EDITOR'S NOTE



BY: ERICH EISELT
IMLA Assistant General Counsel
and Director of Affirmative Litigation

First World Problems

This Term, the Supreme Court will consider some of the more monumental social issues dividing our country, including whether states can limit access to abortion and whether businesses can decline to serve customers based on religiously-grounded sexual mores. Many other battles will be fought in forums small and large, from city councils to legislatures to judiciaries, testing our basic tenets—the separation of powers, the right to vote, the meaning of the Constitution. Conflict seems to pervade the nation, arising from right, left, and center. .Some see the fraying as a prelude to America in free-fall.

It takes but a few seconds of footage from halfway around the world to put our anxieties in their proper aspect. As we bicker over which telling of history will be taught in our schools, or which economic measures will accelerate our prosperity, a young democracy is facing annihilation before our very eyes. Forty million people who had barely begun to experience freedom are struggling to preserve their entitlement to self-determination, and many may pay the ultimate price in defense of that right.

In comparison, our concerns seem trivial. No one in our country doubts the primacy of "government of the people, by the people, and for the people." We may debate *how* that architecture should take shape, but never its underlying legitimacy. In that regard, municipal lawyers are pivotal in safeguarding the rule of law in our most basic embodiment of self-determination—local government. We see the turmoil at ground level and recognize that, for all its vehemence, it does not presage the death of democracy, but instead reveals its vitality.

As amply illustrated in this issue of *Municipal Lawyer*, IMLA strives to provide members with the fine points of domestic municipal law practice. But IMLA also endeavors to present the opportunity to see other forms of governance at work. We've gone to Havana, Prague, Jerusalem, Berlin and, only nine years ago, to the very cities now most in the world's focus—Lviv and Kyiv. These comparative law sessions provide ample occasion to reflect upon—and embrace—the freedoms that we take for granted.

IMLA hopes you will find the March-April *ML* informative. And, to echo Barb Adams in her President's Letter, we express our support for the people of Ukraine in their struggle to preserve self-government.

Best regards-

Erich Eiselt