MIT Professor Urges Energy Use Surcharge

How to make friends and influence economists.
(But I did try, politely, earlier)

BOSTON (UPI) — A Massachusetts Institute of Technology professor, charging "the nation's economists and advisers are blundering badly in their proposals for handling the energy shortage," has proposed a surcharge on energy with the collected cash to be returned to each adult in the U.S. in uniform payments.

Engineer

David Gordon Wilson, a professor of mechanical engineering at MIT, said Monday, "Rationing energy would involve an enormous government bureaucracy and widespread cheating. Taxing fuel would hurt the poor unduly and slow the economy.

"The nation's economists and policy advisers are blundering badly in their proposals for handling the energy shortage."

Wilson, 45, suggested a surcharge on energy which he said "would help the poor and stimulate the economy."

"Take oil as an example," he said. "If we want to cut consumption by 25 per cent, we need to put on a surcharge of about 50 cents per gallon. This would go on oil for whatever use — private, governmental, plastics production, etc.

"Consumption should then drop from about 18 million to 13.5 million barrels per day. This would come about," Wilson said, "because a great many individual users would have a powerful incentive to find ways to simultaneously saving money and oil.

$100B A Year

"The government would be collecting over $100 billion a year. Shared out among the approximately 132 million people in the U.S. who are 18 years old and over would give each one $65 per month or $783 per year," he said.

Wilson said the cash would be deducted from income taxes or be distributed as refund checks. He said some people might chose to use the energy refunds to pay for their own fuel surcharges and use as much fuel as before.

"But most people and corporate bodies would decide they could manage with less energy, and with less energy -using goods and services. They would decide to spend their additional purchasing power in the areas of the economy—the areas involving lower fuel use."

DAVE,
BEST SUGGESTION I HAVE REVIEWED TO DATE

JOE HANNAH
ENVIRONMENTAL
722-7125