

Rhyme: Municipalities and the Law in Action

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Repository Citation

Omar T. McMahon, *Rhyme: Municipalities and the Law in Action*, 27 Marq. L. Rev. 168 (1943).
Available at: <http://scholarship.law.marquette.edu/mulr/vol27/iss3/11>

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BOOK REVIEWS

Municipalities and the Law in Action. Charles S. Rhyne, Editor. Published by the National Institute of Municipal Law Offices, Washington, D.C. Price \$7.50.

This 600 page book is not a case-book, not a digest. It is rather a compilation of legal opinions, treatises and discussions on the law applicable to municipalities which are obliged to depart from ordinary municipal problems and perform a variety of undertakings in aid of the national war effort. It contains articles on numerous special problems and questions of policy confronting local municipalities. The editor has included papers by many able and experienced city counsel for large, medium and small cities of the 48 states.

There are many valuable and practical suggestions on the course to be pursued by municipalities in matters affecting civilian defense; state and local defense councils; air raids, black-outs and dim-outs, not only for the coastal cities but also for interior localities; leaves of absence, reinstatement, seniority and annuity rights of city employes entering the armed forces; new revenue and financial problems of cities incident to war activities; defense public housing and the taxation problems incident thereto, and payments by the federal government of sums in lieu of taxes; war damage insurance; the attempted federal control of municipal salaries and wages; the jurisdiction of the War Labor Board over disputes between municipalities and their organized employes; compensation for injuries to private persons participating in civilian defense activities; the legal problems of tax exemption for federally owned and leased establishments for the manufacture of war munitions and supplies; absentee voting by members of the various branches of the armed services; priorities on critical construction and operating materials and equipment needed by municipalities; the unusual demands on local public health service for the prevention of absenteeism by war workers and the control of venereal diseases in cities adjacent to military camps; the varied demands for modification of the city zoning and building restrictions; the mixed federal and local control of municipal airports; public and privately owned utilities, including local transportation facilities; rental control; federal legislation bearing on the competitive bidding statutes applicable to cities and their boards and commissions and city planning for post war emergencies and the accumulation of state, county and city surplus funds for post war public improvement construction to aid in relieving the anticipated unemployment and depression conditions most likely to be prevalent in the period of adjustment from war economy to peace.

This material is based on one year's war experience of cities since Pearl Harbor. It contains reliable information on existing federal wartime statutes and a summary of pending legislation that will affect municipalities.

Old and recent court decisions are cited on many issues of law, especially relating to the powers and limitations of power of federal and state and local governments, particularly in reference to the dual sovereignty of the United States and the several states. The book is well-planned and indexed and should be a handy ready reference for every city and county attorney in the land. It should be of great assistance to the federal officials, military and civil, whose positions require contact with city authorities; it should have a wide appeal to the bar, public officials and the public generally.

It is beyond the province of this review to enumerate or discuss the many subjects and questions covered in the book, but we can state unreservedly that any lawyer, either serving the public or in private practice, faced with a legal problem involving wartime activities of municipalities will find this book to be of invaluable aid.

OMAR T. McMAHON.*

A Permanent United Nations—Amos Peaslee. G. P. Putnams and Son, N. Y., 1942. Pp. 146. \$2.50.

One of the most discussed questions today, that of a permanent united nations, is the topic of Mr. Amos Peaslee's new book. The author is neither pessimistic nor optimistic but he does present one of the best arguments in favor of a permanent world government that has been seen recently.

Mr. Peaslee, who is a recognized authority on international law and who has been an American representative at many international conferences including the one at Versailles, first makes an historical review of the various methods employed by nations to formulate international policy, beginning with the Treaty of Westphalia up to the latest Pan American conferences and, most recently, the Atlantic Charter. He points out rather emphatically that the failure in the past, and the possible collapse in the future, lies in the absence of a *real world government*—self-sustaining and powerful enough to enforce its laws. Mere treaties, mere contracts are not enough; it must be government.

The author outlines a suggested form of government. It should be democratic in form, he says, and should consist of a legislature, a judiciary and an executive office. Although Mr. Peaslee speaks against

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