation". Third, to awaken the electorate and arouse many citizens to participate in government.<sup>3</sup>

This new League was in the advantageous position of possessing the basic organizational structure as an inheritance from the Suffrage Association. Within a year, the conversion had taken place in all but two of the states. The state Leagues were the keystone of the League structure and charged with the development of local Leagues. The similarity in the League structure and that of the federal government made the League itself an instructor in understanding our form of government.<sup>4</sup>

The major emphasis in the first instance was to increase the size of the vote. At the time of the conclusion of World War I, it was felt that since less than half the electorate voted in the majority of elections, that in itself was proof of democracy's failure. Thus it was that the League undertook to "get out the vote". The vote, however, was not materially increased. In the words of Marguerite M. Wells, President of the League of Women Voters, 1934-1944:

Thus the League made a discovery. It learned that the slacker vote was not disease but symptom. The disease was more obscure. It lay deep in American political life, its traditions

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3 Stone, op. cit., p. 6.

4 Ibid., p. 7.



and habits, even in the organization of its governmental system. There existed no sovereign magic cure such as an increased vote. The League never again tried to find one. It began to recognize that American people needed to be acquainted with political affairs, to learn their dependence on them and how to deal with them effectively. The League concluded that the measures already undertaken for support were as good as any for its purpose and that in fact the League itself was thus getting out the vote all the year round. So within the first few years of its existence the League found itself committed to no less purpose than to help make democratic government in the United States a success.

This has, with certain variations in means of implementation, remained the emphasis of the League to the present day. Also, it should be pointed out that even though the League is aware that a large turnout on election day is not a panacea for the ills of democracy, the League has expanded its voters' service work beyond the original "get out the vote" campaigns. Information about voting -- use of the ballot and voting machines, candidates' questionnaires and candidates' meetings, broadsides explaining amendments -- all of these techniques and many more have been developed by the League. So successful have they been and so universally regarded as such that many organizations perform many of these same functions at election time. In many respects, the voters service work remains the heart of the League. Certainly, it is best known for these contributions, and the League's best press coverage occurs at elec-

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5 Marguerite M. Wells, A Portrait of the League of Women Voters (Washington, D. C.: League of Women Voters, March, 1940), p. 7.

tion time. Also, this work results in financial support from individuals in the community.

To return to the historical perspective -- a conflict in League purpose developed out of the original organization. The conflict was reflected in a statement made by Mrs. Maud Ward Park, President of the League of Women Voters, 1920-1924, at the League convention in 1923, ". . . I hope for the future of the League of Women Voters -- not that it will become a body of expert persons who do remarkable things brilliantly -- but that it will continue to be in fact what one of our wisest members called it, 'an every woman organization', and our future is assured so long as we hold to that fundamental purpose." This particular problem confronted the organization because of the way in which its structure had developed. The departments and committees tended to lead to an expertness and legislative success which overshadowed the development of a great body of citizens with a broad knowledge needed to make decisions on the variety of issues which arise day by day. Special interests were built up and the League's effectiveness in carrying out its broader purpose was limited.<sup>6</sup> Without going into the program activities, it might be well to list the departments to suggest the directions of this "expertness". They were entitled, "Efficiency in Government", "Education," "Child Welfare", "Economic Welfare", "Legal Status of Women" and "International Cooperation".

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<sup>6</sup> Stone, op. cit., p. 12.



Current emphasis. -- Throughout the early years, nevertheless, the League was conscious of the desire to be more than a small, qualitative experiment in adult education, but to extend its methods throughout the entire electorate.<sup>7</sup> However, it was not until 1934 that the process of breaking up the departmental structure was begun. It had become apparent that this system of compartmentalization had prevented the League from proceeding towards its commitment to make a success of democracy. The initial step was to select as an all out campaign the adoption of the merit system by government. As a concomitant, steps were taken to achieve a more adequate means of financing the activities of the league and to reduce the scope of the program.<sup>8</sup> In the words of Kathryn Stone, "If the League was to help democracy succeed by increasing intelligent citizen participation in government, it must choose a restricted program which was suitable to widespread member participation and have enough time and energy to take such a program to greater numbers."<sup>9</sup>

The shock action which provoked these trends into actual practice was World War II. It was then that the League began its real concentration on the citizen -- to attempt to reach the vast army of citizenry to remind them of their importance in democracy and alert them for action.<sup>10</sup> The convention of 1944 abolished the de-

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 23-4.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 25.



partmental structure and the new emphasis on person-to-person method was authorized. The relationship was changed to a direct national-to-local League relationship from the previous practice of channeling communications through the state office. The small discussion group was initiated as the basis for League thought and action. The philosophy of the League presently rests on the premise that, "... each individual possesses his own complement of reason and experience which he is obliged in a democracy to use in the common good; that no one can assume this responsibility for him, that he must be free to make his own choices; and that upon the wisdom of the individual's choices in a democracy hangs our collective fate."<sup>11</sup>

With this general perspective, let us turn now to a consideration of the present character of the League and the nature of its operations.

Present organization. -- The purpose of the League is to "promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government".<sup>12</sup> There are over 100,000 members in 764 Leagues in 43 states, the territories of Alaska and Hawaii, and the District of Columbia. The budget of the national League is \$176,162.00, and together all the Leagues in the country spent three-quarters of a million dollars in 1950. Many persons familiar with its influence express surprise that the League is as

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>12</sup> By-Laws of the League of Women Voters of the United States, As adopted May 1, 1946, and As Amended April 30, 1948, and April 24, 1950, (Washington, D. C.: League of Women Voters of the United States, 1950), p. 1.

small as it is, and, even then, the membership represents an increase of 100% in the seven years between 1944 and 1950. The organization of the League is on three levels with the national League, state Leagues, and local Leagues; and, as in our democracy where the individual is the government, so the member is the League. The idea is strengthened by the program making process which provides the League with the reputation of a pressure group in the public interest. It is important in understanding the operation of the League that this process be described. Although the national program is taken as the example, the same words could be applied to program-making in state and local Leagues with a difference only in the intervals of time.

Program making process.— Six months prior to the national convention, a letter from the President goes to all state and local Leagues requesting suggestions for the current agenda and platform items for the coming two years. The program of the League on all levels is divided into the current agenda which consists of items of major emphasis and the platform which contains items previously on the current agenda and which have been placed on the platform for sustained attention. The national League may select measures for action from the platform if an opportunity arises to do work on a measure which is in conformity with the platform.<sup>13</sup> The recommendations from Leagues all over the country are received and made into

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<sup>13</sup> League of Women Voters of the United States, National Program, 1950-52 (as adopted by the National Convention, Atlantic City, New Jersey, April 24-28, 1950), (Washington, D. C.: League of Women Voters of the United States, June, 1950), p. 4.



a proposed national program which is once again circulated. Additional suggestions and comments are incorporated into a revised proposal which is then presented to the delegates at the convention. Final decisions are made by majority vote, and any items suggested by the leagues but not recommended by the national board may be considered and adopted by the Convention by a two-thirds vote. At the council meetings which take place in alternate years of the convention, modifications and recommendations for emphasis are made.

Even such a brief description would seem to make it clear that the member, in fact, does make the program. To be sure, some members fail to respond as some people fail to vote, but the League is diligent in its efforts to secure membership participation in this activity.

The program is important not as an end in itself, but because it serves as the tool to carry out the purpose of the League. Because of this, League members choose only a few governmental questions which are of public concern. Limiting the program allows for thorough membership consideration; it means that the League really speaks for its members and can be effective by concentrating its efforts.<sup>14</sup> In this regard, the subjects must be suited to learning how to get at facts, how to discuss them with a true cross-section of the community, how to arrive at decision in the public interest, and then how to bring about the desired result.<sup>15</sup> Action in the

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<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>15</sup> Address by Anna Lord Strauss, President, League of Women Voters, 19th National Convention, Atlantic City, New Jersey, April 24, 1950, p. 3. (Minicographed)



League consists of three phases: (1) providing information; (2) building public opinion; and (3) supporting legislation.

Non-partisanship. -- The League is noted as a non-partisan organization. Probably the most eloquent testimony to this can be stated in the words of a recent editorial:

It isn't easy to walk a chalk line of non-partisan, objective participation in public affairs. But it must be reassuring to the League, as it counts its hecklers, that they come from both the left and the right.<sup>16</sup>

Of course, League members can and do disagree with some of the positions arrived at by a majority of the membership. Those in disagreement may act according to their beliefs outside the League. The League maintains its non-partisanship in that it never supports or opposes political parties or candidates. League members, however, are encouraged to be active in the party of their choice.<sup>17</sup> There is a growing expression of belief among League leadership that the role of the League should be one of training for active political participation. This recognition derives from the conviction that right decisions are dependent on the kind of men and women who are elected to public office. Anna Lord Strauss has said:

The League of Women Voters is not an end in itself. It is a marvelous training ground. We awaken the apathetic, combine the few

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<sup>16</sup> Minneapolis Tribune, October 19, 1950.

<sup>17</sup> National Program, 1950-1952, op. cit., p. 3.

minutes here and there of many people and are the constructive expression of otherwise uneasy consciences. . . . Let's use our intelligence and experience to help many others to recognize that with freedom go responsibilities. Let us so improve the political climate that many more candidates with the potentialities to be statesmen will enter and remain in the arena to serve their fellowmen and their country. And in doing so let us remember that there is no more rewarding work than to develop that form of government which gives the utmost freedom of opportunity to all of the citizens.<sup>18</sup>

The League guards its non-partisanship in its effort to secure and maintain two-party membership representation in each local League. It has also developed certain specific policies as safeguards; League officers and Board members do not hold prominent party positions; Leagues may be and have been disaffiliated for partisan activity.<sup>19</sup>

Membership. -- Membership in the League is open to all women citizens of voting age. The dues are kept purposefully low so as not to prevent anyone from joining because of economic reasons. It has always been the aim of the League to achieve a real cross section in its membership -- with persons of all social and economic groups and with a diversity of political opinion. In some communities, this has been realized to a greater degree than in others. But it is a yardstick that the League holds constantly before itself.

Program action. -- In summation, then, a brief outline is pre-

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<sup>18</sup> Address by Anna Lord Strauss, op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>19</sup> Facts about the League of Women Voters, 1920-1950, (Washington, D. C.: League of Women Voters, September, 1949), p. 3.



sented of the measures which Leagues have supported generally in their twenty years of existence:<sup>20</sup>

Social welfare measures, including child welfare, benefits for women in industry were prominent early objectives.

TVA as a "Yardstick," pure food and drug laws, disarmament measures, World Court and reciprocal trade had League support.

Merit system for government at all levels has been a constant League interest.

Modern city charters and state constitutions have often grown out of League initiative.

Good public schools are always high on the list of League interests.

Civilian control of atomic energy, the United Nations, and world economic recovery have been major post-war goals.

Any attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of this organization in terms of the degree of achievement in its stated objectives has no place here.

However, this brief description of the League of yesterday and today, something of its philosophy, and its role in our society have been set forth to provide a background for the subsequent chapters.

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 9.



## CHAPTER II

### ORGANIZATION

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota derives its authority from its By-Laws as do all Leagues, national, state and local. The Minnesota By-Laws were revised in 1947 in accordance with the shift in emphasis of the 1946 national convention to make the League an organization with the individual member as the focal point for all activities. Outlined in the By-Laws are provisions concerning purpose and policy, membership, local Leagues, officers, board of directors, finance, convention, nominations and elections, program, national convention and council, parliamentary authority and amendments.

Functions of a state League. -- In general it might be said that state Leagues are charged with the following responsibilities:

1. Service to existing Leagues.
2. Organization of new Leagues.
3. Long range cultivation which might eventually lead to new organization, such as members-at-large, newspaper cultivation, publications to schools and colleges, etc.
4. Supervision of college Leagues.<sup>21</sup>

These responsibilities are spelled out in the By-Laws of the League of Women Voters of the United States in Article V, Section 4.

In this regard, growth standards for state Leagues are as

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<sup>21</sup> League of Women Voters of the United States, Report of Organization Conference (Chicago, Illinois: June 27, 28, 29, 1950), p. 1. (Micrographed)

follows:

A state League:

1. Shall show growth in extent of state coverage by an increasing number of local Leagues so placed as to be politically effective.
2. Shall show increased effectiveness in assisting its established local Leagues to use more efficient organization patterns; it shall see that new leagues are established with efficient organization patterns.
3. Shall show increasing effective leadership in assisting its local Leagues in planning for member participation in state and national program making and in carrying out the local, state and national program.
4. Shall show increasingly effective leadership in assisting its local Leagues to support the work of the League as a whole through League approved fund raising methods.

Responsibilities of the national League to state and local

Leagues. -- The state League receives a great many tools from the national League to help bring about these desired results. A few examples would include the Local Leaders Handbook, a manual on organization; Tips on Reaching the Public, a guide in public relations; How to Raise Money for the League of Women Voters, hints on finance operations; and The Election Handbook, techniques to be used in voters service work.

The national League maintains a staff whose job it is to advise state and local Leagues on their activities and help in the preparation of materials. All of the materials on national program items



come from the national League and may be supplemented by state League materials on the same item. The pamphlets and memoranda are concerned not only with subject matter but also with suggestions for their use. Techniques in carrying the League program not only to the membership but to the community as well comprise a large part of Leagues' responsibilities.

The national League, then, has certain responsibilities to state and local Leagues in terms of providing both program and non-program materials and aiding in the improvement of League performance. Staff and national board members travel extensively to impart the knowledge that has come from the experiences of many Leagues to a specific difficulty or set of problems. To tell the story of the League is a major task of the national League as it is of all Leagues. What is important here is that League performance justifies telling about. The establishment and maintenance of high standards in all facets of League work is, of course, an essential part of the operations of the national League. The arranging of the national convention and national council meeting is a national League responsibility. All of these operations come under the aegis of the national League.

Relationship of the national League to state and local Leagues.--

Certain relationships of the Minnesota League to the national league are spelled out in the By-Laws. Part of the article on policy stipulates, "The League may take action on state governmental measures and policies in the public interest in conformity with the platform



of the League of Women Voters of the United States."<sup>22</sup> This means that when a state or local League adopts a program, the specific items must, at least in general terms, reflect the present or past work of the League nationally. This imposes no severe limitation since the platform contains rather broad subject matter outlines.

The section on membership stipulates, "The League of Women Voters of Minnesota shall be composed of the local Leagues, which have been recognized by the League of Women Voters of the United States. . . ."<sup>23</sup> This is implemented through certain requirements which a League must meet before being recognized as such. For example, a League about-to-be (shall):

Have a paid-up membership of at least fifteen.

Adhere to the policy of non-partisanship of the League of Women Voters in the United States.

Shall adopt By-Laws which enable it to promote the purpose of the League of Women Voters of the United States.

Shall hold an annual meeting at which officers are elected and a budget and local Program of work adopted.

Shall hold at least nine regular Board meetings during the year.

Shall send representatives to at least one

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<sup>22</sup> League of Women Voters of Minnesota, By-laws (as adopted by 1947 State Convention), Article II, Section 2. (Mimeographed)

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., Article III, Section 1.

state League meeting during the year.

Shall render reports to the state League when requested.

Shall not disband without notice to the League of Women Voters of the United States which may delegate to the state League the authority to attempt reorganization.

Activities of a local League shall be directed toward carrying out the local, state and national programs of work. A local League shall comply with all requests for action from the League of Women Voters of the United States and the state League or explain the reason for not doing so.

Shall assume financial responsibility for the support of the League as a whole commensurate with its strength and the potentialities of its community.

Shall show progressive effectiveness in carrying out the purpose of the League of Women Voters of the United States.<sup>24</sup>

Another section provides that when a group meets the recognition standards, the state Board will recommend recognition to the national Board. When this is achieved, that local League becomes an integral part of the League of Women Voters of the United States and the League of Women Voters of Minnesota.<sup>25</sup> The same procedure applies in an instance of withdrawal of recognition.<sup>26</sup> The responsibility of the state League in having representation at the national convention and the national council is provided by the appointment

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<sup>24</sup> League of Women Voters, Local Leader's Handbook, (Revised; Washington, D. C.: League of Women Voters, December, 1948), p. 5.

<sup>25</sup> By-Laws, op. cit., Article IV, Section 2.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., Article IV, Section 3.



of two delegates to each conference by the state board.<sup>27</sup>

In the same ways that the national League possesses responsibilities toward the state and local Leagues, so does the state League have duties toward the local Leagues. Preparation of materials, travel by board members and staff, maintenance of standards, assistance in any number of ways is rendered by the state League.

A sound definition of the role of the state League would include the fact that the state board is the agent of the local Leagues on state governmental matters. In the same way, the national board is the agent for local Leagues on matters of national concern. The organization of the state board will be discussed in more detail in another chapter, but in so far as the work of the state board helps to define the relationships of the state and local Leagues, it will be discussed now. One of the facets of the state League's job in program is to have a knowledge of state and local governmental structures and to make that information available to local leagues.<sup>28</sup> Outlines of a general topical nature on state and local government can be prepared or pamphlets incorporating this basic information may be made available. The Minnesota League has prepared a mimeographed series entitled "Know Your State", and the St. Paul League, with the approval and review of the state board, published a handbook on Minnesota state and local government entitled "You Are The Government". The national League to assist in this work has pub-

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27 Ibid., Article XI, Sections 1 and 2.

28 Notes on the Institute for State Board of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota, conducted by Mrs. Errol Horner, Organization Secretary, National League (December 9, 1943), p. 1. (Mimeographed.)



lished three pamphlets on structure of government entitled "Know Your State", "Know Your County", and "Know Your Town's Future". The latter is frequently used by local Leagues as a guide in the preparation of a local government manual for distribution in the community. The writing of this is frequently used as a means to introduce a new League, to make an existing one better known, or as a device to pave the way for an effort to secure financial support from interested persons in the community.

The selection of issues on the state program varies from year to year through action by members at the state convention. This variation is kept within bounds insofar as state and local Leagues may not adopt items on the current agenda which are not derived from the national platform. This serves to prevent conflict from the experience of previous work yet is not severely limiting since the national platform is broad in scope. Although the program changes, the purpose remains the same since the program is but one of the tools used by the League to educate citizens and give them means for participation.<sup>29</sup> One of the tendencies which is sometimes difficult to overcome is the measurement of effectiveness by the passage or defeat of bills. The realization that education and influencing public opinion is frequently a larger part of the job in the achievement of the League purpose must constantly be emphasized to the membership.

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

At the state convention, board members are charged to present the proposed program without bias. Delegates should be encouraged to express individual opinion and their own League's thinking on these matters.<sup>30</sup> This expression must be carefully heeded by the state board members in determining action between conventions.

After the program is adopted by the convention, certain responsibilities mandated to the board include: (1) preparation of material to implement every item and distribution to each local League, and (2) follow-up to see that members have sufficient background to take effective legislative action. This is particularly important since action in the League must be action by the rank and file and not just on the part of a few state board members.<sup>31</sup>

These, then, are some of the relationships of the state League to the local Leagues that arise out of program activities. The state board also has a relationship to local Leagues in non-program areas through the delegation of authority by the national board. In organization, the state League is concerned with the strengthening of existing Leagues, cultivating new Leagues, securing members-at-large, and supervising the activities of college Leagues. The degree of the state League's relationship is determined by the need. If the board possesses certain limitations in terms of money and woman power, certain decisions must be reached with respect to the emphasis that will be placed. For example, if it is felt in a particular year that new Leagues should be established, the available

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<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.



resources will be devoted to that effort and less attention paid to other aspects of organization work.

All or most of the state League's funds come from pledges made by local Leagues. A sum from the state League to the national League is pledged each year. Since the largest part of the money to operate the League comes from the local Leagues, the state and national boards have a very definite responsibility and interest in the creation of good money-raising techniques by the local groups.

These responsibilities are prevalent, too, in the fields of legislative action, public relations, voters service, distribution of publications, in all the facets of the League job.

To reiterate, the member in the local League is the focus of attention in League work. State and national Leagues are instruments to permit action on those respective levels. The national and state boards are charged to carry out the mandate of the members on those levels of activity. Assistance to the local Leagues is provided by the state and national boards. The nature of the assistance required is determined through correspondence received from local Leagues, reports of their meetings and activities, copies of press releases, treasurer's reports, reports on organization, and reports from finance committees. The observations of board members and staff who assist local Leagues are recorded. The channels of communication in the determination of needs are good. The paper work provides basic facts, and the field trips enable the visitor to observe the human relations factor which plays a large part in the operation of any voluntary association.



Through these means, then, the strengths and weaknesses of a particular League are appraised. The state board, occasionally enlisting the aid of the national board, attempts to develop the attributes and cure the faults in a specific instance. Since the success of the state assistance is in large part determined by the strength or weakness of the state League, a review of the state board organization and operation is necessary in this analysis.

In summary, then, it should be reiterated that the job of the state League is dependent on responsibility delegated to the state board by the national organization and by local leagues. In the final analysis, all authority comes from the local leagues which define and delegate it at national and state conventions.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Mrs. Malcolm Hargraves, "How Best to Run a State League with an Office and Staff". (Paper prepared for Convention, League of Women Voters of the United States, Atlantic City, New Jersey, April, 1950.)

## CHAPTER IV

### BOARD ORGANIZATION

Officers.-- The By-Laws of the Minnesota League of Women Voters provide that the officers "shall be a President, a first Vice President, a second Vice President, a Secretary and a Treasurer".<sup>33</sup> These officers are elected for two-year terms. The By-Laws define the duties of these five officers in somewhat general terms.

The president is to preside at all meetings, sign or endorse checks, etc. She is an ex-officio member of all committees except the nominating committee. She has the usual powers of supervision and management and performs such other duties as may be designated by the board.<sup>34</sup>

The two vice presidents in the order of their rank succeed the president in the event of absence, death or disability, and perform such other duties as the president and board may designate.<sup>35</sup>

The secretary keeps the minutes of all League conventions and of all board meetings. She is a co-signer with the president of all documents that the board may approve and performs such other functions as are incident to her office.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> League of Women Voters of Minnesota, By-Laws (as adopted by 1947 State Convention), Article V., Section 1. (mimeographed).

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., Article V., Section 2.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., Article V., Section 3.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., Article V., Section 4.



The treasurer, or her duly appointed assistant, bills and receives all moneys due. She is the custodian of League funds and deposits them in a bank designated by the board and disburses them on the order of the board. She makes periodic statements at board meetings and makes an annual report at the convention.<sup>37</sup>

The By-Laws designate that there shall be seven directors elected for two-year terms, and not more than seven directors appointed for a one-year term.<sup>38</sup> This provision means that the board of directors of the Minnesota League of Women Voters shall not exceed nineteen persons including the five officers.

The powers and duties of the board as spelled out in the By-Laws say that "the board of directors shall have full charge of the property and business of the corporation and authority to manage and conduct the same, subject to the instructions of the convention. The board shall plan and direct the work necessary to carry out the program on state governmental matters as adopted by the convention. It shall accept responsibility delegated to it by the League of Women Voters of the United States for the organization and development of local Leagues, for the carrying out of program and for promotion in the local Leagues of finance programs requisite to further work of the League as a whole, including transmission of funds adequate to support the national budget. The Board shall create such special committees as it may deem necessary."<sup>39</sup>

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37 Ibid., Article V., Section 5.

38 Ibid., Article VI., Section 1.

39 Ibid., Article VI., Section 4.



The By-Laws also include a provision that the board shall hold at least eight regular meetings a year.<sup>40</sup> An executive committee is provided to function between board meetings with the usual safeguards outlined.<sup>41</sup>

With the legal authority for the establishment and operation of the board of directors derived from the By-Laws, an examination of board assignments should be made to determine if the practices are in conformity.

The major division of League work is reflected in the breakdown of board organization into "Program" and "Non-Program". First, an analysis of state board procedure in the program area.

Program. — The State Leaders' Handbook lists board responsibilities in program as follows:

1. Adopt criteria for choice of a state program.
2. Seek recommendations from local Leagues for state program.
3. Assume leadership in formulating state program; submit same to local Leagues for their consideration and to convention for adoption.
4. Determine materials necessary to be issued on state governmental matters and pass on adequacy of presentation. (Material may be submitted to a reading committee of three or four members conversant with the subject who have varying viewpoints. An outside authority might be consulted also.)

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., Article VI., Section 5.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., Article VI., Section 7.

5. Determine type of action to be taken on state governmental matters,
6. Determine when local Leagues are prepared to act on state program.
7. Urge local Leagues to make recommendations for national program.
8. Correlate recommendations from local Leagues and forward same to national office accompanied by its own recommendation.
9. Plan area or state-wide conferences on program problems.<sup>42</sup>

Board chairmen in the program field receive their assignments according to items on the state and national programs. It should be noted that the chairmen in charge of "Equalizing Opportunities", "Structure of Government", "Economic Items", and "Education" work on subject matter both with the state and national government. The chairmen of "Civil Service" and "Civil Rights" are presently confined to the state program area, and "National Resources" and "United Nations and World Trade" are national program responsibilities. This doubling up is necessary when there are three or four items on both the state and national current agendas, and when some platform items are demanding attention in the opinion of the boards.

Ideally, these resource chairmen, as they are called, should have committees to distribute the work. Also, the establishment of a good committee structure where the chairmen can delegate responsi-

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<sup>42</sup> League of Women Voters of the United States, State Leader's Handbook, (Washington, D. C.: League of Women Voters: 1947), p. 5.



bility is an effective means of developing League leadership. For example, the "structure of government" chairman in the Minnesota League should watch constitutional revision since that is currently of primary importance, have one member keep up to date on congressional reorganization, one advising local Leagues which have city charter revision on their local agenda, and in the event that the chairman lives outside the Twin City area, one member assigned to the legislative committee to keep tab on progress of relevant bills in the Legislature. The education chairman could have one person watching federal aid to education, one assisting her on state matters, one helping local Leagues studying or acting on community school problems, and, again, one assigned to the legislative committee if the chairman herself, because of geography or some other factor, is unable to attend to this task.

It is impossible to allow for the importance or priority that will be assigned to any one program item at a particular time. For instance, as this is being written, the international situation dominates the scene; two or three years ago, federal expenditures were a major issue. Adjustments in the arrangement of a committee structure must be made as developments occur if those developments cannot be anticipated.

Committee duties in the program area include:

A. Toward the national program:

1. Make plans for the use of local Leagues of sufficient material to give the members background for carrying out action.



2. Assist local leagues in preparing adequately for carrying out Requests for Action.
3. Keep state board informed of League member and community attitudes on national program.

B. Toward the state program:

1. Prepare material to underwrite items on the Current Agenda.
2. Assist local leagues with techniques for carrying out state program.
3. Discover areas of agreement, strive to reach consensus of local league membership, and advise the board of the degree of preparation for action existing in the local Leagues.
4. Keep state board informed of trends in League and community thinking on items in their fields.
5. Appraise the current needs of state government best suited to give many League members an experience in active participation in government.
6. Keep history of action taken on each program item.
7. Clear files for successor.

C. Toward local program:

1. Consult with local leagues on a choice of local projects.
2. Give guidance on carrying out local projects.

D. General:

1. Conduct area of state-wide conferences or program problems.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., pp. 5-6 .

The League program is a means of carrying out the League purpose. To this end, board planning and the work of the resource committees are especially important. Board decisions largely determine the bases for committee operations. Decisions must be made in time to set the wheels in motion and keep them running smoothly.<sup>44</sup> A recent publication of the League suggests:

"Planning with flexibility" would make a good slogan for the local (or state) board. An over-all plan for the whole League year is needed. Yet this plan should be flexible enough so that it can be adapted to the tempo of events and to developments within the League itself.<sup>45</sup>

At the first meeting of the board after the Convention in the spring, this over-all plan for operations is developed. The board considers (1) the total program load; local, state and national current agenda which the members have voted to undertake, plus any continuing responsibilities on which action is expected during the year (especially if it is a legislative year); and (2) other League jobs such as voters service, finance, public relations.<sup>46</sup> In these considerations, it is essential for the board to concern itself with techniques to reach the member and the community. The League board must plan with certain questions in mind:

- (1) What is the total amount of time available

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<sup>44</sup> League of Women Voters of the United States, Program Organization in the League of Women Voters: Board Planning and Resource Committees, (Washington, D.C.: League of Women Voters, Sept., 1950), p.1.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 1.



for getting the program to the members?

How many League meetings can be expected during the year and what kinds - unit, general membership, open meetings for the community.<sup>47</sup> Leagues vary in the number of meetings they have, and the state board plans must be adaptable for leagues which meet both twice and once a month. It is very difficult to attempt to do an adequate League job in less than two meetings a month.

One of the tasks of the organization committee is to encourage this practice.

- (2) How much time can be devoted to each program item - local, state and national? How much is needed to get an adequate understanding to the member? How much preparation has there been in the past year or two? Will special work be needed to bring members (old and new) up to date?
- (3) What are the most effective ways of getting information to the membership? Of helping the individual member to take action?
- (4) How much community activity can the League undertake on each program item? Some leagues take on only one major community campaign each year, others are able to do more. The

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 1.



decision depends on the budget and on womanpower (leadership and membership) as well as on program considerations.

- (5) What League action will be of the greatest interest to the membership and get the most participation? Will most interest new members? Will best extend the League influence to new areas of the community? Will be of the greatest public service?
- (6) What developments are expected in the various program fields? Which items should have priority? If a state legislature meets biennially, the League might wish to allot more time for state program just before or during the session.
- (7) What dates must the League calendar be built around - such as elections, finance efforts, annual meetings, national and state conventions, deadlines for local, state and national program-making, town affairs, expected timing of legislation? The League calendar should be set up so that the membership will be prepared in time, and community activity schedules with these dates in mind.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., pp. 1 and 2.

These considerations apply to both state and local League boards in planning the total job for the year. Some of these seven items have more relevance to state planning, others to local planning.

The Suggested Action Outline for a Local League (Appendix A) is one technique that a state board can use to give the local League board an overview in planning their own activities. It demonstrates that even though the League work may seem overwhelming, it can be done.

Each board member has the special responsibility for making recommendations to the board for action in her field. For example, a resource chairman should outline developments that she foresees in her area and propose action on the basis of the various factors mentioned above.<sup>49</sup> Any significant trends in membership opinion of state or national program items should be reported to the board and if the item is on the national program, should be transmitted to the national board.

The committee's work consists of getting information, clarifying issues, analyzing opinion, keeping the board informed, devising ways for informing the membership and community, and carrying out other board plans for action.<sup>50</sup>

When the state for preparing material is reached, the board indicates the over-all theme of the material, guided by the expression of the state convention. The chairman and her committee usually

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<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.



try to finish the work in the summer so that all the program kits may be received by the local Leagues in the early fall to facilitate planning the year's activities. The actual writing is usually done by the chairman but it is carefully checked by board members. The best laid plans for publication dates often go astray because board members are insistent on revisions when, in their opinion, it is necessary. The material which is mimeographed consists of the substantive outline, a discussion outline and bibliography. This is often supplemented by other pamphlets put out by other organizations. When the item is a study item, care is taken to present both sides of the question. For example, at the time the Minnesota League was studying fair employment practices, materials supporting and opposing the establishment of a state Fair Employment Practices Commission was sent out to all local Leagues. After the League has determined to take action on a specific issue, the materials are prepared with a view to reinforcing that decision.

The state League also plans meetings to introduce a new program item to representatives of the local Leagues or bring them up to date on an item of long standing. These meetings are usually called "workshops". The purpose of the workshop is to provide intensive training on a particular program subject. Those who attend assume the obligation of helping to take information to the membership and to the community.<sup>51</sup> The most recent workshop sponsored by the Minnesota League was to initiate a study of state revenues

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 4.



and expenditures. Representatives of business, labor, government, and education presented their observations to the delegates in attendance. This technique serves a very useful purpose in training leadership and providing information which it would be difficult for the League to duplicate in any other way without great expense.

Sometimes, area conferences are arranged to achieve this same purpose. Area meetings are more appropriate for learning techniques and exchanging ideas on subjects already embarked upon.

More and more there is the recognition that not only must local Leagues be provided with facts but with the know-how to take the facts to the community. This has always been an emphasis in the League because the League has never been a study club or a self-improvement society. Techniques are not only responsibility of the non-program board chairmen but the resource chairmen as well. Both must work together in constantly pointing out that the program is a tool of the League whereby both League members and others may be trained in the political process and assume responsibility in that role. The heavy program load of national, state, and local current agendas sometimes impedes this objective. League members with but a superficial knowledge of a particular item cannot speak with authority in the community. It is not the purpose of the League to create experts, but a large program does not give the members sufficient opportunity to do anything but skim the surface. Greater attention is being paid to this central problem although no solution except perhaps one of self-denial is yet on the horizon. This is important here not only because of League policy but because it

renders the job of the state board more difficult.

In general, it might be said that the work of the resource chairmen is good except that they too frequently rely on themselves for the various aspects of their jobs, when it would be wiser to delegate some of the responsibilities to committee members. This is easier said than done, of course. In large part the difficulty of developing a committee structure stems from limitations of time and limitations in experience in delegating authority. Many board members would probably like to be able to assign some of their duties to other responsible persons but do not take the time to set up the machinery. Others dismiss it with the often heard misconception, "It's easier to do myself." The desirability of a committee structure is generally accepted in the League since this provides one of the best means to secure membership participation through the delegation of responsibility. It is simply that the exigencies of the moment often prevail over the long-run objective. The end result of a lack of committee structure is that sometimes the work is done well, sometimes merely done, and sometimes falls on a staff member whose job it is to assist all chairmen and committees but not to perform the whole task herself.

Legislation. -- The legislative work of the League is so comprehensive in scope that to function without an active committee would be fruitless in terms of achievement. The job of actual work at the Legislature falls largely upon the members of the St. Paul and Minneapolis Leagues because of their geographic proximity to the state capitol. The resource chairmen and their committee mem-



bers of these two Leagues in the fields of education, civil service, civil rights, economics, and constitutional revision serve as the chairmen and committee members respectively on the legislative committees. The legislative chairmen in each of the two Leagues direct their activities under the over-all supervision of the state legislative chairman.

The legislative responsibilities are outlined as follows:

Committee Members: Keep informed on League program and League stand on legislation. Know time of and attend legislative committee meetings, House and Senate sessions concerned with bills on particular program items. Keep in constant contact with Committee chairmen on progress of bills and on proper timing for calls for action. Inform legislators of League stand. Determine the proper time for speaking before a legislative group on League stand.

Committee Chairman: Supervises committee work. Sees that all sessions concerned with her particular item are attended. Reports to St. Paul / Minneapolis legislative chairman on progress of bills and on timing for action by League members.

City Legislative Chairman: Supervises committees on Education, Civil Service, Civil Rights, Constitutional Revision, and Economic Item. Reports to state legislative chairman on progress of bills and on proper timing for calls for action.



State Legislative Chairman: Supervises all work at the Legislature. Informs state board on progress of bills and timing for calls for action. Informs city, legislative chairman of League stand on legislation.

State Board: Decides when to issue a call for action to local Leagues. Keeps local Leagues informed on progress of legislation. Determines League stand on legislation through authority granted at convention.

Local Leagues: Respond to call for action by writing as a League to legislators. Keep in touch with legislators, informing them of League stand on legislation. Keep state board informed of local League opinion on legislation. Inform themselves and their community on League program and League stand on issues.

League Members: Inform themselves, their community and their legislators on League program and League stand on issues. Respond to calls for action by writing as individuals to legislators. Attend legislative sessions whenever possible.

State Office: Liaison between local Leagues, state board and members working in the legislature. Information on program items and progress

of legislation available here.<sup>52</sup>

The work of the legislative committee and its over-all relationships have been well defined. This particular structure has not always prevailed -- adaptations to the exigencies of the situation in terms of available manpower sometimes requires another pattern. Essential to the successful functioning of this committee is the liaison work of a staff worker at the Legislature. The job of this person should be to watch for hearings, consideration of bills on the floor of both houses, votes, etc., and to alert the state legislative chairman with regard to the time for action appropriate to the particular requirement. A transitory personnel situation during the last session made the operations of the committee more difficult, and, in some instances, the resource persons were more competent in one area than another. This, of course, is a situation that is always likely to prevail in the League no matter how extensively efforts might be made to achieve the very best.

Organization. -- The work of the organization chairman and her committee might be said to be basic to the operations of the League as a whole. The national and state Leagues are charged with an organizational responsibility to provide tools to make the job both easier and more effective. The introduction in the Local Leader's Handbook, the principal League document on organization,

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<sup>52</sup> League of Women Voters of Minnesota, "Legislative Responsibilities" (June 12, 1950), p. 1. (Micrographed.)



says:

It is (the Handbook) not to be taken as a directive, or as a set of rules that must be followed to the letter. Of course, we must all agree on fundamental League policies, and there are certain purely technical procedures, such as bookkeeping and recording membership lists, that ought to be uniform throughout the League, because that will save our time and free energy for the real job. But in between the fundamental principles and the business routine there are all kinds of methods used by local boards to direct the work of their Leagues. However, the Handbook has been made up out of the experience of many Leagues, and the plan of organization set forth in it has proved successful in a wide variety of communities. We offer it to the local Boards in the hope that it will give them useful suggestions, and thus make their task easier.<sup>53</sup>

This sets forth very clearly that organization is not an end in itself but a means whereby the end of the League in action can be achieved more readily. Sometimes, it is a bit difficult because of this necessary emphasis on organization to make local League leaders understand that the constant hammering away at organization will, in the long run, make their job an easier one.

The organization committee must be prepared to discuss all phases of the League work. Board organization, finance, public relations, and program are areas which are discussed with local Leagues by members of the organization committee. The organization worker, in her visits to existing Leagues, should recommend to

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53 Local Leader's Handbook, op. cit., p. 4.



other state board chairmen that assistance in her area would be valuable to such and such a League. A letter or visit by one or more state board members serves to follow up the recommendation of the organization worker. Re-appraisal of the total organization picture should be done by the board at least twice a year. Reports of the organization chairman and others who have engaged in organization work should be heard at each board meeting.<sup>54</sup>

There are two major phases of the Minnesota organization plan: (1) strengthening existing Leagues, and (2) organizing new Leagues. Most state Leagues also include college Leagues under the aegis of the organization committee but it is felt in Minnesota that the seven college Leagues require a board member to chair that activity. A possibility that might be considered by the Minnesota League is to have a non-board member of the organization committee supervise this activity. Of course, it is also true that this could probably result in a de-emphasis of that activity. Again, it is a matter for policy determination in deciding what time and effort should be devoted to college Leagues and the kinds of activities they might undertake.

In recent years, the emphasis on organization committee representation was geographical. One of the major difficulties in serving local Leagues in Minnesota is distance plus climate which makes certain parts of the state inaccessible at the time of year

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<sup>54</sup> Mrs. Malcolm Hargraves, op. cit., p. 6.

when Leagues are most active. It soon became clear, however, that effective organization work should not be sacrificed because of geographical convenience. Hence a realignment of the organization committee occurred, combining, wherever possible, effective organization workers with geographical considerations but ruling out the latter where it would tend to weaken the over-all committee structure. In choosing persons with the ability to handle a particular situation in a particular League, it may be said that even though there may be a state board member in that League, an unknown board member will carry more authority and prestige. Quite frequently, it is well worth the cost to send two persons, two board members or a board member and staff person, for one visit. This makes for conversational informality and insures a better chance of not missing anything that might be said.<sup>55</sup>

Committee members work with both new and existing Leagues although some work more with one than with another. Materials are provided for organization workers and suggestions for information for the worker to get from the Leagues they visit. The visitor fills out a report which seeks information as to women competent to assume responsibility, specific problems of this League, evaluation and recommendations. The local Leagues report on their meetings on another form and send in copies of their board meeting minutes. This basic material provides the worker with information necessary to understand where a local League is strong

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 6.



and where it is weak. Occasionally, a rather complete analysis of the strengths and weaknesses is made of each local League and made available to the board and to organization committee members. This is helpful in pointing out that a given number of local Leagues require varying amounts and kinds of attention.<sup>56</sup>

In the last few years, the emphasis in the Minnesota organization plan has been directed toward strengthening existing Leagues. Presently, the emphasis is shifting and will, all other things being equal, continue to shift in the direction of establishing new Leagues in Minnesota. To strengthen existing Leagues, attempts have been made, and by and large achieved, to give two visits to each League with additional visits as needed and extensive correspondence. These visits are scheduled with an eye to flexibility and arranged with consideration for the local League's convenience. One meeting might be with the board, another with the entire membership if the League is small enough to be manageable under these circumstances. Many local Leagues have meetings in the fall or spring designed especially to interest individuals in joining.<sup>57</sup> State board members are often asked to speak at these gatherings, and a good orientation presentation of League purpose and policies is beneficial to old members as well. The determination of the where of new Leagues derives from the recognition that there should be Leagues in the larger communities in the state and in congressional and legislative districts where there are none. It is ad-

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

visable to build new Leagues in areas possessing reasonable proximity to other Leagues for exchanges, conferences, etc. In the same regard, attention should be paid to developing Leagues in isolated regions to help build up another geographical unit.<sup>58</sup> Requests from a group of women who wish to have a League are always answered and acted upon although the end result may or may not be the establishment of a new League.

One of the problems with which the organization committee and state board has had to concern themselves is the fact that there are more small Leagues in Minnesota than in any other state. This means that many of the organizational standards must be adapted for a League with fifteen to twenty-five members. There is a great deal of attention devoted to the degree of adaptation that will not result in a general deterioration of League standards. Sometimes, familiarity with the situation in a particular League will result in sacrificing League standards to a greater extent than is probably required. This is a very human reaction but there is usually enough strong feeling on the other side to prevent any general tendency in this direction. The successes of a small league in doing a job as it should be done is especially helpful in contradicting the customary arguments of the "impossible". The value of a representative from a small League telling other small Leagues that it "can be done" is an accepted fact.

Some of the major elements discussed in a meeting of an or-

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 7.



ganization committee member with a local League board are: representation at area meetings and state conferences; membership, getting a cross section, orienting and assimilating new members; finance; board assignments; discussion leadership; and full member participation.<sup>59</sup>

In helping to create new Leagues which are then called "provisional" Leagues for a probationary period of a year or so, extensive materials have been prepared to assist the organizer. In the cultivation and pre-organization work, the organizer makes preliminary community analysis, contacts key people in the town, such as the editor of the paper(s), librarian, mayor, etc., for suggested leaders. The action organizing is done in the following order:

1. Temporary committee is set up. It should represent different political, education, economic and social groups.
2. Hold pre-organization meeting. Organizer should tell all about the League and requirements for success -- nothing should be held back. If everything looks favorable and there is enthusiasm and willingness, nominating and by-laws committees should be named.
3. Organization meeting should be called. It

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<sup>59</sup> League of Women Voters of Minnesota, "Minnesota Organization Plan" (January 20, 1950), p. 1. (Mimeographed.)

should be close to pre-organization meeting to keep enthusiasm. At the first organization meeting, officers should be elected, by-laws adopted, budget committee appointed. Organizer should attend first meeting.

4. At second meeting program items from national and state program should be selected and budget adopted.<sup>60</sup>

The work of the organization committee in cultivating the new League from a provisional status to that of a fully-recognized local League should emphasize these factors:

1. Organizing a local board. See that it has minimum number of officers needed to carry out the League's responsibilities.
2. Local budget. It should be made realistic; most funds kept for community work.
3. Local survey. Board coordination is essential and as many members as possible should take part even if the job is small. Survey should be used to bring work of League before the public.
4. Work under state and national programs. One item at a time is selected, work begun on

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<sup>60</sup> League of Women Voters of the United States, "Brief Summary Report of Organization Conference" (League of Women Voters, Washington, D.C.: August 24, 1950), p. 3. (Mimeographed.)



it in the proper way and other items added at approximately three-month intervals until League is carrying full program load.

5. Reports. The League must be encouraged to send in copies of board minutes and the required number of statistical reports.
6. Voters Service Work. This is a delicate activity in a provisional League and needs to be limited and supervised by the state board. Mistakes can be made which will hamper League effectiveness for a long time. Full program of Voters Service is a privilege which comes with recognition.
7. Nominations and election of officers. New officers are not usually elected immediately upon recognition. The provisional League officers usually take over.<sup>61</sup>

In this phase of the organization task, it is important to give adequate service to new Leagues. Frequent visits by experienced League members should be made although the new League should feel neither that it is being "watched" nor become dependent for all decisions. Expense determines this frequency although economies can be effected by utilizing competent personnel in adjacent Leagues.

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

It is evident that the League of Women Voters carefully nurtures new Leagues. They do not "just grow" but are supervised so they will fit into a general organizational pattern which is contributing to the successfulness of the League everywhere.

. . . Rather, endless man-hours of serious selective reading, followed by thinking and discussion; meetings and rallies, and the sort of organizational detail that has made the League of Women Voters a respected exception to the average citizen norm.<sup>62</sup>

The stature of the organization work of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota has increased considerably in recent years. This is due, for the most part, to the individual who has been the organization chairman on the state board and who has contributed a very considerable amount of time and effort in this direction. She has received support from the president who recognizes the extent of this achievement. In all this, the organization committee has had very little assistance from the staff in recent years even though one of the two persons in the office is nominally the organization secretary. The secretary would undoubtedly have been called on to do more if the chairman had not assumed such a large share of this work in terms of visiting local leagues. The future will see a change in this division of responsibility since the organization chairman will be a woman who cannot devote as much

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<sup>62</sup> Llewellyn White, "Truman: Merry-Go-Round and Man," The Reporter (November 7, 1950), p. 38.



time as her predecessor but who will have a very strong committee composed in part of the former president, organization chairman and treasurer -- all board members with experience and an intimate knowledge of the League. The new organization secretary will be a woman who has had experience in League organization in a large city League and will serve skillfully in this capacity. There is a recognition in the League that if it wishes to extend its influence, it must continue to grow and develop with a sound basis of organization to effectuate its purpose.

Finance. -- In the Minnesota League of Women Voters, the finance committee has had little effectiveness. The organization committee has had to carry more than its share of the load in this facet of the League job. Briefly, it is the responsibility of the state finance chairman to encourage local Leagues to adopt good finance practices and to assist in their development.

Good finance practices in the League include the development, presentation and adoption of a budget, dues collecting procedures, and going to the community for contributions. The By-Laws of local Leagues provide for the making of a budget in a series of steps, as follows:

1. The budget committee is appointed, well in advance of the Annual Meeting as provided in the By-Laws. The treasurer is a member of it and so is the finance chairman, but neither of them should be the chairmen.
2. The committee draws up a tentative budget to be sub-

mitted to the board.

3. The board discusses this draft, amends or approves it, and presents it with recommendations to the members at the Annual Meeting.
4. The members consider and act upon the budget.<sup>63</sup>

It is strongly urged that when the budget is presented, it be done so imaginatively as to emphasize that this is the blueprint for the coming year's activities in terms of what the League will do and what it will need to do it.

Certain procedures are outlined for the collection of dues — first billing at the beginning of the fiscal year, April 1, and two reminders. If dues are not paid by October 1, members are usually dropped.

The national and state Leagues are especially interested in the fiscal talents of local Leagues since their funds are derived, with few exceptions, from the resources of local Leagues. The local Leagues make pledges to the state Leagues and the state League, in turn, makes a pledge to the national League. Formerly, the amounts contributed were determined on a rather artificial basis of population in the community and League membership. Presently, the emphasis is on the over-all strength of the League and general rather than specific potentials. Factors to be con-

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<sup>63</sup> Local Leader's Handbook, op. cit., p. 28.



sidered are size, strength, and age of the League and the size and character of the community.<sup>64</sup> For a variety of reasons, Leagues with comparable memberships in communities of equal size are not able to make the same pledges. A League, according to the standards of recognition, must make a minimum pledge of \$25.00. Individual consultation should be used to arrive at understanding and cooperation in League financing.

Some of the variables which enter into this operation would include, for example, the difference between a new and old League. The state League, anxious to assist in the sound development of this new group would encourage the retention of a larger proportion of its funds to carry on local functions whereas the established League could better afford to give a greater share to the state League. Sometimes, too, a League which has existed for twenty years and is predominately composed of members old in the organization is reluctant to engage in the kind of finance activity advocated by the state League. In Minnesota, particularly, where there are several groups of many years' standing in the small communities, this reluctance makes adherence to the expectations of the national League difficult to obtain.

These difficulties derive from the finance philosophy evolved by the League in its years of experience. Since the League is a service organization designed to promote political responsibility, not only in its membership, but in the whole community, it feels

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64. Mrs. Malcolm Hargraves, op. cit., p. 7.

that it is logical and right to ask interested citizens to help finance its work.<sup>65</sup> The League does not conduct a general public appeal for funds, but solicits contributions from a relatively small selected list of interested people. It approaches these selected individuals as citizens who are concerned with increasing citizen participation in government.<sup>66</sup> The League is especially careful to preserve its non-partisan reputation by not receiving such a sizable donation from one individual that anyone would consider the League under any obligation to that donor.

It is with this general proposition in mind that means of implementation must be evolved by the local Leagues. In this context, the local League must then concern itself with budget determination, contribution techniques and their fundamentals (responsibilities, calendar, endorsements, personnel, prospective contributors, training of solicitors, report meetings), solicitation techniques (preparation, actual interviews), and general promotion. The state League's job is to be knowledgeable in all these aspects of finance drives, and know what particular kind of assistance each local League requires.

Finance training meetings are a good technique to reach many Leagues simultaneously. There, as with all meetings and conferences, needs must be considered against available funds as well as the desirability of another meeting which strains the limited time

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<sup>65</sup> Local Leader's Handbook, op. cit., p. 28.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p. 29.



of members. At state conventions, some attention is always given to finance. Panel discussions which reach the entire convention representation are generally more desirable than a separate panel since wide comprehension is essential to good League finance.<sup>67</sup>

As was mentioned above, the Minnesota League has been perhaps less successful in this area than in any others in very recent years. It might be said that this is due largely to ineffectual chairmen, either because of unsuitability for this particular task or because of a combination of factors which stem from the fact that a human being and a volunteer fills this post. Again, it might be said that perhaps this post has been more subject to human variables than any other. Of course, in a job associated with the raising of money, certain characteristics are advantageous — forcefulness, ability to convey enthusiasm, the possession of a facility with words to explain what might appear to be a complicated process so it seems easy — these are tools of a finance chairman. These qualities are not rare but perhaps the frustrations of this position deter many able women from accepting an offer to serve in this capacity. Generally speaking, all the state board chairmen must serve as catalytic agents to stimulate local Leagues to take action, and to take action in ways and means which have proved most successful. There is no feeling in the League that there is nothing new under the sun but certain techniques have proved valid through use, and it is suggested that

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<sup>67</sup> Mrs. Malcolm Kargraves, op. cit., p. 8.

once local groups have assimilated these basic methods, they may go on from there in the realm of experimentation in this laboratory of democracy.

Voters Service. — It is perhaps fitting to proceed to the bailiwick of the voters service chairman for here the League members have been innovators supreme. Voters service, in the League of Women Voters, includes the following: giving information to the public about registering and voting; urging citizens to use the ballot; explaining public questions appearing on the ballot; giving information about candidates for office, their records and their opinions on important issues; holding candidates' meetings; reaching new voters; keeping and publicizing voting records -- all the many activities that the League undertakes to develop a more informed and responsible electorate.<sup>68</sup> Voters service is an all year round job; though, of course, it reaches its peak just prior to elections.

To point up the role of the state League in voters service activities, it might be interesting to examine the material prepared for the most recent election in the fall of 1950. The kit included a "Get Out the Vote" broadside prepared by the national League, a letter to local League presidents from the state voters service chairman, a single page of tips entitled "How to Make the Most of Your Candidate Questionnaires", two questionnaires for each congressional and legislative candidates assigned for interview by

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<sup>68</sup> Local Leader's Handbook, op. cit., p. 46.



a particular League, the roll call (the recorded votes of House and Senate members on issues supported or opposed by the League) for the most recent legislative session in 1949, the congressional roll call (Minnesota's nine congressmen and two senators) for the first session of the 81st Congress, a voters service calendar to guide Leagues in their planning, a single sheet of "Pre-Election Tips", a one-page review of dedicated taxes in Minnesota, and a bibliography of recent materials prepared by the state League on its program items.<sup>69</sup>

These seventeen pages represent the combination of factors in the voters service job, namely, one of the League's responsibilities -- candidates questionnaires and information on voting records, techniques, and substantive program materials. Follow-up on these pre-election activities was done largely by correspondence. Additional material was forthcoming in regard to the three amendments to the state Constitution. This was in the form of a broadside, and an attached letter outlining possible methods of distribution.

While the job of interviewing candidates is parceled out to local Leagues, the state League has the responsibility of interviewing candidates for the United States Senate and state executive and judicial offices. The results of these interviews or questionnaires are then distributed to the local Leagues through a special

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<sup>69</sup> League of Women Voters of Minnesota, "Voters Service Material" (July 19, 1950), 17 pp. (mimeographed.)

mailing, or if the timing is profitable, printed in The Articulate Voter.

By and large, local Leagues in Minnesota carry out the voters service program with zest and imagination. All kinds of talents are appropriate to this activity and are fully utilized. The realization that an all-inclusive voters service plan is most desirable is a significant factor in the attempt to have Leagues in all legislative and congressional districts in the state. At the moment, there are Leagues in the nine congressional districts and in 46 of the 67 legislative districts.

Perhaps the largest burden of this task lies in the planning which must be done to assure proper timing and to come forth with provocative ideas to fire the enthusiasm of local Leagues.

Public Relations. -- The concept of public relations in the Minnesota League of Women Voters is, as the term implies, one of relationships with the League's public and not the limited area of publicity which is but a part of the whole. As a matter of fact, the emphasis on the work of the public relations chairman, in recent years, has been to instill this broader concept into the operations of local Leagues. In other words, in everything that the League does, public relations is involved to a greater or lesser degree, so that a job must be done well to assure good relationship with the public.

The Articulate Voter of July-August, 1950, sets forth quite extensively this philosophy and something of the ways and means of implementation. Here, then, is still another source of communica-



tion through which the state League may speak in the interest of a non-program activity. The Voter says of a public relations program:

It is simply the coordinated and directed handling of these contacts which the League has with special groups within the general public, and with the general public itself. To know whether we are on the right public relations track, each of us should ask herself this question: Do I try to make the League better known and better understood in every conversation about the League, in every letter or pamphlet written for the League, in every news story or radio program involving the League, and in my League meetings.<sup>70</sup>

Again, The Voter says:

The responsibility for increasing public knowledge and appreciation of the League isn't just the job of a public relations chairman in your group (she'll guide and help you...yes), it's everybody's job.<sup>71</sup>

The Voter makes these suggestions for the individual League member:

1. Keep up to date on the League.
2. Know the National, State and Local agendas of study and action.
3. Know League policies.
4. Know League history.
5. Accentuate the positive.
6. Eliminate the negative.

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<sup>70</sup> League of Women Voters of Minnesota, The Articulate Voter (July-August, 1950), Vol. 28, No. 1, p. 3.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., pp. 4-5.

7. Be helpful.
8. Be proud of being in the League.<sup>72</sup>

The public relations chairman must work with all the board chairmen to see how their activities can be used for public relations purposes. Quite frequently, the public relations chairman prepares a companion piece to indicate to local leagues the public relations value of a particular activity, for example, voters service. For a special conference or state conventions, sample press releases are prepared for distribution to local leagues.

The editorship of the state League's bulletin might properly fall under the aegis of the public relations chairman. In the Minnesota League, the chairman has served as editor. This is something of a strain on one individual's time and talent. To be sure, there is a certain advantage in having the editor serve on the board, but this is not necessary if, as a non-board person, she maintains close liaison with the public relations chairman to whom she is responsible and the staff.

Radio, and now television, are other public relations responsibilities. There is a very real need for more adequate League work in these areas. Many of the communities where there are Leagues have radio stations which would be willing to grant time to the local League if their product were worth-while and attained a certain professional rating. The public relations chairman should have a committee member whose responsibility it would be to gather

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid., pp. 4-5.



together the radio work that has already been done, sample these ideas, and make them available to other Leagues. The preparation of radio scripts for adaptability by local Leagues could be sent out by the state board. In the cities where television stations are operating, the League should attempt to develop suitable ideas for programming and take advantage of this innovation before it becomes tied up commercially. A few of the Leagues in Minnesota have had continuing radio activities. There should be, therefore, personnel to draw on to fill such a position and/or serve as committee members.

There are sufficient requests which come into the League office for speakers to justify the establishment of a speakers bureau. This need not be elaborate but one person might work at the job of compiling a list of names of members willing to speak on League subjects. Then, when a request came to the office, it could be handled with a minimum of time and effort. This individual should serve as a member of the public relations committee.

There is no question but that the Minnesota League should establish a committee to handle the many phases of its public relations work. The past three years has seen this work done well but by an overburdened chairman too busy to establish a committee, though the intentions have been good. A new chairman assuming this activity should be strongly encouraged from the start to form a committee before other habit patterns in the conduct of League public relations are established.

Some indication has been given here of the board structure of

the Minnesota League of Women Voters. In general, the over-all structure is sound; it is the implementation that one might question -- implementation in terms of coordination and committee development.

Coordination, whether it be formal or informal, should be effected to a greater extent by state board members to be sure that every means is utilized to carry out the League purpose. To be sure, this is done now, but if the increased attention to community action, brought about by the critical world situation, is to succeed, an even larger effort must be made by all members. It is to be expected that the state board will exercise leadership in this direction.

The committee structure of the state board has been adequate where it is outlined in the By-Laws, as with the budget and nominating committees. Where the structure is merely suggested on the basis of experience, the fulfillment has been sporadic. The work of the budget committee will be discussed in another chapter. The nominating committee consists of five members, two of whom are members of the board of directors. The chairman, who is not from the state board, is elected by the convention. The remaining four committee members are appointed by the board of directors.<sup>73</sup>

Perhaps, a letter from the president to each of the board members soon after the state convention outlining each person's particular responsibilities would be helpful. The letter, which

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73 League of Women Voters of Minnesota, By-Laws, an. cit., p.5.



should be as short as possible, would refer them to several materials which should be read in preparing for the year's job. Basic publications are furnished to all board members. These include the State and Local Leader's Handbook, By-laws of the national and state Leagues, national and state programs, budgets and other pertinent materials which are determined to be useful and essential to the board member's job. The accompaniment of a letter or memo would be especially helpful to new board members as a device for partial orientation; it would be helpful to experienced board members particularly if their area of responsibility has changed. The principal value would be that it would point up the scope of the job and the necessity for assistance. It would be easier for board members to find persons to serve as committee members in the late spring and early summer than in the fall or in the midst of a hectic winter's operations.

This is more difficult to do on the state level; nevertheless, it is just as important to train leadership and have membership participation in the state League as well as in the local League. For the chairman to rely on herself to do the job is unfair both to her as an individual and to the League. Greater emphasis must be placed on the fact that when an individual joins the League, she works. As Mrs. Malcolm Hargraves, former President of the Minnesota League, remarked, "The League does not furnish inertia." That must be true or the League is not fulfilling its purpose. It must be true or the state League cannot do the intended job. Leadership and membership participation are not

the primary concern of this paper. Without both, however, this paper could not be written, and so some attention has been paid to this phase of group dynamics. Administration derives from this process, and here the League is no different from any other group whether it be a government agency, a business enterprise, a labor union, or another voluntary association. The nature of the administration is determined by those who administer. The League is strong and weak as leadership is strong and weak. Any organization plan will not insure successful administration no matter how sound it might appear to be from the standpoint of principles and techniques. A well thought out structure will, of course, facilitate good leadership and the accomplishment of the objectives of the organization. It is for this reason that administration is important in an analysis of the operations of volunteer civic association. The League's policy of membership participation and its attention to the achievement of that end prevents strong leadership from being dictatorial, and weak leadership from dissolving the organization. The truism is that democratic administration is never easy -- board members must serve in recognition of that fact.



## CHAPTER V

### STAFF

Job specifications. -- There have been no job specifications developed with respect to employment in the office of the Minnesota League of Women Voters. In looking for employees, there seems to be a tacit understanding among the board members and officers as to the qualifications of any organization or executive secretary, but these standards have not been recorded. On occasion, standards are compromised because of the urgency of the situation or some other unforeseen circumstance.

It might be well, however, to venture a statement of general requisites looked for in a League employee.

Age - This is not a significant factor except perhaps to say -- neither too young nor too old. Some care must be taken in the selection of the organization secretary that she is not so young that League members tend to dismiss her statements and/or advice. On the other hand, youth can be an advantage in attracting younger women into the League. To reiterate -- age can be of lesser importance when other factors tend to negate any seeming chronological disadvantage in one di-

rection or the other.

Education -- Of course, any academic training in political science or a related field would be advantageous to the League. Training in group work would also be of benefit to the organization secretary. Again, education is not vital because it has not proved to be so. Persons with no college training or with college work in such unrelated subjects as chemistry or mathematics have been effective League workers, and sometimes those with a pertinent college background have not been able to make a satisfactory contribution.

Experience -- This is as tenuous a qualification as education. It is fine for the League to secure a person with relevant experience in a phase of government, office, or group work, but this consideration would not rule out the hiring of an otherwise qualified individual.

Practical skills -- It is imperative that one person in the League office, usually the executive secretary, be knowledgeable in the operation of office machines -- typewriter, mimeograph, addressograph. Ability to take



shorthand is also an advantage although not completely essential. Some of the other office mechanics can be learned without previous knowledge, although any previous training or experience is helpful in such matters as keeping the files, bookkeeping, etc.

It is apparent that one of the reasons that job specifications have not been drawn up is because they would not then permit the elasticity needed from the League in hiring personnel. One might ask, if none of the above has any practical application in securing staff, what does? The intangibles are important and perhaps they might be best summed up in a single word, "attitude". In this term, all the important factors can be found -- flexibility, adaptability, enthusiasm, a willingness to do the menial chore as well as the one of personal interest, an ability to get along with people and to work well with them. No one person possesses these attributes in the same degree, and in diversity, various staff members have made different kinds of contributions to the League. In this same way, a diversity in age, education, experience, and practical skills have made it possible for the League to derive beneficial results of considerable variety from those whom it has employed.

There are other reasons why the League avoids specifics in its personnel practices. The League cannot afford to expend a large proportion of its small budget in salaries. Therefore, what

is expedient sometimes triumphs over what might be a completely ideal situation. Often, too, what originally seemed an expedient move proves to be wisdom . . . as the person or persons gain experience and rise to the demands of the job. The League knows that the lack of remuneration means it cannot hold a staff member forever; it recognizes that this fact has very clear advantages. The necessity of orienting more frequently, which is expensive in terms of time and woman power, also carries with it a reassurance that no one person will have been on the job so long as to assume a role of importance, and/or identification that would prove unhealthy in the long run.

At one time, in the early 1930's, some attempt was made to establish qualifications for the executive and field (now called organization) secretaries. The qualifications listed for the executive secretary were:

1. College work in political science is essential. Experience in government service or work with government is helpful.
2. Must enjoy office routine, that is, a definite time for work, and should not be expected to work outside of office hours.
3. Should have efficient, attractive appearance in meeting people, and should have intelligent sounding voice over telephone.
4. Must have ability to jump easily from one job or trend of thought to another, as different officers come in with different problems and requests.



5. Should have ability to get along with people.<sup>74</sup>

These requirements were listed for the field organizer:

1. Ability to get along with all kinds of people, demand respect, create enthusiasm and interest, ability to hold Leagues to minimum requirements.
2. Understanding of League policy and procedure and highlights of program.
3. Willingness to be alone frequently, to stand rebuffs and discouragements, as well as success.
4. Education -- with some emphasis on political science -- teaching experience is an asset.
5. Poise.
6. Ability not only to get a League, but to look after its growth and not give up until you have exhausted every means of holding the League.
7. An organizer should not become a speech-maker, but should develop discussion that will help the League to understand its own problems.<sup>75</sup>

This rather elementary outline of job specifications for these two positions contains many elements which have application today. Except for the first statement in regard to the qualifications of the executive secretary, "College work in political science is essential", there is no other reference to particular

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<sup>74</sup> League of Women Voters of Minnesota, "Employment Information", Typewritten document in file, no date, p. 1.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

educational background or experience. The other references pertain largely to aptitudes and personality.

Recruitment. -- It would seem that job specifications for staff positions in any voluntary organization would have to be of a very general nature except in those rare instances where some sort of technical training is essential. Probably, one of the most significant factors in this is that voluntary organizations are unable to pay salaries commensurate with the job to be done. This does not, however, prevent the securing of competent personnel for there are people willing to make remunerative sacrifices for short periods of time because of personal interest in the work of the organization. For those groups which might be categorized under the heading, "civic improvement", persons with an appreciation of social needs often work or develop this understanding as they progress on the job. Even though the data on those who have served with the League in Minnesota is very sparse, such correspondence as is available indicates that this has, in many instances, been the motivating factor for those who apply to the League for employment. In this context, education and experience have sometimes been suitable. Those who have been exposed to social problems, either through academic or practical work, in one or another aspect of the social sciences are those who gravitate towards the League.

The practical work in government which frequently produces staff members is membership in the League of Women Voters. It has been a fairly common experience that staff members in the



League have been introduced to this organization by joining a college or local League. When a staff member resigns the League itself is often turned to as a source of supply for personnel. The advantage in having a person work for the League who has been a member is that the individual familiar with the purpose and policies of the organization does not require the same amount of orientation as the one completely new to the group. Also, she will frequently be able to make a larger contribution because of her experience as a member -- this is only if she maintains high standards and does not dismiss ideas as impractical or impossible on the basis of the activities of her own discussion group or local League which may not have been completely ideal.

Recruitment, generally, in the Minnesota League does not follow a formally established procedure. Suggestions come from League members, and it is more by word of mouth than any other manner that recruits are found. In certain cases, members of political science faculties are asked for names of former or current students who would be qualified or interested in working for the League.

To summarize then, it would seem that the establishment of job specifications for employment in the League of Women Voters can be a questionable practice if not carefully worked out. The principle is a sound one, however, and it would be advisable to do so to postulate a standard to which to attain, but the factors of the smallness of the staff, the inability to pay large salaries, and past experience in recruitment and performance would render

such specifications a mere hypothesis which could be proved or not be proved as the case may be. Care should be taken in writing out specifications to make them sufficiently flexible to permit rather broad application since if they are too rigid and the requirements of work with the League are largely the intangibles of personality, these job specifications could not guarantee.

Division of labor. -- There have been three job categories in the Minnesota League of Women Voters: Executive Secretary, Organization Secretary, and Office Secretary. In the thirty-one years between 1920 and 1951, seven persons have served as executive secretaries, seven as organization secretaries. Recently, in the period from December 1948 to September 1950, one staff member, nominally the organization secretary, also performed many of the functions of the executive secretary. The third classification is that of office secretary. Until recently, the position of office secretary was filled consistently on either a half-time or full-time basis. The tendency in the last five years or so, except for the period December, 1948 to September, 1950, when the second staff member was a part-time, then a full-time office secretary, has been to eliminate this position and call in part-time clerical help during emergencies or periods of peak loads.

The division of labor between the executive secretary and organization secretary has been spelled out. It should be emphasized, however, that with such a small staff, any division of labor is adapted to the talents of those employed at any given time. In general, it can be said that the executive secretary



handles routine correspondence, processes materials prepared by board members, keeps a double entry accounting of receipts and disbursements, is in charge of processing The Articulate Voter, oversees incoming and outgoing mail, keeps the membership lists up to date, records the literature bills, purchases supplies and makes arrangements for the maintenance and procurement of equipment, and other miscellaneous procedural chores. The major tasks of the organization secretary are in the areas of local League organization and legislative work during sessions of the legislature. Together, the two secretaries provide research and editorial assistance to the board, help in the preparation of reports and analytical records, and keep board members informed and assist them in any way they might require.

Policies. -- At no time has any member of the staff been paid in excess of \$200.00 per month.<sup>76</sup> The salary provisions have varied in terms of the general economic picture, the strength of the League, and the training of the personnel. Provisions are usually made for salary increments with the customary qualifications of meritorious service. The organization secretary is allowed \$1.00 a day for food costs while in the field. Travel and hotel expenses are paid by the League. If she has her own car, she is paid at the rate of eight cents a mile. Modest travel advances are made to avoid the necessity of having the organization

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<sup>76</sup> League of Women Voters of Minnesota, "Chronological Record of Salaried Staff, and special Workers, Minnesota League of Women Voters" (November 27, 1944), pp. 1-3. (Typewritten.)

secretary draw on her personal funds. Salaries are paid bi-monthly.<sup>77</sup>

The office hours are from nine o'clock a.m. to four-thirty p.m. with an hour for lunch, Monday through Friday. Excessive overtime is compensated for by reasonable time off when required.

Occasional absence is allowed for sick leave when needed. For any prolonged absence, due to serious illness, the regular salary will be paid for a period of not exceeding two weeks.

Each full-time staff member is allowed one month's vacation with pay, and eight-and-one-half holidays are observed during the year.<sup>78</sup>

In general, it can be said that the personnel policies of the Minnesota League are generous ones with respect to the conditions of work. If the requisites for staff members are largely intangibles, it can also be said that many of the rewards for working for the League are also intangibles. This is true of any job situation where job satisfaction is of primary concern to the individual worker.

Little mention is made by the national League to guide state or local Leagues with respect to the operation of Leagues with a staff. There was some indication in the files of the Minnesota League that around 1930, the national League had sent out a questionnaire pertaining to the operation of state offices. At the

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<sup>77</sup> League of Women Voters of Minnesota, "Memorandum as to Policies of State Board with Respect to Staff Members" (September 22, 1948), p. 2. (Typewritten)

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., p. 1.



last national convention of the League in 1950, one of the round tables was entitled "How to Run a State Office with a Staff".

The State Leader's Handbook makes some mention of the relationship between the state board and staff positions in these words:

The Board would give careful attention to the question of paid, professional staff. In the League of Women Voters, the most important work has always been done by volunteers -- the members themselves. Professional assistance can supplement but does not take the place of the members. It can, however, relieve the members of time-consuming detail so that her time and efforts can be directed toward the larger field of League activity. In deciding to employ professional staff assistance, the Board should consider just what it hopes to achieve. The following questions might be asked:

What type of assistance is needed, clerical, executive? Usually the first paid worker in our office is a clerical assistant. As the office expands, field service and program workers can be added.

Is there a clear understanding of her duties on the part of the secretary?

Is one person -- the president or her assistant -- responsible for allocation of the secretary's time?

Has sufficient time been given to the secretary's orientation to the purpose, policy and program of the League?

The Board should discuss and decide on a definite plan for allocation of work, reconsidering

and modifying this plan as needed but adhering to it carefully.<sup>79</sup>

For the Minnesota League, the answer to the first question posed in the State Leader's Handbook is obvious. For this League, which came into being in 1919, one year before the national league, both an executive and organization secretary are needed, with one or both possessing some skill in program work.

The clear understanding of the secretaries' duties is largely dependent upon the following questions pertaining to direction and orientation:

Relationship of staff to board.-- The secretaries in the League have many bosses, for they are responsible to every member. The board members, of course, are those who direct most closely the work of the staff. The organization and legislative chairmen are the ones to whom the organization secretary is for the most part responsible. The executive secretary takes most of her direction from the president and her assistant, usually the first vice president. In assisting board members, the secretaries indicate the availability of their time, will notify those concerned when a committee is to meet, will get necessary information either from the files or from other sources, and will read material editorially or critically depending on knowledge and will transmit it to a reading committee or specialists for review. In all these

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<sup>79</sup> League of Women Voters of the United States, State Leader's Handbook (1947), p. 22.



things, it is important to remember that the purpose of the staff and office is to enable the board member to perform her responsibility, not to do it for her.<sup>80</sup> The staff members must plan in such a way that the woman power, the League's most precious asset, can be used to the best advantage.<sup>81</sup>

In arranging the field work of the organization secretary, certain specifics should be kept in mind in terms of the best utilization of the personnel. Within the limits of the over-all organization plan, considerations of age, experience, special knowledge or interest, and personality should determine the scope of her activity. She can, of course, be sent to a community on short notice; she can be used in concert with a board member, although previous agreement should be made as to which will have the authority in the conduct of the meeting. Again, this is largely determined by the factors of age, experience, etc.<sup>82</sup>

Generally speaking, the job of the staff member is a two-way street. They keep board members informed and, in turn, implement the instructions of the board members to accomplish a given objective. It might be well to pursue this avenue to see exactly how this procedure works.

First of all, the staff must be familiar not only with the duties of a particular chairman but her capabilities as well. Her talents and failings will point up the kinds of assistance which

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80 Mrs. Malcolm Hargraves, op. cit., p. 3.

81 Ibid., p. 9.

82 Ibid., p. 9.

will be required. In some instances, the emphasis should be procurement of research data; in others, editorial work will be needed most. Perhaps a description of incoming mail would best indicate how board members are kept abreast of current happenings in their field. All incoming mail is opened by the executive secretary who reads it over. Anything that is not of a purely routine nature is routed to the appropriate board member who is called, or if she lives out of town, is mailed the correspondence. If it is not urgent, it is put in the board member's file for her attention when she is next in the office. Files are kept for the individual board members and all relevant materials and letters are placed in their files. After she has gone through the file, she tells the secretary what should be placed in the regular files or what should be discarded. The president sees the carbon copy of the board member's reply together with the original letter. The delegation of this responsibility leaves the president free to do a larger job, yet she is kept informed of all that has transpired. All routine correspondence (membership information, literature order, checks, etc.) is handled by the staff.

The fact that state board members live in different parts of the state of Minnesota makes this procedure more complex than for a city League where board members come from a smaller geographic unit. It is sometimes difficult to be completely comprehensive in correspondence; however, the fact that staff members also attend board meetings and committee meetings and hold individual conferences with board members tends to alleviate this as develop-



ments occur. The elapse of time when a deadline is to be met is perhaps the most difficult obstacle to overcome when material must be shuffled between board member and office. Of course, in emergencies, there is always recourse to the telephone. Limitations on the use of this instrument are mostly financial ones.

Instructions from the board to the staff are the aforementioned ones -- board and committee meetings, correspondence, phone conversations, and individual conferences. Where there is any question on the part of the staff, it is expected that they will contact board members in town. It has been the custom to elect the first vice president from St. Paul or Minneapolis if the president lives out state with the thought that she will then have general supervision of the office as a major responsibility in serving as assistant to the president. The designation of one single person to whom the staff can turn for authority greatly expedites the decision-making process within the office. The vice president is expected, in the conduct of her duties, to check with the office frequently and help to determine priorities where there is a heavy office load. This responsibility relieves the staff of having to make decisions which should for the most part be made by board members.

It can be said that direction from the board to the staff through the utilization of these various techniques has been definite. In many instances, the advice of the staff is sought, and there is very little difference in the final analysis as to methods of procedure.

The next question referred to orientation. The amount of orientation depends, of course, upon the individual's training, experience, and knowledge of the League. Publications which set forth the purpose, policies, program, organization, and history of the League should be read. Exposure to League talk and, in so far as possible, the performance of specific tasks all are part and parcel of the orientation process. Of all these, the most valuable is the actual work, and, in the League, where there is usually no time for a leisurely orientation or training program, work is done almost from the very beginning. To be sure, some mistakes are made, but the other staff member is there at all times to guide and advise. From the experienced secretary, the new secretary learns procedures; from the League members, she learns philosophy. There is a certain degree of overlapping in this learning process, but, generally speaking, these are the contributions made in orienting a new staff person.

The final statement in the State Leaders Handbook refers to a board plan for allocation of work among the staff. To a certain extent, this has been done through a statement of the duties of the organization secretary and the executive secretary prepared in 1948. Modifications and alterations suggested by the Handbook to allow for the particular talents of the staff members are made. Both secretaries in the course of time are usually familiar with the work of each so that one can run the office during the other's vacation or take over in case of illness.

The secret of successful operations of staff and board mem-



bers can best be summed up in the statement made by a former president of the Minnesota League, "Professionals with the spirit of volunteers; volunteers with the standards of professionals."<sup>83</sup> It is to the degree that each is able to attain this ideal that a large measure of the effective administration of the Minnesota League will be achieved.

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<sup>83</sup> Mrs. Malcolm Hargraves, "Presidential Address" (Paper read at the State Convention, League of Women Voters of Minnesota, May 23, 1951).

## CHAPTER VI

### FINANCE

Role of the state League. -- The main task of a state League in securing money to support the work of the organization is the development of sound money-raising techniques by the local League. The Minnesota League does not solicit funds directly. Money raised in the local Leagues is transmitted to the state League. The state League in turn contributes a pledge to the national League. The description of the finance chairman's job in the chapter on board organization describes this process more fully. However, a brief outline might be valuable in contemplating the total picture. The state job with respect to League financing revolves around:

1. Leagues which use the contribution method.
  - a. Those whose drives are well established and need little if any help.
  - b. Those who need encouragement and/or new ideas to continue; those who need help in changing to the simultaneous nation-wide drive schedule (in the fall).
2. Those who for various reasons do not use the contribution method.
3. State contributions from individuals.



- a. Direct contributors -- need consistent attention in regard to League literature, activities, etc.
- b. Members-at-large -- how to service them.
- c. Jane Grey Swisshelm Fund. These would be special contributions and not re-solicited.<sup>84</sup>

"Actually what we want is to have every League in Minnesota make an effort commensurate with its circumstances to expand its own activities and support state and national ones by means other than dues."<sup>85</sup>

Budget process. -- An examination of the League's budget process and something of its developing sophistication in money matters will serve to point up the place of finance in the state League.

The By-Laws of the League of Women Voters state that the fiscal year is from April 1 to March 31 each year.<sup>86</sup> In the article on finance, it is also stated that the board shall submit to the Convention a budget for the ensuing year. This budget shall provide for the support of the League of Women Voters of the United States as well as for the state League. A copy of the budget is sent to each local League at least two months before the conven-

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<sup>84</sup> Letter from Mrs. Malcolm Hargraves to Mrs. Frederick E. King, June 21, 1950, p. 1.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>86</sup> League of Women Voters of Minnesota, By-Laws, 22, cit., Article VII, Section 1, p. 4.

tion.<sup>87</sup> By-Laws also provide that the budget be prepared by a committee which is appointed no less than four months before the convention. The treasurer is an ex-officio member of the committee but is declared ineligible to serve as chairman.<sup>88</sup>

Practice in recent years relative to the composition of the budget committee has been that both the treasurer and finance chairman serve ex-officio. The chairman and one other person are non-board members, and the remaining committee member is usually a board representative. Basic data such as copies of the budget adopted at the previous convention, a summary report of income and expenditures to date and outlook for the remainder of the year are provided by the staff.

Past experience and some indication especially from the board members as to the general state of health of the League usually result in a fairly close approximation in the balance sheet between income and outgo on the first trial.

The work of the budget committee is done both by correspondence and meeting. The members furnished with the necessary information prior to the first meeting come fairly well oriented. At this time the first budget is prepared and is then sent to the board for its consideration. After recommendations from the board, the budget is once more revised if that is necessary either by correspondence or by an additional meeting. After final approval by the

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid., Article VII, Section 2, p. 4.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., Article VII, Section 3, p. 4.



board, it is sent to the local Leagues which have ample opportunity for examination before final action is taken at the state convention. Budget revisions are made once or twice during the course of the year.

The approach in budget formulation in the League is to determine expenditures and then provide for anticipated income. The budget committee members are conscious of the fact that even though the technique is to relate income to expenditures, the expenditures should be kept within the bounds of realism for this discussion. Of course, it would be ideal to be able to pay the entire costs of board members attending the monthly meetings, to compensate more adequately the travel costs of especially the president who in recent years has lived outside the Twin Cities and other officers and board members who travel for the League, to pay the staff better salaries, etc. On the other hand, the budget committee has been more optimistic than defeatist in considering possible income when the work of the League for the coming year has been outlined.

Fiscal analysis. -- It might be interesting to review Minnesota League finances over the years since its existence, and examine the degree to which budget estimates have approximated actual income and expenditures. A tabulation by the author of the financial history of the state League indicate more sins of omission than commission. For example, there was no auditor's report for the ten-year period, 1938-1948. For those years, the treasurers' reports have been used in this analysis. From 1919-1941, the fiscal year was from October 1 to September 30; in the period 1941-

1947, from May 1 to April 30; and since 1947 the fiscal year has been from April 1 to March 31.

It is of interest to note that the years of highest income have been for 1919 and 1951 (budget estimate) when the figure has been over \$16,000.00. There is no record to indicate whether the League inherited any money from the parent organization, the women's suffrage group, or whether it was conceived with an enthusiasm that was reflected by large financial donations, to account for this large figure in its first year of existence. In the years between, income has fluctuated between that high figure and a low of \$6,974.31 in the year 1934-35. This, of course, may be accounted for by the general economic situation prevailing during the depression era. In the years between 1930-31 and 1939-40, the budget estimate and the auditor's report hovered in the \$7,000 - \$9,000 range. At no other time is a figure less than \$10,000 noted, except in the budget estimate for 1945-46 which was \$9,650. Actual income for that year was \$12,158.34, one of the largest discrepancies between estimation and actuality and due largely to a turnover in officers and staff in a period of some personal conflict in the state League, and the uncertain international situation which prevailed in May of 1945. The average estimated income for the thirty-one years between 1919-1951 (no final budgets could be found for the years 1922-23 and 1931-32) has been \$13,269.89. The average actual income for the 32 year period between the years 1919 and 1950 has been \$10,673.97. At first glance this would seem to be a rather large discrepancy. However, it should be pointed out that



in the first year of operation, the state board increased an originally recommended budget of \$20,000 to \$50,000 in what must have been a tremendous burst of enthusiasm for this new organization. The actual intake was slightly over a third of this guess. The following year, 1920, the estimate was \$25,000; the actual receipts equaled roughly one-half that figure. In 1921, the budget was set at \$21,150. Income was just over half that amount. From 1923 on (the budget for 1922-23 was missing), a fairly accurate budget estimate has been adopted by the conventions. In 21 of the fiscal years, budget estimates exceeded income; in 9 of the fiscal years, income exceeded the budget estimate. However, the margin, except for the three years noted above, has been a small one.

The major source of income through the years has been from the local Leagues. In the first years of the League when the quota system prevailed, many were unable to fulfill the pledge. In recent years, when the pledge from local Leagues has been established on a basis of over-all strength, a League not paying in full has been the exception rather than the rule. The state League has derived funds from the sale of educational material, national and state publications, and from the subscriptions to The Articulate Voter formerly called The Woman Voter, which are held by every member. In the past, direct contributions to the state League were one of the largest sources of income. Recently, emphasis has been in the direction of encouraging contributors to donate to the local League if there is one in the community. Then the local League can pass part of the contribution on to the state League

in its pledge. Another factor in this approach is that it is much easier for the local League to service a contributor than for the state League to do so. One of the processes in League finance is to inform contributors of the work of the League on a year round basis so when he or she is solicited again, he will know what the League has done with his money. At the present time, most of the contributions to the state League come from persons living in a community where there is no local League.

Income from members-at-large has never been very substantial. The largest figure recorded is \$38.25 for the year 1932-33. In 1950-51, the amount was \$4.00, or two members-at-large. This activity poses a difficult question for the state board. It is more expensive to handle members-at-large and time is limited. Yet the cultivation of this kind of membership might well result in the development of new Leagues. This problem would seem to have a rather low priority until the more important work of the League is handled in such a way so as to permit time and effort in this area. And, of course, there are other organization techniques leading to the establishment of new Leagues.

State conventions and meetings have usually evidenced a small excess of income over expenditure derived from registration fees. College dues and other miscellaneous items account for the balance of sources of income for the Minnesota League.

In the past there have been some special funds established and from which interest has accrued. In 1937, Mr. G. W. Bacon established a permanent fund in the memory of his aunt, Mrs. Jean



G. Walton, and Jane Grey Swisshelm with an initial contribution of \$1,000. Subsequent contributions to this fund now provide an annual interest yield in the neighborhood of \$30 - \$40.

As with income, the highest expenditure was in the first year of operation, 1919-1920, and the last year for which a report has been made, 1950-51. The amounts were \$15,967.30 and \$13,858.24, respectively. The average budget estimate is, of course, the same as for the income side, \$15,269.89. The actual expenditure for the years 1919-1951 averages out to \$10,644.11. The figures for average income and the average expenditure come within \$30 of each other, the surplus being on the income side. For 14 of the fiscal years, the budget estimate exceeded the actual expenditures; in 12 of the fiscal years, expenditures exceeded the estimate. The margins between estimates and expenditures have been small except in the three aforementioned years, 1919-1922.

The largest single expenditure item in the budgets and reports of the Minnesota League has been for salaries. For the most part this item has represented roughly 1/3 of League expenses except in the depression period when other items were cut and salaries were for the most part maintained at the same level. At this time salary totals frequently equalled one-half of League costs. Another sizable charge has been that for office maintenance including the purchase of supplies, equipment and postage.

The item referred to in the budget as League promotion travel has been a major expenditure and one of the most important. This is the money spent for organization work and visits made by other

Minnesota makes  
the ninth largest  
pledge. In order  
they are

1. N. Y. - 14200
2. Ill. 13200
3. Ohio 9600
4. Mass 8750
5. N. J. 7700
6. Cal 7600
7. Conn. 7100
8. Missouri 6600
9. Minn. 5900



board members in a program or non-program area. This expense has fluctuated according to the extent of travel by the organization secretary and the organization chairman and whether or not they have a car.

The pledge to the national League has a record of wide variation from a low of \$250 in 1922-23 to a high of \$5,900 in 1951-52. Even though \$1,200 of this latter figure is allocated for a new national every-member publication, it is, nevertheless, the largest pledge ever made by the Minnesota League. The Minnesota League has an excellent record in the amounts it has pledged to the national League. At the present time, only New York and Illinois pay more.

The League expends money for the publication of the bulletin, for the acquisition of national publications and for the preparation of state materials. In all these instances, it is generally the rule that income from their sales is greater than the expenses involved.

It is only recently that the state League has included in its budget provision for president's expenses, the costs of board members attending meetings, and for sending delegates to national conventions or council meetings. It is only since 1948 that any consistent policy has been established for these expenditures. Each year there has been an attempt to increase the amount, and when there is an indication that there will be a surplus from unexpended funds, part of that surplus is usually transferred to increase further the amounts allocated for these purposes.

Other expenses of the League go for telephone and telegraph, insurance, college Leagues and other small miscellaneous items. The item called "Special Project Fund" is the expenditure of the interest from the Jane Grey Swisshelm Fund and is used, in the discretion of the board, for a special purpose for which funds would not otherwise be available.

Records. -- A comparison of figures for both income and outgo is very difficult because through the years different headings have been used. The budgets have usually been more superficial than the treasurers' reports which have gone into some detail. For a period of time, the budget of the state League would have only four items listed under income and four under expenditures. This renders very difficult any analysis as to accuracy of estimates except with respect to total figures. The treasurers' reports and the auditors' reports have not always agreed. Whether this is because one was done previously to another and credit was allowed on the past year's records after the close of the fiscal year or for some other reason is hard to say. It has been pointed out that there was no auditor's report for the ten-year period, 1938-1948. All of these things indicate that the mechanics of finance in the Minnesota League have left something to be desired.

In 1948 when the bookkeeping system was revised, the items in both the budget and the accounts were made the same, which meant that the treasurer's report would also conform. Since 1948, the reports of the auditor and the treasurer have been in agreement. It is important for the sake of future financial accuracy that this

system be preserved. The fact that since 1919 the Minnesota League of Women Voters has taken in \$341,567.09 and expended \$340,611.79 certainly points up the necessity for the careful maintenance of accurate records. The fact that it was necessary to go to three files and to the files of most of the state conventions to gather together this basic data, and even then there were some omissions, is a strong indication that there is considerable need for the centralization of financial records. (Appendix B and C)

Action by the state convention. — The minutes of the state conventions indicate that there has been very little change of the proposed budgets by action of the convention. Any alteration in the budget as presented derives from the amount of the pledge announced by local League representatives at one of the sessions. In the past few years an attempt has been made to get the next year's pledges sufficiently in advance to avoid extensive revision at convention time. The principle reason for the few questions from the delegates or any revision at their behest is a lack of appreciation of the meaning of the figures. It is a generalization and/or a platitude that, by and large, most women seem to shy away from budgets and fiscal matters generally. Of course, there is no substantiation in fact for this when women control 80% of the money in the United States, except that perhaps those who feel most strongly are the most vocal in their expressed horror. Attempts after attempt to render budgets comprehensible and interesting have not succeeded in altering the rubber-stamp action of the convention. It is unquestionably true that a larger and more effective



effort could be made in this direction even though those who have served as budget chairmen have been for the most part capable women. It is an interesting commentary on the democratic structure of the League that the officers and board members are more often disappointed where there are no questions and comments and more pleased when there are. If there is discussion, it is evidence that the leadership has been at least partially successful in putting over the budget as a blueprint for League work and therefore making it understood by the membership to be as important as it is.

For the fiscal year, 1946-47, a rather interesting chart was prepared indicating "What You Have in Financial Support" to the state and national Leagues and "What You Received in Services for Your Money". It would seem that this sort of chart with further embellishments of color and sketches might be the sort of pictorial outline that would be useful in budget dramatization. When the budget is sent to local Leagues, it is accompanied by a letter of explanation from the chairman of the budget committee. Of course, it cannot be expected that local Leagues will have the intimate knowledge of state operations to judge accurately the validity of the budget estimates. However, if the member has been acclimated to a concern about budgets in her local League, it would be expected that she might transfer that sense of inquiry to the state job with which she is less familiar.

It has already been pointed out that the variance in income and expenditures from the years 1919-1951 has been small. The Minnesota League received in income amounts around \$10, \$11, \$12 and

\$13,000 in the twenties; it has acquired the same sums in the forties and fifties. Yet the League today is active and strong with less purchasing power in \$13,000 than would have been the case twenty-five years ago. The same holds true for the other side of the ledger recording League expenditures. Factors in this picture are the stable salary picture, increasing reliance on the mimeograph machine as opposed to the printing press, and a general lessening of ceremonial features which cost money and were more reminiscent of the dramatic flair of the old League than the plodding characteristics of the League today.

In conclusion, it might be said that although the budget-making process is sound, more attention should be paid to the budget presentation. In addition, greater care should be taken to preserve League financial data in the records. If it is true that the budget is a blueprint and the statement of the treasurer, supported and confirmed by the auditor's report which should be made yearly, is a record, the necessity for their maintenance is obvious. The League cannot afford to be negligent in the fiscal mechanics of its program.

## CHAPTER VII

### OFFICE MANAGEMENT

Many of the elements involved in office management in the Minnesota League of Women Voters have been touched upon in previous chapters. However, it might be well to mention those procedures which if not reduced to effective routine can serve to disrupt administrative efficiency in any organization.

Processing of money. -- In 1948-9 a rather comprehensive office reorganization was effected. This was derived largely from the initial step in establishing a double entry bookkeeping system as opposed to the older method which tended to result in mistakes and/or inaccuracies. The auditor that year recommended double entry bookkeeping and helped to set up the books for the new method. As pointed out in the chapter on finance, the books contained the same headings as the budget breakdown. With the new system, it became apparent that it would fall upon the staff to assume the major responsibility for its maintenance. Unless the treasurer came into the office each day, which was unrealistic for a variety of reasons, it was contingent upon persons who were there to make the entries for incoming and outgoing checks. Heretofore, the treasurer had come in on the average of twice a month to copy figures in the ledger which the executive secretary had recorded in the cash book. In this process, the chances of error are obvious. At the present time, three persons are authorized to sign checks --



the president, treasurer, and executive secretary. So here, too, a staff member has considerable responsibility. What is the practice of handling finances in the state League? The executive secretary records all income and expenditures. Deposits are made twice a month, around the fifteenth and on the last day of the month. No receipts are sent out from the state office since the cancelled check or money order stub serves that purpose. Checks are usually written twice a month, near the first when the last month's bills have been received and towards the end of the month when any subsequent invoices may have come into the office. Since two signatures are required, the president or treasurer usually sign checks in advance, and when they are made out, the executive secretary affixes her signature.

This procedure, which is a great improvement in the saving of time and attaining greater accuracy, posed a problem. If the new system depended upon the daily attention of the staff, what was the role of the treasurer? It would seem that under present circumstances, she serves more as an auditor than a treasurer. The monthly report which she makes at each board meeting is prepared simply by adding the columns and placing the total amounts by the appropriate budget headings. The treasurer should see the report before the board meeting and ask the staff any questions about either income or expenditures which would be helpful in her interpretation to the board. There is no question but that, in this one respect, the treasurer's job is more difficult for it is always harder to understand what you have not done yourself. How-

ever, if she would take initiative and be inquisitive, it would certainly be possible for her to be completely familiar with the financial transactions of the League. There is another protection in that any expenditure which is not routine is authorized by the board. Also, the books are now audited each year.

In this situation it is incumbent on the treasurer to determine the degree of her participation since the only overt indication of her job is in giving the monthly and annual reports and signing checks. In this instance, it would seem that the sacrifice of participation for greater efficiency and economy certainly has merit.

Pledge payments. -- Prior to the time of the state convention, each League is asked to send in the amount of their pledge and the time at which they wish to make payments. Most Leagues pay in three ways; in one lump sum, twice, or four times a year. An alphabetical file, by League, is kept of this information indicating the date due, amount due, amount paid, and date paid. In this same three-by-five card file, a monthly chronological file is kept, so the executive secretary by looking, for example, at the month of July can tell which Leagues indicated they wished to pay on their pledge at that time. A month previous to this she sends out reminders including the date and amount due according to the instructions sent the state office by the local League. This system greatly facilitates prompt payment by the local Leagues and enables the state board to anticipate income and spend accordingly. This last is a valuable device in helping the board to plan.



The fact that in recent years the monthly bank balance has been in the neighborhood of \$1,000 has rendered this less important than in a time of more difficult financial circumstances.

Membership records. -- An alphabetical file by League of the members of each local League is kept in the office. This three-by-five card file contains the name and address of the member. As the membership information comes into the office (drops, new members, changes of address, reinstatements), the executive secretary either pulls the card, makes a new one, or changes the address. She sends this information on special forms provided for this purpose to the national office. She then makes the corresponding changes on the plates for the addressograph machine either making new stencils or pulling old ones. The billing system contributes to the maintenance of an accurate and up-to-date membership listing.

Literature bills. -- Bills for the purchase of national and state educational material are mailed to each of the local Leagues every two months following the mailing of the state bulletin The Articulate Voter, which is published bi-monthly. As orders for material come into the state office and as bills are received from the national office indicating the purchase of literature by various Leagues, entries are made in a ledger containing an alphabetical listing of local Leagues. At the end of the two-month period, the sums are totalled and bills are sent out. There is a charge of 36¢ a year per member for receipt of The Articulate Voter. This averages for each issue (six during the year) 6¢ per member. Thus, if a League has 50 members, there appears on the bi-monthly state-



sent a charge for 50 Voters at 6¢ each. This helps the treasurer of the Local League to check with her membership figure to ascertain whether the state office has a correct number of members listed for that League on the basis of the number of Voters that appears on the bill. Only five or ten copies out of a mailing of 4,700 are returned for incorrect addresses or other reasons after each mailing of The Articulate Voter which indicates the accuracy of the mailing and membership list. Checks for educational material come in promptly as a rule, and there has proved to be a very small margin of error in the statements as they go out. This record also enables the state board to observe what materials the local Leagues are ordering and whether they seem to be making adequate use of the publications available.

There is no publications chairman on the state board although most local Leagues have one. She is in charge of procuring and distributing League publications not only among League members but in the community as well. Upon occasion, a state board member has undertaken to make an appraisal of materials used by local Leagues over the period of a year. There has been no real follow-up except as visiting board members make suggestions to the Leagues of ways and means to secure a wider distribution in the community. Perhaps a member of the public relations committee should direct this activity.

Files. — A complete revision of the files was effected in 1949, and the new system seems to be working satisfactorily. Alphabetical files are kept of the local and college Leagues. Chronological files are kept of League meetings — national and state con-

ventions, regional, state-wide and area conferences. National and state program files are broken down according to the current agenda and platform divisions. National and state non-program items are filed together as in organization, finance, public relations, voters service, etc. A miscellaneous file encompasses such things as state board meetings, national and state nominating committees, state and national program making. Another file contains League history and office data, employment records, insurance, taxes, leases, etc.

This particular breakdown should not be considered the final word on a filing code for the state League office. There are other possibilities for the maintenance of records. However, since this has proved to be fairly successful, there is no immediate necessity for change. Small alterations should be made as the need arises which alleviates the necessity of doing a larger job in the future.

Record of potential leadership. — One of the other records which the office staff maintains for board members on the nominating committee is a file on potential leadership. Suggestions for this file usually come from members of the organization committee and the organization secretary who make reports on persons with evident talents which might prove useful to the League. These observations come to the office through written and oral reports of visits to local Leagues. The name of the individual, her interests, and something about her present and/or future availability are incorporated on the card. This file can be used as a reference for chairmen seeking committee members, individuals wanted



for a special job, and, as mentioned previously, for service on the board of directors. This effort to do something concrete in the way of a systematic search for leadership has proved helpful and should continue to be helpful to the degree that board members contribute to its development and utilize it.

Record of vital statistics of local leagues. -- Another office help serves as a short cut to find out basic data about local Leagues without having to go through their individual files where their records are kept. It is a loose leaf notebook consisting of one mimeographed page for each local League which is filled in or changed as the information comes into the office. First, the congressional and legislative districts are given, then the number of members, the number of units, and the population of the town. The local current agenda is listed, and the date, frequency, and the last year in which their municipal elections were held. Information about local League finance includes whether or not a drive was held, the date, the amount of the dues, the amount of the budget, and the pledge to the state and national Leagues. Finally, the list of officers, board members and their assignments is made. Supplementary pages list publications ordered. It would seem that this device should have considerable value in providing finance, organization and voters service chairmen with essential information that is not always found in the files. Frequently, the editor of The Articulate Voter wants to write an article about what local Leagues are doing in their community. This notebook gives a clue for further inquiries for this purpose. It was not until plans for



this notebook crystalized and an identical page was sent to each local League to fill out that this information was complete in the state office. A new form should be made out each year, and the old one placed among the permanent records in the local League file. Every effort should be made to maintain this or a similar record of the basic facts, compiled in one place, on the local Leagues in Minnesota.

Relationship to Minneapolis office. -- One of the largest contributing factors to the effective operations of the state office has been the location of the office of the Minneapolis League of Women Voters next door. Both Leagues are able to derive certain benefits from this coexistence. There is a definite advantage to both groups, for example, in that by purchasing supplies together they are able to effect a considerable saving in money. The Minnesota League uses the addressograph machine in the city office, and the Minneapolis League uses the adding machine in the state office. Were they not located in geographic proximity, it would be difficult to make use of this kind of exchange. The good relations which have prevailed among the staff members have meant a cooperativeness of effort during periods of peak load in one or the other office. Both Leagues have mimeograph machines; sometimes both are being used by one League. Perhaps the most useful kind of assistance is that of manpower when the mechanical operations of stapling, stuffing, sealing, and stamping are urgently needed for a big mailing. Of course, the city League is in a better position to call on volunteers for this kind of a job; it is more difficult

to institute this kind of arrangement in the state League where the volunteers must be obtained from the local League in the city in which the office is located. By and large, the volunteers who have assisted the staff in times of peak loads have been state board members living in or near Minneapolis. Some assistance has been provided by the Minneapolis League's office volunteers. It would be an interesting study to see how many individuals have become prominent in the League because they offered to do an hour's typing or generally made themselves available for office work. By this means, many have acquired a more intimate knowledge of the League and that knowledge has led to more active participation.

Location of office. -- In speaking of the advantages accruing from this physical proximity of the state and large city League, it might be well to mention the location of the office and the space provided. The office is located in a building in the heart of the shopping center of downtown Minneapolis. This has proved to be an asset in the sense that members feel that they can "kill two birds with one stone". In the same morning or afternoon errands can be done and a trip to the League office for one purpose or another can be made. It would be hard to imagine a more ideal arrangement. The state office consists of one fairly large room with three desks, a small work table, four sets of files, a supply cabinet, bookcases, and the mimeograph machine and table. There is adequate space for individual conferences or small committee meetings. The Minneapolis office is a suite of four rooms. One is the board meeting room which the state League uses for its board



meetings or other meetings requiring a greater amount of space. The state office also utilizes this same room when a large mailing is being prepared. The addressograph machine which is used to mail out The Articulate Voter is in another small work room along with the files and mimeograph machine. Another small office contains the desks of the president and executive secretary. The reception room which is of good size contains the desk of the executive secretary's assistant, pamphlet racks, and storage cabinets. Without the facilities of the Minneapolis office, the state League would be quite severely hampered in the administration of its day-by-day activities.

Equipment. -- It is one of the duties of the staff to keep the board informed on the status of the equipment in the office. Planning ahead for regular replacement as opposed to large expenditures at one time means better financial management and better office management. The arrangement of service contracts for periodic inspection and repair of such items as the mimeograph and adding machines also serves to increase efficiency and avoid crises involved in situations where work must be produced when a piece of equipment breaks down.<sup>89</sup>

On occasion, there has been some tendency to refuse purchases of pieces of equipment because of the large expenditure involved. This tendency to a kind of false economy has probably hindered the

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<sup>89</sup> Mrs. Malcolm Hargraves, "How Best to Run a State League with an Office and Staff", op. cit., p. 9.



achievement of an optimum degree of efficiency. A generalization might be made in that women possess this characteristic to a greater extent than do men who are more familiar with modern business practices. This has not, however, acted to impede progress but only to approach it with more caution. And perhaps there is wisdom in this caution. In an organization of volunteers with a paucity of funds, it is most important to spend money for the larger tasks of the organization, and under no circumstances will a League office possess any resemblance to a modern affluent business office. It is only when a seeming economy in denying a certain purchase results in a larger expenditure of time and manpower that this approach hinders rather than helps the achievement of good administrative practices. When such a problem confronts the League boards, these factors should be weighed very carefully.

League board members are probably less familiar with the mechanical operations of the office than with any other League activity. This is as it should be since the purpose of an office is to make possible the performance of those tasks which release the energies of the members for the most important functions. This does not imply an ignorance of the performance of the secretaries. The president and her assistant are the two persons with the most knowledge of what is involved in the running of the office. Of course, the degree to which they are informed is largely dependent on the extent to which the staff keeps them informed. The staff certainly should not burden them with trivia; it is important that they are made aware of any needs, the more significant work, and

any reorganization planned.

The national League in the State Leaders Handbook states, "Leagues' needs and capacities vary to such a degree that it is unsatisfactory to set down definite plans for filing and office procedures, but the national office will be glad to consider each individual state's requirements and give all the assistance possible to set up good administrative practice."<sup>90</sup> Organization secretaries of the national League traveling in the field often report to the national headquarters the achievements of particular state offices. This means that a request from a state League for information on administrative techniques is frequently referred to another state League which seems to have evolved a satisfactory working solution. This exchange of information at meetings of various kinds has frequently proved helpful in the development of administrative improvements.

The purpose of an office for the state League is to provide a central place for the maintenance of records and the production of work essential to the job of the League when the size and financial conditions merit its establishment. It would presently be inconceivable for the Minnesota League to operate without both an office and a staff. The two are hard to separate since their purpose is the same, namely, to make it possible for the volunteers who are the members to attend to the important work that will accomplish the given objective of the League.

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<sup>90</sup> State Leaders Handbook, op. cit., p. 21.



## CHAPTER VIII

### REPORTING

If the League is to increase its effectiveness, it is obvious that the channels of communication should be sufficiently good to allow interchange of information and experiences. The recording of League activities is necessary to learn of new techniques, experiment with them, and adopt or discard them according to the results of the experimentation. There are many difficulties to overcome in the achievement of an adequate reporting system when there are over forty state Leagues and over 700 local Leagues. The Local Leader's Handbook suggests ways whereby some of the obstacles to efficiency in working in separated groups can be met:

First we must try to realize that we make a real contribution to the success of the whole League when we share our ideas and our experiences with the women who are laboring along with us in other states and other towns. That means Reports, Reports, and more Reports, Vertical reports, -- that is, to our state and national offices, whence the meat of them can be sent out to our fellow Leagues; and horizontal reports to each other, and to the women who are going to succeed us in our assignment.<sup>91</sup>

Local League meetings. -- Each local League sends to the state office a brief report of each of its meetings on a form pre-

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91 Local Leader's Handbook, op. cit., p. 51.



vided for that purpose. Any publicity which the League has received is attached to this form. (Appendix D) In addition, each League sends a copy of its board meeting minutes. Frequently, copies of significant correspondence with legislators or congressmen is sent to the state office. The results of congressional and legislative interviews or questionnaires are also made available to the state League. Supplementing these rather formal statements is the general correspondence, especially to the organization chairman or secretary, which provides additional information. In Minnesota, the local Leagues do a fairly good job of reporting.

Where the local Leagues fall down on the job is in the reporting the results of special events or activities. The other reports fill a need for basic information; it is the total story of a particular job that gainsays the League its public acknowledgement, and it is in this area that the record is incomplete. It is hard to know how a new habit pattern might be established. Possibly the public relations chairman or a member of her committee could piece together the story through her own knowledge and by interviewing those most intimately involved. There are many instances where adequate reporting by local Leagues could provide a substantial addition to the recorded history of municipal development in Minnesota. For example, a year or two ago, the St. Paul League engaged in a civic battle over public housing. The documentation of this story, either in a popular vein or a more formalized style, would provide valuable information and might well be published in "The National Municipal Review" or a public housing journal. Cer-

tainly, more attention should be paid to this activity by the state board.

From the state League to the national League go minutes of board meetings, copies of all materials sent to local Leagues, copies of The Articulate Voter, copies of interviews and correspondence with congressmen, and copies of congressional candidate questionnaires. The state League must also furnish the national office with basic data on membership, officers and board members and so on.

Performance. — Periodic official reports are required of state and local Leagues by the national organization. The most comprehensive report is the one on performance. It covers the areas of membership, state administration, services to local Leagues, development of unit organization in the state, program, and national services. This material is covered on five legal-sized pages with additional attachments as are found to be necessary. An appendix to this report consists of statistical information by Leagues. Included here are the population of the community, the number of members not renewing the past year, the number of units last year and this year, the number of visits made by the state, which Leagues have bulletins, the amount of the budget, and the amount each League contributes to the support of the state and national organizations.<sup>92</sup>

There has been a definite improvement in the nature of the

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<sup>92</sup> League of Women Voters of Minnesota, "Performance Record for Year Ending March 31, 1951", 7 pp. (Typewritten)



report questions in recent years. Even though the task of filling out the report is met with a certain lack of enthusiasm, this attitude has lessened as the report seems to be more purposeful in attaining the desired end. The statistical data is supplied by the executive secretary; other sections of the report are usually handled by the president, organization chairman, and the staff with other board members consulted on specific details.

Finance. -- A second major annual report is the one on state finance. This report is compiled by sending out to each of the local Leagues a form which when filled out gives the information to the state finance chairman for the report. Generally, the national League wants to know what were the contributions budgeted and those received, the number of persons contributing -- members and non-members, the number of solicitors, and any comments on the finance efforts of each League. Questions concerning over-all plans for future development and the specifics of the last year's experience are asked. The executive secretary also assists in the preparation of this report.<sup>93</sup>

Treasurer. -- Another annual report closely associated with the one made out by the finance chairman is that of the state treasurer. Again a form is sent to the treasurer of each local League for the information to place on the report. The breakdown is between income and expenditures. Under income, the questions concern

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<sup>93</sup> League of Women Voters of Minnesota, "Report by State Finance Chairman for the Year Beginning April 1, 1950", 2 pp. (Typewritten)



the amount secured from members in dues and contributions, non-members' contributions, and all other receipts. Under expenditures, the figures asked for are local disbursements and the amount passed on to the state and national Leagues. Otherwise, the treasurer is asked for income and expenditure figures for the state League and for the total figures for the local and provisional Leagues.<sup>94</sup>

Voters service. -- A new form which will appear on an annual basis is the voters service report of activities by state and local Leagues. This is a two-page report which is filled out by each League and there is no compilation of local League information required on the part of the state League. The voters service chairman makes out this report. It would seem that it is a wise move to procure this information on a more formalized basis since this activity represents some of the most significant work of the League.<sup>95</sup>

There are then four annual reports which are required of state and local Leagues by the national League. The organization or performance report is probably the most accurate of all the reports. The other reports which depend on information from local Leagues for compilation, namely, the report of the finance chairman and the treasurer, are not always complete. Some Leagues neglect to send in reports, others are incomplete. The voters service reports are as good or bad as the voters service chairman in

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<sup>94</sup> League of Women Voters of Minnesota, "Report by State Treasurer for the Year Beginning April 1, 1951", 2 pp. (Typewritten)

<sup>95</sup> League of Women Voters of Minnesota, "Voters Service Report, 1950-1951", 2 pp. (Typewritten)

each League makes them. Part of the difficulty with the finance and treasurer's reports stems from the fact that most local Leagues and the state League must make out these reports prior to the end of their fiscal years, and the figures usually represent an eleven-month period. It is true that there is a certain amount of duplication between the reports of the treasurer, finance chairman and the report on fund raising which might be eliminated by careful analysis and revision on the part of the national board members responsible for these areas of operation. The national office asks that these reports be submitted in time for computation and analysis prior to either the national convention or national council meeting which takes place each year in April. In this way, the national League reports to the local and state Leagues on the sum total of their activities for the past year.

In both the fund raising and voters service reports, an effort is made to get the "story" so that it can be used in feature articles or for publicity which usually is concentrated in the fall. The League of Women Voters of the United States has been attempting to achieve a simultaneous nation-wide fund raising drive in the fall months. It was felt that this would enable all the Leagues to take advantage of the wide publicity coverage effected by the national organization at that time. This has been partially achieved. Some Leagues which have established a pattern of spring drives are somewhat hesitant to change the time for fear of adverse results. There is some validity in this for a multiplicity of reasons, so the process will be a slow one, but one certainly to be pursued.



Fund raising. -- Another report, recently originated, pertains to fund raising. It is to be made out by the finance chairmen of the local Leagues and seeks information under the headings of "Preparation", "Results", and "Future Planning". One copy of the report goes to the state office and should be of considerable assistance to the state finance committee in performing their job during the year.

State convention. -- It has been mentioned that these reports are used in oral and written statements of interpretation and evaluation to the membership. In the same way they aid the state board in reporting to the state convention and are otherwise made available in a variety of forms to the local Leagues. At the state conventions, there are almost always reports by the president and the organization and finance chairmen. In different years the work of different chairmen is emphasized. In an election year the voters service chairman makes a statement of the composite activities of the local Leagues. The college League chairman usually makes a brief report. After a legislative session the legislative chairman tells the story of the League's successes and/or failures, as the case may be. In addition, the legislative chairman always makes a written report incorporating the voting records of the senators and representatives on issues with which the League was concerned.

It is fairly evident that reporting in the League is a two-way street. The tediousness of making out a report is not in vain so long as the information received is used to promulgate new ideas



and better techniques for doing the League job. The more attention given to reporting, the more adequate is the job that can be done by those charged with interpretation and evaluation. And, of course, the reporting will be better when the report forms are so constituted that persons filling them out recognize that they possess potential value. It is incumbent on the individual or individuals concerned to make the potentiality an actuality. One innovation which has been extremely helpful is sending out the forms many months prior to the deadline. With a copy in the chairman's hands, she will watch for those things asked about and remember better than if she did not know what the report was to contain until two weeks before it is supposed to be submitted.

Horizontal reports. -- The "horizontal" reports to be made to each other are well achieved through the medium of the board meeting. Where the League is weak in this regard is in the reporting by present officers or chairmen to the women who will succeed them in their assignments. The reporting should not be so detailed as to discourage efforts or ideas which in the past might have been voted down or unsuccessful but which might succeed under new management. However, it should provide some information as to the "how" and "where" which would greatly facilitate the work. It should not be the responsibility of the staff to orient a new board member in her job. They can and should help. The real orientation should come from the other board members and her predecessor. Materials essential to the job are put in notebooks which are given to each board member. The Minnesota League is suggesting this year

that board members write down information which, in their opinion, would be helpful to someone new on the job. This should be done even if the board member expects to serve for some time. Too often it has been the experience that a board member in the middle of her job must move from the city or because of some other contingency resign from the board. The new person taking her place is all too frequently lost, and unnecessarily so, in contemplating the work to be done. League officers and board members must learn to record their experiences and make it possible for their successors to move forward rather than having to retreat in the first few months or depend upon one of the secretaries to enable them to take up where others left off.

It might be said that reporting in the Minnesota League has been adequate. It is in the area of encouraging local leagues to pay close attention not only to official reports but to filling in the gaps to reveal the total story. This does not mean that an historian is required to record every action but rather an awareness of what action is significant. A greater appreciation is needed by local Leagues of the fact that what they are doing is not an isolated occurrence but that when put together and added to the experiences of others, it becomes an addition to the record of civic action. A recording of the individual experience of a state board member is another need. All of these things facilitate League work and make possible better public relations. For the story to be told, it must be known; and for the job to be done, the knowledge of past experience is invaluable. The official re-



## CHAPTER IX

### COMPARISON WITH OTHER VOLUNTEER CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS

Lack of information. — It is difficult to evaluate the administrative efficiency of the League vis a vis any other volunteer civic agency because the literature and/or appropriate information is not extensive. Most of the material published by these groups, including the League, is either in the nature of propaganda, i.e., extolling the merits of the organization in question or of a substantive type to provide more background and furnish the results of research to the membership. This is as it should be because an organization established for the purpose of attaining a specific goal cannot spend its energies in self analysis or there would be little time for anything else. Nevertheless, it should record systematically its methods and procedures. Files are the best source of information for the day-to-day operations which are administration and they are too often incomplete. Few civic associations prepare the kind of organizational material which is characterized by the League's state and local leader's handbooks. An occasional memoranda suggesting techniques will be sent out. Most associations which have state and local branches are precise about financial relationships but other aspects of their work do not receive the same degree of standardization. There are exceptions to these generalizations, of course, but, by and large, they seem to hold true.



Categories of civic organizations. — There are as many civic or pressure groups as there are major functions of government. It is difficult to classify them but certain broad categories might be defined:

1. Fact-finding and research. State and municipal research bureaus serve as good examples of groups which engage in research and make their findings available to their membership and to the public.
2. Pressure groups which seek the adoption of their recommendations. Into this broad category fall all sorts of strange and not-so-strange bedfellows. Most civic associations can be placed here. The National Municipal League, National Civil Service League, League of Women Voters, PTA's, Women's clubs, civic federations, taxpayers associations, community and neighborhood groups, health, welfare, education, recreation organizations, and so on.
3. Campaigning for candidates or issues. Some organizations find that to effect their program, it is necessary to concentrate on electioneering for those who will support their ideas. Some are of a transitory nature which come into existence long enough to "turn the rascals out", and then subside if they are successful. Charter

or constitutional amendments will often serve as the *raison d'être* for the formation of groups to take a pro or con stand on a particular issue.

4. Adult education. This last classification incorporates the first three and also provides a place for those organizations which concentrate on public discussion in a primarily educational program.<sup>96</sup>

Fact-finding and research groups. — It would be impossible to record an elaborate administrative comparison between these groups and the League of Women Voters without first making a detailed investigation to arrive at the facts. As has already been pointed out, there is a paucity of relevant materials. Therefore, it is necessary to choose those groups for investigation where published information is available and where the writer's familiarity will permit analysis.

Frank Mann Stewart has written histories of both the National Civil Service Reform League<sup>97</sup> (now the National Civil Service League) and the National Municipal League.<sup>98</sup> While largely the story of the establishment of civil service and the development of the city-

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<sup>96</sup> Howard M. Kline, "Citizens Groups in Review", National Municipal Review, Part I, October, 1941, pp. 577-78.

<sup>97</sup> Frank Mann Stewart, The National Civil Service Reform League (Austin: University of Texas, 1929), 304 pp.

<sup>98</sup> Frank Mann Stewart, A Half Century of Municipal Reform (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California, 1950), 289 pp.

manager plan, nevertheless, there is some space devoted to structure and administration in both volumes. Actually neither the Civil Service League nor the National Municipal League are leagues in the sense of the League of Women Voters. There are no real local branches to speak of although some did exist in the past.<sup>99</sup> In view of this fact, it would be more accurate to compare the national office of the League of Women Voters in Washington, D. C., with the headquarters of the Civil Service and Municipal Leagues in New York City. Nevertheless, there are some general conclusions which it is possible to reach.

Both the older Leagues have much larger governing bodies than does the League of Women Voters. This has presented a problem to them both in terms of unwieldy direction and attendance at executive meetings.<sup>100</sup> Both admit to a heavy reliance on the committee structure whose advantages have outweighed some of the disadvantages.<sup>101</sup> There is some difference, however, in the make-up of committees in the League of Women Voters and the other two associations. In the former, committee membership is composed in large part of lay personnel; in the latter, trained or professional talent is more the rule than the exception. In other words, the National Municipal League and the Civil Service League are much more likely to produce original research than the women who rely more on work already done,

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<sup>99</sup> Stewart, The National Civil Service Reform League, p. 233.

<sup>100</sup> Stewart, The National Civil Service Reform League, p. 232.  
Stewart, A Half Century of Municipal Reform, p. 180.

<sup>101</sup> Stewart, The National Civil Service Reform League, p. 233.  
Stewart, A Half Century of Municipal Reform, p. 181.



and, in many cases, the work used has been that of these two organizations.

In this connection, it should also be pointed out that the Municipal and Civil Service Leagues depend to a greater extent on the professional assistance of their staff members. The League of Women Voters is probably one of the outstanding examples of a civic organization where policy formulation and execution is performed by the same body. The degree to which this is greatest is in the local unit. This decreases in practice, however, as one goes up the chain of command through the state to the national League where there is increased formalization. Membership participation does not provide the same base of operations in the other two groups. The emphasis is more on professional advice and implementation by the staff with the membership supporting the specific reforms or acting on them where their community is involved in an applicable situation. The membership of these two Leagues consists for the most part of men and a few women who are interested, give some time and donate their money but who depend on the paid staff to do much of the work which is done in the League of Women Voters by the membership. Also, the execution of program is supervised much less closely in the two older associations than in the League of Women Voters. The governing bodies meet infrequently, and their decisions do not incorporate the kind of detail for day-to-day operations as do the board of directors in the local, state, and to a lesser extent in the national Leagues.

There is considerable variance in the nature of the annual

meetings of these three Leagues. At the convention of the League of Women Voters, the greatest amount of time is directed towards the formulation of next year's program and activities. At the meetings of the other groups, especially the National Municipal League, there is rather specialized discussion of the technical aspects of reform proposals.<sup>102</sup> This difference is the natural result of the distinguishing features of the organizations with regard to purpose, policies, etc.

The problem of greatest concern to the National Civil Service League and the National Municipal League is that of finance.<sup>103</sup> It is the general feeling that the alleviation of this customary headache would go a long way in solving any present problems in the organization of these two groups. The Civil Service League also possesses the problem of leadership to maintain its vitality.<sup>104</sup> In the League of Women Voters, financial problems are also indigenous. However, a happy financial situation would not guarantee a successful program without the other concomitants which are a part of the over-all picture. This does not mean to imply that the other groups are negligent of the other facets of their programs, but rather that since membership participation is the key to the League purpose, and not an easy one to achieve, the League will always have concerns other than finance. The League of Women

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<sup>102</sup> Stewart, A Half Century of Municipal Reform, p. 182.

<sup>103</sup> Stewart, The National Civil Service Reform League, pp. 235-238.

<sup>104</sup> Stewart, A Half Century of Municipal Reform, pp. 185-191.

<sup>104</sup> Stewart, The National Civil Service Reform League, pp. 238-240.



Voters has a much larger membership than the other two organizations and has maintained a larger budget. However, both the other Leagues have received grants from endowments or foundations for specific projects.<sup>105</sup> Both these groups have also solicited larger funds from fewer individuals in contrast to the practice of the League to solicit not-too-large sums from a wider base. The National Municipal League and the Civil Service League derive other income from sources comparable to that of the League of Women Voters, namely, membership dues and the sale of publications.

In general, it may be said, especially with regard to the National Municipal League for which more recent data is available, that the same conclusions can be reached as those pertaining to the League of Women Voters. Both groups are respected and have made definite contributions in civic education and action. Basic organization is sound though both groups admit to possible improvements. Here, the question becomes one of emphasis -- finance is the principal factor in determining the scope and effectiveness of the Municipal League's program, and a solution is urgently needed.<sup>106</sup> In the League of Women Voters a program for financial support has been determined. It remains only for local Leagues to implement to a greater extent what seems to be a satisfactory fund-raising technique.

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105 Stewart, The National Civil Service Reform League, p. 237.  
Stewart, A Half Century of Municipal Reform, p. 187.  
106 Stewart, A Half Century of Municipal Reform, p. 194.



Norman Gill's history of the municipal research movement<sup>107</sup> points up yet another type of civic improvement group which differs even more from the League of Women Voters. The municipal research bureaus have what might be termed a more traditional administrative arrangement. Professional salaried staff members do the work directed by boards composed of leaders of civic, social, and philanthropic organizations. One of the major problems is to secure board representation that is not dominated by one group or one segment of the community.<sup>108</sup> Other areas of concern are how to get greater board member interest and participation, how to secure new and young leadership, how to attract properly -trained staff, and how to raise money.<sup>109</sup>

It would seem clear that these organizational problems are more closely aligned with those of the National Civil Service League and the National Municipal League than with the League of Women Voters. In this instance, the degree of separation is even greater where the work is done by the staff. The only reason why the municipal research bureaus fall within the scope of this comparison is that they are directed by volunteers and their purpose is civic improvement. Otherwise, there are rather significant variations in the nature of administration, although some of the processes and techniques remain the same.

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107 Norman N. Gill, Municipal Research Bureaus (Washington: American Council on Public Affairs, 1944), 178 pp.

108 Ibid., p. 168.

109 Ibid., pp.167-171.

Pressure groups. -- Another classification of volunteer civic organizations which fall under the second broad category and which possess similar characteristics to the League of Women Voters are those in the international field. In recent years an increasing number of organizations have come into existence for the purpose of acclimating the public to yet another level of government which in the past has been remote but now assumes a new intimacy through great change in time and space relationships. These are the groups with an international focus. Prior to the last war the emphasis was on education when the Foreign Policy Associations dominated the field. Many of the new organizations, however, try to build support of specific programs which they feel will help to achieve a secure world. The United Nations Association, United World Federalists, and the Atlantic Union Committee are among these. A more accurate comparison can be made with these groups since they possess the same structure with a national office, state or regional branches, and local chapters. Since the branches and chapters vary as they do in the League, the Minnesota groups will be taken as examples in this analysis.

Of all these groups, the one most similar to the League is the United World Federalists where an elaborate committee structure and considerable membership participation exist. The other associations depend upon the leadership of a few and, in the case of the Minnesota United Nations Association, rely a good deal on the staff. This is not deliberate but rather the way the organizations have evolved due to those who are directing the operations. When busi-



ness men assume roles of leadership as has been the case with the Atlantic Union Committee, they are prone to take the whole responsibility and function from their offices. There are many persons who would like to participate in this work and feel frustrated because there is no job for them to do.

It is interesting that in groups with loose control from the national level and with the same type of over-all structure they take shape in such different ways. It points up very definitely that the nature of the administration is affected by those who administer, and this is especially true where the structure is not clearly defined. Most state or regional branches and local chapters take the national patterns as a guide in the adoption of a basic document to outline their methods. Again, there are specific arrangements with regard to the apportionment of dues. Except for this provision and the customary one of adherence to purpose and policies, there is very little in the way of organizational instruction which the respective national offices send out. The local groups are left more free than the League to adapt and experiment in the management of their own affairs.

It seems fairly apparent that there would be greater diversity in these organizations than could be the case in the League where organizational procedures have been standardized. These would be particularly true with the state Leagues. In other words, there would be more basic organizational similarities in the Minnesota, Illinois, and Ohio Leagues than there would be in the Minnesota, Illinois, and Ohio United Nations Associations, United World Fed-



eralists, or Atlantic Union Committees.

Political action groups. -- The third classification which incorporates those groups directly involved in political action by taking a position in support of or opposition to particular candidates or amendments, finds membership participation to a very high degree for this is the essence of the political process. There are those who do not work, of course, but who lend their names and/or contribute money to the cause. The majority, however, run the gamut of political action from speech-making to the stuffing of envelopes. Organization, which is sporadic, derives from other experiences with similar campaigns, and appropriate committees are formed and assignments given. An understanding of procedures and methods also comes from members who have had training in other organizations and who transplant that knowledge to the new situation.

Adult education groups. -- For the fourth category of adult education, it would be possible to cite virtually any volunteer organization. The Foreign Policy Association suggests itself, however, for this comparison because of areas of program concentration similar to the League of Women Voters. The Foreign Policy group has had a limited appeal, and even now when there is wider interest and concern, the membership is decreasing throughout the country. Every group, no matter what its purpose, seems to be devoting some time to a discussion of world affairs, and this would naturally limit the attraction of a group which offers still another public lecture on some issue of foreign policy. An effort has been made to counteract this general trend by lowering the dues when

other groups are raising them, and by revising the system of allocation so that the local branches keep a greater percentage in their treasury. This move is directed towards the achievement of a larger membership by making it economically possible for more to join and by enabling the local groups to do more in the community to justify their existence.

Again, purpose and finance dominate the scene in the relationship of the local chapter to the national office. It is fairly obvious that in the Foreign Policy Association membership participation is not significant except in so far as the members might be expected to attend meetings. Those who serve on the board are charged with running the affairs of the organization. Efficient board operation hinges on the personnel and the mode of delegation of responsibilities. Where instructions and assignment are made clear, there is little to impede administration except the limitations of the individual administering.

It is evident, even in this cursory analysis of various kinds of civic organizations, that little attention has been given to any systemization of methods and procedures. Most groups concentrate on purpose and the organization develops along lines congenial to the talents and inclinations of the persons in leadership roles in the particular association.

State Organization Service. -- With the multiplicity of organizations and the neglect of administrative factors which stem from a lack of direction and coordination and lead to impediments in the way of concentration on objectives, one should consider



possible solutions. Certainly one goal would be a greater cohesiveness among these groups. One suggestion is already being tried. At the University of Minnesota a department of the Extension Division known as the State Organization Service acts as a secretariat for pro bono publico volunteer organizations. This service, originating in July, 1949, was established for the purpose of making it possible for these groups which play a vital role in our society to do a more effective job. As has already been suggested, these associations are frequently prevented because of lack of skillful administration from concentrating on objectives. Even though, as has also been pointed out, groups pay little attention to the establishment of procedures and methods, they find that a great deal of time is being diverted to keeping books, worrying about the processing of materials, wondering how to go about raising money, and getting new members. There are also the many organizations which do not have an office and staff and discover that membership lists get lost in bureau drawers, or that funds have gotten mixed up with someone's personal money. It was this realization which led to the idea of a secretariat and its fruition in the State Organization Service.

At the present time there are twenty-three organizations in the State Organization Service, and of these, four have executive secretaries. For these groups the State Organization Service maintains files, keeps books, does clerical work, mimeographing and art work, processes membership, and advises on general organizational problems. The members pay for these services but the costs are



less than they would be if, for example, the mimeographing had to be done by a commercial letter shop. The associations which have executive secretaries have effected considerable savings. There is no rent or telephone service charge. There is a ten-percent administration fee on the monthly bill for those who take office space. The cost of supplies is greatly reduced when the organizations can take advantage of the University's central purchasing. They can also profit through the use of meeting facilities and the intellectual resources of the University of Minnesota. Many of the groups have counterparts in University departments or draw heavily on the University staff for membership. One only has to mention groups like the Minnesota Psychological Association or the Minnesota Welfare Conference to make that fact apparent.

An application for membership is reviewed by an advisory committee composed of University officialdom -- administrative officers, deans, and heads of departments. This is the only approval necessary for an organization to become a member of the State Organization Service. Financial support comes not only from the members' bills but from the University and the Carnegie Corporation. The Carnegie Corporation, recognizing this as a unique experiment in the field of adult education, gave a three-year decreasing grant of \$16,000 to help start the program. The annual budget totals around \$30,000 with the division being about one-third from each of the three sources of support.

There is another aspect of the State Organization Service which is important in contemplating greater cohesiveness among

these volunteer associations, and that is the World Affairs Center. The first four groups to join the Service were organizations with an international focus, and they asked if, in addition to the work of the State Organization Service, it might be possible to establish as a part of the over-all structure a clearinghouse for these particular groups. This was agreed to and presently there are nine organizations in the World Affairs Center. This Center operates certain common program services such as a speakers bureau, a pamphlet shop, a film advisory service, and an international correspondence agency. The Center assists the member groups in program work and suggests ways and means to help each organization do a better job in discussion of issues and participation in the decisions which determine America's foreign policy. There is no charge for this work; it is subsidized by the University and represents a large share of the one-third which is contributed to the support of the State Organization Service by the University. The Center is run by a board of directors consisting of two representatives from each of the nine organizations. It has served to coordinate activities and yet maintain the individuality of the member groups, each of which has a distinct contribution to make in adult education. It is this fact which justifies the University's interest and financial outlay.

The role of administration in the State Organization Service is another story which cannot be detailed here. It is sufficient to say that as experience has developed, administrative techniques have been evolved with the result that despite a steady growth in



membership, the State Organization Service has been able to contract its staff and effect economies in other ways.

It would seem that many advantages would accrue to the Minnesota League if it were to join the State Organization Service. Certainly, many economies would result, and more time could be devoted to the non-clerical aspects of the work since a large part of this burden could be assumed by the personnel of the State Organization Service during peak load periods. Volunteers would still be used as they are by many of the groups already participating in the Service and there would be no decrease in staff. Probably, the largest obstacle for the League to overcome in contemplating such a move would be the habit patterns of its members. As has been mentioned before, a downtown location has certain benefits which could not apply at the University. It has been suggested that the Minneapolis and St. Paul Leagues also join the state League in affiliation with the State Organization Service. This would be a particularly good arrangement with a greater chance for exchange of information and experiences among these three groups. If there would be financial, personnel and other benefits to the League in this situation, it is also true that the other groups in the State Organization Service would profit greatly by the League's experience in the techniques of organization. Perhaps the solution to this problem lies in a possible downtown location of the State Organization Service which has been contemplated in terms of future activities. The difficulty in this proposal lies in the fact that the St. Paul or Minneapolis people would suffer depending upon which

location was chosen. The midway location of the University also possesses certain advantages. This outlines the principle factors which the board of directors of the state and Twin City Leagues must weigh in deciding whether or not to use this service.

There might be some justification in proposing that this idea be duplicated by other state universities located in metropolitan areas where headquarters of a majority of state volunteer associations can be found. If it is agreed that these organizations make a distinct contribution in our democratic society, it may then be said that it is a legitimate task for a university to assist these groups in service to the state. From both an intellectual and administrative standpoint, this role has merit.

This does not mean to imply that the university should undertake either to preserve these groups or so bureaucratize them that they lose meaning. But surely it is possible to lessen the burden of administration and to provide the stimulation of ideas without changing the inherent nature of volunteer organizations. What is desired is that where a need demands attention, that attention will be directed along channels which can best satisfy the need. This is the "why" of volunteer groups. It is a frequent commentary that our society is over-organized. In many respects this is true, but it is also one of the proofs that our democracy is as successful as it is. The people have wanted to participate in solution of our society's ills. They also want that participation to be fruitful, and that is the "how" of organizations. With this background perhaps it is now possible to suggest certain common denominators in the administration of civic improvement groups.



## CHAPTER X

### CONCLUSIONS

Principles of administration. -- In the preceding pages, an accounting of the organization of the Minnesota League of Women Voters has been given. It is perhaps fitting to consider now some of the philosophy and principles of organization and its derivative administration. With this framework it will then be possible to suggest the common administrative elements to be found in a volunteer situation. John Gaus has defined organization in this way:

Organization is the arrangement of personnel for facilitating the accomplishment of some agreed purpose through the allocation of functions and responsibilities. It is the relating of efforts and capacities of individuals and groups engaged upon a common task in such a way as to secure the desired objective with the least friction and the most satisfaction to those for whom the task is done and those engaged with enterprise.<sup>110</sup>

John A. Vieg has said of administration:

Regardless of the field of human endeavor, there is thus an administrative side to all planned effort. In simple situations where the things that need to be done are obvious, and it is fairly plain who can best do what, it is possible for people sharing an objective

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<sup>110</sup> John M. Gaus, Frontiers of Public Administration, quoted in Leonard D. White, Introduction to the Study of Public Administration (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1939), p. 37.

to work as a team and never grow aware of the fact that their teamwork for the common purpose spells administration. But when conditions become complex or difficult, when it is no longer easy to know how to proceed or whether the resources available will be adequate for gaining the common end, the administrative aspect emerges as a matter of special attention.<sup>111</sup>

Mr. Gaus has observed that organization comes into being in large measure according to the old saying, "When three Americans get together, there is an organization." Mr. Vieg emphasizes that, to the three, administration may not be a conscious process, but if the group becomes 3,000, it then assumes a significant role. As the organization becomes larger, it follows that administration becomes more formally and extensively developed.<sup>112</sup>

Administration enables the organizations of a society to fulfill their responsibilities and execute their programs. The functions of administration have been proclaimed in a multiplicity of ways. One of the most famous descriptions is incorporated in the coined word, "POSDCORB". POSDCORB spelled out means Planning, Organizing, Staffing, Directing, Coordinating, Reporting and Budgeting.<sup>113</sup> Other authorities object to this definition because of its over-simplification and omissions, even though admitting that

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<sup>111</sup> John A. Vieg, "The Growth of Public Administration" in Elements of Public Administration, Fritz Marstein Marx, Ed. (New York: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1948), p. 3.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>113</sup> Luther Gulick, "Notes on the Theory of Organization", Papers on the Science of Organization (New York: Institute of Public Administration, 1937), p. 13.



the seven broad categories are common to practically all administrative positions.<sup>114</sup> Others include in the term (a) policy formation, (b) the planning and setting up of the organization, and (c) the running of the organization.<sup>115</sup> Malcolm S. Knowles in his recent book on informal adult education has pointed up operational efficiency in a series of specific questions:

Administrative organization and procedures -

- Is there a clear distinction between policy making and execution?
- Is there a logical allocation of functions in accordance with a general plan of organization?
- Are there clear and definite assignments of authority and responsibility?
- Is there effective coordination of all organization units and staff members?
- Are the office services adequate in quantity and quality? Does correspondence get answered promptly, is filing efficient, etc.?
- Are inquiries and registrations handled promptly, courteously, and in an orderly fashion? Is there a minimum of waiting and red tape?
- Are records accurate, as comprehensive as practicable,

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114 Albert Lepawsky, Administration (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1949), p. 23.

115. Leon C. Marshall, Business Administration, cited in Lepawsky, ibid., p. 38.

and accessible?

Committee functioning -

- Are the committee's functions clearly stated and known by all members?
- Does the committee meet frequently enough to fulfill its responsibilities?
- Does the committee function well as a group-- does it accept responsibility as a group-- think cooperatively and make decisions effectively?
- Are the individual committee members personally involved in the organization--do they subscribe to its objectives, do they give active service?
- Are services to the committee adequate? Are notices of meetings sent in time; are adequate records kept; is there a follow-up on decisions?

Staff functioning -

- Is there a spirit of teamwork rather than rivalry?
- Is there creative executive leadership?
- Is there staff personnel adequate in number to the needs of the program?
- Are all necessary staff services performed?
- Are all members of the staff qualified for all jobs?



-Are there job descriptions for all jobs--  
do all staff members know their responsibilities?

-Are there good working conditions, adequate salaries, and sound personnel policies and practices?

-Is there good morale among the staff?

Use and maintenance of physical facilities -

-Is there adequate space for the kind of program required to achieve the objectives of the organization?

-Is the space suitable in terms of location, decoration, and furnishings?

-Are the physical facilities maintained in good condition in regard to heat, light, ventilation and sanitation?

-Is there adequate administrative and instructional equipment? Is it properly safeguarded and maintained in good condition?

-Is provision made for the replacement or renewal of physical facilities before they deteriorate to such an extent as to interfere with efficiency or operation.

-Is the space and equipment used as close to capacity as is practicable?<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Malcolm S. Knowles, Informal Adult Education (New York: Association Press, 1950), pp. 242-243.

These three definitions of the administrative function ranging in scope from the general to the specific point up what is involved in administration. In general it might be said that all operation involves the management resources of men, money, materials and machine to bring about the desired results.<sup>117</sup>

An attempt has been made in the preceding chapters to describe and analyze the administrative functions of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota. In making any general conclusions about the administrative characteristics of volunteer civic improvement groups, it is important to keep in mind organizational variations. Organization will vary with the size and with the geographical dispersion of the group, with the character of the objective sought, with the character of the workers and equipment, according to the character of personnel available for executive positions, and according to the character of the work being done.<sup>118</sup>

Policy formulation and policy execution. -- With these qualifications it will be possible to make some concluding statements. First of all, the distinction between policy formulation and policy execution is obscure. In volunteer organizations the members perform both functions. This characteristic receives less emphasis as the organization becomes either larger in size or has a greater geographical dispersion which often leads to formalization and more

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<sup>117</sup> Groups and Their Administration, A Preliminary Draft of An Outline of the Processes of Administration Public and Private and An Orientation for Technical Courses in Administration by a Faculty Seminar of the American University, Washington, D.C., 1938, p. 60. (Mimeographed.)

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., pp. 49-52.



reliance on staff workers to do the job. As has been stated before, this distinction probably exists to a lesser degree in the League of Women Voters than in any other organization of comparable size. The League purpose to provide its membership with the skills and attitudes that they will carry into "governing the nation" is the primary factor in this. This is also true of the myriad of smaller groups which have little or no staff assistance and must do the work which they agree to themselves.

The League's rapid growth in the last few years has produced an organizational problem in the reconciliation between organization and purpose. This is especially true of the city Leagues where the individual member becomes more remote. The League is aware of this conflict and is seeking ways to solve it. Since this admission seems to involve an acceptance of change where change seems desirable, there is a good chance that the League will be able to find a solution. Organizations must be dynamic in a dynamic world or the likelihood of their success is small. The League as an organization must maintain the lack of distinction between the enactment of policy and its execution or it will depart from its purpose of training for political action by participation in the processes of government. It would appear that this should be a necessary characteristic of volunteer groups generally except where professionalization is involved as in social work agencies. The differentiation between these two facets of organization has been derived for the most part from the field of public administration, and even there it is losing its original emphasis in the

growing recognition of the extent of overlapping which prevails. The only distinction which can be said to exist is that, in some instances, execution is done by greater numbers. Even though the membership will determine the work to be done, the means of implementation will be decided by the board, and, it is hoped, will then be carried out by a large proportion of the members.

Finance. -- The second significant administrative characteristic indigenous to volunteer groups is the problem of finance which is now and, in all probability, ever shall be. The payment of dues by the members is usually not a sufficient source of income to carry out the purpose of the organization. This affects quite decidedly the functioning of any group, and while it may be said that government, business, and labor also worry about the source of money, the means of securing it are pretty well established. Volunteer associations experiment with a great variety of techniques from cake sales to the soliciting of large sums of money from individuals. There is always a great hue and cry about the state of the treasury. To be sure, some groups, as in the Minnesota League, are fairly well situated, but, for most, how to get money to extend and make their program better known remains a pressing concern.

Financial goals are frequently set too low, sometimes in the expectation that what they wish to undertake will cost very little money. While every group of this sort should practice economies, there is, nevertheless, no reason to warrant a reduction in financial terms of the significance of what they want to do. Some groups have become discouraged with previous results of efforts to raise



money and then fall into this category. Any solution of this problem is dependent on the organization's realistic appraisal of what it will take to do the job and careful planning to achieve the goal.

Staff and line organization. — Still another facet of the administration of volunteer civic improvement groups is the lack of staff or auxiliary organization. Line organization is emphasized and is effective in those cases where the thing to be done is quite simple.<sup>119</sup> Many groups suffer, however, because they have not given staff operations sufficient attention. Staff operations in the Minnesota League are performed primarily by the organization, finance, and public relations committees. These committees provide the functional committees of the League with an operating base so that when they are ready to act, the organization, money, and promotion are ready. Too many of these volunteer groups scurry around when they want to do something, lacking a clearly defined organizational pattern and procedures with which to go ahead. In many volunteer associations, a complex organization is not required; however, there is some justification in expecting them to make a greater effort in these areas. It would seem they could profit by such an effort.

Implementation. — The last characteristic of volunteer civic organizations incorporates all of the phases of administration. This is simply a deficiency of implementation. This will always be true because the groups are composed of volunteers. This applies for the most part to these groups which execute policy as well as

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid., pp. 52-53.

formulate it. Even though the kind of person attracted to the organization is highly gifted and motivated by high ideals, this deficiency will prevail because of lack of training, lack of suitability for a particular assignment, lack of time, and so on. This is not intended to be a criticism of volunteers, rather a recognition that this is an activity which is not the primary job of the individuals who are members. Organizations are composed of individuals who are in business or running homes, and who give of their not-so-spare time because of a sympathy with the purposes of the group or for some other motivating factor. This would apply to planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting, and budgeting to use the word, POSDCORB, as a guide. The volunteer association is not expected to be managed in the tradition of a modern industrial plant or government agency. The same processes of administration are to be found in a greater or lesser degree with the variations mentioned above especially noticeable.

Concern with the administration of volunteer civic organizations is predicated on the awareness of the contribution they make to the totality of group living. Efficiency of operations is closely related to the fulfillment of objectives.<sup>120</sup> The essentials of shaping an organization revolve around:

1. The determination of tasks
2. The allocation of human and other resources to the tasks.

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<sup>120</sup> Knowles, op. cit., p. 241.



3. The establishment of structural relationships.
4. The process of operating the structure is decided.<sup>121</sup>

This description of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota has been directed toward the end of discovering the principles and procedures involved in the organization of one relatively successful citizen agency. Perhaps this will serve to suggest a pattern or alternative patterns subject to general application which will be helpful to other groups. It is the hope of this writer that this analysis will make it possible for the administration of volunteer civic organizations to be more effective in the matters with which they are concerned. The degree of their effectiveness is vital in our democratic society for the subject of their concern is responsible government.

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<sup>121</sup> Groups and Their Administration, op. cit., p. 49.

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