State government faces new challenges today, as it has throughout its history. During much of this century power gravitated from the states to the federal government, raising concern about the decline, or even disappearance, of the states. An increasingly skeptical attitude toward big government in Washington now indicates, however, that we are entering a period of rejuvenation of state governments.

We do face serious problems, including inflation, energy supply, tax burdens and many others. Certainly what the federal government does about these matters has immediate effect on the states. As a state, however, we must deal with this response, and we must initiate our own solutions where possible.

The state's most important concern is how to insure sufficient economic development, and the critical energy necessary, to provide jobs for our growing population while maintaining and improving upon our environment and lifestyle which make Wisconsin truly unique.

The state's problems are the concern of your Governor, your Legislature and the agencies that comprise the state government of Wisconsin. They are also the concern, however, of county, municipal and town officials who volunteer so much time in the best of the American tradition. But it takes a partnership with the people to effectively deal with them.

Effective citizens are informed citizens. For this reason, we welcome another edition of the Wisconsin Blue Book - the 1979-80 edition. The Blue Book has played a key role in keeping citizens of this state informed - in a nonpartisan, objective manner - about their government. In its pages can be found a detailed explanation of how that government is organized, and what it is doing. Only by understanding the scope and complexity of the government's activities can informed thought be brought to bear on the problems we face today.

It is with particular pleasure that we call attention to the feature article in this edition of the Blue Book. "Local Government in Wisconsin" by Professor James R. Donohue, is a detailed examination of the counties, cities, towns, villages and school districts that comprise our local system of government. It is a paradox that local government, while closest to the people, is often the least understood. Only with the knowledge of how local government actually operates can our citizens be effective in their efforts to deal with local problems.

As one who has given most of his life to education, I especially note that Professor Donohue's article demonstrates the continued cooperation and interaction between the University of Wisconsin System and the other parts of the state government, to the mutual benefit of both, and embodying the "boundaries of the campus are the boundaries of the state" philosophy.

Sincerely,

Lee Sherman Dreyfus
Governer