

As the President draws up his seventh military budget, he is under economic and political pressure to cut deep. How far can he safely go without endangering a strategy that the Pentagon believes has worked?

Is the Defense Budget Big Enough?

by Charles J. V. Murphy

President Eisenhower this month will be giving increasing attention to the defense budget of 1961, which will be presented to the Eighty-sixth Congress when it reassembles in January. This is Ike's seventh military budget and the last he will execute in full. It will largely determine how his finances will look when he winds up his eight years in the presidency. And it involves some of the most difficult and important decisions the President has had to make: choices that must be made against the background of the Treasury's current difficulties in the money market; against the mounting demands of the military for new and costlier weapons; and finally, against the strange turn in the cold war introduced by the personal diplomacy of the President and French leaders, to avoid the uncertainties it may inject into the Atlantic alliance.

From the *Fortune* magazine, the arrival of Mr. Khrushchev

economic recovery, such a surplus in 1961 may well be obtainable, but only on condition that the President resists the reckless demands of civilian pressure groups, and meanwhile holds military spending at least at present levels, or even reduces them. But it is just here that the President runs into the countervailing judgment of his military advisers and his collateral obligation to support our allies, not to say his sworn duty to maintain the defenses of the U.S. In holding military expenditures in this fiscal year to \$41 billion, the military have been forced to shut down many a cherished program, such as the Navy's Regulus II missile and the Air Force's mach 3 F-108 interceptor. Moreover, in the face of rising costs, just to maintain present force levels—approximately 2,500,000 men, and to carry major equipment programs forward at a pace the services deem necessary—will require a military budget of \$50 billion in 1961.