

to promote understanding of remaining available options for public choice. Furthermore, the projections could be made on varying assumptions. On the basis of such projections, the Joint Economic Committee might well decide to hold hearings to consider the background of the projections and their implications for the future.

- *It would also be useful if the Bureau of the Budget should itself issue at some future date, as a staff rather than a Presidential report, a special multi-year projection using ranges based on explicit assumptions and again designed to focus attention on available options.* Such a publication can be prepared without the time pressures attendant on preparation of the budget document, and periodic updatings should be planned for similar publication.
- *Meantime, there should be encouragement and extension of the practice, now followed by various Federal agencies, of preparing and publishing multi-year projections of ranges of objectives and accompanying costs.* Indeed, the preparation of such projections by agencies is an integral part of the Planning-Programming-Budgeting system. Although forward estimates may not be possible for all agencies at this time, an increase in the number for which these were available would be very helpful. Firmer Executive Office guidance should be furnished the agencies in their projection work so that their various economic assumptions will be more uniform, and the respective products more comparable. Also, future costs of new legislative proposals should be presented to the Congress in connection with hearings on such legislation as required by law.
- *As soon as is practicable, it would be highly desirable for the President to appoint a study group or commission to examine and report on long-term trends in Federal Government programs and finances.* Such a study should be regarded, not as an academic exercise, but as a guide to various alternatives facing the Nation—and as an aid and stimulus to wise decisions and timely actions. If this type of study in fact proves valuable to decision-makers and to the public, it should be repeated periodically—perhaps every five years.

We are confident that such measures will contribute significantly to greater congressional understanding of the Federal financial picture, better understanding by the public of their Government, and better public policymaking.

Detailed information in the budget Appendix

Although the Commission's primary assignment was to try to unify and improve the set of concepts underlying the budget, its deliberations and discussions with many users of the budget document produced a continual awareness of the mass of detailed financial information presented in the budget document and the *Appendix*. The preparation of this information requires an enormous amount of staff time and effort in the Executive Office