

graphically "fixed." Their redefinition would require constitutional change and very substantial citizen support. Since the county in Maryland is deeply rooted in the fabric of government, history, and tradition, it is generally felt that major changes in county boundaries do not constitute a ready and feasible solution to the many problems created by the fact that, in the metropolitan areas particularly, the total urban community is more often divided than defined by county boundaries. For this reason, solutions to urban problems in metropolitan areas most often focus on alternative approaches: the creation of new local governmental units, embracing two or more existing counties; and the development of intergovernmental cooperation and coordination techniques.

Several types of multicounty governmental units already exist in Maryland. None, however, are fully-defined governments. A new type of unit, the *regional government*, is today being given serious consideration. Such units, because they would be governed by directly-elected officials, would constitute a third level of local government in the State. This approach to providing for the governmental and service needs of area-wide urban communities is regarded by some as a direct and severe challenge to existing local governments. It is regarded by others as a direct and logical extension of the principal originally underlying municipal incorporation: the recognition of an emerging community and its governmental needs.

A major alternative to the regional government approach is that of the area-wide *authority*, which could be created by an act of the legislature and given responsibility for one or more urban services. The area-wide authority differs from the intra-county authority, as dis-

cussed above, only in the size of its geographical base. At any level, the authority's primary characteristics are those of its corporate, rather than governmental, nature, and its conduct of one or a few services, rather than a broad spectrum of functions and programs.

The *regional* or *metropolitan area* government approach has not, to date, been widely adopted among the states primarily because a majority of the states have not previously recognized the county as a major urban unit, as it has been recognized in Maryland. For this reason, primary emphasis is ordinarily given to problems of county-municipal relationships and to urban county development, rather than to regional development.

The *regional* approach has received considerable attention in recent years in England. In October, 1960, a Royal commission in London recommended that: "For local government purposes in this area there should be constituted a number of Greater London Boroughs and a Council for Greater London." The commission also recommended that "The Boroughs should be the primary units of local government and should perform all functions except those which can only be effectively performed over the wider area of Greater London. The needs of the wider area will make it necessary for concurrent or supplementary powers to be conferred on the Council for Greater London in relation to some aspects of environmental health and housing."⁶ The London government, in a white paper issued in November, 1961, concluded that "the Commis-

⁶ ROYAL COMMISSION ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN GREATER LONDON, REPORT 1957-60, at 254 (1960).