

'Monopoly' Played for Big Stakes With Serious National Results

"**M**ONOPOLY" is one of the country's most popular games. It is not always played by a few people around a parlor table. The big games are deadly serious and are played for big stakes.

Look at the Congressional Monopoly. Public opinion polls reflect that voters hold Congress in low esteem. It is heavily Democratic. Yet Democrats have won 19 of the last 21 elections. When does the other side get to bat?

Bureaucrats are winning at Government Monopoly. In spite of criticism of the number of regulations issued by federal agencies, both bureaus and rules are proliferating. National policies and national controls are increasing.

The Federal Trade Commission is cracking down on any private industries that officials suspect might have gotten together to fix prices. Other government bureaus are regulating prices. The official position seems to be that it is all right for government bureaucrats to fix prices but not private bureaucrats.

Socialists can hardly be said to be winning the game of Government Monopoly of Business, but they are making gains. Semi-nationalization of railroads is a partial victory, and pressure to nationalize the petroleum industry through establishment of a "national energy policy" resulted in price controls and unneeded regulation that has industry officials in a dither.

Unions are attempting to establish a national labor monopoly. They have been helped by Congress and expect to get more help from campaign contributions now being passed out. Compulsory union membership exists in many industries

and in most states. The union objective is to control all jobs.

Other "Monopoly" games going on include education, religion, welfare, sports and mail delivery, among others.

Some monopolies may be desirable and workable, either for technical, economic or practical reasons, but their existence should be determined by the people, rather than by those who stand to profit from their existence.

Monopoly is a threat to freedom, and that danger is greatest when an institution becomes a government monopoly. Such an arrangement can seldom, if ever, be efficient for the simple reason that every person hired is a voter, and every person fired also is a voter.

In free enterprise, public control exists because the customer can go elsewhere. Monopoly flourishes when there is nowhere else for the customer to go.

C. Northcote Parkinson, British writer noted for his oft-quoted "Parkinson's Law," says this on the subject:

"For once the monopolies have become identified with government, being merely the tools of official policy, the point is soon reached when the government comes to employ a majority of the electorate. This involves a change in the whole nature of both government and society. It means that state employees will be voting, in effect, on their own terms of service. At that point the choice lies between dictatorship and collapse."

If this is true, we'd better look at the scoreboard on the big Monopoly games going on in the United States!