

Mr. GALLAGHER. Gentlemen, under the rules of the committee I would ask you to be sworn. Raise your right hand. Do you solemnly swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth so help you God?

Mr. ECKLER. I do.

Mr. RANDALL. I do.

Mr. TAEUBER. I do.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Thank you. Please be seated. The Chair welcomes you gentlemen. We appreciate the cooperation we have received from your Departments. Please proceed.

TESTIMONY OF A. ROSS ECKLER, ACTING DIRECTOR, BUREAU OF THE CENSUS, DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE; ACCOMPANIED BY C. KYLE RANDALL, CHIEF, FARM INCOME BRANCH, ECONOMIC RESEARCH SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE; AND CONRAD TAEUBER, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

Mr. ECKLER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I should also like to introduce my colleague, Dr. Conrad Taeuber, who is our Assistant Director for demographic fields.

Mr. GALLAGHER. You are welcome, Doctor.

Mr. ECKLER. We appreciate the very balanced statement with which you started the presentation, Mr. Chairman, and with your permission we will read our own statement prepared in response to your inquiry.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Please proceed.

Mr. ECKLER. We welcome the opportunity to appear before this subcommittee and to discuss with you some of the questions which have been raised concerning the census of agriculture. The Bureau of the Census is continually mindful of the questions that may be raised concerning its efforts to provide information that is needed by Government, business, and all other agencies and persons concerned with the functioning of the American economy.

Information concerning agriculture has been collected since 1840. The growing need for such information led to the establishment of a separate census of agriculture, and, beginning with 1920, Congress put this census on a 5-year basis. With the rapid changes that are taking place in American agriculture, there have been many new demands for information for the census. The growing concern with farm incomes and the welfare of farm people has led to increasing need for information relating to the incomes of farm families. Although there has been a growing degree of commercialization and specialization in agriculture, with production increasingly concentrated in relatively large units, there has also been a trend toward combining living on a farm with work off the farm. Sometimes nonfarm work is done by the operator himself, sometimes by other members of the family, who may bring in more cash than is received from the sale of farm products. In a recent report on the expanding and the contracting sectors of American agriculture, the Department of Agriculture states:

The minimum size of farm necessary for economic survival would be considerably larger than it now is if it were not for an increasing reliance of farm operators on incomes from nonfarm sources. In 1959, nonfarm income accounted for about 20 percent of the total income of farm operators in the expanding sector, and nearly 60 percent of that of operators in the contracting sector.