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# Bureaucracy Triggers Side Effects

**S**IDE EFFECTS from various useful drugs are well known. Tablets taken to relieve a headache might cause an upset stomach, or a soothing lotion might cause a rash. Laws, court decisions and bureau regulations have side effects, too, usually unexpected and often bad.

A typical example showed up in Oklahoma City recently. Home insurance policies ordinarily do not provide coverage for flood damage, so Congress passed a law to subsidize the high costs of such insurance. Naturally, those living in low areas were first to apply.

That's the action. Now here's the reaction. Operating under another law, FHA has announced that it can't guarantee mortgage loans in flood-prone areas revealed by the insurance.

Agriculture has had its share of side effects, too. Programs created to save large numbers of small farms have resulted in concentrating crops and livestock production on a small number of large farms. When price support loans filled government granaries with surplus crops, consumers complained about the cost of storage. When the government finally sold the surpluses, consumers complained because our reserve supplies had disappeared.

There have been times when the government was paying rent to keep land out of production, while another agency, under another law, was building irrigation systems to put deserts into production. Flood control projects have sometimes inundated more good land than ever was flooded in the area.

We send food to starving nations, either by selling it, lending them money to buy it, or by giving it to them. But the more we send them,

the faster their populations increase, resulting in less food per person.

Congress and legislatures have taxed oil and gas from drillstem to service station to get more revenue to spend, causing major companies to move many of their operations abroad. This has made the United States heavily dependent upon foreign oil sources, which in turn has made us subject to political blackmail, creating fuel shortages, with increased prices and more federal agencies to set up more regulations.

Then, in order to conserve fuel, Congress changed our clocks, reduced highway speed limits and required auto makers to build more expensive cars that get fewer miles per gallon of fuel.

Congress created OSHA to see that employers provide safe working conditions for their employees. Then

OSHA wrote thousands of pages of regulations, which businessmen don't have time to read, but if they ask OSHA inspectors whether they're in compliance, they are subject to fines for anything that hasn't been corrected.

EPA banned use of DDT on the questionable assumption that it endangered birds. Now gypsy moths and tussock moths are again defoliating trees in a dozen states, leaving birds no nesting places.

Congress has created so many bureaus to regulate business and individual affairs that it is considering a bureau to regulate other bureaus. Thus one action generates another, and side effects of one law necessitate another law or a legislative court ruling. We are hooked on the habit of lawmaking and all of its side effects.