

Point of View

To Be Equal

THE NEW FEDERALISM RETURNS

By JOHN E. JACOB

After its plan for the "New Federalism" ran into fire from governors and mayors, the Administration went back to the drawing boards and attempted to meet enough of the objections to win broader support.

But the revised New Federalism is still a misguided plan, mistaken at its core, and ought to be buried.

It simply is not amenable to repair work, because it is designed to meet the needs of an earlier era, not the needs of today. It recalls the bad old days of states' rights and proposes returning to the states the powers they once abused, thus leading to the federal government's expanded role.

The basic flaw of the New Federalism is its decentralizing thrust,

which comes at the very moment when state and local economies are subject to national trends and influences.

And those state and local economies are also dependent, not on federal dollars and mandates as the New Federalism supporters maintain, but on international trends as well.

Whether your town can maintain its vital public services often depends on whether rising oil prices shut local factories or whether steel and auto imports put people out of work.

If anything, we ought to be constructing a New Nationalism, not a New Federalism, to deal with the effects of complex national and international trends.

Instead, the Adminis-

tration wants to continue to turn over a variety of federal programs to state control and to dump welfare on the states.



John E. Jacob

But if there is any program that should be fully federalized, it is welfare. Welfare is not a local problem: to be dealt with locally, it is a national problem that can only be dealt with on a national basis.

Welfare cannot be separated from poverty,

for it provides the barest minimum sustenance to the poorest of the poor. Poverty — and the welfare program it spawns — is the result of national economic failures.

Hunger in Michigan

picking up a substantial part of the cost.

If anything, the problem with the welfare system — in part — is that it already is under too much state and local control. So we get

productive citizens. The New Federalism amounts to an invitation to the states to compete in being tough on the poor.

But poverty is a national problem that won't go away by Washington's attempt to dump it on the states. The ranks of the poor are rising fast — over two million people were added to the poor last year and the continuing Depression adds more daily.

So it is illogical to dismantle national programs and national accountability for growing problems. Like it or not, our leaders must realize that we are nearing the end of the twentieth century and our problems will never be solved by returning to the failed methods of earlier centuries.

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is the same as hunger in Mississippi, and if we are a nation it should be dealt with nationally. Fairness demands that poor people get the same treatment no matter where they reside.

And the quality of that treatment is bound to suffer under the New Federalism. Welfare and other social benefits vary wildly from state to state, even with the federal government

a situation where states like Mississippi and Texas provide benefit levels far below any reasonable concept of decency, and no state pays benefits matching the understated poverty level.

Some states have a long tradition of pushing their poor people out — tolerating conditions so harsh that they leave instead of helping to create opportunities that will keep them in their home states as

PEOPLE, PLACES and POLITICS

By Joe Neal



Here we go again! The Balanced Budget Amendment, which is now being pushed by the Reagan Administration, has been with us before.

The idea of a Balanced Budget Amendment is that such an amendment would solve our economic ills. It is being said that a Balanced Budget would be for Congress to spend up to a point and at such a point Congress would have to stop spending money.

The Balanced Budget Amendment is based on the premise that Congressional spending is the cause of our problem and once Congressional spending is in check, all of our economic ills would disappear. This will not happen under a Balanced Budget Amendment.

The Balanced Budget Amendment is just a diversion being used by the Conservatives to keep themselves in power, because they have not been able to accomplish a turn-around in the downward trend of the economy by methods utilized to limit the cost of social programs such as Medicare, Food Stamps and Social Security.

The Conservatives do not want to admit that their two-year control of the Federal Government has been a disaster. Under the Reagan Administration business failures have averaged eleven every hour of the business day. This is the highest business failure rate since the Depression.

The arrest of Food Stamps violators and cuts in

Medicare will not hide the fact that this Administration's failure to utilize the government structure to ease some of the economic ills is pushing this country to economical collapse. We have stated before in this column that government has a definite role to play in meeting the needs of this country.

The government's role as defined by the Preamble to the Constitution is not only to provide for the common defense, which Reagan people see as primary, but also to provide for the general welfare of the citizens. The general welfare of the citizens does not have to be found only in welfare payments to dependent children, or Food Stamps or Medicare for the elderly, but can also be found in the use of the "counter valence" powers of the government: government acting as a counter weight against the destructive powers of "Big Business." So far, this Administration has been unwilling to move against "Big Business," even when it can be clearly indicated in some instances that their operation is detrimental to the nation as a whole. The Administration's answer has been to deregulate these businesses and refuse to acknowledge the element of greed.

Greed has a voracious appetite for self satisfaction. To allow greed to operate without restraints, a nation asks for trouble. The trouble for our nation is seen in the high interest rates, and the increases in fuel costs. These areas are where the government can use its power of "counter valence." This government could solve the interest rate problem in two weeks. The only thing it has to do is take over the Federal Reserve Bank and allow individuals to borrow money from reserves, just as the private banks do now. As for the fuel costs, the government could create a national oil corporation for the purpose of purchasing crude oil or it could utilize the Department of Energy for this purpose by increasing the authority of this agency to acquire oil for domestic as well as defense usage. This would be a beneficial use of the government's "counter valence" powers.

Old dogmas cannot suffice in a computer age. The rapid changes in computer technology have

trapped the Conservatives into a static view of the world, a view which can only be satisfied with the new technologies if they can be used to substantiate long-standing beliefs about how government should operate. This simply means that the benevolence of government is never allowed to emerge as long as the Conservatives are in control. It seems to be more important to the Conservatives to utilize the advanced computer technology to find out who is cheating on Food Stamps than it is to utilize this technology for the creation of a fair and just society.

We will never be able to cure the economic ills such as high interest rates, unemployment and high fuel costs unless we recognize the fact that government, in the last resort, is left with finding the solution.

Voter Registration To Close Aug. 14

Voter registration for the Sept. 14 primary election will close at 9 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 14.

The Clark County Election Department, located at 400 Las Vegas Blvd. South is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Beginning Tuesday, Aug. 10 until the close of registration on Aug. 14, it will be open

from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.

For those people who have moved since registering, their addresses must be changed by calling the Clark County Election Department at 386-4055 through Aug. 6. After that date, however, addresses may only be changed by coming in to the Clark County Election Department office before Aug. 14.

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