

# Congress Should Undo EPA Mistake

OKLAHOMA'S booming economic growth may screech to a halt next summer, whether the country goes into a recession or not!

Federal law could shut off our economic development and prosperity. Even prairie winds that blow away fumes, smog, dust and sometimes rain may not be enough to save us from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), created by Congress for our own good!

Oklahoma City's downtown renewal project might be completed some day, only to be rendered useless by EPA. That bureau has authority to ban downtown parking and limit private car uses.

Any metropolitan area of 200,000 or more population that is in violation of EPA's ozone or carbon monoxide standards must change its ways. Only Spokane and Honolulu meet requirements now.

Speaking to the Oklahoma Farm Bureau convention last week, Leigh Nichols of Oklahoma City, 6-state representative of the Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association of the United States, declared:

"Everybody is in favor of cleaner, healthier air but regulations and standards that would stop economic growth may be unrealistic and unattainable."

A major oil company was stopped from developing oil shale in Colorado because it couldn't shut down natural hydrocarbon emissions from local juniper and mesquite that exceeded ozone standards.

The Smoky Mountains got their name from natural hydrocarbons from trees. Measurements taken far out at sea have shown natural ozone or smog levels in violation of EPA specifications.

But each state is required to file a state implementation plan (SIP) that will meet EPA standards for five major pollutants.

If Oklahoma's SIP fails to meet EPA's approval by June 30, 1979, that agency can veto all new construction permits for manufacturing, dry cleaning establishments, filling stations, or practically any other business, whether in a polluted area or not.

If our SIP is not approved, EPA

has power to order all federal grant monies for highways, sewer construction and air pollution control shut off.

Beginning July 1, 1979, anyone who plans to build or modify a major facility will be required to follow a complex pre-construction permit process that includes 29 places where the applicant can be stopped by EPA. It could take two years or longer.

"More citizens are becoming aware that the clean air standards seem to dictate no more growth and are really land use planning through the back door," said the Oklahoma Farm Bureau's resolutions committee.

Economic control is one of the most powerful forces in government. When an agency such as EPA has power to shut down economic growth and development of a state or city, it is time for Congress to undo one of its mistakes.

Don't blame local government. Congress created the EPA and delegated it power to write and enforce its own laws.