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Federal Control Erodes Freedom

MANY government employees, elected and appointed, are working to change our form of government. In our Bicentennial, the drive to complete the shift to national socialism is being intensified.

For example, a recent news story reported that Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey, D-Minn., has bemoaned "the lack of a national energy policy, a national education policy, an American economic policy, a national food policy and a world food policy." Like most other senators, he is "available" as a candidate for president.

"National policy" has come to be synonymous with "Washington regulation and control." Such a system is contrary to American concepts of individual freedom and local government.

Humphrey is not the only candidate espousing centralization of government. Most candidates of all parties favor gathering more controls into the bureaucracies of Washington.

Oklahomans have had several experiences with "national policies" recently, wherein freedom and free enterprise lost out.

Wheat farmers got a dose of "national farm policy" when the President determined that it called for an embargo on grain exports, causing grain prices to go down because of missed sales.

Our petroleum industry suffered a major setback when Congress passed and the President signed what amounts to a "national energy policy" that discourages exploration, penalizes production and keeps Oklahoma oil prices below what we pay Arabs for oil.

Ranchers holding leases on 12,000 acres around Lake Wister in Eastern Oklahoma got a taste of "national

grazing policy" when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers arbitrarily canceled their grazing rights.

Osage county land owners were surprised and infuriated when they learned federal officials had secretly explored their pastures with a view to condemning a large area for a park, presumably as a part of our "national environmental policy."

Employers got a New Year's application of "national pay rate policy" when minimum wages were raised to \$2.30 per hour, with no requirements that employees do more or better work.

"National policy on privacy" now is to seal records of criminals, because disclosure that they are crooks might damage their reputations, while the government maintains hundreds of data banks on other citizens, with limited protection against misuse.

National policy now regulates in virtually every field, with more than 60,000 federal investigators probing into our private lives and operations of free enterprise.

Citizens may have had a little relief by the inefficiency of the bureaucracy. When a "national policy" is unfair, undesirable, unwanted or unnecessary—as so many of them are—the more efficiently it is run, the worse the results will be. But we can't rely upon continued inefficiency to protect our freedoms.

Thomas Jefferson said: "That government is best which governs the least, because its people discipline themselves." That's a great truth, but it isn't what the politicians and bureaucrats are trying to establish as our "national policy on everything."