

Soak the Poor

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Arthur Hoppe

THE PRESTIGIOUS National Union for Tax Sanity is wildly enthusiastic about Mr. Ford's lean new \$394 billion budget.

"At last a President has openly adopted the wise fiscal policy we have been urging for years," says Executive Director Homer T. Pettibone, "soak the poor."

Pettibone noted that most of the \$28 billion Mr. Ford trimmed from the budget affected only the old, the sick, the young, the hungry, the uneducated, the crippled, the jobless and other undesirable elements of society.

These savings, he said, will allow every decent American to enjoy a tax cut — particularly every decent American who is either a corporation or earns more than \$10,000 a year.

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"EVER SINCE Congress passed the graduated income tax in 1913," Pettibone said, "political demagogues have been demanding that the government soak the rich. It simply hasn't worked.

"For one thing, the rich can afford tax lawyers and accountants who are twice as smart as the congressmen who write the tax laws. Therefore, any attempt to soak the rich merely results in more billions of tax dollars that aren't paid. No wonder we have such a budget deficit.

"Secondly, there are far more poor people than rich people and their numbers are increasing every day. If we are hunting for taxpayers, surely we should hunt where the game is most plentiful. And isn't it more equitable to take a dollar from a million taxpayers rather than a million from one millionaire?

"Thirdly, it would be foolhardy to give more money to the poor in times of recession and unemployment. They would merely fritter it away on food, clothing and shelter. The rich, however, will spend it on cars, swimming pools, croquet sets and the kind of material possessions that create jobs.

"Lastly, do we really wish to penalize success and reward failure? The question has often been asked but never answered: 'What has poverty ever done for America?'

"It is the rich and the rich alone who have made this country what it is today. It is the rich who built our railroads, our conglomerates and our defense arsenal. And if they weren't rich when they started, they were when they finished. It is they who have selflessly done far more than their share to make America the wealthiest nation the world has ever seen.

"But Mr. Ford has been the first President to see clearly that the old, the sick, the young, the hungry, the uneducated, the crippled and the jobless are a drain on our resources and a burden on our economy. Mr. Ford has wisely acted to reduce that burden by what he rightly described as 'a major turning point for the American people.'

"There couldn't be a better description of his new policy to soak the poor."

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PETTIBONE seemed surprised when asked if he didn't feel this new policy was perhaps a bit heartless.

"How could it be heartless?" he asked incredulously. "Everyone knows Mr. Ford is a real nice guy."