

Nixon's '74 Budget Hit as Unfair to Poor

6/17/73
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A coalition of 90 organizations contended yesterday that President Nixon's 1974 budget "not only ignores our human needs, it distorts our national priorities."

The accusation came from Milwaukee Mayor Henry W. Maier on behalf of the three-month-old Coalition for Human Needs and Budget Priorities. Affiliates include labor, church, civil rights, welfare, women's rights, and civic organizations.

Coalition chairman Maier and others addressed an ad hoc hearing chaired by Democratic Sens. Edward M. Kennedy (Mass.) and Walter F. Mondale (Minn.).

Mondale raised a fundamental problem that the coalition faces in mounting a national campaign to reverse budget cuts in urban, education, welfare, and housing programs.

"Why have we been arguing this case for so long without getting a strong public support?" he asked. "What can we do to make these arguments a political force that public leaders from the President on down must respond to?"

No one had a simple answer.

Paul C. Warnke, former assistant secretary of defense argued that the proposed \$79 billion defense budget could be reduced by \$12 to \$14 billion, with that money going to domestic needs, and the nation would still be "far and away the strongest military power in the world." He suggested a cut in military aid to foreign nations, a "significant reduction" in manpower, and

elimination of "some of the more egregious examples of military waste" such as a proposed billion-dollar nuclear-powered carrier.

Vernon E. Jordan Jr., executive director of the National Urban League, said that while the budget cuts hurt blacks most because they are disproportionately poor, the majority of people affected by the cutbacks are white.

Most people on welfare are white, he said, as are two-thirds of the families who bought housing through a now-frozen federal subsidy program, two thirds of the trainees in manpower programs, and four fifths of those in public employment programs.

Citing cuts in funds for day care centers, schools, health center, and job programs, Jordan lamented "the violent assault on the promises made to America's poor and to the aspirations they have nurtured."

Jack T. Conway, president of Common Cause, the citizens' lobby which has joined the Coalition, said that Congress has "bumbled along through the budget, refused to pass a tax reform bill, and endured executive secrecy." Nevertheless, he added, "the only leadership we can look to is the Congress."

He suggested that it hold each year an early debate on budget goals "based on public hearings and the report of a new, strongly staffed Committee on National Priorities." Only after deciding on goals, he said, should Congress pass individual budget bills.