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The City of Jacksonville: Consolidation in Action

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The present consolidated City of Jacksonville includes the former County of Duval, the old city of Jacksonville, and four small municipalities. Consolidation made Jacksonville the largest city in Florida, the largest city in land area in the United States (841 square miles) and moved it up to 23rd in population of the Nation's cities. The questions to be examined in this paper are how and why did it happen, and how has it worked.

Background to the Merger

In 1940 Jacksonville-Duval County had a total population of over 210,000; some 170,000 in the city and 37,000 in the rest of the county. From that point to 1965, county growth outstripped the declining city, so that the county outside Jacksonville rose rapidly to an estimated 327,000, while the city fell below 200,000. Projections to 1980 showed the county with 885,000 and the city remaining almost static with 211,000.

These population shifts had important age, race, income, and education characteristics that contributed to the sense of crisis fueling the fires of the consolidation movement. By 1960, Jacksonville was over 41 percent black, the third highest percentage in the Nation among cities over 100,000. The county outside the city was only about 9 percent black. During the 1950's in the city the black population increased over 14 percent, while the white population decreased over 10 percent. During the same period, the old city was becoming more and more the residence of the very old and the very young, with the economically productive 20-64 age group down by 15 percent during the 1950's. The over-65 group was up over 36 percent to a total of just over 9 percent, while the under-20 group increased 17.5 percent during the Fifties. By contrast, the over-65 group in the county totalled only 3.8 percent. The contrast carries through to income and housing. In the old city in 1960, 31 percent of the population was below a poverty level of \$3,000, while the comparable

figure in the county was 15 percent. Thirty percent of the houses in Jacksonville were deteriorated or dilapidated, while the county figure was 13 percent. In education the average years of schooling of adults over 25 was 9.5 in the city and 11.5 outside the city.¹

The picture is not an unfamiliar one. It shows a central city in decline, losing its most productive citizens, at least in economic terms, gaining citizens disproportionately in the very old and very young categories, and well below its relatively affluent suburbs in income, housing, and education. While these trends undoubtedly supported the consolidation movement, their presence in dozens of other cities where consolidation movements have not developed makes it clear that they are not sufficient to explain the success in Jacksonville.

Jacksonville's governmental structure was a bizarre hodgepodge of overlap and duplication. The city had a nine-person city council elected at large and presided over by a president. The council was the major legislative authority. The administrative power was located in a city commission of five members elected at large, each of whom headed up the city's services in a particular functional area or areas. A mayor-commissioner presided over this group. In addition, city voters elected a recorder, a municipal judge, a treasurer, and a tax assessor. Thus, a structure defended in the name of checks and balances was in fact a maze of duplication, and gaps in authority characterized by buck passing and inability or unwillingness to cope with emerging problems. When widespread corruption was added to these disabilities, another link in the consolidation chain was forged.

The county structure featured a commission form with five commissioners elected at large who served as both administrators and policymakers for the county. In addition, voters elected several administrators such as the sheriff. The system was designed for another age. By the mid-1960's the pressures for urban services in the suburbs had been strained to the breaking point. Home

rule was not available to either the city or the county until a new State constitution was adopted in 1968. The fragmentation of local government was further assured by the existence of an expressway authority, a Port Authority, a Hospital Authority, a Housing Authority, the Air Improvement Authority, and the Jacksonville-Duval Planning Board. These authorities were essentially autonomous single-purpose districts that did not share central services and were not subject to budgetary or other coordination.

By the mid-1960's Jacksonville and Duval County could be described as a central city with a fancy facade of new buildings downtown, and deepseated social, economic, and political problems just beneath the surface. The suburbs were booming, with no governmental structure capable of meeting their service needs. Perhaps most important, the school system had reached the critical stage in its steady decline from mediocrity to disgrace. The countywide school district was faced with a steadily weakening property tax base as thousands of homes built for families in the suburbs were kept off the property tax rolls by a low assessment ratio (estimated in the 20 to 50 percent range of market value and a \$5,000 homestead exemption. A taxpayers' group estimated that 60,000 of 93,500 homesteads in the entire county were not on the tax rolls.² Finally, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools removed accreditation from all of Duval County's 15 high schools.

In addition to schools, a broken-down city sewer system discharging raw sewage into the St. Johns River, inefficient package sewer plants or septic tanks in the suburbs, lack of adequate police and fire protection in the suburbs, the soaring cost of Jacksonville's city government in the face of a declining population (from 1950 to 1965 per capita costs of services rose more than 400 percent, from \$116 to \$479), an increasing air pollution problem—these and other issues set the stage from which the consolidation movement emerged.³

The Consolidated Government Plan

Reform of the local government system for the area had been an issue for many years. The most recent effort to cope with the emerging problems had involved a massive annexation plan to extend the limits of the city throughout most of the county's urbanized areas. The annexation case was weakened by suspicion of the central city by suburbanites, easy to understand in the face of the statistic that Jacksonville "had the largest number of full-time employees and the highest monthly payroll in the nation" for a city of its size.³ In the 1963 election, city voters supported annexation by more than 3-to-1, but the proposal to add 66 square miles and over 130,000 people to the city was turned down in the suburbs with 16,000 votes against and 12,000 votes for.

A similar proposal was defeated the following year.⁴

With annexation as a solution not acceptable, the forces for consolidation became active in early 1965 when Claude Yates, retired Southern Bell executive and president of the Jacksonville Area Chamber of Commerce, called a meeting of civic and business leaders. After several hours of discussion it was decided to ask the legislative delegation to allow the preparation and submission to the voters of a consolidated form of government for Duval County. The legislative delegation subsequently approved the proposal, which, when submitted as a local bill, meant automatic approval by the legislature. The bill actually named the 50-person group, with provision of a 17-person executive committee. No person holding public office was eligible to serve. Four blacks and five women were included. The group was chaired by one of Jacksonville's leading civic and business leaders, J. J. Daniels. It hired an executive director and adopted a budget of some \$60,000, one-third of which it had to raise, with the remainder mandated from the city and county. The commission divided itself into task forces, and over the next 15 months drafted, held hearings on, and presented to the legislative delegation a consolidated plan of government for Duval County.

The "Blueprint for Government" abolished completely the old city and county governments, and all other governmental units within the boundaries of Duval County except several authorities.⁵ It substituted a single government structure composed of a mayor with full administrative powers, a 21-member council elected from districts to serve without pay, and a non-partisan school board of seven members elected from districts formed by combining three city council districts.⁶ The proposal was a bold one, and it was boldly defended by its creators, but a legislative delegation, expanded from eight to 16 members by reapportionment, had to approve it before the people could vote on the charter.

As described by Martin⁷, Representative George Stallings, who anchored the right wing of the House delegation, led the fight to assure defeat of the proposed charter. The center of opposition to the plan was in the House delegation. In the final key vote on the proposed modifications, Stallings led a majority of the House delegation in opposition to placing the charter before the people in a legally defensible form, while all senators voted for the modified plan. The critical issue within the delegation was whether to put the charter to the people with a questionable judicial article attached, or whether to modify the charter in this and other ways so as to assure its legality and strengthen acceptability to the voters. No legislators supported the study commission proposed charter without modification. After much political maneuvering and sharp delegation in-fighting, the charter was approved, but not without substantial modifications. The major changes included the restora-

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tion to elected status of administrative officers of the old county government (sheriff, tax assessor, tax collector, and supervisor of elections); the reduction of the council to 19 members, 14 to be elected from districts and five at large; and *ad valorem* tax limitation; an option for the four small municipalities to join or not join the consolidated government; added pension and other employee protections; and a provision for an elected Civil Service Board.⁵

While most of these changes weakened the purity of the consolidation proposal, it was still a bold and far-reaching plan. The fight for adoption was carried on with as much enthusiasm as had been displayed in drafting the proposal. The leaders were the same people from the business, civic, and professional community who had initiated the consolidation drive. Proponents formed themselves into Citizens for Better Government, raised about \$40,000, and waged a strong campaign. Claude Yates chaired the group and Lex Hester, study commission executive director, served as referendum coordinator. They had the full support of the Chamber of Commerce, the media, most other business and professional people, and many other groups such as the League of Women Voters, the Duval County Medical Society, and the bar association. More unusual perhaps, they had the support of many key black groups, including the Jacksonville Urban League and the Voters League of Florida. Most civic clubs endorsed and worked for the proposal. On the "on side" was a group called Better Government for Duval County, the Central Labor Union and its city and county affiliates, some of the suburban press, some black leaders, two black newspapers, certain members of the legislative delegation, and some extremist groups who branded the proposal as communistic. The supporters stressed economy, efficiency, responsible government, and the ability to deal with problems; the oppositors denied economy, raised the specter of unresponsive government, and most of all, raised the ghost of a "communist plot."⁹

The support of black leaders was jeopardized in mid-campaign by the apparently inadvertent adjustment of council district lines so as to pit two incumbent black councilwomen against each other. The resulting city of "foul" from the black community led to a quick adjustment of the boundaries. Ms. Saliye Mathis, one of the councilwomen affected; Clanzel Brown; and Earl Johnson were the key leaders in rallying black support for consolidation. Ms. Mathis was an educator, active in a large number of civic organizations, including the Urban League and the NAACP. Brown was executive director of the Jacksonville Urban League. Johnson was a lawyer, widely recognized in both black and white communities as one of the most effective leaders in the area. He was later elected to an at-large seat on the Consolidated Government Council, and still holds that seat. Dr. W. W. Schell, vice president of Greater Jacksonville Economic Opportunity and president

emeritus of the Jacksonville Urban League, headed a group of blacks for consolidation in which Ms. Mathis served as treasurer, and Wendell Holmes, later elected to the School Board, served as secretary.

Black opposition was largely composed of old-line black leaders satisfied with the status quo, many of whom had been active in support of former Mayor Hayden Burns' political organization. A different kind of opposition came from Ms. Mary Singleton, an educator who operated a restaurant. She took the position that consolidation was a white move to dilute black political power. Blacks in the old city constituted about 40 percent of the vote, a figure that would drop to about 20 percent with consolidation. Ms. Singleton was later elected to the Consolidated Government Council and in 1972 was elected to the State Legislature.¹⁰

Probably the most optimistic supporter of consolidation failed to anticipate the size of the victory in the August 8, 1967, balloting. Of the 86,000 voters who went to the polls, over 54,000 voted in favor of consolidation. Every section of the county favored the proposal, even the small municipalities, which opted in a separate ballot to stay out of the new government.

Only the rural sections of the county favored the status quo. In the old city, consolidation proponents won by more than two to one. In the county, the margin was almost two to one in favor. Blacks in both the city and the county favored consolidation, though by narrower margins than the overall vote. Upper income voters supported the change by five to one; the issue carried among lower income voters, but by a narrow margin in the county, more comfortably in the city. Voters in the densely populated urban fringe around the old city gave the heaviest majorities to consolidation—six to one.¹¹

The question remains why Jacksonville citizens went against the tide and approved a radical restructuring of their local government, providing in one sweeping change the machinery for a unified, regional approach to urban problems. Some factors that built support have been named. The school crisis and the inability of either the city or county governments to keep up with service demands surely were a factor. Strong media, business, and professional leadership was undoubtedly important. But most of these conditions had been present in many other metropolitan areas that were unsuccessful in attempting to change their local government. Was there a multiplier factor in Jacksonville to put the issue over the top? The answer is yes. The indictment of two out of five city commissioners; four out of nine city councilmen, the city auditor, the city recreation head, and the resignation of the city tax assessor under a cloud provided the extra added ingredient needed to mobilize and sustain public support of change. In short, things seemed to have sunk so low that almost any change would have been welcome. The grand jury began its work in May 1966, after television station WJXT

launched a series of exposures pointing toward various kinds of corruption in city government. By the time the Local Government Study Commission released its findings, counts of grand larceny, bribery, and perjury had been brought against no less than eight city officials.¹²

Organizational and Fiscal Structure

The Local Government Study Commission recommended a fully consolidated government, excepting only the School Board, which the commission lacked authority to change, certain court officials mandated by state law, and several authorities.

With regard to the authorities, the study commission recommended that the Expressway, Port, and Planning Authorities continue, and also proposed a new authority, the Jacksonville Electric Authority, in place of an old department of city government. The study commission recommended that the Air Improvement Authority, the Housing Authority, and the Hospital Authority be abolished. The recommendation was not followed in the case of the Hospital Authority. The boundaries of all these authorities were countywide. The authorities and the School Board were subject to budget, purchasing, personnel, and other central service powers of the Consolidated Government. As enacted, all the small municipalities were given the option of coming in or staying out of the consolidation. Though not a complete consolidation, the new government still represented a sweeping move from fragmentation to unification.

The major fiscal feature of the new government was a differentiated property tax arrangement featuring an Urban Services District (USD) and a General Services District, the latter covering the entire area. The purpose was to promote an equitable property tax system, linking services to property taxes paid. The great bulk of all services provided by the city fell into the General Services District category, including such things as fire, police, health and welfare, recreation, public works, and housing and urban development. The Urban Services District was confined to street lighting, garbage, street cleaning, and debt service. The charter provided that no new USD could be established, nor could an existing one be expanded, unless all these services could be furnished within one year. The old city of Jacksonville and the four smaller municipalities constitute the five Urban Services Districts established to date. Some of the peculiar aspects of the USD system with regard to the smaller municipalities will be discussed below.

One striking feature of the new fiscal system was that a large part of total spending takes place in agencies not wholly within the control of the Consolidated Government. A financial summary for 1971-72 shows, in a budget of almost \$286 million, 34.6 cents of every dollar is spent by the School Board, 21 cents by the

Jacksonville Electric Authority, and varying lesser amounts by other authorities. Thus, about two-thirds of total spending in the City of Jacksonville is carried out by independent agencies subject to little control from the Consolidated Government. Furthermore, a substantial part of the General Services District funds are expended by elected administrators such as the sheriff. Thus, the effectiveness of the City of Jacksonville as a unified government may depend on how meaningful the budget control powers of the mayor and the city council is (or can be made to be) over independent agencies.

Performance: An Assessment

All local government structural and functional changes tend to be promoted, and often oversold, on the grounds that major economies and efficiencies will occur because of the proposed change. This has been especially true of consolidation proposals. The "Blueprint for Improvement" did stress economy through eliminating duplication, although some care was taken to link the quality and quantity of services to the economy and efficiency claims. The question remains: Has the Consolidated Government of Jacksonville yielded major savings in service costs for the people of Jacksonville?

The question must be answered against a background of at least 20 years of neglect in meeting many basic service needs of the area. A Consolidated Government special report, issued after two years of operation, did not overstate the problem when it noted that "prior to Consolidated Government, Jacksonville was a community in crisis with discredited schools, indicted public officials, inefficient and wasteful local governments, disgraceful pollution and innumerable other problems with no hope of solution."¹³ Against this background, the accomplishments of the new government in expanding services to areas that had never had them, especially the suburbs, is impressive; old programs have been upgraded, some drastically; new programs have been launched. Expanded service has cost more money. The always sensitive property tax rate declined slightly in each of the first three years of consolidated government, from 31.98 mills in 1968 to 29.72 mills in 1970. The rate in the three years prior to consolidation had ranged from 40.58 to 41.85 mills. The cost to an average taxpayer owning a \$15,000 home declined almost \$60 per year even after accounting for increased service charges on water and the imposition of a sewer charge. Taxpayers in both the former county and the former city benefited.

If taxes have been reduced while services were improved, where has the money come from? The question cannot be given a definitive answer, but several sources are obvious. The Consolidated Government has maintained an aggressive program of attracting Federal funds. The lower millage rates have produced more

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property tax dollars as the tax roll has risen, from \$1.7 billion in 1968 to \$2.5 billion in 1971. Some increases in State funds have been realized. For instance, the establishment of the entire county as a city qualified the Consolidated Government for additional cigarette tax aid amounting to some \$2 million in the first year.

An examination of new services and improved quantity and quality of old services will help clarify the picture. A comparative study of old and new government programs, revenues, and expenditures completed by in-house staff in 1971 gives some basis for assessment. The study compared the last year of the old city and county governments (1968) with Consolidated Government revenues and expenditures in 1969, 1970, and 1971. The figures include all general government funds, but exclude agencies such as the school system and authorities. Over this period spending rose from \$56.2 million in the last year of the old government to \$57.6 million in 1969; rose to \$73.2 million in 1970, and increased further to a budgeted figure of \$80.2 million in 1971. Thus, spending rose most sharply in the second year (21.4 percent) and increased 8.8 percent in the third year. Where and why did the increases occur?

Almost \$8 million of the total \$24 million increase took place in new programs, the largest single category being urban renewal and other Federal program areas. A widely praised new service was a Rescue Service System that in 1970 handled over 18,000 patients with an average response time of 4.2 minutes. The added cost was \$600,000. A street lighting program, mainly benefiting the suburbs, had added almost 8,000 street lights by 1970, with 9,000 additional lights projected for 1971. The added cost was \$700,000.

Major increases in existing programs included the addition of over 200 firemen that allowed staffing all formerly volunteer fire departments in the old county with at least two full-time firemen; some 200 additional police, allowing a drastic upgrading of police service in the suburbs; and a complete overhaul of the child services program where children had been "kept in a condition of filth, abuse, neglect, and apathy."¹⁴ These and other improvements in the quality of programs were estimated to total over \$13 million by 1970.¹⁵

In specific examples of saving, one report cited "nearly 2 half-million dollars saved through Central Services purchasing of patrol cars."¹⁶ A special study of savings brought about by having all agencies use the Legal Division of the Consolidated Government showed total government legal expenses dropping from \$576,586 in 1966-1967 to \$494,967 in 1970-1971. The head of the Legal Division commented that "the real value of the Legal Division has been its ability to provide coordination and liaison between agencies... and to provide full-time career legal talent whose sole responsibility is to the taxpayers."¹⁷ It was further noted that the cost reductions came in the face of a significant

increase in duties. An added area of dramatic savings cited was in validation and approval of over \$100 million in bonds, where costs were cut to less than half those of pre-consolidation days.¹⁸ Improved investment practices, which raised the percentage of city funds invested to 96.2 percent, increased such earnings by over \$800,000, of which \$600,000 was attributable to better investment practices.¹⁹

The picture that emerges from this assessment is one in which costs did in fact go up after consolidation, but the quality and quantity of services to the public was substantially increased. The suburbs benefited especially from better fire and police protection and the equalization of utility rates. A major water and sewer program also promised large benefits in the future. For the old central city, the first priority in the sewer program was to reconstruct collapsing lines in the old city areas. By 1972 that program was complete. Consumers benefited from a new Division of Consumer Affairs that handled over 11,000 complaints in 1971. Recreation programs have been expanded, largely with Federal funds. The Consolidated Government seems to be moving on many fronts to launch new and upgrade old services, with tangible and substantial benefits to central city and suburb, black and white, and to the region as a whole.

The Limits of Consolidation

The favorable consolidation vote in 1967 abolished the old county and city governments, but it did not produce complete consolidation in the strict sense of that term. The several categories of governmental units with some degree of independence from the Consolidated Government include: (1) elected administrators (sheriff, tax assessor, tax collector, supervisor of elections, and county clerk); (2) the small cities (Jacksonville Beach, Neptune Beach, Atlantic Beach, and Baldwin); (3) authorities (electric authority, Port Authority, Hospital Authority, Beaches Public Hospital Board); (4) the School Board, (5) the Area Planning Board, (6) the Civil Service Board, and (7) Federally encouraged areawide agencies in areas such as health, poverty, and crime. None of these units are completely independent of the Consolidated Government, but neither are they subject to its full control.

The elected administrators' independence has been substantially curtailed, in that they are subject to budget control by the mayor, and must operate through the Department of Central Services in purchasing, personnel, and legal services. A study of the effect of the election of these administrators on the operations of the Consolidated Government revealed little or no operating problems between the mayor and the elected administrators. However, both the study and most of the city councilmen and administrators interviewed for this study felt that the elected status interfered seriously

with efforts to pinpoint responsibility and accountability. In addition, there was a widespread feeling that the lack of friction and operating difficulties to date was due largely to the eagerness of both the mayor and the elected administrators to get along, and that the potential for operating difficulties is always there. This concern was expressed with special emphasis regarding the law enforcement function, where the mayor has the responsibility, at least in the eyes of the people, but does not have operating control over the elected sheriff.²⁰

The former small cities, technically Urban Services Districts under the new charter, were seen by most Consolidated Government officials as a minor irritant that sooner or later should be removed in the process of perfecting the consolidation plan. The cities offer not only Urban Services District functions such as garbage collection and street lighting within their boundaries, but have to date continued to offer General Services District functions such as fire and police. Since they are restricted by the Consolidated Government to the USD millage rate of 6 mills, they pressed for the right to levy a full 10 mills, as other Florida cities do. This was refused by the Consolidated Government, but it has agreed to a kind of revenue sharing system in which money is given to Urban Services Districts two through five (the former small cities) to compensate them for General Services District functions they perform within their boundaries. The Consolidated City stands ready to take over these services at any time, but has not forced the issue. The small cities are clearly a source of irritation and discontent for the central government. However, their total population and budgets constitute only about five percent of the total, and fiscal pressures seem to be moving them more and more into the orbit of the Consolidated Government.

The independent authorities constitute a different, and perhaps in some ways more serious, limitation on the power of the Consolidated Government. On the positive side, several persons interviewed defended the authorities on the familiar grounds that they are performing "business-like" functions that demand flexibility and imagination that might not be present if they were a regular department of the city. Conventional wisdom has it that such functions as the production and distribution of electricity, or the operation of a transit system, is hampered by the inflexible bureaucracy assumed to be characteristic of regular departments. On the negative side, others felt that the authorities constitute a fragmentation that weakens the effectiveness of the new government, and support their abolition. In operational terms, there have been problems of coordination, but none that seem major. One example was cited by the head of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, whose department had not been consulted in Downtown Development Authority plans for reshaping the central city. The two agencies were

thus deeply involved in planning major changes in the same area without effective coordination. In addition, the mere existence of authorities sets up a constant tug-of-war between the authorities and the Consolidated Government as the authorities press for more autonomy and the Consolidated Government for less.

One thoughtful assessment of the authorities from a man who generally favors them stressed the need for strong mechanisms to coordinate their programs with the rest of the Consolidated Government. He cited the following controls as necessary to keep them in orbit: (a) full use of the mayor's appointment and the council's confirming power; (b) making them fully subject to central services controls in the budget, personnel, and purchasing areas; (c) strong budget review by the council; and (d) a firm requirement that all their activities should be reviewed and approved or rejected in the light of an overall development plan. This student of the Consolidated Government felt that where there was one Consolidated Government, authorities could be kept in line.

While at least one top staff member and some council members feel strongly that the authorities should be converted to regular departments, or at least drawn more tightly into the fabric of the Consolidated Government, there seems to be limited support for such a move. Legislative delegation backing of such a move, critical to its support, is not in evidence. In terms of the greater (multi-county) region, there has been no link-up as yet between the authorities and the emerging council of governments.

The School Board might be thought of as a special authority with an elected board. It uses the Department of Central Services, and it is subject to Consolidated Government review of its budget. Given the fierce independence of school districts generally, even this much control was no small achievement. The Civil Service Board has been forcefully condemned as unsound by almost every person interviewed in or out of the new government structure. It has been called "the worst compromise we made" by one observer. Several feel that its elected status and full range of personnel powers make true management responsibility impossible in the personnel area. The general recommendation is that it be an appointed board with strictly advisory powers, with the personnel function turned over to management. Every top administrator interviewed stressed the difficulty of weeding out decades of deadwood, given the resistance to such efforts by the elected Civil Service Board. Finally, the Jacksonville Area Planning Board operates more or less as an independent authority, with board members appointed by the mayor. A recent management efficiency study recommended that the planning function come under a regular department, abolishing the independent Area Planning Board.

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A variety of Federally encouraged districts exist in the Jacksonville area, some with countywide and some with multi-county jurisdiction. Whatever their functional merits may be, they add an element of further fragmentation to the consolidation picture. Law enforcement, health, manpower, and community improvement agencies are included in the list.

The Law Enforcement Regional Planning Council originally encompassed a seven-county region, but more recently, one-county metropolitan regions have been substituted in several of the State's metropolitan counties, including Jacksonville. The governor appoints these boards, and the effort under Governor Reuben Askew has been to broaden the representation on the board from a former heavy emphasis on police chiefs and sheriffs. Bureaucratic inertia often approaching the paralysis level has characterized the program statewide. Jacksonville has probably fared better than most areas, with some 36 projects funded, but the problem of effective coordination with the Consolidated Government remains.

In the area of health planning the Community Health Facilities Planning Council has been designated by the State for Hill-Burton Act "sign-off" authority. It operates outside either the Consolidated Government or the Area Planning Board, and the mayor enjoys no appointment power with regard to it. One highly placed Consolidated Government official felt that the council had not done a good job of setting community health priorities, partly because of internal disputes and conflicts that seem to characterize its functioning.

The Manpower Planning Council, appointed by the mayor with countywide responsibilities, operates out of the mayor's office, so it does not constitute a coordination problem. It has had very few operating dollars other than Emergency Employment Act funds.

The community action programs are controlled by a 45-person board made up of one-third public officials, one-third poor, and one-third citizen members. The CAP program involves some \$7 million annually and 400 employees. Coordination problems with such Consolidated Government agencies as the Housing and Urban Development agency exist, although the City of Jacksonville has some input through the one-third public official members.

The existence of the Federally encouraged and typically single-function agencies just described do tend to further limit the inclusive authority and responsibility of the Consolidated Government. They are in that sense typical of the host of categorical grants-in-aid programs that have generated in recent years increasing objections to the resulting "vertical functional autocracies" that, whatever else their merit may be, weaken the capability of governments of general jurisdiction to allocate scarce resources within a comprehensive planning and implementation framework.

In assessing the limits of consolidation, it is first clear

that Jacksonville is not a case of pure unified government. There is still some fragmentation involved. At least up to now, this fragmentation has not been a serious handicap in the operations of government. All units are subject to some degree of control by the Consolidated Government. Yet the problems, immediate or potential, are viewed as serious enough by most of those interviewed so as to call for further tightening of the consolidation plan.

The Emerging Political System

The abrupt and far-reaching structural changes accomplished in Jacksonville also brought abrupt and far-reaching changes in the political system. First and perhaps obvious, the old leaders of the pre-consolidation days, thoroughly discredited by the grand jury findings, for the most part lost their power and have not come close to regaining it. Hayden Burns was a symbol for the old-style politics, in which he headed a political organization that, in the eyes of many, assured corrupt and inefficient government for the area. The reform fervor swept in a different breed of politician, personified by the new mayor, Hans Tanzler. Tanzler was viewed by every person interviewed as a good mayor. His own view of his political style conforms essentially to the assessment of others interviewed. Tanzler noted that he was not a good politician in the old "boss politics" sense. He has not made patronage appointments; he has not built up a political machine, nor made any effort to do so. His style is essentially one of a non-partisan approach in which he goes to the people through the media for support on key issues.

The mayor is not without his critics, but they are for the most part friendly critics. The strongest criticism concerned his lack of forcefulness as an administrative leader. Some also felt he was not aggressive enough as a policy leader. Yet these same critics admitted that he had tackled some tough, potentially unpopular issues, such as the need for a sewer fee to help support a pollution control program. One thread of criticism picked up at several points concerned the mayor's unwillingness to use his political clout to pull together more forcefully the threads of administrative fragmentation discussed above.

The 19-person council in the Consolidated Government has had forceful leadership of its own, rather than simply the lead of the mayor to follow. The mayor does not seem to have an identifiable working majority that cuts across issues; he must put his majority together on each succeeding policy matter. Every person interviewed, including five incumbent council members, like the mixed at-large/district arrangement. The single exception was a black council member who would prefer all district elections. The feature most often mentioned by council members and others as helping the council

perform effectively was the council's auditor. This office has functioned with a small staff to give the council the background on which to base policy/administrative initiative.

The place of blacks in the post-consolidation political system is viewed by both black and white leaders as a vast improvement over pre-consolidation days. A black leader and council member who opposed consolidation on the grounds that its central purpose was to dilute the power of blacks in the old city now feels that it has not had that effect. She feels that "blacks have more political power than ever before under consolidation." She noted, as did others black and white, the sharp increase in jobs for blacks under consolidation. Blacks have been added to the fire department for the first time, and more blacks have been recruited in the law enforcement area. All leaders interviewed stressed the great success in drawing blacks into the political system by appointing at least one black to every advisory board.

On the always delicate subject of blacks and law enforcement, one black leader held that while the sheriff was a good person, blacks felt that he was not a strong leader, did not really run the department, and thus left many things to racist old-regime law enforcement officers. Many blacks, including the two interviewed, would support the appointment of the sheriff so that he could be controlled by the mayor, who is perceived as a strong friend of blacks. A current cooperative effort between the Urban League and the sheriff to recruit more black policemen was praised by both black leaders interviewed.

The black council member elected at large felt that blacks definitely have had a greater input under consolidation. His view was that blacks struck a bargain in supporting consolidation by "opting for representation now rather than waiting to get the whole central city". He noted that if the latter course of action had been chosen, "I might have been the black mayor, but I would have been only a referee in bankruptcy." This same black leader felt that leadership generally among blacks was getting stronger, and viewed the political future of blacks under the Consolidated Government as good.

The single problem with regard to the political system in the eyes of most Consolidated Government supporters interviewed was the area's legislative delegation. In Florida local bills put through the legislature by a local delegation can often override local home rule powers. Consolidation supporters expressed the view that the Duval area delegation did not fully understand and often were not sympathetic to the Consolidated Government. This in turn meant that discordant elements such as the small cities had a potential ally in attempting to weaken the power of the Consolidated Government. It was also widely felt that lack of understanding and sympathy prevented further strengthening of the new government.²¹

The Jacksonville SMSA is surrounded by small, rural and small-town-oriented counties that at first glance have little in common with the Jacksonville "giant." Very little urban development lies outside the boundaries of the new city, so the region in terms of dense urban development is almost wholly encompassed within the new city. In spite of this, there has been action to extend the scope of the region on a voluntary basis by forming a council of governments in the area.

Mayor Tanzler has supported the move, but the chief architect of the Florida Crown Conference of Local Governments is Walter Williams, a councilman from the small town of Baldwin, in the western, rurally oriented part of the City of Jacksonville. All eight counties in the area around Jacksonville have joined. The board of directors consists of sixteen members: each county commission selects one representative, while the cities within each county designate one member to represent them.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

Williams stressed the delicate problem of constantly assuring the neighboring cities and counties that consolidation had nothing to do with the COG effort. He reported that the interest of the smaller counties and cities stemmed from their growing concern about slipshod development as Jacksonville tightens its zoning, subdivision, and building codes. Regional planning and an A-95 review process have been discussed, with considerable sentiment in favor of such a move. The main program to date is a regional emergency medical system which extends the excellent Jacksonville system to the surrounding areas in the Gold Crown COG. This regional emergency health program has received Federal support in the form of a \$3 million grant. Telephone consulting services for doctors in the rural and small-town areas, and fast, efficient movement of patients from such areas to the Jacksonville Medical Center, are part of the operation. The Florida Crown Conference is just beginning, but it does signal a broadening of the regional outlook from the one-county SMSA to an eight-county region. As the Jacksonville metropolitan area continues to grow into the surrounding counties, the importance of the COG will increase. The A-95 review process has been confined to the City of Jacksonville, and until very recently very little has been done to use it effectively as a coordinating planning tool. Persistent pressure from the mayor's office on the semi-autonomous Area Planning Board to use the A-95 review process more effectively as a management tool finally resulted in a strengthening of the process during the last six months of 1972. The use of the review and comment power up to that point had been virtually dormant.

A parallel, and probably more significant, development has the potential for major strengthening of

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intergovernmental coordination in the Jacksonville area. A Federal chief executive review and comment grant will support an expanded staff in the mayor's office for review and comment on all aid proposals from local governments to Federal, State, or other sources. Thus, the authority of this new unit is much broader than the A-95 review powers. The extent to which the Federally encouraged areawide agencies such as CAP will be drawn into this review process is not yet clear, nor is the exact relationship between the mayor's office review and comment activity and the parallel A-95 responsibilities of the Area Planning Board.

In the eyes of consolidation leaders in Jacksonville, State and Federal governments are contrasted sharply in assessing support for the Consolidated Government. The opinion of one top Jacksonville administrator is stronger than most, but reflected the general attitude toward the State when he said that "the State has not helped very much; the Department of Community Affairs is hopeless; the LEEP program seems bogged down in bureaucratic impotence; and the State bureaucracy generally is very poor, highhanded, inefficient, and has little concept of the needs of local government." A two-year wait for a State assistance program in the sewer bond area accounted for a good part of the negative attitude toward the State.

The Federal government, on the other hand, was generally viewed as having given strong support to the Consolidated Government. A Federal programs coordinator had been successful in vigorously seeking

Federal funds in areas such as housing, urban renewal, and recreation, in sharp contrast to the indifference or hostility toward Federal help that characterized the old government.

Consolidation and the Future

Jacksonville's Consolidated Government met its first clear test of public reaction in 1970 when Mayor Tanzler ran for election against the prime symbol of the old city politics, former Governor Hayden Burns. The new government passed with flying colors, with Tanzler winning by a wide margin. No serious effort to dismantle the new approach has emerged. Only the small cities persist in seeking to regain some or all of their past autonomy, and so far they have not succeeded. There is considerable talk among consolidation supporters about further strengthening the existing structure. The charter provides for the appointment of a charter review committee to recommend needed changes in the Consolidated Government, and such a group is being organized. Several persons interviewed thought the committee would give high priority to considering (a) how to bring the former small cities more fully into the consolidation scheme; (b) how to tighten Consolidated Government control over the independent agencies and offices; and (c) how to alter the role of the Civil Service Board so as to provide for a vigorous, positive approach to personnel administration. All three considerations promise to be highly controversial.

Footnotes

¹The statistics for this section are taken from Local Government Study Commission of Duval County, *Blueprint for Improvement*, 1966, especially pp. 10-17.

²Richard A. Martin, *Consolidation: Jacksonville-Duval County*, Jacksonville: Crawford Publishing Co., 1968, p. 39.

³Martin, pp. 39-40.

⁴Martin, pp. 44-45.

⁵The authorities that were continued from the old to the new government included the Expressway Authority, the Hospital Authority, the Port Authority, and the Area Planning Board. In addition, the new Jacksonville Electric Authority was created. The Expressway Authority was later broadened to a Transportation Authority.

⁶Martin, p. 68.

⁷Martin, Chapter 6.

⁸Martin, Chapter 6, especially pp. 123-134.

⁹Martin, Chapters 7, 8, and 9.

¹⁰Martin, Chapter 7.

¹¹Martin, pp. 224-26.

¹²Martin, Chapter 4.

¹³City of Jacksonville, Department of Central Services, *Bold View*, Vol. 3, No. 1, March, 1971, p. 7.

¹⁴Consolidated Jacksonville In-House Memo, December, 1970.

¹⁵In-House Comparative Study, 19.

¹⁶*Bold View*, March, 1971, p. 21.

¹⁷Annual Report, Legal Division, Exhibit B, 1970-71.

¹⁸Annual Report, Legal Division.

¹⁹In-House Memo, Investment of Funds, December, 1969.

²⁰William D. Talbot, *The Impact of Independently Elected Officials on Jacksonville, Florida's Consolidated Government*, Unpublished Master's Thesis (Florida Atlantic University, 1971).

²¹A preliminary assessment of changes in the delegation resulting from the November 1972 elections indicate that the new delegation will be much more friendly to the Consolidated Government than the old delegation.