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POST
#. 38,890
S. 49,141

MAR 29 1967

Creative Destruction

It may be that former Florida governor Farris Bryant has the toughest job in government. And it's not at all certain that the country would not be better off if his job were abolished.

Bryant, as the federal administration's roving ambassador to the states, has the job of selling what President Johnson has called "creative federalism." This boils down to trying to get governors and other state officials on the federal aid bandwagon.

About \$15 billion worth of "grants in aid" flows out from Washington to states and cities each year. This is expected to increase to as much as \$60 billion by 1972. And each one of these dollars has a little string attached to it that runs back to a bureau in the national capital.

Although Johnson admitted in a meeting with governors earlier this month that federal aid programs are tangled in a bureaucratic maze, he made no bones about plans to expand the programs. He called for a new federal-state "partnership."

"This is no time," he said, "for talk about states' rights or about an all-powerful Washington."

Isn't it? We can't think of a better time, unless it is yesterday. The more deeply we become enmeshed in this "creative federalism" the harder it will be to get out. And