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BOOK REVIEWS


The Government and Administration of Florida is Volume 8 in Crowell's American Commonwealth Series. This series, under the editorship of W. Brooke Graves of the Legislative Reference Service of the Library of Congress, is being published in an attempt to provide a fairly definitive volume on each of the forty-eight state governments. Thus far four of the projected volumes—those on Wyoming, New York, Mississippi, and Florida—have appeared. Although the volumes differ, of course, in detail and in the theoretical framework employed by the authors in the various states, a definite effort is apparently being made to insure that the general coverage is similar, so that the separate studies may be more effectively used for comparative purposes.

It is not surprising that this study of Florida government is the first comprehensive work published on the subject, because so many of the detailed studies upon which a general treatment depends have been undertaken so recently. In fact, the vast majority of these more limited studies have resulted from the increased emphasis on state governmental research that has been fostered by the establishment of the School of Public Administration at Florida State University, the Public Administration Clearing Service of the University of Florida, and the Florida Legislative Reference Bureau, all created since World War II. The authors had the added advantage of being in a good position to feel the active pulse of the state, and at the same time they were able to bring to the study the detachment of extensive academic experience: Dr. Doyle is Dean of the School of Public Administration of Florida State University; Mr. Laird is Director of the Florida Merit System; and Mr. Weiss is Director of the Legislative Reference Bureau.

The formal expanse of materials covered by the book should elicit no complaint from those who are looking for a one-volume treatment of the subject. After opening with a short chapter on "The State and Its People," the authors proceed to treat the Constitution, parties and popular control, political institutions, administration of the functions carried out by the state government, county and municipal government, and intergovernmental relations.

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Well over half of the book is devoted to administration. There are separate chapters on the central staff functions of finance and personnel administration; and the line functions are grouped in chapters on general topics such as education, health, welfare, agriculture, highways, labor relations, and regulatory activities, rather than by major agency headings. This method of organization not only permits a discussion of all the diverse administrative agencies of the state but also shows quite clearly by construction how many separate authorities are operating in each general area of administration and, consequently, how disintegrated the administrative structure actually is.

The book is primarily descriptive and is so attentive to the legal bases of the institutions of Florida government that it would be regarded in Europe as a work on the public law of a State. Although, as the authors expressly recognize, the rapid changes in detail of governmental arrangements will very soon make certain of the facts obsolete, this work undoubtedly will long serve as a basic reference on the political institutions of the state.

The volume of material covered, however, does not always leave sufficient room for hanging the flesh and blood of actual governmental operations on the large legal skeleton. As a result, the way in which the political forces of the state are related to one another in practice, the informal processes by which decisions on certain issues are made, and the techniques used by the various branches of government to effect their formalized political powers are not fully revealed. The use of V. O. Key's work on Florida in his Southern Politics, for example, would have aided considerably in the handling of the materials on parties and popular control of government.

By the same token, much more critical material could have been worked into the discussions of certain problems. Often these critical appraisals are suggested in passing, but they are not elaborated upon even when certain standards of criticism are so well established as to be completely orthodox. There is widespread acceptance among scholars and administrators, for example, of the desirability of certain administrative arrangements such as executive integration, merit personnel practices, budget controls, and the like. The authors make occasional reference to some of these norms and cite a number of administrative surveys in Florida that have used them as the basis for critical appraisal, but they do not themselves apply the standards systematically to the institutions under consideration. The same point may be raised in connection with the Constitution, the cabinet, and local government.
It is obvious that a pioneering effort at pulling together the amorphous mass of information on Florida government could not do all things for all men, but it is to be hoped that a second edition will include some elaboration of the working political process in Florida and a more extensive critical appraisal of both political process and institutions. Because of the necessity to literally catalogue large numbers of administrative agencies and their functions, it would be helpful if organizational charts of the major departments could be added in any revision.

Despite considerable—and possibly admirable—restraint on many counts, the authors have been unable to pass some of the more glaring anomalies in the government without comment. The tongue-in-cheek technique is applied rarely enough and with sufficient deftness to render it fully effective. In discussing university scholarships, for example, it is noted that the scholarship fund financed by the “extra day” of racing in the state may be used at the discretion of each school; “however,” the authors remark, “it is generally understood that they are to be used in granting athletic scholarships.” Or, again, in discussing a certain fiscal practice in Jacksonville, it was noted that “under this procedure each group [the commission and the council] can take credit for easing the burden of government on the individual citizen and blame the other for the financial crisis thus created.”

Errors and misleading statements inevitably slip into a work of this scope, but in this book they are at a minimum. In the chapter on education, for instance, it is implied that the General Extension Division is an integral part of the University of Florida. Actually it is designed to serve the University of Florida, Florida State University, and Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, although for administrative purposes it is in the line authority of the University of Florida. The impression is also unintentionally conveyed in the chapter on intergovernmental relations that the power of federal judicial review of state legislation stems solely from the due process clause of the fourteenth amendment; the writers actually mean to say that this clause had the effect of allowing the Court to apply certain guarantees of the first ten amendments of the Federal Constitution against actions of the states.

The authors, the editor of the series, and the publisher have all performed a commendable service in making this work available to students of state government and to the public in general. The authors have labored extensively and with success; the editor has performed a valuable function in co-ordinating a number of parallel studies; and
the Crowell company deserves much credit for embarking on an important publishing venture such as this in the face of realization that financial returns from the series will probably not be great.

It seems beyond question that the future of state government depends heavily on a knowledge of the experience of states in meeting the diverse problems of politics, governmental organization, and administration; it is equally clear that the comparative studies from which such knowledge will grow is dependent upon a thorough treatment of the government of each state.

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PATENT LAW IN THE RESEARCH LABORATORY. By John Kenneth Wise.

This pocket-size book, which can be read in one sitting, states in the preface that it is intended for the industrial research worker. The author seems to have missed the mark. Although presented in an interesting and readable fashion, undue space and emphasis are devoted in the early chapters to the history, evolution, and justification of the patent system itself. Throughout the later portions of the book the substantive and procedural changes effected by the congressional revision of the patent law effective January 1, 1953, are analyzed in a somewhat tedious fashion instead of being discussed in a straightforward way.

Despite these objections, this book is recommended to those who desire a condensed survey of patent law in this area. Readers will obtain some background for predicting the probable patentability of laboratory developments, important safeguards to observe throughout the process of development and application for patents, and some appreciation of both the costs and the benefits of patent protection. One omission that might be considered serious is that of any discussion of shop rights, with the various patent policies followed by different employers and the resulting agreements in their employment contracts.

The more important of the administrative Rules of Practice of the Patent Office are discussed, with special explanation of proper