

More Goodies Assure More Controls

CURRENT popular movies play upon fantasies about future civilizations from other planets warring for control of space.

Current politics play upon fantasies that our government is still "of the people, by the people and for the people." Actually, we are governed by beings from another world — the unreal world of bureaucracy that is headquartered in Washington, D.C.

We elect congressmen to represent our ideas and needs. They carry these up to Washington, enact laws and appropriate money. To the extent that Congress finances something, bureaucrats control it.

That includes commodity prices and thereby farm income and food costs. It also includes highways, schools, energy, safety, water supplies and sewage systems, jobs, municipal governments, arts, sciences, research and, to a very considerable degree, information.

Whatever becomes saturated with the Washington atmosphere and is processed in the political machine tends to take on the shape and aroma of those who operate the devices and dish out the funds.

These results not only may have little resemblance to what appears to be public opinion but, in many cases, actions taken are contrary to clear indications of what the public wants.

For example, survey after survey has shown that a heavy majority of citizens wants the federal government to stop spending more money than it takes in. Yet, just as often as budget time rolls around we are told that a balanced budget is impossible to achieve and Congress raises the national debt limit again.

Public opinion polls repeatedly have shown that citizens would like limits on terms of office for elected officials, more openness in government (sunshine laws) and termination dates for government agencies (sunset laws). The public wants right-to-work laws.

We don't get them because officials who might be affected and bureaucrats on public payrolls don't want them. They are willing to give voters what they want — providing they also want it.

There was no great public de-

mand for a federal Department of Education but the unionized teachers wanted one, so we have it. The obvious result will be increased demand for school rules to be written in Washington and enforced by allocations of federal funds.

There was no great demand for a federal Department of Energy, but the administration wanted one, so we have it. A recent report by that agency says that government policies have surprisingly little effect, for either better or worse, on the nation's energy prospects for the next 10 years.

The same might be the case with the Environmental Protection Agency, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and dozens of other bureaus of high employment, large budgets and limited usefulness.

Total effect of this trend is to concentrate more and more power in the hands of fewer people. That is how citizens lose control of their government. When a candidate promises you more goodies from Washington, he also is guaranteeing more control from Washington.