

# WASHINGTON REPORT

## THE BUDGET

Misunderstanding about the Federal budget is not unusual, but there is even more basis for it this year when the Congress has cluttered the scene with old work at the same time it takes on the study of future spending plans. Following tradition, the new Federal budget has been submitted to Capitol Hill. Now the process of sifting and evaluating has begun but with a significant difference. Hanging over the consideration of the new budget is

the unfinished business of what to do about the \$19 billion it takes to run the Departments of Labor and Health, Education and Welfare this year. Action is already seven months late on this bill and new spending legislation is pending until the growling subsides in a Congress whose appetite for spending is greater than its will to pay the bill through new taxes.

Hopefully, this last of the appropriations bills will be disposed of soon and we will be able to

turn our attention to the financing of Federal operations in the new fiscal year beginning July 1. A total of \$200.8 billion is proposed. Certainly, this is an enormous amount and it is difficult to believe that it is, in fact, a tight budget. However, various interest groups are sure to be seriously dissatisfied with the reductions it proposes. What is more important is that it is a balanced budget that will, if the predictions prove correct, result in a surplus of \$1.3 billion.

It is important to remember that in this budget we are talking about dollars that are depreciating in value as inflation continues. The government, which so largely determines the financial climate of the country is also the first victim of its own failure to stem inflation since it, too, must pay more for everything it buys. Living within its means requires more discipline than we have seen in Washington in some time, but this is one of the stern requirements for fiscal stability in the country at this time.

This budget is not merely 1,700 pages of fine print that add up to a given sum. It also reflects the relative priorities assigned to hundreds of programs which require the agreement of the President and the Congress in the 14-odd appropriations bills that will be based upon some part of the budget recommendations. The new budget and the President's Economic Report which was submitted with it provides a glimpse of some of the broad changes that are being proposed by the White House.

One of these new directions that has attracted attention is the diminishing proportion of the defense spending. For the next fiscal year, national defense is proposed at \$71.8 billion. This would be approximately 35 percent of our national expenditures and would represent the lowest percentage of our budget since 1950. It is pointed out that the budget also shows an increase in spending in the human resources areas for such programs as Social Security, welfare, health, education and manpower. This increase would rise from approximately 37 percent of our expenditures last year to about 41 percent in the new recommendations.

There are a multitude of discussions and disagreements arising from the clues to the organization of our Federal resources provided by the budget and the economic report. None of these, however, has caused so much discussion as the withdrawal of our troops from Vietnam. Increases and perhaps increases, more reductions than now contemplated may be possible.

Even so, it seems incredible to me that so many seemingly responsible people in Washington are insisting that the nation's defense should be cut drastically to free funds for other programs which may be desirable. Certainly, there is waste and duplication in our defense effort that cannot be condoned and must be rooted out. However, we must avoid the serious risks to the country's security which some of these demands to slash defense efforts would involve. These considerations will almost surely underlie many of the debates over the course the nation is charting this year and we must carefully evaluate each cut to assure that we cut but not lose needed muscle.

## How To File Tax Returns

**Greensboro** — If a person died in 1969 or in 1970 before filing a federal tax return for 1969, the executor, administrator, or surviving wife (or husband) must file a return for the decedent. An executor or administrator may elect to file a joint return with the surviving wife (or husband).

If an executor or administrator has not been appointed, the survivor may file a joint return by indicating in the signature area that she (or he) is the surviving spouse.

The day of death of the decedent should be entered in the address area of the return. If a refund is due, a form 1310 must be attached to the return. These forms are obtainable at any IRS office or by writing to IRS, 320 South Ashe Street, Greensboro, N. C. 27401.

The total number of Southern Bell employees surpassed 50,000 for the first time June 1968.

## Four Poets On C-W Campus

**BOILING SPRINGS** — Four of North Carolina's finest poets will be on the campus of Gardner-Webb College, Thursday night, February 26th, as part of a series of ten poetry readings sponsored by the North Carolina Arts Council on college campuses.

Those taking part in the program to be held at Gardner-Webb include: Guy Owen, North Carolina State; Ronald Bayes, St. Andrews Presbyterian College; James Applewhite, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and Fred Wilkie, Gardner-Webb.

Mr. Wilkie is a native of Charlotte and a graduate of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and University of Iowa.

Through special grants made to the North Carolina Arts Council it has been made possible to get four poets of such caliber on a college campus at the same time. This is the first time in the history of the council that such a program has been attempted.

## County-Wide Fire Reporting Nuisance Calls

Cleveland County has been receiving a large number of nuisance calls on our county wide fire reporting phone—some being just nuisance calls and some being false alarms.

These calls rose to such an extent that in January we requested Southern Bell to cooperate by installing a device on our lines which maintains the connection even though the caller hangs up. Southern Bell identifies the calling telephone line and notifies the Police or Sheriff's Department who in turn investigates the call.

As of this date we have checked several which have turned out to be children or teenagers. No arrests have been made, however, indictments are pending in some cases. It appears we will have to arrest some to help stop such a disgraceful practice," a spokesman said.

## Bloodmobile Returns On Monday

Blood is badly needed. We are behind in our blood collections.

This is the word of Larry Hamrick, chairman of the Kings Mountain Red Cross Blood Program, as he urged citizens to respond by giving a pint of blood to the blood bank.

The regional blood collecting unit returns to Kings Mountain Monday for a one-day visit. Donors will be processed from 10:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. at the National Guard Armory.

Goal of the collection is 100 pints. Blood is badly needed for a local patient who will undergo open heart surgery, added Hamrick.

## Oak Grove VFD Benefit Set

Oak Grove Volunteer Fire Department will sponsor a ham supper Saturday beginning at 7 p.m. in the lunchroom of Bethware school.

Proceeds will benefit the building fund. The Fire Department is in process of building a new fire station via fund-raising projects.

Tickets are \$1.50 for adults and 75 cents for children.

Wayne Self is Chief of the Oak Grove VFD and Howard Hamrick is assistant.

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