

The New York Times

Briefing

A credit card statement on the U.S. deficit? ■ Gun

lobby takes aim at, of all people, Reagan officials

■ Predicting the Presidential and Congressional races

Credit Card Deficit

Calculating that each American taxpayer, in theory, could be responsible for \$18,569.10 of the debt now on the Federal books, a Republican Congressman from New York is trying to force the Internal Revenue Service to make that more widely known.

Representative Joseph J. DiGuardi, from Westchester, plans to introduce legislation to require the I.R.S. to mail the nation's 102 million taxpayers a "U.S. Taxpayer Credit Card Statement," illustrating the Government's huge deficit.

"Americans know more about their credit card bills than they do about the national debt," said Mr. DiGuardi, an accountant for 22 years with the firm of Arthur Andersen & Co. He timed the announcement to coincide with the I.R.S. mailing of 1040 forms.

His 1987 Taxpayer Credit Card Statement would show that unpaid charges carried from 1986 into 1987 totaled \$17,118.08 a taxpayer. Purchases (or spending by the Government) in 1987 totaled \$2,888.88 a taxpayer for the military, \$1,984.53 for Social Security and \$3,035.07 for other expenses, while finance charges (or interest payments) assessed for unpaid balances would total a hefty \$1,915.50. The total would be \$25,027.46 a taxpayer. Offsetting that would be payments (taxes) in 1987 of only \$8,373.95 a taxpayer, thus increasing



Drawings by Redinger

the balance to be carried into the 1988 tax year to \$18,569.10.

"Until Americans understand what kind of mess this country is in, we won't develop a national consensus to get out of that mess," he said.