

## POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

### *Grooming a New "Political Man"*

"Cotton Mather's *Life of Phips*: 'A Vice With the Vizzard of Vertue Upon It'" by Philip F. Gura, in *The New England Quarterly* (Sept. 1977), Hubbard Hall, Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Me. 04011.

To many 17th-century New Englanders, William Phips (1651-95) epitomized what a good governor should *not* be. But preacher Cotton Mather found an overriding virtue in Phips's checkered career: his "love for his country."

Gura, a professor of English at the University of Colorado, finds the appeal to patriotism in Mather's *Life of Phips* (1697) a fateful updating of the Puritans' political vocabulary. Massachusetts' old charter, which made church membership the prerequisite for political rights, had been revoked in 1683. The new charter based the franchise firmly on ownership of property. A new kind of public man was emerging—with Phips the outstanding example. This carpenter, treasure-hunter, and charismatic soldier (his forays against French Canada secured New England's northern border) beguiled his way to a knighthood in 1687 and, on the recommendation of Mather's father, to the governorship of all New England in 1692. He died three years later in London, facing charges of bribery, piracy, and misconduct in high office.

Faced with this mixed record, Mather emphasized Phips's courage, ambition, diligence in worldly affairs, and endearing manner with the lower classes. If these qualities had a "sinful" smell about them, they were nevertheless the virtues, Mather explained, of an incipient "political man." Hence, the *Life of Phips* set a new standard in colonial politics; for the first time, public patriotism superseded personal piety as the chief measure of a good leader.

### *City Limits and Stunted Growth*

"Understanding the Urban Predicament" by Richard P. Nathan and Paul R. Dommell, in *The Brookings Bulletin* (vol. 14, nos. 1 & 2, 1977), 1775 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

The decay of the nation's Northern "core cities" has become *the* U.S. domestic problem, say Brookings government specialists Nathan and Dommell. But while the public tends to associate urban decline with city size, the authors believe other factors are more critical.

One cause is the balance—or lack of it—between a city and its suburbs. In a review of 55 of the nation's largest cities, Nathan and Dommell find that 43 of them are economically worse off (in varying degrees) than their suburbs; 2 are about the same; 10 are better off. Almost all of these are in the South and West, and 4 have populations greater than 1 million.

The 14 worst off cities (including Newark, Gary, Baltimore, Cleveland, Detroit, and Hartford) are primarily in the northeast quadrant of the United States. Their rate of population loss doubled between 1970

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and 1973, as compared to gains of up to 20 percent for the 10 healthiest cities. Growth in per capita income and tax base has declined. The nub of the problem: The boundaries of the unhealthiest cities have remained substantially unchanged for 60 to 100 years; unlike such new cities as Phoenix or Houston, older core urban areas have been unable to expand geographically to increase their "resource base."

Nathan and Dommel recommend increases in existing federal subsidies, such as welfare, to aid the central cities. But more important, they say, the ailing Northeast cities need *structural* relief. State, county, and suburban governments must realign their functions, if not their boundaries, to share the wealth with less affluent areas. One approach would create a two-tier system of government to preserve local autonomy while helping to coordinate financial policy. According to the authors, the governments of Los Angeles City and County and of Miami and Dade County "come close to the [two-tier] ideal" of individual community governments incorporated into larger, metropolitan area planning authorities.

### *Civil Liberties and the Burger Court*

"Contemporary Supreme Court Directions in Civil Liberties" by Robert J. Steamer, in *Political Science Quarterly* (Fall 1977), 2852 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025.

Lawyers, political scientists, and reporters discussing the Supreme Court under Chief Justice Warren Burger tend to adopt "angry and apocalyptic" tones. Many feel that Nixon and Ford appointees to the Burger Court have systematically dismantled the "edifice of civil liberties" erected by the Court under Chief Justice Earl Warren (1953-69).

Despite all the "hand-wringing," contends University of Massachusetts Provost Steamer, the contrast between the Burger and Warren Courts in regard to civil liberties is not all that sharp. The differences are "subtle shadings."

Criticized for curbing "access," the Burger Court, in fact, has simply tried to limit judicial review to cases involving real, not technical, questions of constitutional law. (The Court's docket is now four times as crowded as it was during the 1930s.) The 1966 *Miranda* ruling on the rights of accused persons still stands, albeit somewhat modified, despite the presence on the Court of two of the original dissenters from that decision, not to mention five "conservative" Republican appointees. Rulings expanding the use in court of evidence obtained from illegal searches and seizures are a break from the Warren years, but not from the rulings of earlier courts.

In Fourteenth Amendment equal-protection and due-process cases, the Burger Court has actually moved further than the Warren Court and created a "suborder of liberties" that have "no ascertainable reference points." Going beyond race, the Justices deal inconsistently with discrimination involving sex, age, and national origin, and with rights to travel and rights to marital privacy. Rulings in these cases rest on