

As America has evolved, America has changed; and we must understand this evolution and change if we are to intelligently evaluate where we are today and where we will or might be tomorrow.

An abundance of space, a scarcity of material wealth and a small, homogeneous population are descriptive of the problems and people of our nation at its birth. Less than two hundred years later, the conditions and situations are for the most part diametrically reversed. We have too little space, tremendous material prosperity, and a multiplied and diversified population that must be secured by central government and serviced by its state, county, and municipal leadership.

This great physical change has been accompanied by great psychological change, for most of us no longer regard government as a suspect instrument which would deny individual freedom, but as the organized and regulated system for achieving it.

Yet our progress has not been without penalty. The state of things as they are confounds and challenges the state of mind to which we have willingly and earnestly matured. The "bigness" of things seems to obscure the importance of people. The enormity of population, industry and government itself overwhelms the individual and imparts to him a feeling of helplessness and even a sense of anxiety. He feels defeated, isolated and discarded by a society suddenly become mechanized, computerized and organized to the impersonal standards of a new world. And if in this atmosphere he should expire; if by virtue of the very technological triumphs which he created, he should become extinct; his government will crumble, his nation will fall and the civilization that was intended to inspire will be destroyed.

We must not allow individualism to fail, or fail to encourage its development, expression or fulfillment while yet we may. This is the philosophical and political challenge of our time. This is a domestic dilemma which cannot be resolved by the federal colossus in Washington. We must focus on local government, on the government closest to the people, on you and leaders like you, if this challenge is to be met.

Local government is the political instrument most capable of affording the individual citizen maximum expression and participation in the daily decisions which directly affect his life. Local government, characterized by its immediacy and intimacy, is most capable of responding to the needs and desires of its citizens.

As Governor of a state, and as former chief executive of a large county, my experience has revealed that local governments remain