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American Government System OK, But We Need to Get Back to It

CANDIDATES, commentators and political reformers continue to bombard the public with declarations that our system of government should be changed "because it isn't working."

We should look back to our Declaration of Independence and Constitution, but we should do more than look back. We also should strive to re-establish their basic principles.

The part of our system of government that isn't working is that which has been changed by politicians, courts, Congress and bureaucrats. This covers a great expanse of territory.

In the first place, the American Revolution was a rebellion against big government. Our biggest trouble is that we have allowed government to grow beyond all reasonable limits in size, cost, personnel, laws, bureaus, functions and power.

Thomas Jefferson, a strong advocate of limited government, said: "I am not a friend to a very energetic government. It is always oppressive." On more than one occasion, President Gerald Ford has stated: "A government big enough to give us everything we want is a government big enough to take from us everything we have." Our government is big enough now!

The American system originally provided for representation of the people, elected by a majority of the people, with checks and balances of one branch of government against another.

Big government, including law-making, by professional politicians and career bureaucrats has nullified certain of these functions so that millions of citizens feel their power of franchise has been lost, even when they go to the polls and vote. It is changes made in the system that are not working well.

In the founding of our country, supporters of states rights won out over advocates of a strong central

government, but since then, states rights have been knocked down, one after another, until the states have little power left. This has made it easier for political cliques to run things from Washington.

Self-reliance and thrift were basic qualities of character when progress was measured by productivity. Besides strangling business with myriad bureaucratic rules, federal agencies now encourage welfare without work, idleness without initiative, and discrimination in the name of equality.

Freedom of religion seems to be officially construed as freedom from religion, with corrupt conduct in high places as notable evidence of our moral and spiritual decay.

We do not need to change our American system of government. We just need to get back to it!