

SPECIAL INQUIRY ON INVASION OF PRIVACY

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 23, 1965

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SPECIAL SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVASION OF PRIVACY
OF THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS,
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:15 p.m., in room 2203, Rayburn Office Building, Hon. Cornelius E. Gallagher (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Cornelius E. Gallagher, Benjamin S. Rosenthal, and Frank J. Horton.

Staff members present: Norman G. Cornish, chief of special inquiry; Miles Q. Romney, associate counsel, Government Operations Committee; and Raymond T. Collins, minority professional counsel.

Mr. GALLAGHER. The subcommittee will come to order. I am authorized by my two colleagues, who are tied up on the floor and will join me, to start our hearing in the interest of time, and the fact that we have some distinguished witnesses here today whom we do not wish to detain longer than necessary. The Chair has a brief statement that he would like to make at the outset.

This hearing is a continuation of a special inquiry under the House Committee on Government Operations into the subject of invasion of privacy as it is related to the efficiency and economy of certain Federal investigative and data-gathering activities. Today we will take a look at the 1964 Census of Agriculture, especially that section which requires farmers, under penalty of law, to answer detailed questions about their outside income and provide the same information for all persons living in the farmhouse. Prior agricultural censuses have not asked for such information, although less detailed information on personal income has been sampled in the regular census covering the general population.

The committee's interest in this subject dates back several months. Last year, it received a complaint from a Pennsylvania farmer who objected to a new section of the farm census questionnaire because it sought information on the outside income of everyone living in the same house as the farm operator. The farmer who wrote the subcommittee said he thought questions about farm income were proper, but details about his outside income constituted an invasion of privacy in his view.

Section 11 of the 1964 Census of Agriculture, which was sent to a 20-percent sample of all farm operators plus operators of all farms of 1,000 acres or more, asked for the following information regarding each person 10 years of age or older living in the farmhouse:

1. The total wages or salary, commissions, and tips from all jobs off the farm before taxes and deductions.
2. Total income from any nonfarm business or professional practice after business expenses.