

State's Outlook for Next Decade Rosy

OKLAHOMA should fare relatively well in the next decade if "America's Restructured Economy" develops as outlined in Business Week magazine.

The report says that instead of moving together, sectors of the economy are being pulled apart, with widening differences in growth, output, employment, investment and profits. It predicts that for the 1980s, the United States will have these separate economies:

1. Old-line industry, which has run into serious international competition. "They are reviving, but substantial improvement will require further restructuring," the magazine says.

2. Energy, which will continue to resist recession, buoyed continually by the world's growing needs, limitations on supplies, and a powerful cartel controlling the price of oil.

3. High technology, where an early lead fueled by military developments "has pushed America far ahead of the rest of the world" in semiconductor and computer technology.

4. Agriculture, with the United

States standing as "the potential granary for the world" because this nation is "blessed with a temperate climate — something two of the world's biggest food consumers, China and the Soviet Union, do not have."

5. Services, where employment is expected to "grow fast" in finance, personnel, communications, information processing, consulting and the like. "The newest trend is internationalization of these services," the magazine states.

Oklahoma has always been underdeveloped industrially and so may have suffered less from international competition while benefiting from relocation of industries and people from the north and east.

This trend has been substantially slowed by unfavorable interpretations of law by the state's attorney general. If needed changes are made, Oklahoma could rejoin the movement; otherwise, perhaps not.

"In stark contrast to the oil-poor north, Texas, Oklahoma and Louisiana in the oil-rich southwest will experience burgeoning growth," Busi-

ness Week observes. "Employment will continue to boom."

It is less certain how this state may rank in development and application of high technology. Hans Mark, deputy director of NASA, is quoted as saying high technology is "a dynamic force that . . . creates industries and jobs that most people — and that includes economists — can't even imagine."

Oklahoma should rate well in agriculture in the 1980s, because world population is expected to increase to 5.2 billion by 1990 and because this area has favorable weather for grain and livestock.

"The heavy demand for food worldwide is certain to push up American food prices," says the magazine.

Growing demand for services, foreseen as stimulating competition and productivity, could mean more jobs even in Oklahoma where employment currently is regarded as being near maximum levels.

Overall, our state should do pretty well in at least three and perhaps in all five economic categories described.