at-large election process. Given their status as part-time, volunteer Commissioners, they are equipped to properly represent only a small minority of the Lawrence residents.

A cursory glance at who has been elected to the Commission the past 26 years shows how few people the Commissioners have really represented. Of the 32 Commissioners since 1951, there have been two lawyers, one doctor, one builder, 11 business owners, nine business managers, one accountant, one dentist, one associate KU dean, on KU professor, and two housewives of University people. Only two people who could be classified as wage-earners, have been elected.

In a community the size and diversity of Lawrence, it is no accident that such a homogeneous club of professionals and business people have continually dominated the Commission.

The system is designed to perpetuate this class of people in office. First, running for office on at-large basis costs a great deal more than running in smaller districts. It also takes a great deal more organization, and city-wide contacts. All these qualifications directly discriminate against hourly or salaried wage-earners. With a regular work schedule to maintain, a family to support, the prospect of the election race is discouraging. Add to this the salary of Commissioners, a token $100 per year and it's easy to see who is willing to spend the 15 to 20 hours per week minimum time necessary to keep up with City business. A third and most important paradox is that if more than 10 to 12 candidates file for the three Commission seats, which should, of course, be encouraged in a Democracy, then the field of City-wide candidates becomes so muddled that those few candidates with money, organization and a flexible time schedule are greatly advantaged.

Another tenent of American Democracy is direct election of the chief administrative officer. The administrative arm of government's job is to provide basic services to the general populous, for which they are taxed. The nature of the people in charge of the bureaucracy delivering these services determines who will get what and how much. In a Democratic society, it would be contradictory to allow anyone but a directly elected official to head such a bureaucracy. At the state and national level, it would be unconstitutional.

In Lawrence, this basic principle has been tossed out. Our City administration is run by one man, the City Manager, who is hired by the Commission for an indefinite term, paid a high salary and given near dictatorial control over all aspects of the administration and of all City employees.

The Manager's office and the entire administration is shielded from the voters by the Commission by intent. There's a tie between the voters and the Commission, there's a tie between the Commissioners and the Manager, and also a tie between the Manager and his staff. But the three relationships are separated like a military chain of command. The voters have no control over the appointed City Manager. While the Commissioners can hire or fire a City Manager at any time, they have no control over appointments to City staff. Yet, the staff performs most of the administrative work. In Lawrence, staff members are forbidden to speak directly to Commissioners without direct permission by the City Manager.

Firing the City Manager is the only effective means the Commission has to affect the internal structure of the City administration. If they were to do that, they would dissolve the very infrastructure that manages the City and provides them with information with which to direct the official they are firing.

The fact that the Commission is charged with setting policy and seeing that the City management carries out the policies, shows the lack of the third and final tenent of representative Democracy in City Manager government.

That tenent is the system of checks and balances inherent in the separation of powers provided in the U.S. Constitution.

In that ingenious document, the legislative and administrative functions of government were divided into two branches, each with separate and singularly important functions. With one person chosen to head the administrative branch, the founders of the Republic understood the value of a free and independent legislative body, elected by districts to guard against administrative abuses of power. At the same time, the chief executive, being a direct representative of the people at-large, was given similar powers over the legislature. Thus, a system of checks and balances.

No such system exists in Lawrence City government. To the contrary, there exists a built-in conflict of interest in the City Manager System. Since the Commission is a board of part-time, unpaid, "amateur" politicians, most of the information on which they base their decisions are placed before them each week by the staff of the man hired to carry out the policy decisions they've made.

Stop now a moment to ponder the role of these five representatives of all the people. Who do they represent? Who has the greatest lobbying power with these five representatives? In what circles does this lobbyist travel? What are the scope and variety of interest groups he represents?

Ed Carter, district manager of Southwestern Bell, president of the Rotary Club, director of the Chamber of Commerce, and current contender for Commission said in his campaign, "Our present City government, more closely than any other form, resembles the structure of the American corporation."

By Carter's own admission, Manager government is basically a marriage of business and government. City Manager government is designed to run like a business. It's main purpose is not to serve the needs and desires of Lawrence residents, but is to promote growth, business and industrial development and profits. Citizen participation, Democracy, fairness, representation hardly figure in such a system.

This form of government has no place within the borders of these 50 United States. Within the past few months, federal district courts in Alabama and Louisiana struck down at-large Commission government as unconstitutional because of its inherent discrimination against minorities through dilution of the voting strengths of Blacks.

The form of government recommended by these courts is called government by a Mayor and Council. An elected chief administrator, a Mayor, is voted on by the city at-large and is ultimately responsible directly to the people for all administrative decisions at City Hall.

The Mayor, accountable to the public and to the Council, serves for a two-year term. He or she then has to campaign on his or her record for re-election. The Mayor appoints a staff or professionals responsible for departments in City government by and with the consent of the common Council. The Mayor has the right of veto over the Council's decisions. He or she has the right to appoint an administrative assistant and shall, upon entering office, find his or her salary set by City ordinance. The office is the administrative branch of City Hall.

The Common Council is elected from voting wards in the city, with no less than four wards having two council members elected from each ward. All council members come before voters in their respective districts every two years. They are embodied with with full legislative authority, consent of all Mayoral appointments, and can, with a 3/4 vote, supercede the Mayor's veto. Their salaries are set by city ordinance. They comprise the legislative branch of city government.

The Mayor-Council system provides the kind of meaningful governmental "checks and balances" that can make Lawrence not only a beautiful and prosperous community, but one in which the democratic ideal is placed above all others. True representative democracy can function most perfectly only at the local level.

Let's waste no more time in beginning such an experiment here in Lawrence!

People on the way Up

Why Is This Man Smiling?

You might say that his mirth stems from his pending resignation as director of the Lawrence-Douglas County planning department. His name is Dick McClanathan, and he's on the way up. Forced to resign by insubordinate underlings and scandal-weary commissioners, Dick will no doubt surface soon in a larger city with a higher salary.

Meanwhile, the nation-wide search goes on, for a new planning director. Main qualifications: must be able to work well with local developers and contractors; must be able to work within a "military" environment; high school diploma, or equivilent.

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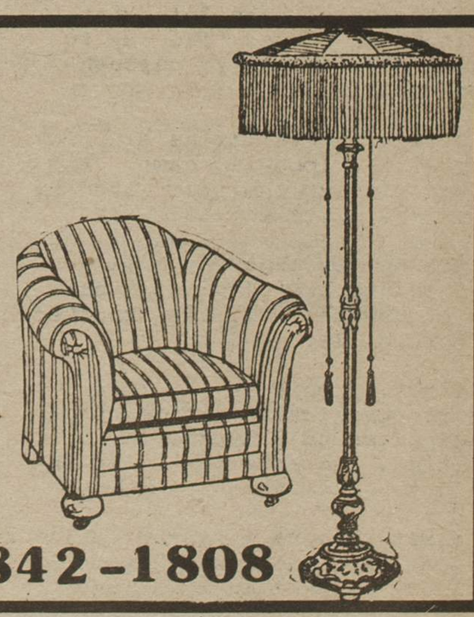

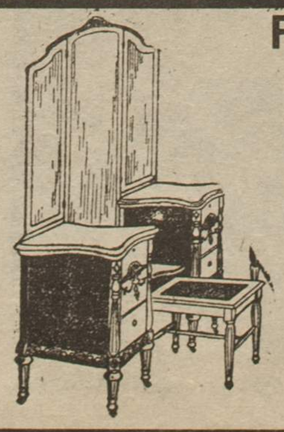

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