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Necessary sacrifices

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Thanks to Sid L. Mohn and Jeff Manza for helping readers understand that the federal government must claim responsibility for cleaning up the poverty exposed by Hurricane Katrina ("From extreme crisis comes clarity," Perspective, Oct. 2). President Bush and congressional conservatives call for "sacrifice." Not surprisingly these appeals have been directed at ordinary Americans already struggling to feed their families, pay their medical expenses and keep some heat in their homes. The only sacrifice conservatives are willing to make is to further cut social programs that feed the hungry, provide necessary medical care to those without private insurance and offer meager cash assistance to those in crisis.

Congress was already calling for \$35 billion in spending cuts to these types of federal programs to offset prior tax breaks before Katrina ripped the lid off poverty in the Gulf of Mexico. Have conservatives considered sacrificing their tax breaks? Absolutely not.

This looting of our nation's budget leaves hundreds of thousands of destitute Americans without nutrition, health, education and employment assistance that are needed today, and devastates our communities with a staggering federal deficit for years to come.

The \$200 billion in estimated recovery costs from Hurricane Katrina could have been paid for with tax revenue our government will be giving back to our richest neighbors.

It's time to demand some sacrifice from them too.

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