

are reducing the debt by this redefinition. The debt will be what it has been.

Chairman PROXMIRE. Of course.

Mr. STEIN. You just say what we are looking at, what we consider important and relevant, is this part of the debt.

Chairman PROXMIRE. Yes. That is right. And there is no question about it. But what you are actually doing in terms of public relations—after all, there are a lot of people concerned about the national debt and have been talking about it for years, and a lot of Members of Congress are concerned about it. And if you have this increasing gross national product and all of a sudden you are able to reduce the national debt, you put this in juxtaposition, you can alleviate some of the apprehensions perhaps, but you are going to get a lot of complaints in the process of alleviation.

Mr. STEIN. Well, I think this is not as radical a transformation as it sounds. I think anybody in the financial community, for example, who is interested in the size of the Federal debt has for a long time known that what you should be interested in is the size of the debt held outside of the Government and has used these numbers.

Chairman PROXMIRE. Very good.

Now I would like to get into another area that Congressman Rumsfeld got into, but I feel very strongly about it.

We felt in 1966 that we had been had. As a matter of fact, as you recall, Ed Dale, in writing the financial summary of the year for the New York Times, said the big economic goof of the decade had occurred in 1966 because the administration did not disclose to us the enormous increase in the cost of the Vietnam war. And, Mr. Capron, you are the first witness I have heard anywhere—and we have challenged the Secretary of the Treasury and every other responsible Federal official—you are the first one who said they didn't do it for national security reasons. And they have been challenged on this by the Armed Services Committee, too—why didn't they give us the facts? And I think it is very hard to justify not correcting data. Quarterly reports are one thing I think we ought to get, because this is one way of getting corrections. If there is no change, there is no change. But if there is a change involving billions of dollars, we ought to know it. And it seems to me if Congress had been told we were going to spend \$12 billion, or \$14 billion, or \$18 billion or closer to \$20 billion, we would have been in a much better position to have taken steps—maybe they would have been unwise, but at least we would have taken them on the basis of information with regard to other spending programs and with regard to taxes.

Mr. CAPRON. Let me make clear that this was purely a personal speculation on my part when I suggested that there might have been national security reasons which led the administration to delay in publicly revealing the defense buildup. I was speaking hypothetically, and suggesting there might on some occasion between informing the Congress and public and national security.

Chairman PROXMIRE. We were told again and again the number of people that were sent overseas, and they would tell us almost monthly how many were being brought into the Armed Forces, how many people were actually in Vietnam. There was no mystery about it. And, of course, this has been reported so conspicuously and widely, and with the kind of enemy we are opposing they are not in a position to match forces against ours.