

Self-Reliance Has Its Own Rewards

ONE of life's most serious moments may occur when a person realizes for the first time that he no longer will be supported by others, and must rely upon his own resources.

This is true also of states and municipalities which have been receiving largesse from the federal government.

Just as an individual may find it more enjoyable to spend money than to earn it, public officials generally find it more pleasant to appropriate funds than to levy taxes to gather them.

As various items are pared from federal budget proposals, howls of protest and pain are being heard from individuals, governments and institutions that have been recipients of loans, grants and subsidies.

People supported by subsidized arts programs wail that our culture is threatened. Teachers imply that education may falter and fail. Labor unions argue that budget-cutting will penalize working people. Municipal officials give the impression

that cutting off CETA projects and marginal workers may bring local government to a standstill.

The Oklahoma City council was shocked when told that federal budget cuts might transfer to it a burden of \$100 million to provide sewage treatment over the next 10 years. One could question how disposal of local wastes became a federal responsibility in the first place.

The Oklahoma Conference of Churches, which has been critical of political activities of the Moral Majority, sent up a cry because of anticipated budget cuts for certain social programs.

Nationally, it was reported that 157 organizations joined together to try to block federal budget cuts. Apparently, all of them were beneficiaries of federal appropriations they don't want to lose.

Obviously, some people are not thrilled by the idea of seeking employment where productivity is a major consideration, even though it is a fundamental of free enterprise. As we shift away from the Socialist

principle of redistribution of wealth, our nation will become stronger because individuals and local governments will be more responsible if they are operating on their own.

After the initial shock wears away, the idea of becoming self-supporting should not be too distasteful to self-respecting citizens.

It generally is true that the hand which holds the purse also has a grip on those who in its contents.

Not only do government bureaus direct how funds they handle may be spent; they also may use them as leverage for other objectives. An example of this is the Department of Transportation's continuing threat to withhold highway construction money unless the state enforces the 55 mph speed limit.

Self-reliance could bring freedom from some such rules and regulations. In addition, studies have shown that tax dollars collected and spent locally usually buy more services than tax dollars routed through the IRS and the bureaucracy in Washington.