

partisan group to be formed for this purpose will, indeed, as the President hopes "recommend an approach to budgetary presentation which will assist both public and congressional understanding of this vital document." That method would quite logically be a single budget representing the consolidation of administrative and other accounts, presented under acceptable accounting principles, rules of disclosure, etc.

The budget Congress deals with

The "three-budget" complex, which so often confuses rather than clarifies public understanding becomes a four-headed monster when the aspects dealt with by the Congress are segregated.

Congress acts on the legislation that funds the thousands of accounts for the administration's programs. This series of figures represents the spending authority or money "requests" of the President. And these might be called the *appropriations budget*.

It is these figures in the budget document that are translated into the items in appropriations bills. The Congressional Appropriations Committees and their various subcommittees evaluate the President's requests, first in the House of Representatives and then in the Senate. Differences between the amounts passed separately by each House are settled in conference committees. The conferees' bills go back to each House, and final action is an appropriation bill enacted into law. There are about a dozen regular appropriations bills each year.

It is at this stage of the total budgetary process that the opinions of concerned parties can have influence on the ultimate level of government spending. This is when—and why—the advice to "write your Congressman" is so often heard. And Congressmen themselves often plea for mail. Chairman George H. Mahon (D-Tex.) of the House Appropriations Committee has pointedly said, "A letter, I tell you, like a vote, can make a difference—perhaps *the* difference."

It is practically impossible, however, for the ordinary citizen or businessman to get sufficiently acquainted with the technical details to write his Congressman on specifics. This undoubtedly explains a number of things: the reason there is a lack of mail received by Congressmen on how to curb spending, the reluctance of people to express themselves at all when it must be in general terms only, a pervasive public sense of defeatism and frustration on high spending and high taxes, and the subsequent continuing increase of central government power over the economy and the communities of the country.

The size of the budget that Congress acts on has risen from \$102 billion in 1963 to \$144 billion for the new fiscal year 1968. A large part of this increase—\$17.5 billion—represents the rise from June 30, 1966. Table 3 indicates how much of the rise goes to non-defense activities. For example, funds for the Department of Housing and Urban Development are up 62% from 1966—to \$3.2 billion. And this does *not* take into account the additional \$2.4 billion of proceeds from the sale of loans and mortgages which are expected to be applied directly to departmental programs. Money for the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, a third higher than in 1966, is a massive total of \$13.3 billion.

The total of the President's request for 1968 funds is up only 3.2% from the *present* estimate for 1967; but 18% above the original estimate for 1967; and nearly 14% above the funds provided for 1966.

[In billions]

1966	\$126.4
1967 original estimate.....	121.9
1967 current estimate.....	139.6
1968 estimate	143.9

Although Congress acts on the President's requests by organization units, departments, agencies, bureaus—that is, the line item accounts for program activities—the amounts representing the allocation of these funds by government functions is helpful information. These totals illuminate trends of spending by kinds of expenditures, and the relative emphasis given to certain areas of government effort. Table 4 presents this view of government financing.

These figures by function may be more helpful than dollar data by agency for the ordinary citizen or businessman wanting to express his general view to Congress. It is not only relatively easy, but quite understandable, for a businessman to say to his Congressman, for example—

Requests for defense funds are increased only 3.7% over 1967—is it really necessary to increase funds for education by 13%, when the war is our priority job now?