

MOUNTING ASTONISHMENT AT THE BAD NEWS

It follows that if the U.S. buildup in South Vietnam proceeds to a much higher level, the supplemental requests will run into many billions before the end of fiscal 1967. And since the Military Establishment will have to procure a lot of additional equipment and supplies and bring in a lot of additional men, defense expenditures will rise billions of dollars above the estimate submitted last January.

So the 1967 budget barely begins to suggest the level of Vietnam war spending that probably lies ahead. The budget is not misleading once its rather sophisticated underlying assumptions are understood; but the assumptions are *not* widely understood, and the administration has not made much of an effort to see that they are. There is likely to be mounting astonishment this year and next as the bad news about the war's costs and the implied message about taxes and inflation sink in. It's a good bet that Americans will still consider the war worth winning. There is no reason for them not to know its cost.