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## Minnesota Government in the Future Society

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# Minnesota Government in the Future Society

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## IN BRIEF:

- Act I: — Forces at Work Affecting the Governmental Institutions of the Future.
- Act II: — Dilemmas at the Heart of Governance and How They Are Affected by the Underlying Forces.
- Act III: — Reconstructing the System: A Blueprint for Reconciling the Dilemmas.
- Act IV: — Minnesota's Place in the System: What Can the State Do on Its Own Initiative?
- Act V: — Epilogue: Prospects for Progress.

## ACT I

### Forces at Work Affecting the Governmental Institutions of the Future

#### A. Introductory Points

- (1) Among the most difficult concerns about the future is the question of making government effective, responsible and responsive.
- (2) What happens to or is done about government is dependent on, related to and affected by all other dimensions — population growth, energy supply, environmental policies, education, changing values, income distribution.
- (3) Thus, the question of governance is at the heart of the matter; it is the most holistic of our concerns, demanding comprehensiveness in theory and sensitive awareness to economic, social, technological, psychological and philosophical factors.
- (4) Any reading of the future must assign an enlarged scope to government, because the increasing interdependence of society generates need for more extensive mechanisms of planning, coordination and control and for more equitable allocation of scarce resources.

#### B. The Critical Forces At Work

- (1) The push towards egalitarianism:
  - (a) This is a worldwide phenomenon, the product of industrialization. It rides on technology's new inventions, telecommunications, electronics, jet aircraft, labor-saving appliances.
  - (b) The demand for involvement, for an increased measure of equality, is heard on all sides — from women, from blacks, from youth, from gays, from the elderly, from the poor.
  - (c) It is not a passing fancy; it is a critical dimension in the future of governance; it constitutes a basic assault on old forms in which established groups appeared to have an

unyielding hold on power.

- (d) The rising spirit of egalitarianism is central to the frustration of modern government; everyone demands involvement, a role in deciding policies that affect them.
  - (e) It is seen as the logical extension of democracy, culminating in a move towards *plebis citarianism*.
- (2) The growing complexity and interrelatedness of phenomena:
    - (a) Industrialism, with its ever-intensifying specialization of labor and ever-widening dependence upon the eclectic use of the world's resources, pushes society into greater and greater interdependence. It transcends local, state and national boundaries.
    - (b) In fact, the interdependence, as witness the energy crisis, is now global in character.
    - (c) Problems that are complex and that reach beyond the jurisdiction of existing governments demand fundamental enlargement of political institutions.
    - (d) The need for mechanisms that control, restrain and even condition the behavior of individual citizens becomes more apparent each day.
    - (e) There is now a worldwide search for holistic answers to the problems of complexity; this is certain to have profound effect upon governmental institutions.
  - (3) Diminishing world resources:
    - (a) Developing imbalances, both national and global, demand the attention of effective governments — inflation, access to scarce resources, populations that outstrip the capacity for sustenance, regional dislocations within countries.
    - (b) The imbalances are accompanied by a rising consciousness concerning environmental deterioration. This sets up additional demands for strong governmental intervention.
    - (c) The question of population control is at the

critical center; it involves the worldwide need for control and restraint and, at the same time, continuing respect for historic freedoms to procreate as the individual wishes.

- (d) Minnesota's future is clearly related to the supply and access of national resources and beyond that to world resources.
- (4) The inadequacy of existing institutions of government:
  - (a) Governments everywhere are in trouble; they are unable to cope with rising expectations and economic imbalances.
  - (b) Totalitarian governments appear to be in as much trouble as democratic governments; one suffers from the absence of popular participation, the other from an excess (putting the case in perhaps oversimplified terms).
  - (c) Democratic governments tend to be dominated by powerful private interests that have the skill and resources to use the open political system to their advantage.
  - (d) The American federal system fragments governing power; it conceals great disparities among competing states and localities; it is overwhelmed by the nation's pluralistic interests, thus tends towards paralysis.
  - (e) The entire structure of intergovernmental relations is facing a fundamental test; this is accentuated by the call for decentralization which is the response to the push for egalitarianism.
  - (f) Also at a time that calls for comprehensiveness in policy planning, for concerted and unified action, the Presidential system — with its deliberately structured adversary relationship between the executive and the legislative branches — is becoming increasingly anachronistic, as witness Watergate.
  - (g) There has been a continuous decline in the effectiveness of state and local governments as national forces are pushed to the forefront.
- (5) The public's reluctant yielding of established values:
  - (a) It is a time of insecurity and the public clings to what it is familiar with. Superficially at least there appears to be a great reluctance to yield to fundamental change in governmental structure or procedures.
  - (b) The emphasis seems to be on curtailing rather than expanding governmental power; decentralization is part of this emphasis.
  - (c) In this context the effort to shift responsibility from the national government to state and local governments appears to have popular backing — e.g., revenue-sharing.
  - (d) But the public seems aware, at the same time, of the need for more effective governmental control policies; thus an ambivalence is present in the general public.

- (e) Going into the future we can expect that the growing need for more effective governmental intervention will generate an increasing willingness on the part of the public to accept leadership in the direction of governmental reform.

### C. Special Conditions Affecting Minnesota Government

- (1) A set of forces work strongly in favor of Minnesota's capacity to make its government more effective and more responsive in the face of changing needs. Especially noteworthy is the state's historic openness and its willingness to undertake new governmental approaches.
- (2) While Minnesota confronts the full range of problems that concerns people everywhere, social disorganization and economic disparities are not present in extreme form. As a result, our problems are not unmanageable and are amenable to governmental planning.
- (3) The state has already taken significant steps in the direction of basic reform, notably the establishment of the Metropolitan Council of the Twin Cities Area, adoption of the system of Regional Development Commissions, establishment of the Commission on Minnesota's Future, and intensive attention to the resource problems of the future.
- (4) A dimension of major reinforcement is the effective work of voluntary non-governmental organizations, such as the Citizens League, the Upper Midwest Council, and the League of Women Voters.
- (5) As a result of these factors Minnesota, by pursuing intensively questions that relate to governance in the future, can become the nation's foremost laboratory for governmental reform. By consciously pursuing that role the state could unleash further and even more potent forces in the direction of improved governmental response.

## ACT II

### The Dilemmas at the Heart of Governance and How They Are Affected By the Underlying Forces

#### A. Why the Dilemmas Are Critical

- (1) Governance in a democracy seeks contradictory objectives — to serve the collective public and the individual. The contradictory pulls become more difficult to reconcile as time goes on.
- (2) Thus a clear analysis of the character of these contradictory pulls is essential for comprehending the nature of governance for the future.
- (3) We live in a time of complexity, yet hunger for simplicity — a time of interdependence, yet hunger for personal autonomy.
- (4) The need is to reconcile the contradictory objectives and our only means of doing so is through adjusting and reforming our institutions of governance.
- (5) The process is doubly confounded by the need, in a democracy, of reforming the system through majority rule with outcomes that may have the effect of restraining the majority's behavior.

## B. The Dilemmas:

- (1) *The public and the private sectors.* What belongs to which? How do we enlarge public control and still preserve private initiative and creativity?
- (2) *Centralization and decentralization.* The same question approached from a different angle — how do we achieve a comprehensive set of policies and yet assure democratic control or at least the flow of inputs from those affected by the policies?
- (3) *Leadership and citizenship.* Complexity poses the need for an elite that is competent to deal with it. To cope with complexity may therefore mean fundamental change in the manner of selecting our leaders. At the same time the importance of having a citizenry that is aware and informed becomes ever greater. The need is, as a result, to do both — facilitate leadership and improve the quality of citizenship.
- (4) *Planning and freedom.* It all adds up to the classic confrontation — is it possible to reconcile the two? Can we give technocrats and planners power and still keep them accountable? What kind of government is our best hope for achieving the reconciliation?
- (5) *Majority rule and minority rights.* This classic dilemma becomes increasingly sharper because of the widening diffusion of power. Today and increasingly in the future groups of all types will demand *fair shares* and will refuse to subordinate to majority control; this is related to the growing use of violence in politics — those too long denied will use extralegal devices to gain what they regard as morally legitimate ends.

## C. Implications for the Future of Governance

- (1) As we confront the future we must clearly comprehend that there are positive values on both sides of the several dilemmas.
- (2) We must be on guard against old dogmas and old ideologies that oversimplify and ultimately obscure the nature of our problems.
- (3) Leadership in the future will require special skill and competence and will constitute a new elite; technocrats, consultants, specialists are the vanguard of this rising new class. But it is a class that still has not developed the capabilities it needs for governing in a society of such great complexity.
- (4) Institutions of government must be given breathing room; they must be equipped with power to act, but ultimately accountable to the public.

## ACT III

### Reconstructing the System: A Blueprint for Reconciling the Dilemmas

#### A. Model for An Ideal Federalism

- (1) What Minnesota does is inextricably linked to the viability of the federal system. It is not meaningful to discuss the future of governance of the state outside of the context of its national setting.
- (2) In fact, increasingly what happens in Minnesota is

dependent on world conditions, involving international trade, world resources, environmental pollution, and perhaps our reconstruction should start with mechanisms that will reconcile the dilemmas on a global scale.

- (3) For here and now, however, we begin with the national model and seek to place Minnesota in the proper intergovernmental context.
- (4) The primary objective is to achieve a framework in which the values on both sides of the several dilemmas are preserved and maximized.
- (5) Thus, there is here proposed an institutional rearrangement that appears to offer some improved prospect of realizing that objective.

#### B. Components of a Reconstructed System

- (1) The response capability of the American system has become inadequate —
  - (a) The federal government is in essential retreat from key domestic problems.
  - (b) State governments have had historic difficulty in relating to problems, owing to interstate competition and disparities.
  - (c) Local governments, in both urban and rural areas, share fragmented power; they are unable to plan effectively and to reach the resources of their communities.
  - (d) As a result people have an increasing sense of the unresponsiveness of government.
- (2) What is needed is to accept the interrelatedness of the several levels of governance and to think not in terms of particular functions being assigned to particular levels, but rather in terms of problems and needs that are the responsibility of *all* levels.
- (3) In reconstructing the system major constitutional overhaul will be essential; there must be the procedural interlinking of federal-state-local interrelationships, with a reconstruction that vests sufficient power in governing bodies and at the same time develops safeguards against abuse of that power.
- (4) To that end we envision a reconstruction that will involve five tiers of government:
  - (a) The national government.
  - (b) State governments.
  - (c) Substate regional governments.
  - (d) Historic municipalities and counties and special districts.
  - (e) Neighborhood councils.

#### C. The National Government

- (1) Primary attention must be given the question of ending the paralyzing effect of the separation of powers framework. The Presidency and the Congress must be made coordinate parts of a cooperating and viable system.
- (2) There must be a renewed national commitment to deal with problems that are national in scope, in particular policies governing income distribution, population growth, and the use of land, water, air and other natural resources.
- (3) The renewed national commitment must be drawn

with respect to national goals and national standards that seek a minimum measure of equal access to an equal participation in society and the economy.

- (4) The national government should budget the nation's resources in a fashion that moves towards realizing the national goals, and, as part of that process, the allocations that the federal government makes to other levels of government should be contingent upon the latter's willingness to accept and respect the national standards.

#### D. State Governments

- (1) State governments are pivotal in our constitutional framework; they give life to subdivisions, determine their structure and powers and their capability to provide viable delivery systems at the local level.
- (2) It is essential that states be brought into some form of national conformity concerning the extent to which they tax their own resources; thus, the federal government should *impose* — through the carrot and the stick — standards that require states, as a condition of receiving federal money to adopt tax structures that are generally comparable and equal to those of other states and to reconstruct local delivery systems in a rational and coherent way.
- (3) The essential objective that must be sought by states is the development of viable substate regional governments.

#### E. Substate Regional Governments

- (1) Problems are not local but regional in character; this is true of both urban and rural sections.
- (2) Comprehensiveness and coordination in planning and program-building and delivery of services must be related to natural, organic areas; we must recognize the unreality of trying to deal with organic wholes through fragmented, atomized governmental efforts.
- (3) It must be granted that creation of substate units is a movement towards centralization and bigness and, as a result, contains dangers and can threaten important existing values.
- (4) Thus, in establishing regional governments, they must be carefully related to the continuing historic units of local governments.

#### F. Historic Municipalities, Counties and Special Districts

- (1) Loyalties and feelings of identity with historical cities and villages are valuable and ought to be preserved.
- (2) They will remain meaningful even if governments have reduced authority to raise revenue and to determine overall programs.
- (3) By having the problems of taxation lifted, local governments will be *liberated* to pursue programs that are addressed to questions of quality of life more directly.
- (4) The proposal here is intended to retain *administrative, implementing, reinforcing*

responsibility at this level, augmenting the regional policies carried out at the regional level.

- (5) The basic concept involves policy responsibility at the regional level and administrative responsibility at the local level.

#### G. Neighborhood Councils

- (1) Efforts to achieve community control, neighborhood involvement and citizen participation have not been greatly successful. This is because existing institutional arrangements frustrate the effort. Neighborhood control over programs for which there are no resources soon becomes an exercise in frustration.
- (2) What is needed is a formal arrangement that ensures the participation before and during the building of a program along with effective monitoring of programs in operation, with feedback and evaluation that are integral parts of the governmental system.
- (3) Thus our comprehensive restructuring would impose — under federal, state substate and municipal law — immutable requirements for input and review (not control and approval) of all policies affecting neighborhoods and individuals.
- (4) Neighborhood councils would be led and staffed by lay and professional people who would be paid for their labors, even as we pay both lay and professional people at the other levels.

#### H. Five Tiers Working In Consort

- (1) The reconstructed system would thus seek both:
  - (a) comprehensiveness.
  - (b) retention of the pluralism of other levels.
- (2) It would require extensive constitutional change and legislative action.
- (3) It would require a long period of public learning and adjustment and the modification of many value commitments.

### ACT IV

Minnesota's Place in the System: What Can the State Do On Its Own Initiative?

#### A. The Need to Maximize the State's Capability to Respond to Public Problems

- (1) We have noted the centrality of the states in the federal system. They are the pivots around which the federal system operates and, while what they do will be strongly conditioned by national — even world — events, they can greatly influence public policy by well-planned action within their constrained jurisdiction.
- (2) The role of the states has been made even more important by the recent de-emphasis of the federal involvement in meeting the nation's social needs and by the rising demand for decentralizing governmental responsibility.
- (3) The state must be able to anticipate future trends and future needs. Historically the state has *reacted* to events and problems as they have

occurred; change now comes too rapidly for a reactive role to be sufficient. Today state government must be able to *anticipate* and *plan for* change.

- (4) As a major pivot in the federal system, the state reaches *down* to its subdivisions and *up* to the national government. It should recognize and assume responsibilities in both directions.
- (5) With respect to its subdivisions — the counties, cities and special districts — the state must increasingly lead, plan, direct. It should set statewide goals and statewide standards in all fields of public concern. It should remake the framework of local governments so as to overcome economic disparities and so as to make it possible for local governments to respond to local need and to provide for the effective delivery of public service.
- (6) With respect to its effect upon the national government the state needs to assume a role of greater assertiveness. It should continuously espouse national action on problems that require national attention. It should, at the same time, vigilantly insist upon state participation in national programs so as to guard against excesses in centralization.

#### B. Essential Elements for Effective Governmental Response

- (1) By now it should be apparent that the first essential for the state's coping with the increasing complexity of public problems is a legislature with adequate capability for diagnosing public need and for taking effective action. This involves more than annual sessions, adequate staff and improved committee operations; it also involves an enlarged scope of legislative purpose in which the state will move increasingly into the regulation of the private sector, imposing restraints on the use of limited resources, especially land; it involves an ever widening flow of information into and out of the legislature and a constantly expanding intellectual grasp on the part of legislators.
- (2) An equally critical element for an adequate state governmental response is the institution of the Governorship. This provides the vital spark that channelizes the state's energies, both public and private. A time of complexity requires a unifying leadership force that can command the resources that enables it to comprehend the issues and to propose promising alternatives. The Governor's office is at the critical center; it must have an operating framework that yields the information that is indispensable for policy leadership, and that information must come through a process of continuous feedback that ensures maximum public involvement and maximum accountability. The Governor's relationships with the legislature, with subordinates in the executive branch and with all sections of the public must be in harmony, and this means that the institution of the Governorship should be recast if its

operations are to be equal to its responsibilities.

- (3) The third essential element is a state administrative structure that makes possible holistic planning and comprehensive program management. This means governmental reorganization along lines that are coherently related to public needs and that allow for efficient and expeditious administration while at the same time providing a high degree of accountability.
- (4) The fourth essential is a reconstituted structure of local government, about which we have already spoken. Here the future demands that needs and resources be related and this requires the development of a framework of substate regions that will overcome fragmentation of responsibility and disabling disparities.
- (5) The fifth essential is an adequate revenue structure that yields the resources needed for effective public action and in a fashion that does not place the state in a disadvantageous relationship with other states and does not excessively burden individual and corporate taxpayers.
- (6) A final essential — already implied in the description of the other elements — is a deliberately and carefully planned system of input and feedback from the clientele affected by particular governmental measures. New possibilities for such a system are opened by cable TV and are greatly reinforced by the growing interest in various forms of community councils.

#### C. Alternative Approaches to State Action

- (1) Fundamental constitutional overhaul:
  - (a) In the light of the essentials for effective governmental response that we have described, we now raise the basic question as to whether it is realistic to expect the state to cope adequately with problems of the future, if it continues to operate under present constitutional arrangements.
  - (b) Under the existing system the Office of the Governor and the two houses of the Legislature have an essentially adversary relationship. This often leads to delay and conflict and tends to deprive the state of unified leadership for a program drawn by a responsible majority party.
  - (c) Thus the question is pushed as to whether the separation of powers doctrine, which has been so traditional in American history, is continuing to serve the best interests of the state. One might concede its value at the national level where different public interests are protected by different branches, but at the state level the adversary relationship may have the effect of making state action more and more difficult with no compensating advantage.
  - (d) Fundamental constitutional overhaul could provide these new arrangements:
    - An essentially parliamentary system to

replace the gubernatorial system, with the Governor emerging from the legislative branch, chosen as the leader of the party that holds a majority in the State Legislature, in the fashion of a prime minister.

- A unicameral legislature, in which the Governor would sit as the leader of the majority party and the first minister of the state.
- A reorganized executive branch, the departments of which would be headed by legislative leaders of the majority party.
- The total number of state legislators would be greatly reduced, perhaps to as few as 35 or 40, with the legislators serving full-time and with appropriate reimbursement.
- The number and types of governmental subdivisions would be greatly reduced and reorganized on an essentially regional basis.
- Restraints and limitations on the state's taxing power would be removed, allowing the State Legislature to reach all the resources of the state.
- The Civil Service system would be overhauled to reflect political leadership at the top level, achieving the desired unity between policy formation and program execution.

(e) Admittedly, this alternative is extreme. It is not likely to have much, if any, immediate support. We think there is, however, value in a probe of its dynamics, because by studying this radical proposal we may bring into clearer view deficiencies in the existing system and advantages that may be gained by making modifications that do have political acceptability.

(2) Comprehensive reorganization within the traditional framework:

- (a) A much less drastic approach is comprehensive reorganization within the traditional American separation-of-powers framework.
- (b) Here we would anticipate a measure of constitutional reform, establishing perhaps a unicameral system, a smaller legislature, and the elimination of some of the statewide elective offices, such as State Auditor and Secretary of State.
- (c) But essentially the comprehensive reorganization would be aimed at improving legislative and executive operations by making the basic organization more coherent and by providing for a more orderly relationship between the two branches.
- (d) Again a major dimension would involve major reorganization of local governments, attaching them to substate regional bases. In particular the system of 87 counties would be reorganized on a major scale and given new

and more relevant powers.

- (e) Another major dimension would be the stipulation — by detailed statutory measures — of community and neighborhood participation in the policy process, enabling expressions of preference and local review opportunities as public policies are enacted and administered.
- (f) Ultimately there would emerge under this approach a state government characterized by
  - a broadened flow of information from the public and a sharpened feedback system for interaction between the public and the government.
  - a more coherent and cooperative set of relationships among and between the Governor, the Legislature, the state executive departments, the subdivisions of state government, and community councils and other forms of local involvement.
  - greater and more productive access to the resources of the state.
  - better informed public leadership and improved systems for problem analysis and program planning.

(3) A continuing program of policy analysis:

- (a) The argument is made by many that it is not productive to seek major governmental reform, that it is not politically feasible to change the constitution in any basic way or to introduce radical change in the institutions of state government.
- (b) Some knowledgeable leaders argue, in fact, that existing mechanisms are adequate and that, while they can be made to work better, primary attention should be directed not to structural change but to improving and enriching the flow of information to the critical centers of policy planning.
- (c) If we accept these premises, we still must contend with the inescapable necessity of interrelating the many components of the public complexity, and this means a patient examination of how effectively existing institutions are filling this need and what the prospects are for the future.
- (d) An important start has been made in the related work of the State Planning Agency and the Commission on Minnesota's Future. From the current effort there very likely will emerge a continuing mechanism designed to regularize and facilitate the flow of diagnostic materials, thus aiding the Governor, the Legislature and other levels and agencies of government in policy planning and program building.
- (e) This approach minimizes structural or institutional change and emphasizes attention to substantive problems. There is the implied expectation that — if the problems are fully comprehended — the existing framework will

be sufficiently responsive.

- (f) In 1972 a Citizens League Committee on State-Local Fiscal Planning made a series of recommendations that would augment this approach. The committee recommended a series of changes that would increase the capability of both the Governor and the Legislature to provide leadership in policy planning. It also recommended establishment of a Minnesota Governmental Policy Institute that would provide a highly structured continuing nonpartisan study of the state's basic needs, surfacing — independently of the Governor and the Legislature — policy proposals that have a high degree of controversy and for that reason very likely would not be initiated by elected political leaders.
  - (4) The minimalist view: Let nature take its course:
    - (a) A point of view persists that deliberate efforts to plan and especially to manipulate social conditions through governmental action are likely not only to fail but to be counterproductive.
    - (b) In this view there is a “logic” in the interplay between supply and demand, between resources and opportunities and between the shape of public policy and the state of the contemporary culture, and that efforts to control, manage, shape the interplay will make matters worse.
    - (c) Therefore, the argument runs, let nature take its course. We should retain our confidence in the free market and in the capacity of individuals to make decisions for themselves, and wherever possible we should vest power in the smaller and more immediately accessible units of government. Above all, we should avoid the concentration of power in larger units of government and we should resist all tendencies to centralize authority.
    - (d) The minimalist view not only warns against tampering with the traditional framework of government, it urges a retreat from much of what has been undertaken in the last four decades.
    - (e) While this approach does not call for positive action, it is nonetheless an option that has a significant number of followers, whose ranks may very well be on the increase. For that reason it deserves thoughtful and patient attention.
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## ACT V

### Epilogue: Prospects for Progress

#### A. The Prospect Before Us

- (1) That the world has become a dangerous place cannot be denied. Nuclear power, environmental deterioration, overpopulation, insufficient world food supply, the persistence of war and violence, and growing social disorganization within urban centers — all converge to suggest an unpromising outlook for the future.
- (2) Everywhere thoughtful people ask, can we cope? Reactions range from despair to guarded hopefulness, and the search for a policy on the future goes on with no visible fulfillment.
- (3) Against this background of concern and apprehension, there is in Minnesota a measure of confidence that we can through rational effort achieve control over the converging forces.

#### B. Challenge to Thought and Action

- (1) Of one thing we can perhaps be reasonably certain and that is that old ideologies and rigid dogmas are not likely to serve us well. Established constitutions and venerated traditions that were adequate even a few years ago are not adequate today.
- (2) And we can be certain, too, that the forces in the modern world that are fundamentally altering our basic institutions will not yield except as we are able to mobilize our full energies to the most creative thought and action.

#### Suggested Reading

- COMMISSION ON MINNESOTA'S FUTURE. *Proceedings of the Conference on Governance Options in a Democratic Society*. Spring Hill Conference Center, March 22 to 24, 1974.
- METROPOLITAN COUNCIL. *Metropolitan Development Framework: Interim Policies*. February 14, 1974.
- METROPOLITAN COUNCIL. *Metropolitan Development Framework: Discussion Statement on Implementation Issues*. February 13, 1974.
- CITIZENS LEAGUE. *State Fiscal 'Crises' Are Not Inevitable!* Report of the Committee on State-Local Fiscal Planning. June 26, 1972.

## COMPONENT GROUP REPORT

BARBARA GUDMUNDSON, workshop leader

### I. Questionnaire Response:

The material presented did not include a scenario as such; however, it was indispensable as resource material. Twenty percent of the 77 questionnaires returned (as well as the majority of the Government Component Group) felt this was so. More responses mentioned the lack of a scenario-like format, but nevertheless indicated a probability estimate as if a true scenario had been presented.

The distribution of responses in 77 questionnaires returned was:

|                     | not<br>appli-<br>cable<br>6% | not a<br>sce-<br>nario<br>5% | did<br>not<br>rank<br>9% | high<br>prob-<br>ability<br>4% | 1<br>3 | 2<br>5 | 3<br>7 | 4<br>11 | 5<br>15 | 6<br>6 | 7<br>5 | 8<br>7 | 9<br>5 | 10<br>4 |
|---------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| Number of responses | 5                            | 4                            | 7                        | 3                              | 3      | 5      | 7      | 11      | 15      | 6      | 5      | 7      | 5      | 4       |

(Numbers add up to more than 100% and 77 because of some ambivalence in response statements.)

### II. Component Group Response:

- A. Major areas of disagreement with the scenario's description of the present status of the government system.
1. Too little emphasis was placed on the fact of present government's serving the powerful rather than the weak, voiceless, and informationless;
  2. There should be more on the importance of fostering *informed* consent (rather than "conditioning") in the citizenry, so we may learn to live knowledgeably within the limitations of this finite but complex world;
  3. Non-governmental forms will be necessary to deal with the dilemmas central to the problems of governance;
  4. Those in government must value the ideas and contributions of others besides those having technical competence. They must possess a sensitivity to values, and to the non-rational in human behavior;
  5. An amendment to Act I.B. *The Critical Forces at Work*: More emphasis should be placed upon the role of the industrial sector of society;
  6. A meaningful decentralization of the decision-making process should be made;
  7. Governments should be more helpful to individuals by fostering an understanding of how their actions are affected by laws.
- B. Major areas of disagreement with the scenario's treatment of major trends of the government system to the year 1985.

1. It was treated too briefly.
2. It should have included this trend: the coming into sharper focus of all dilemmas.
3. It neglected that there will certainly be an increasing public awareness of public issues.
4. It should have developed a process to achieve the Act IV alternatives of (C.1) fundamental constitutional overhaul and (C.2) comprehensive reorganization within the traditional framework.
5. It should have emphasized that government institutions become ultimately accountable to the public for their planning and for their actions.

### III. Rewrite of the Scenario

- A. General Possible Futures
1. Greater use of telecommunication (and computers?)
    - a. Technologies are available.
    - b. Needs for communications are great.
    - c. Alternatives to communications (transportation) are energy-intensive.
    - d. Demonstration models are currently being developed in this state.
  2. Continuation of the Commission on Minnesota's Future, due to increased awareness of the need for anticipatory — as contrasted with conventional planning processes.
- B. Specific Possible Futures
1. Government disaster future: inflation increasing suffering, desperation causes small

groups of radicals (domestic or foreign) to practice nuclear blackmail, this forces a redistribution of wealth and power or the country falls to pieces or into totalitarianism.

2. Inflation future: energy problems lead to takeover of national and state systems *a la* Watergate manipulation of system wealth and power, country emerges into totalitarian and repressive but safe society, with level of consumption dropping.
  3. Changed political-process future: revolution replaces traditional groups (e.g., unions, parties) in community organization through an Alinsky-type process, i.e., policy-focused politics which make policy-makers more responsive to the powerless.
  4. Possible Methods
    - a. Fundamental constitutional overhaul to a parliamentary and unicameral system with separation of powers reduced sharply.
    - b. Comprehensive reorganization within the traditional framework.
    - c. A continuing program of policy analysis.
- C. General Desirable Futures
1. Increased use of electronics and other communications for public participation in policy formation (by telephone, television, radio).
  2. Local control of schools.
- D. Specific Desirable Futures
1. Formation of local neighborhood councils as the fundamental unit for public communication in policy formulation determined by population base.
  2. Conversion of regional planning commissions into regional policy-making and project implementor on regional-level needs and issues.
  3. Conversion of central unit (state) government to a smaller unicameral, full-time legislature that may elect a governor (with the governor's cabinet coming either from the legislature or other body of the central unit).  
— will determine statewide policy realms such as:  
taxation, land use, resource management, education, economic development, transportation, health, and welfare. The regional commissions would implement the state policy, downward to the local neighborhood councils.
- E. Implementation
1. A public policy "hot line" (i.e. telephone ready for use from one specific location to another) linking concerned citizens and citizens' groups (including local councils) with

policy makers and project directors. The answering service would be an ombudsman-like communications referral linking citizens directly to policy-makers, as well as offering help and information. Useful alternatives: 800 numbers and conference calls.

2. Make government agencies more responsive to the powerless and those hurt by inflation, probably by neighborhood council-type activity.
3. Government should take the lead by starting a crash program on solar energy.

## Educational Objectives

The workshop group submits the following statement to supplement its report on the scenario:

In order to create more desirable future environments in Minnesota, we recognize the following EDUCATIONAL objectives to be important:

To help leaders and citizens:

1. To face up to the unavoidable realities of:
  - a. Interdependence. We cannot thrive on exclusive independence.
  - b. A growing need for governmental planning and direction.
  - c. Population growth and distribution. More people and higher densities will certainly limit freedom.
2. To anticipate future problems and possibilities rather than merely react to urgent crises (i.e. not merely "plan").
3. To give attention to long-term consequences of present values, policies, and programs in *both public and private* sectors.
4. To develop and discuss alternative futures.
5. To stimulate imagination and hope for a good future.
6. To give credibility to the efforts of government and private citizens and groups to face the *tough* and *unpleasant* questions early enough to avoid expensive crises.

We propose *this* primary innovation to be fundamental to the sustained achievement of those objectives:

**The creation of a select, small body of knowledgeable, innovative persons assembled in a well-funded public institute dedicated to providing all governments and citizens in Minnesota with the valid information on crucial public issues necessary for building future-oriented public policy.**

We propose also that, insofar as possible, the arts (theater, music, painting, etc.) be heavily used in stirring citizens' imagination as a major step in accomplishing these educational goals.