

Chairman PROXMIRE. Was there any feeling at all that if you did make these assumptions explicit and clear, rather if you did make the higher spending clear as time went on that you would not have served the national interest? Was the feeling that Congress would have become so alarmed that we would have cut other programs? Would there have been a feeling that there would have been an adverse reaction in some other way on the national interest if we had been told the truth about this?

Mr. SCHULTZE. No, sir, because in February Secretary McNamara told the committee that this was the assumption that the budget was based on.

Chairman PROXMIRE. Yes, and on March 23 Secretary Fowler flatly denied a statement made by Senator Stennis in which he said the best information we have is that the war in Vietnam is going to cost \$10 billion and that this is our position.

Mr. SCHULTZE. And what happened on that, what was kicking around at the time, if you will, were some estimates that if the war didn't stop, there would be a range of somewhere between \$5 billion and \$15 billion more needed. A lot of people took the middle of that range and came to \$10 billion.

Again, the Secretary of Defense and the President and I fully concurred, did not want to come before the Congress with a set of requests based on a range that large. In August, for example, when Secretary McNamara was testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee, in the 72 hours before that testimony he got three different estimates of the Army strength needed to carry on the war.

Chairman PROXMIRE. Yes; but he wasn't off by a few billion dollars. He was off by 50 percent, \$10 billion.

Mr. SCHULTZE. Yes. I would ask you, Senator, to go back and look at the record of financing in any war. There were seven supplementals for Korea. This is not unusual. The difference here, there is one big difference that I will say is unusual, that in this case the Secretary of Defense, and I think quite properly, refused to come before the Congress with the supplemental before he had his requirements nailed down.

In Korea we didn't, and in Korea we ended up with substantial overfunding.

Chairman PROXMIRE. But you see, this committee has a major responsibility in Congress on economic policy to advise other standing committees and, of course, has a legislative responsibility. And if we can't discharge that responsibility, based on accurate information, we might as well fold up shop.

It would seem to me that I might make a suggestion and I would like to ask you to comment on this. Would it be in your judgment in the national interest for us to secure every 3 months, as long as the Vietnam war is on, estimates of, revised estimates of how much it is going to cost? Then we are in a position to advise on tax increases or advise on other spending cuts or advise on fiscal policy.

If you wait for a full 12 months or if we wait as we did before, when the estimate is made 18 months in advance, this committee it seems to me cannot be the kind of helpful, expert adviser to the Congress that it should be. Can you think about this possibility and discuss it with the President and the Secretary of Defense, because it is