

**Section 18 (b)**  
**Local Rule Principle Under Severe Attack**  
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## Local Rule Principle Under Severe Attack

We are about to come to the end of our Bicentennial year in which we have observed the 200th anniversary of the birth of the United States of America. As we look back to the beginning in 1776 and move forward to 1976, every American should be proud of what we as a nation have been able to accomplish in every facet of society to make America the greatest country in the world. Our form of government which enables us to progress individually and as a society is unmatched on the face of the globe. It is the oldest form of a democratic government in modern history and has survived many crises which have destroyed others.

One of the most important principles incorporated into our Constitution which has made this possible is that of home or local rule. It guarantees that any community, as long as it is willing and able to finance it with taxes, is allowed to have whatever form of government it wants without interference from the state or the federal authorities.

We pride ourselves on this and although we do gripe sometimes about the price we have to pay for our local government, we wouldn't change it for any price. At the same time, there is the danger that we are becoming too complacent and accept home rule as if it will continue forever as a form of government which no one can destroy.

Unfortunately, this is not so. Those of us in the nine-county Bay area are familiar with the repeated attempts made to establish a regional form of government which certainly would destroy all vestige of home rule. In spite of eight attempts made so far, the fight still isn't over. You can be sure more attempts will be made in the future. In addition, the State of California now is planning to take control of where industry will be located whether local officials like it or not.

Just recently a federal judge in Mobile, Ala., ordered the City of Mobile to change its form of government. He said this city of 200,000 must change its city commission form to a mayor-

council form of government and gave the city until August of next year to complete the change.

This is the second time such an order was issued by a federal judge. In July of this year, Shreveport, La., was given a similar order and was given one year to come up with a new plan of government. Both cities have appealed the rulings and now the decision as to whether they will have to conform rests with a higher court.

Mayor Lambert Mims of Mobile protested the ruling against his city that it was contrary to the principles upon which America was founded. He said if a judge can issue such a ruling, "he also can tell us we have to eat pork and beans for lunch every day". He said the ruling is against everything that our forefathers fought, bled and died for more than 200 years ago.

Think about what Mayor Mims said for a minute. Although it sounds as if it is an unfair comparison between eating pork and beans every day and changing a form of government, in essence is it what the soldiers of the 13 Original Colonies believed in so strongly that they pledged their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor to achieve. They overcome almost unsurmountable odds to defeat a major military power of its time so that they could enjoy the government of their choice.

Today, 200 years later, we do have this choice. We do have the right, through our local officials, to make our cities conform to the type of life we want to live. If we so choose, we can transform our city into an industrial giant or to place our major emphasis on agriculture. But if the attempts to kill local rule are successful in Alabama or Louisiana and if the State of California officials follow through on the plan to control the location of industry, you will see the beginning of the end of our democratic form of government.

The Colonists fought for home rule. Now it is up to all of us to preserve it by our letters of protests to Washington.