

Key Leaders In Congress Assail Plan

Washington

Assistant Senate Democratic leader Robert C. Byrd, joined by GOP conservatives, denounced President Ford yesterday for advocating the biggest peacetime deficits in history.

Byrd, a West Virginia Democrat bluntly called Mr. Ford's economic proposals "surrender to inflation" and Senator James L. Buckley (Rep-N.Y.) said they would "feed" inflation.

Senator Barry Goldwater (Rep-Ariz.) said "tax cuts, in my opinion, are not going to save the economy" and blamed the nation's plight on excessive federal spending.

The twin attacks from the increasingly influential Democratic whip and spokesmen for Republican conservatives could signal trouble for parts of Mr. Ford's program.

But Senator Jacob K. Javits (Rep-N.Y.), a leading Republican liberal, called Mr. Ford's proposed tax cut "a sound economic measure." He added, however, that the tax rebate should be limited to those earning \$23,000 a year or less.

Javits also said he did not think that higher gasoline prices would discourage consumption. He called for some form of rationing or allocation.

More praise came from

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Vice President Nelson A. Rockefeller, who said, "the President showed tremendous courage and strong leadership in presenting forthrightly to the American people and to the world the hard realities. He came forward with a bold, imaginative program that makes it possible to turn the problems into opportunities for the future."

In his reaction to the State of the Union address, Byrd said, "I do not necessarily oppose a tax cut, but revenue reduction should be matched by decreases in spending.

"The enormous deficits the President envisions — and I think they will be even higher than he estimates — are bound to make our double-digit inflation even worse."

"It's ruinous." Buckley said of Mr. Ford's proposal to cut taxes. "It will rack up massive deficits that in turn will lead to borrowing by the government that will sop up capital in the private capital markets and thus feed inflation."

Even before Mr. Ford spoke to a joint session of congress, Representative Al Ullman, (Dem-Ore.), acting chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, announced that the administration package will be split up. Ullman said top priority would go to the tax cut.

Ullman's plan drew immediate criticism from senate Republican Leader Hugh Scott (Pa.) who said Mr.

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Ford wanted the economic and energy proposals considered together and also said Ullman "seems to be more leisurely" than warranted.

Ullman set a target date of March 1 for reporting the tax relief measure. He said the committee then would consider energy measures before moving to major tax reforms.

At that rate, Scott charged, Congress would not complete action on the tax cut until May and the energy measures until September.

Representative John J. McFall (Dem-Calif.), the Democratic whip, said he would seek a 60-to-90-day delay in Mr. Ford's plan to impose import duties on oil so Congress "has a chance to look at it to see what the effect will be."

But like Byrd, some other Democrats were not so cautious in their criticism.

Senator William Proxmire, (Dem-Wis.) described it as a "bad program" that "won't work and will not get the support of Congress."

Senator Edmund Muskie (Dem-Me.) said the relaxation of anti-pollution regulations would "trade public health for fuel economy." Senator Lowell Weicker (Rep-Conn.) agreed.

Referring to Mr. Ford's proposed payment of \$80 to persons whose incomes are too low to even pay taxes, Representative Robert Drinan, (Dem-Mass) recalled that a similar idea put forth by Senator George McGovern in 1972 when he was running for president was the brunt of jokes.

Speaker Carl Albert (Dem-Okla.) said "I don't want to pick the President's speech apart before I understand it, and I certainly don't."

Senate Democratic leader Mike Mansfield (Dem-Mont.) praised Mr. Ford for his candor. "It was a dismal speech but a truthful one," he said.

House Minority leader John J. Rhodes of Arizona praised Mr. Ford's choice of priorities. "Until we attain energy self-sufficiency, put the unemployed back to work and lower the high cost of living, it is foolish to think that we can begin to pursue the many other noble goals which most Americans share."

But his fellow-Arizonana, Democratic Representative Morris K. Udall, the first announced candidate for the 1976 democratic presidential nomination, called Mr. Ford's energy proposals "a double blow to the nation's consumers and producers."

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