

# GOVERNMENT BY



# TOTEM POLE

## As federal programs proliferate and duplicate we're fast becoming The Overlapped Society

Twelve different federal agencies, departments and programs have been poking about in the bottom of the sea or otherwise concerning themselves with oceanography.

Twenty-three have their hands in the water supply—either before it is polluted or afterwards.

Forty-three federal programs are involved in education or re-education.

Maybe a hundred federal programs provide aid, loans or assistance for development or improvement of cities.

Confusion and duplication are growing so great that three-man federal de-confusion teams have been sent into the field to try and sort out manpower problems.

The U. S. Budget Bureau also is quietly making a study of duplication in governmental functions.

Now, as 1966 draws towards an end, the United States has moved far into an era of supra-programs which overlay major departments, involve scores of federal agencies and which attempt to redo whole sections of society. Much of it is the result of the flood of new laws in the past two years.

In the next few years new regional organizations overlapping federal, state, county and municipal governments, as well as private companies, threaten to change the way we live and work. They would originate, operate and regulate transit lines, multistage transportation systems, water and power supply and pollution control organizations, for instance.

Soon, too, may come additional Cabinet rank departments—perhaps a Department of Resources, or a Department of Consumers.

This is totem pole government with departments and agencies atop one another, covering the same ground.

Any organization which spends more than \$140 billion a year as the federal government does and employs 2,738,248 workers—not counting the military—is certain to have confusion, duplication and waste

in its operation. There is no large private enterprise which does not have some of the same.

However, the volume of duplication and confusion in federal ranks has now grown so large that even those who claim liberal attitudes toward both big government and centralized superplanning swallow hard at the thought of it all.

### **Even in Watts**

For example, the welfare pay-out system has become so complicated that a citizen of riotous Watts must spend about \$4 and a full day making the circuit by city bus of five or six federal, state and county offices to complete documents and formalities for handouts.

A "one-stop" plan being experimented with may reduce some of the confusion. Under the plan a man can, for example, visit his probation officer who will help him fill out forms. The officer will then make the circuit on his behalf.

A cluster of programs are available for the unemployed, untrained, or for the retreads who need retraining, in Watts and hundreds of other depressed communities.

Few precisely duplicate another. Rather, they overlap to a considerable degree and make one wonder if there could not be some consolidation and simplification for the betterment of all concerned.

Equally worrisome is the fact that the number of programs is growing, their scope is expanding.

Among principal umbrellas are the Manpower Development and Training Act which provides money for one set of programs to train unemployed (or as Washingtonians enjoy saying, "underemployed") and the Economic Opportunity Act which provides money to train and retrain unemployed young people under still another set of programs.

• The Manpower Development Program, besides providing job training for unemployed, performs employment research, sets up experimental projects to help "the culturally" *(continued on page 68)*

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deprived" and studies discrimination in employment patterns.

- The Neighborhood Youth Corps provides work experience for needy youngsters between 16 and 21, either in school or out of school.

- "Work Experience" helps unemployed parents get basic education, job training and experience.

- Adult Basic Education passes on money to state agencies to teach older people to read, write and do simple sums.

- College Work Study gives funds for part-time employment for college students from low income families.

If a teenager or a grownup cannot find a comfortable spot in one of these, there are still other programs to be tried for size and shape.

- The Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training promotes the development of craftsmen and furnishes money to upgrade the abilities of journeymen workers.

- The Area Redevelopment Act provides for retraining people whose jobs have become obsolete or whose employers have moved or gone out of business.

- The Office of Manpower, Planning, Evaluation and Research gets up "demonstration" projects.

- The Job Corps under the poverty program is a non-Ivy League school system for underprivileged, unemployed and dropouts.

- The Community Action Program backs local anti-poverty campaigns.

- The Department of Agriculture gets in the action too. It lends money to low income individuals or co-operatives serving the poor in rural areas. Since the money can be used either for agricultural projects or nonagricultural projects, critics find it difficult to see why this program could not be fitted into one of the other programs.

- The Small Business Administration has a loan program of the same sort. This provides loans and management assistance to increase "entrepreneurial" opportunities for low income people.

## **With maybe more to come**

In recent weeks there has been an increase in discussion over the possibility of setting up still another "holding action" program.

This one would give applicants part-time jobs—"such as hamburger jockey," as one government official said—until another program is ready for them.

Sitting off to the side is Vocational Rehabilitation. This is a powerful and unusual office which benevolently and efficiently trains handicapped people.

Cooperation between federal offices, departments and agencies involved in manpower, labor and training was said by Congressional and departmental authorities in Washington during August to be "lacking."

Last March the Labor Department had politely labeled the chaos "lack of coordination." In the hope of improving the deteriorating situation before the full blast of trouble, three-man federal de-confusion teams were sent to 30 major metropolitan areas.

The men, representing Labor, Health, Education and Welfare and the poverty program, were told by the President's Committee on Manpower:

"There appears to be considerable confusion in the minds of both the potential beneficiaries and those administering various programs regarding the complete program provisions."

Manpower agencies were not "exchanging information." There was "apathy and misunderstanding."

Another problem concerned "overlap and duplication."

There is still hope that the three-man teams will dilute bureaucracy, button up fraying ends and get more for the tax dollar.

Meanwhile, from the sound of fury this autumn, several poverty projects—among them the Job Corps—may be abandoned or transferred to other agencies. The records of some are considered that bad.

If abolished they would only slightly reduce the \$15 billion tax dollars yearly the federal government passes on to states as grants-in-aid. A few years ago the figure was only \$2 to \$3 billion.

It's so confusing that the Government Printing Office has turned out guides to various programs and has published handbooks on manpower funds and city handouts.

One handbook is entitled, "Major Programs Providing Federal Funds for Employment and Training."

A 70-pager is entitled "Handbook of Federal Aids to Communities."

Each year there also is a new edition of "Catalog of Federal Aid to State and Local Governments." The 1966 effort covered 257 pages.

Private companies have even gotten into the confusion-dispelling act. A firm of municipal consultants

sells "Federal Aid Indicators" for \$ells. These wheel-shaped indicators have peepholes which can be matched up with other holes to tell the story of government grants.

Through one hole you can see the "Project Title." Through other holes "Eligibility Requirements," "Amount of Loan," "Amount of Grant," "Agency to Contact," "Program Category."

## **Changing pipes in midstream**

Until a few years ago most people worried little—or even thought much—about water. Water, or the lack of it, is now a fashionable subject.

The federals are deeply concerned, and rightly so. But the concern is as scattered as summer showers.

One agency, the new Department of Housing and Urban Development, makes grants for cleaning plants, building water lines, getting water into homes, sending it through toilets and sinks and carrying fouled water from homes to main interceptor sewers.

At the interceptors, Interior takes over. The department grants money to build facilities to carry the water and waste to treatment plants, clean it and dispose of it.

An example of changing pipes in midstream? It is also possible this HUD-Interior switch is the best way to clean and move water. But, what about the Department of Agriculture? It's in the picture again, too.

Agriculture duplicates activities of both HUD and Interior for cities of 5,500 or less and for rural areas.

There is also overlapping in recent land acquisition schemes involving government programs.

In 1961 the Open Space Program was created. It called for the federal government to put up between 30 and 40 per cent of funds for cities to buy nearby open spaces.

Then along came the 1965 Land and Water Program. This one goes in 50-50 with states for recreation projects such as marinas, playgrounds, beaches, riverfronts. Cities get federal grants through states. Once this program went into operation, the Open Space Program upped its contributions to the 50-50 pace.

Here again Agriculture has a program of its own.

Under Greenspan, Agriculture will reimburse cities 50 per cent of what they paid farmers for land they turn into green areas. Agriculture passes out another 25 per cent of acquisition cost if cities will turn the land to natural uses,

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such as bird sanctuaries, forest trails.

All these programs were produced by different committees in Congress with apparently too little regard for waste and excessive administration manpower usage.

The city of Newark, N. Y. shopped around among programs. It selected the Agriculture plan and now has a 32-acre park—75 per cent paid for by federal tax money.

An attempt to dilute duplication may have been behind the brakes Congress has put on the proposed Demonstration Cities Program.

The program called for an all-out attack on city problems. The federal government would pay a supplemental 80 per cent of the local tab of city betterment programs. The plan called for the Department of Labor to train workers; HUD to work with housing; HEW with education and health. The poverty program would play a role also.

Here was one of those massive attacks that Washington thrives on.

Theoretically the program was designed to trim out duplication. But, would it? Would it concentrate governmental resources? Increase effectiveness by simplification? Coordinate?

Congress wanted to take a much closer look.

### ***No one knows where it goes***

Recent Congressional hearings have pointed up the confusion over what happens to the grants-in-aid dollars when they leave the Washington, D. C., city limits.

Take New York City, for example. How much Federal money is poured each year into this Baghdad on the Hudson nobody has an exact idea. Not the city fathers who get and spend it, the Congressmen who appropriate it nor the federal bureaucrats who administer it.

Senator Abraham Ribicoff, D.-Conn., chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on executive reorganization, sought to elicit answers from New York Mayor John Lindsay during recent hearings on problems plaguing cities.

Lindsay started with the figure of \$350 million in 1965. This was quickly raised to \$500 million then \$507.

Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, D.-N.Y., scanned some figures and said it looked more like \$619 million. No,

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Ribicoff ventured, it's more like \$861 million.

Finally Lindsay put in, "You break it all down and you come down for a yearly total contribution somewhere over \$500 million and under \$1 billion."

Two Cabinet members did no better in trying to pin down where the money goes. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Robert C. Weaver testified over \$28 billion a year is spent on programs having

a direct impact on urban problems. Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach said it was more like \$13 billion.

Mayor John Reading of Oakland, Calif., after more than a year in office, is still trying to find out how one city can efficiently spend the federal dollars that pour in from 140 different programs directed in far-off Washington.

His experience with Uncle Sam has been far from encouraging.

Oakland submitted applications for a number of economic development loans only to find "red tape and delays" imperiling Oakland's

entire program. "The applications seem to vanish into a void upon leaving the city," Mayor Reading said wistfully.

The Oakland mayor also discovered that Washington doesn't always deliver as promised. The city put in a good deal of time and effort to work up a justification for federal housing rehabilitation and modernization grants and loans at Washington's suggestion. Then to its dismay Washington advised there was no money available for such work.

Reading told the subcommittee many federal programs are at the root of so many city ills. For instance, FHA programs encourage mass movement of middle income citizens out of core cities into suburbs. Welfare programs perpetuate city ghettos, he said.

### **Adding another layer**

Two relatively new programs which overlay a score of older programs are the poverty program and the federal-states Appalachian regional plan. They are designed to be many things to many people in many ways and at many times. If successful, Administration leaders hope, people might look back someday on the Johnsonian age as they look back on the Jeffersonian and Jacksonian ages.

There is serious question though that they do decrease duplication.

"There will be more duplication before there may be less and we must remember there may never be less," said a Washington veteran who has been dealing with, for and against the federal government for 30 years.

Then there is the trend toward more regional government.

"We know a lot of government workers sit in each other's laps, doing the same job. Regional programs will add another man to the lap. They will be, in effect, another layer of government.

"We know little about regional government. For example, how to handle tri-state water basins or six-state transportation systems?

"This is one reason I foresee more duplication before I can foresee less. Perhaps we should only hope for the best," the official said.

### **Library subsidized twice**

Specific examples of duplication abound. One Congressman came upon this pertinent incident involving the Appalachian program: A \$256,720 grant was made for a branch library in Pittsburgh. The same library also got \$200,000 from

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the Federal Library Services Construction Act.

Looking ahead, liberal publications and liberals themselves find new areas of competition, duplication and friction between government agencies. *Reporter* magazine and a variety of Washington-watchers are pointing out that HUD already competes with Interior and other agencies in water matters and urban park land.

HUD may soon have to go to the mat with the Commerce Department and the proposed new Department of Transportation. HUD wants to control federal money going into rapid transit systems. Already it is passing out millions to bolster existing systems and establish new ones. The Commerce De-

partment's transportation section also has a \$90 million project for an East Coast high-speed rail passenger service. The section is likely to be the foundation upon which a new Transportation Department would be built.

And, so it goes: MDTA, Vocational Rehabilitation Act, Vocational Educational Act, Elementary and Secondary Education Act, OEO, HUD, HEW, OMPER, Ag, Interior, Commerce—scrambling for dollars, bumping each other for business.

They and scores of other departments, agencies, programs, plans and projects were created either by Congress acting on its own, under White House pressure or through that misty process by which bureaucrats expand and multiply their jobs, their paper work, their agencies and even multiply themselves.

**END**

## **THE TRUTH ABOUT TRUTH-IN-PACKAGING**

Congress is not above passing new laws that duplicate statutes already on the books.

A good example is the Administration's so-called truth-in-packaging bill. Since 1961, when packaging and labeling legislation was first proposed in Congress numerous expert witnesses have testified new laws are totally unnecessary.

Take, for instance, a common complaint from packaging critics that information on food containers about the number of servings is sometimes inaccurate. The Federal Trade Commission Act specifically prohibits "unfair or deceptive" label statements about the quantity or number of servings contained in a package. In addition the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act prohibits "false and misleading" label information about the number of servings.

Another complaint is that sometimes containers are "slack-filled" or shaped to mislead the purchaser as to quantity.

The FTC Act already bars packages that "are appreciably oversized or in containers so shaped as to create the optical illusion of being larger than conventionally shaped containers of equal or greater capacity."

The FDC Act allows the Food and Drug Administration to standardize the fill of food containers and prohibits the sale of food, drugs and cosmetics in containers

"made, formed or filled as to be misleading." Many state laws have similar prohibitions.

Then there is the complaint that net contents are sometimes too hard to see or understand on the package.

The FTC Act requires "facts that the consumer considers material to his decision" to appear "in clear, conspicuous type" on the "front or face panel of the container."

The FDC Act requires labels to state "the quantity of contents in terms of weight, measure or numerical count . . . with such conspicuousness and in such terms as to render it likely to be read and understood by the ordinary individual under customary conditions of purchase and use."

Here, too, many state laws prevent unclear labeling where contents are concerned.

As far back as 1954 the two Federal agencies—FTC and FDA—recognized that their dual authority could lead to "needless duplication of effort." They decided that:

"The FTC should have primary responsibility" to regulate the advertising of food, drugs, devices and cosmetics.

"In the absence of express agreement between the two agencies to the contrary, the Food and Drug Administration will exercise sole jurisdiction over all matters regulating the labeling of foods, drugs, devices and cosmetics."