



Fourth Edition

URBAN POLITICS

POWER IN METROPOLITAN AMERICA

RNARD H. ROSS/MYRON A. LEVINE/MURRAY S. STEDMAN



Power in Metropolitan America

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FOURTH EDITION



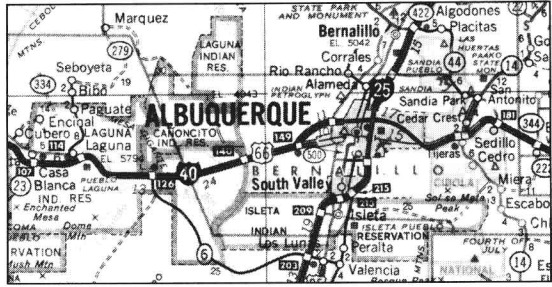
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To Nettie and
the memory of Len,
both of whom taught me
to love the city.

B.H.R.

Bernard H. Ross and Myron A. Levine
would like to dedicate this edition
to the late Charles H. Levine,
our friend and colleague
who taught us both so much
about urban politics and administration.



Preface

Much has happened in urban America since the third edition of this book was published in 1985. Many of the larger and older East Coast cities have continued to lose population and jobs to the newer cities of the South and the West, creating unemployment and underemployment. A fluctuating economy has helped New England make great economic strides and then slump again in 1990, prompting most large cities in the country to sharpen their economic development skills.

The relationships of cities to states and the federal government have continued to change. Some of the change has been stimulated by a continued devolution of federal authority and responsibility to the states begun during the Reagan administration. Other changes have been prompted by a series of Supreme Court rulings that have chipped away at the residual state powers thought to reside in the Tenth Amendment.

Finally, suburbia continues to grow, and with that growth suburbs are now confronting numerous problems once thought to lie solely in the domain of large inner cities. Among these problems are traffic congestion, uncontrolled growth, inadequate schools, solid waste disposal, and rising tax rates.

A positive feature that emerges from the trends of the past five years is that students seem to be regaining their interest in urban affairs and are registering for these courses in increasing numbers. Our hope in this new edition is to rekindle the flame in these young men and women to work toward a society that can look with pride at its great cities and their inhabitants.

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Several friends and colleagues contributed to this work in more ways than they will every know. Among those whose thoughts and comments helped Bernard Ross to look at issues and problems in a new light were

David Walker, University of Connecticut; Irene S. Rubin, Northern Illinois University; Bill Barnes, National League of Cities; Brad Johnson, PRIMA; Robin Hambleton, Bristol University; Michael Bird, NCSL; and Jim Martin, NGA.

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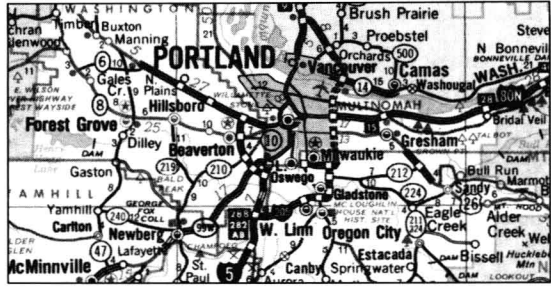
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Cities, Suburbs, and Power

URBANIZATION: THE MOVE TO CITIES

Throughout history cities grew as the centers of commerce, industry, education, and the arts. The general history of cities in the West can be told in telescopic form. Cities flourished as centers of Greek and Roman culture. With the collapse of the Roman Empire, the urban civilization Rome had created rapidly eroded. During the so-called Dark Ages, the urban arts were neglected, abandoned, and forgotten. Fortunately, urban culture eventually revived in the West, coming to a high level of achievement by the twelfth century. During the remarkably creative medieval period, new towns and cities were established, the arts were reborn, and the self-governing city came into its own. At the end of a long evolutionary process, the remarkable civilization of such Renaissance city-states as Venice, Genoa, and Florence emerged.

The Industrial Revolution led to a further intensification of urban activities as large concentrations of labor were needed for the new modes of production. In England, many towns established in the Middle Ages were surpassed by new manufacturing centers and port cities.¹

Cities have historically been centers of opportunity; poorer migrants came from the countryside to the city in search of jobs and wealth. This pattern was repeated in the United States as the rural poor migrated to the cities. In need of labor, some factories in the early 1900s even sent recruiters to the South to bring poor black tenant farmers to work in the mills and foundries of the North. The mechanization of agriculture in the South soon displaced many more rural poor and forced the migration to cities. Thousands of poor blacks from the South made their way to the cities of the North in search of civil rights as well as jobs and prosperity. The pace of this migration was accelerated by the labor needs of factories in these cities during and after World War II.