A decorative border with a repeating floral and scrollwork pattern, enclosing the central text.

A
PRIMER

ON

**State Government Organization
in Michigan**

CITIZENS RESEARCH COUNCIL of MICHIGAN
810 FARWELL BUILDING
DETROIT 26, MICHIGAN

204 BAUCH BUILDING
LANSING 23, MICHIGAN

October 1960

Report No. 203

COULD BE YOU'RE OVERLOADIN' THE CIRCUIT.



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SOME BASIC PRINCIPLES . . .

SUPPOSE WE DIDN'T HAVE?

Suppose there were no departments, boards, or commissions in this state?

Suppose, in short, that there was a legislature and a court system, but no executive agencies to administer, or to carry out, the day-to-day services and functions of state government?

SUPPOSE THERE WERE . . .

No Department of Administration — No State Administration Board — No Attorney General — No Auditor General — No Board of Canvassers — No Civil Service Commission — No Department of Economic Development — No State Board of Equalization — No Executive Office — No Great Lakes Tidewater Commission — No Michigan Commission on Intergovernmental Cooperation — No Municipal Finance Commission — No Department of Revenue — No Secretary of State — No State Treasurer — No State Board of Tax Appeals — No State Tax Commission — No Employees' Retirement System — No Atomic Energy Commission — No Superintendent of Public Instruction — No Junior and Community Colleges — No Community College Development Commission — No Regents of the University of Michigan — No Michigan State University State Board of Trustees — No Wayne State University — No Ferris Institute — No College of Mining and Technology — No State Board of Education — No State Board of Control for Vocational Education — No State Board for Libraries — No Michigan Historical Commission — No Department of Health — No Crippled Children Commission — No Water Resources Commission — No State Board of Alcoholism — No Department of Mental Health — No State Department of Social Welfare — No State Board of Control for Vocational Rehabilitation — No Michigan Commission on Aging — No Michigan State Police — No Michigan State Safety Commission — No Office of Civil Defense — No Military Establishment — No Naval Militia — No Veterans' Readjustment Center — No Department of Corrections — No Michigan State Board of Accountancy — No State Board of Registration for Architects, Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors — No Board of Examiners of Barbers — No Board of Examiners in the Basic Sciences — No Board of Registration in Chiropody — No Board of Chiropractic Examiners — No State Board of Cosmetology — No Michigan State Board of Dentistry — No Electrical Administrative Board — No Board of Registration for Foresters — No Board of Law Examiners — No State Board of Registration in Medicine — No State Board of Examiners in Mortuary Science — No Michigan Board of Nursing — No Board of Examiners in Optometry — No State Board of Examiners in Osteopathic Registration and Examination — No Michigan Board of Pharmacy — No Board of Plumbing — No State Board of Veterinary Examiners — No Department of Conservation — No Great Lakes Basin Compact Commission — No Soil Conservation Committee — No Mackinac Island State Park Commission — No Department of Agriculture — No State Fair Commission — No Upper Peninsula State Fair — No Michigan Weather Service — No State Highway Department — No Department of Insurance — No Michigan Department of Aeronautics — No State Board of Escheats — etc., etc., etc.

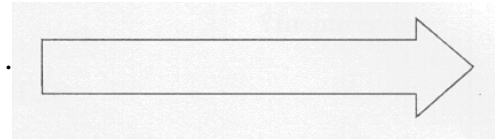
WHAT BASIC PRINCIPLES SHOULD GUIDE US IN CREATING EXECUTIVE AGENCIES?

ONE BASIC PRINCIPLE IS . . .

SIMPLICITY — We would want our executive organization to be simple.

Why? Well, Take a look at the opposite page for a moment.

Quite a few readers will remember cartoons like this . . .
Involved and complicated, they portray the all-around-
Robin-Hood's barn way of doing the simplest thing.



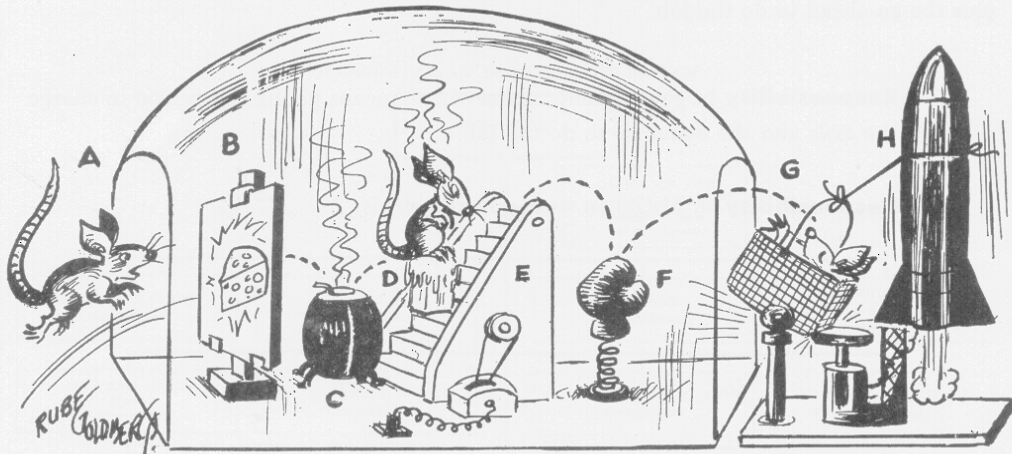
- **Simplicity** in government means understanding of government — your understanding of what is intended and of what is being done.
- **Simplicity** means not complicated — doing the job in that way which involves

The most direct and beneficial results,
the fewest people,
the least time,
the minimum expense.

IS THIS YOUR IDEA OF SIMPLICITY?

SIMPLICITY is one basic principle of executive organization.

How to Get Rid of a Mouse



The best mousetrap by Rube Goldberg; Mouse (A) dives for painting of cheese (B), goes through canvas and lands on hot stove (C). He jumps on cake of ice (D)

to cool off. Moving escalator (E) drops him on boxing glove (F) which knocks him into basket (G) setting off miniature rocket (H) which takes him to the moon.

Drawn for Newsweek by Rube Goldberg

*Printed originally in Newsweek Magazine.
Reprinted with permission of Rube Goldberg.*

ANOTHER BASIC PRINCIPLE IS . . .

RESPONSIBILITY — To carry out a job requires the means of doing it, both the tools and the authority.

If your job were to cook, you would want the food, the equipment, and a free hand in the kitchen. (We all know what too many cooks do to the broth.)

If it were to shingle roofs, again you would want the necessary tools and equipment — plus the go-ahead to do the job.

- **Responsibility** in government, as elsewhere, means giving the person in charge the *tools* and *authority* to do the job.
- **Responsibility** in Michigan state government is

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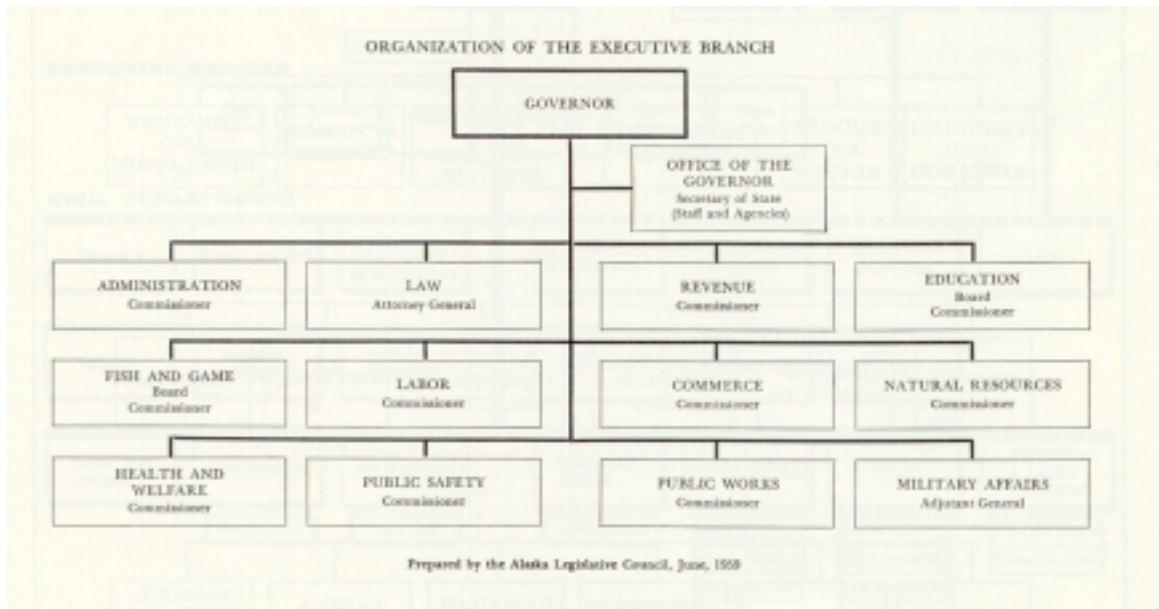
pulverized

into a complicated jumble of over 120 executive agencies.

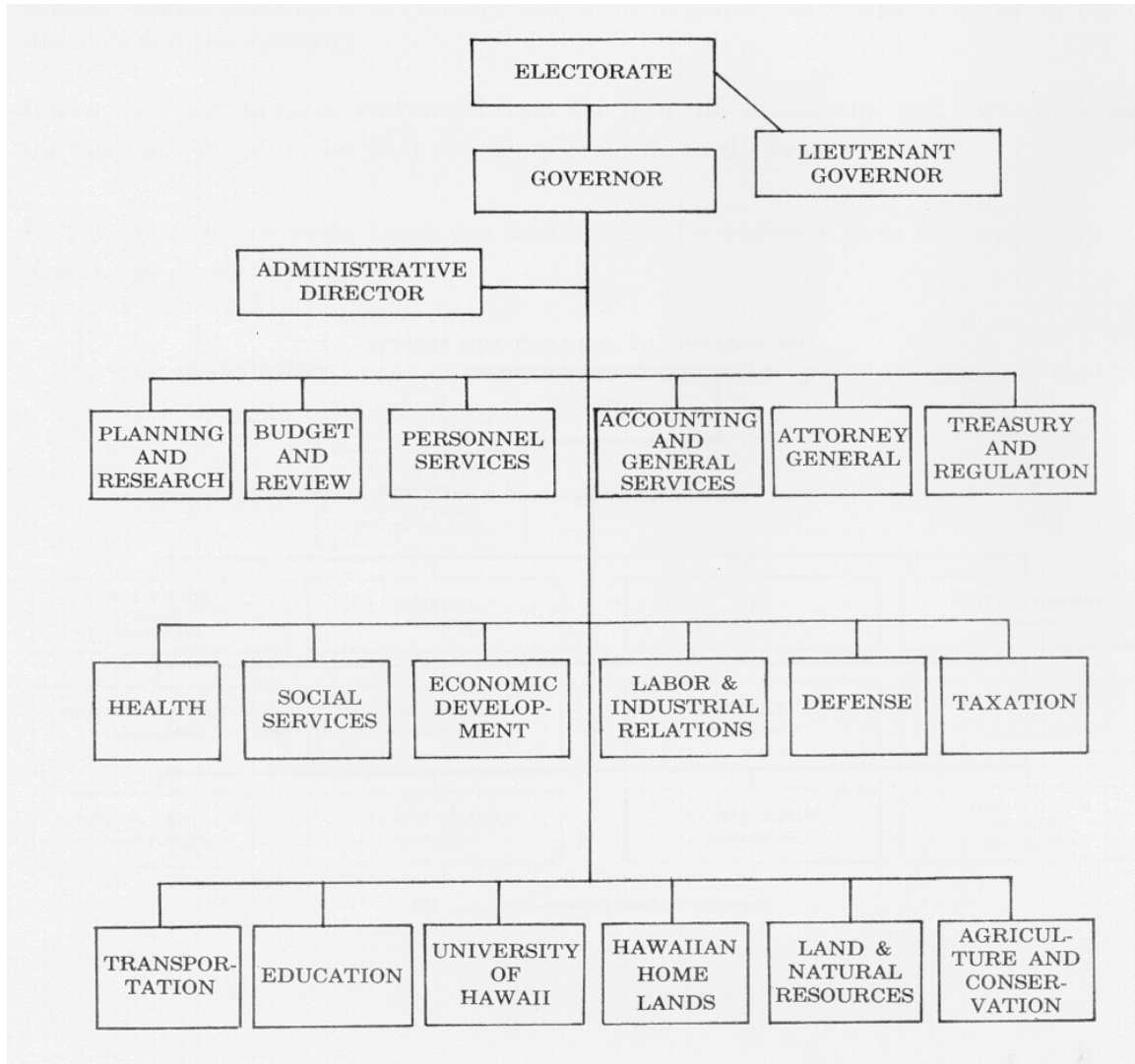
The Constitutions of several states restrict the number of major executive departments to 20 or less.

RESPONSIBILITY is another basic principle of executive organization.

STATE OF ALASKA ORGANIZATION OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

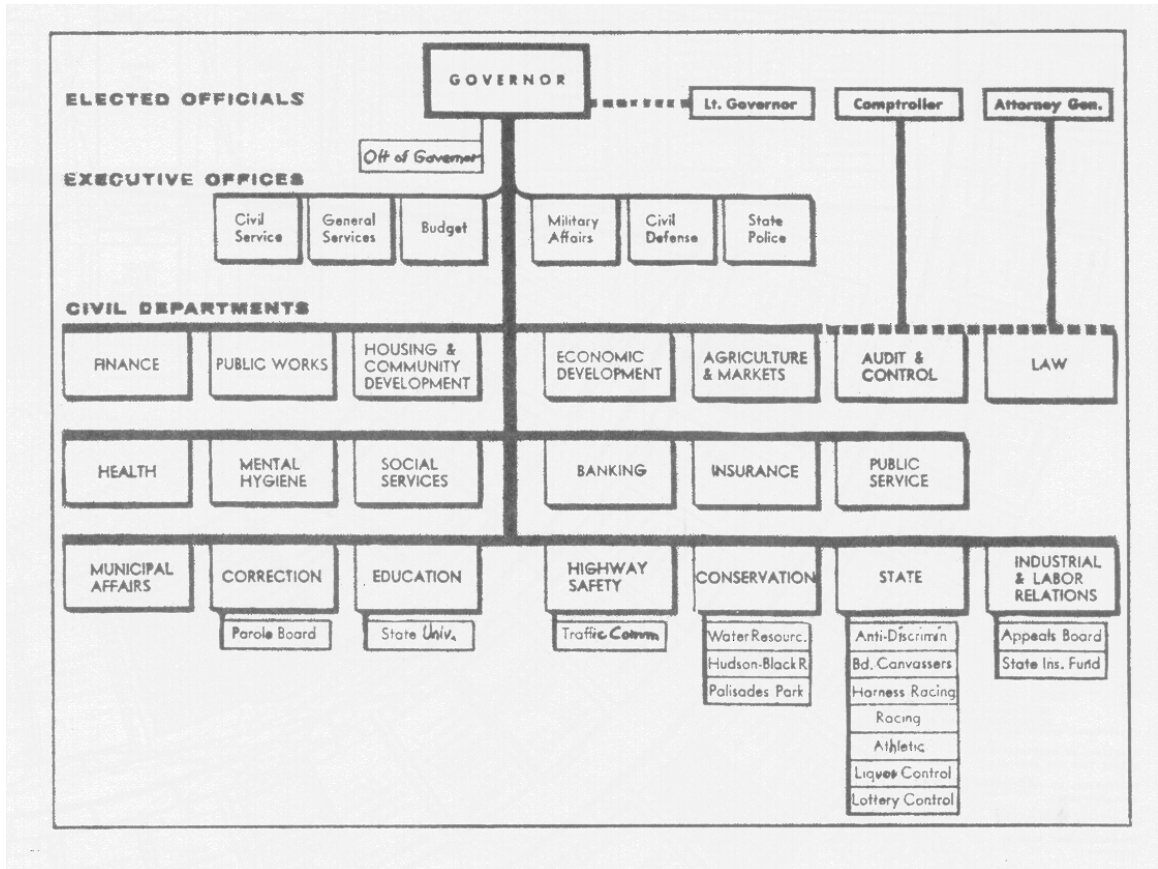


HAWAII'S STATE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTAL ORGANIZATION CHART

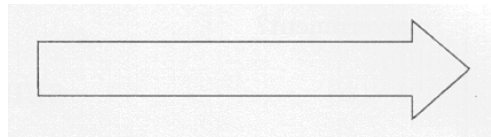


SOURCE: Act 1, Second Special Session First State Legislature, 1959.

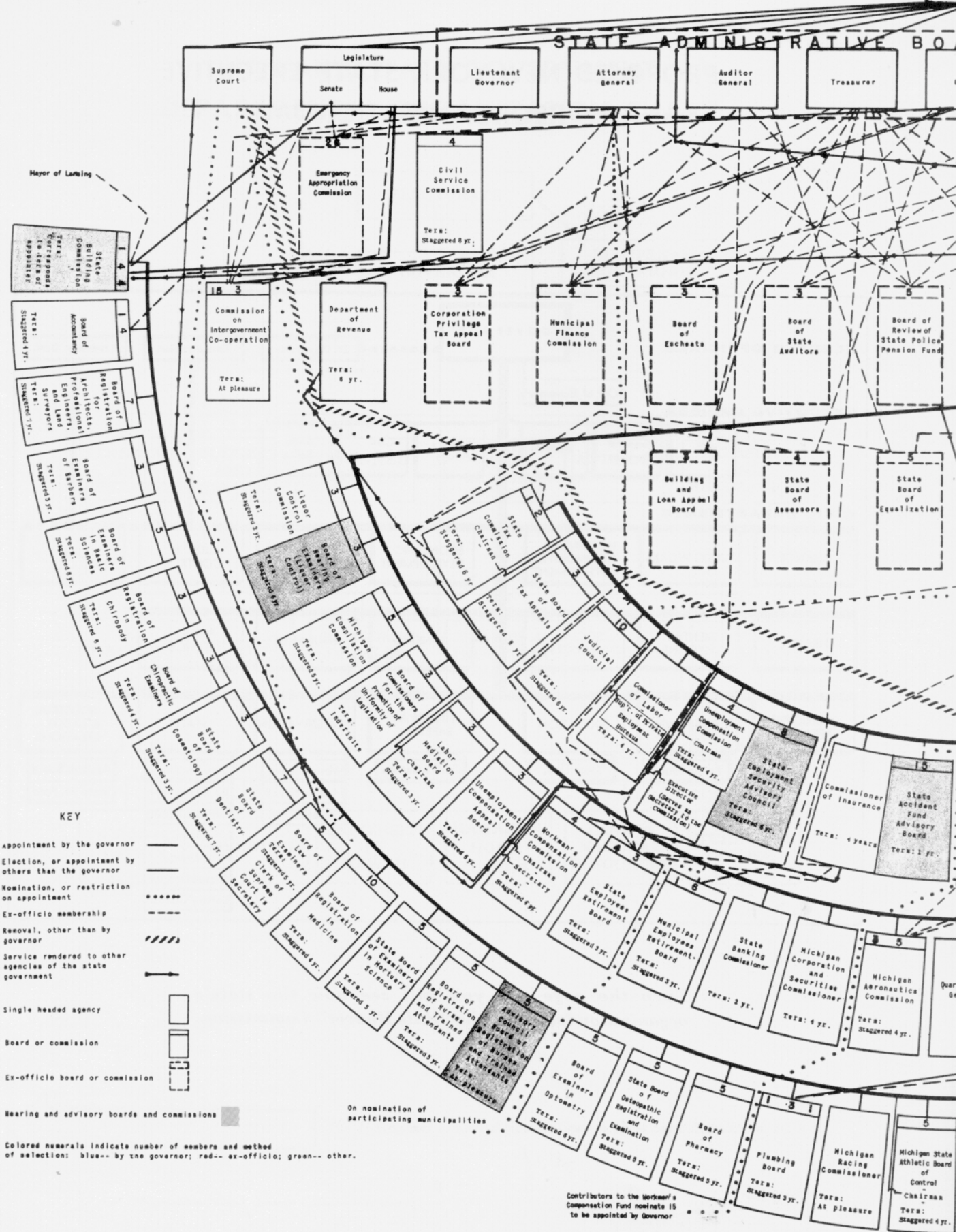
PROPOSED NEW YORK STATE EXECUTIVE REORGANIZATION



Turn the page and you will see how the state's organization looked to the "little Hoover" Commission.



MICHIGAN STATE ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION



KEY

- appointment by the governor
- Election, or appointment by others than the governor
- Nomination, or restriction on appointment
- Ex-officio membership
- Removal, other than by governor
- Service rendered to other agencies of the state government

- Single headed agency
- Board or commission
- Ex-officio board or commission

■ Hearing and advisory boards and commissions

On nomination of participating municipalities

Colored numerals indicate number of members and method of selection: blue-- by the governor; red-- ex-officio; green-- other.

STILL A THIRD BASIC PRINCIPLE IS . . .

ACCOUNTABILITY — After the job is done, you would want to be able to hold someone to account for results.

Accountability to the people is an essential of our form of government. The power to do something about results rests with the people. If they are not satisfied that the job was done well, and effectively, and economically, they should be able to hold someone to account.

— If it were not a good job, the people might want to change cooks,
or roof shinglers,
or governors,
or legislators.

Accountability goes hand in hand with **Responsibility**. If you could not find **Responsibility** in the preceding chart, can you tell where **Accountability** lies — Can you single out the responsible person and hold him to account for results?

The opposite page shows another view of how Michigan state government is organized.



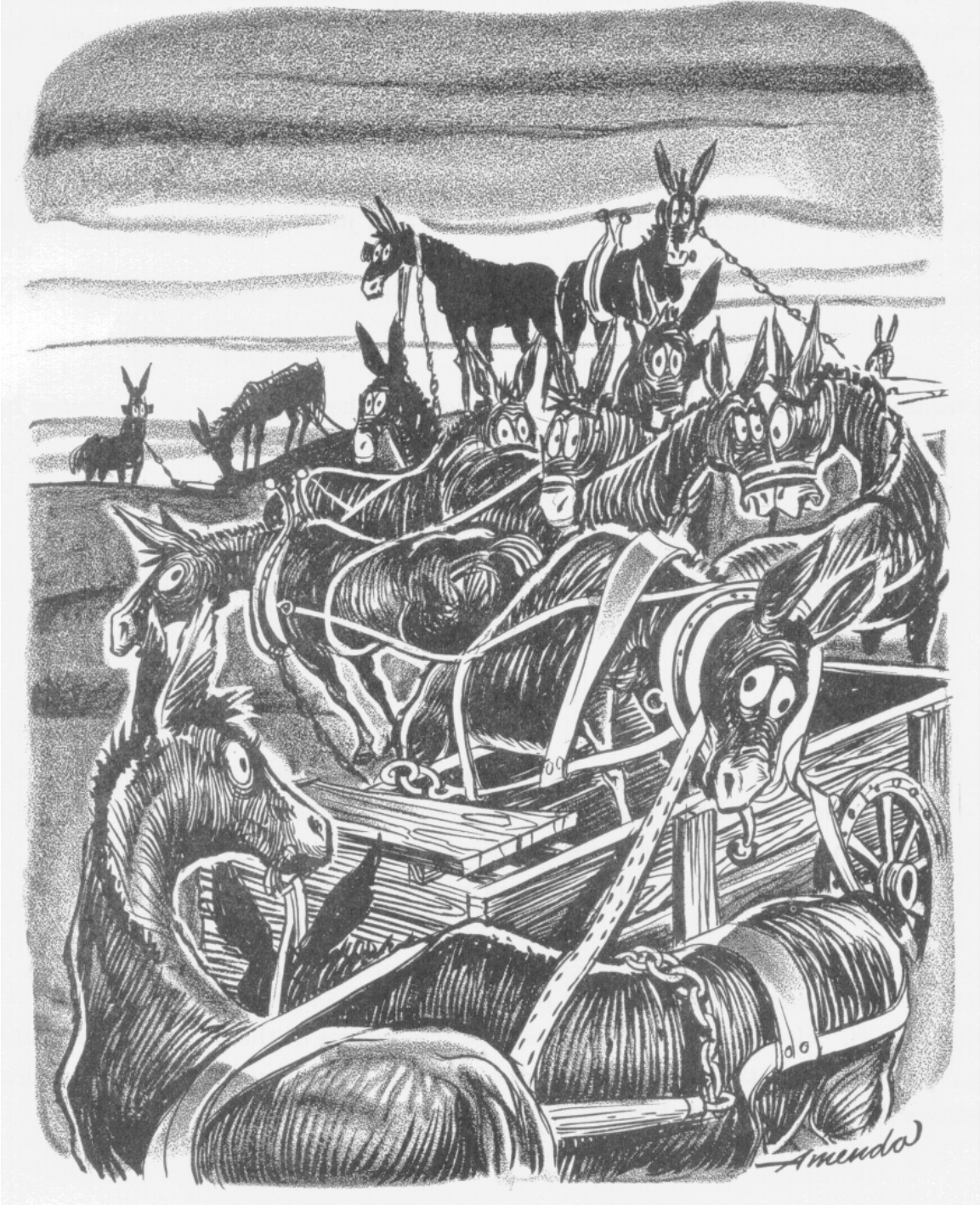
Can you locate any clear **Responsibility?**

Can you determine **Accountability?**

ACCOUNTABILITY is a third basic principle of executive organization.

“An organization chart of Michigan state government exhibits all the weird confusion of a twenty-mule team harnessed in the dark by a one-armed idiot.”

(Taken from “Miracle in Michigan”, National Municipal Review, Vol. XLVII, No. 7, July 1958.)



Drawn for Citizens Research Council by Amenda

A FOURTH BASIC PRINCIPLE IS . . .

CHECKS AND BALANCES — So that no one of the three areas of government — executive, legislative, or judicial — may assume undue importance or wield decisive control.

Checks and balances among executive, legislative and judicial functions are vital to the control and direction of representative government.

In governmental organization, the important point is the relation of the *executive* branch to the *legislative* branch.

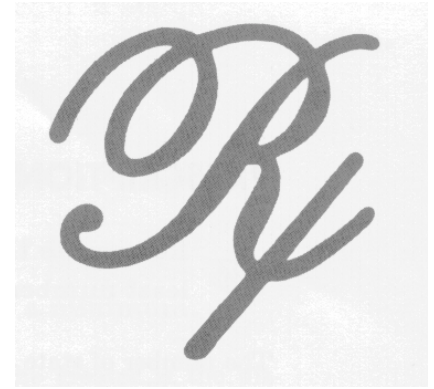
- Your elected representatives — the legislature — should have the means of seeing that its laws are carried out as intended by it and by you.

- The executive branch—the bureaucracy of government—should not be allowed to assume a control that replaces or over-reaches the peoples' own desires. Efficiency in government should not be allowed to become the ability of the “official” to substitute his ideas and his will for those of the “citizen”.

The question is, “How well and adequately are the policies of the people’s representatives being carried out by the executive—and how may we know they are being properly administered?”

CHECKS AND BALANCES is a fourth principle of executive organization.

SOME BASIC PRESCRIPTIONS . . .



What are the primary, the really indispensable points by which these four principles of executive organization may be achieved?



FOR **SIMPLICITY** —

- 1) Reorganize the services and functions of state government into the least number of logical, functional areas of activity.
- 2) Provide that most agencies have a director appointed by the chief executive for a term concurrent with his own, by and with the advice and consent of the state senate.
- 3) Use boards and commissions sparingly.



FOR **RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY** —

- 1) Keep the number of elected administrative officials to a minimum.
- 2) Lengthen the existing two-year term of office
- 3) Give the chief executive unrestricted power of investigation and removal of others from office for causes set forth in law.



FOR **CHECKS AND BALANCES** —

- 1) Provide for independent citizen councils for major state agencies to achieve citizen participation in, and citizen audit of state governmental operations.
- 2) Give the legislature authority to appoint a legislative auditor to oversee how well state laws are being administered, and to make fiscal and performance audits of state agencies.

THESE EIGHT PROPOSALS CONSTITUTE ESSENTIAL PRESCRIPTIONS FOR THE EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION OF MICHIGAN STATE GOVERNMENT.

PRESCRIPTIONS FOR SIMPLICITY . . .



Reorganize the services and functions of state government into the least number of logical, functional areas of activity.

The number of state agencies is far in excess of that needed for logical, functional organization. Official counts even fail to agree on the number; it ranges from 122 to 147. Experience in state reorganization elsewhere suggests that 20 to 30 agencies is the most that is sufficient for sound, effective organizational purposes. Certainly, a substantial reduction in the present number of separate state agencies is both appropriate and feasible. It would be the first step toward **simplicity** in state government organization.



Provide that most agencies have a director appointed by the chief executive for a term concurrent with his own, by and with the advice and consent of the state senate.

This provision focuses responsibility (and subsequent accountability) for the execution of state functions and services where it properly belongs – in the hands of the chief executive, the governor. Senatorial confirmation of the executive appointment is a recognition of proper legislative concern with the people who are to be the chief administrators in state government.



Use boards and commissions sparingly.

Boards and commissions predominate among the more than 100 executive agencies of state government. by their very nature, there can be little doubt that boards or commissions constitute a separate establishment of responsibility and create separate problems of accountability. In some few cases, there may be offsetting considerations. But for these very reasons, boards or commissions need to be used sparingly and only where the special effects of their use seem clearly warranted. Three situations suggest a properly restricted use of a board or commission:

—first, in instances where strong jealousies and competing pressures exist within and outside of departments which are to be merged;

—second, in instances where government undertakes a new function lacking a well developed body of policy and again involving competing interests;

—third, in a few instances where tradition dictates (as in the field of education, for example).

PRESCRIPTIONS FOR RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY . . .



Keep the number of elected administrative officials to a minimum.

The larger the number of elected state administrative officials, the greater is the dispersion of **responsibility**, and the less is the opportunity for public understanding and the ability to elect with discrimination and judgment. Some elected officials—the auditor general is a prime example—have no constitutional duties whatsoever; some, like the state treasurer, are largely ministerial officers, having little room for exercising judgment, but bound by mandates of the law; some, like the attorney general, are primarily staff officers whom the chief executive should be free to select for himself. Reducing the number of independently elected administrative officials would tend to focus **responsibility**, thereby concentrating popular attention on performance and gaining popular understanding of results.



Lengthen the existing two-year term of office

It is argued with some merit that, for example, a four-year term for elected administrative officials would

- a) decrease the amount of time an incoming administration will operate under its predecessor's fiscal policies;
- b) give the voter a better basis and opportunity for appraising the performance of government and for forming a qualified judgment in exercising his vote;
- c) reduce the proportion of time spent in learning the ropes of the new job and in campaigning for re-election, which now may take in all as much as one year of a two-year term.



Give the chief executive unrestricted power of investigation and removal of others from office for causes set forth in law.

Present constitutional provisions deprive the chief executive of the right of investigation and removal while the legislature is in session. With annual sessions, this means the governor does not have these rights for about half of his term of office. His **responsibility** for executive operations is thereby diminished; his effectiveness as the state's manager is lessened. Granting unrestricted powers in this respect would place full **responsibility** for executive management where it properly belongs. At the same time, it would not prevent the legislature from exercising the same powers, if it saw fit to do so while in session.

PRESCRIPTIONS FOR *CHECKS AND BALANCES* . . .



Provide for independent citizen councils for major state agencies to achieve citizen participation in, and citizen audit of state governmental operations.

This proposal substitutes a clearly independent form of citizen participation in governmental affairs for the usual way in which this is sought to be achieved (through the creation of a board or commission). A “citizen” as a member of a board becomes in reality an “official”, a part of the governmental bureaucracy and with a vested interest. The proposed citizens councils, however, would not be a direct part of the administrative process; would not be responsible for performance or results, but *would* have independence of action in reviewing, criticizing, suggesting, and reporting on the results or operations. Such councils would secure a greater public knowledge and understanding of operations and results, and would constitute “citizen participation” in government to a degree not possible when the citizen himself becomes the responsible official.



Give the legislature authority to appoint a legislative auditor to oversee how well state laws are being administered, and to make fiscal and performance audits of state agencies.

If you gave the orders (passed the laws), but someone else carried out the orders (administered the laws), you would need to know how well your orders were being executed. The legislature—your representatives in getting done what you want done—now have little means of checking into the way in which laws are carried out by executive agencies. An appointed official, directly responsible to the legislature, with power to make fiscal audits and to appraise and assess performance is an answer to this legislative weakness. The executive should have the tools and the responsibility. Your legislative representatives should have the co-equal power to see that what is being done is what should have been done, in order to provide the results sought by *checks and balances*.

IN CONCLUSION . . .

The reasons for the present organization of Michigan state government are many. They range from historical developments, through tradition, to fears and jealousies of executive power and authority.

“Centralization” of government is an oft-cited modern objection to any suggestions that state government be made simpler, more responsible, more recognizable as to cause and effect. But centralization has nothing to do with the effective exercise of executive responsibility within any one level of government.

Much of the state’s organizational pattern appears to have developed from the illusion that the total grant of power to executive agencies is somehow minimized if authority for wielding the power is dispersed, divided, and concealed. The legislature determines the total grant of power by its laws (which, in turn, are make subject to judicial and popular review). To grant the power and then to hamper its effective administration by unsound organizational forms can only result in the grave danger that control and understanding will be lost.

Because we can see the reasons for our present state of affairs, we do not have to tolerate a complicated, ill-kempt organization for the provision of important and often vital state services and activities.

The keys to a sounder organization of these services and activities and to their more effective direction and control lie in the four principles we have discussed . . .

SIMPLICITY

RESPONSIBILITY

ACCUNTABILITY

CHECKS AND BALANCES

THE EIGHT PRESCRIPTIONS GIVEN CONSTITUTE THE PRIMARY AND BASIC MEANS FOR MAKING THESE PRINCIPLES OPERATIVE IN MICHIGAN STATE GOVERNMENT.