

problems of course, is that sometimes the enumerators themselves are neighbors of the people they interview. I realize the law supposedly protects the confidentiality of the information obtained, but I wonder if this is actually the case.

Do you think there is any possibility of some of this information being bandied about in the community?

Mr. ECKLER. Mr. Chairman, if I might comment on that, whenever we get any evidence that an enumerator has not conformed to the law in this, we have an investigation made, and we aim to have action taken.

I think that there are sometimes complaints made that may represent just mischievous gossip and so on. I personally doubt if there is very much of this misuse, but there is the opportunity for it.

Mr. GALLAGHER. What if a farmer should fear this type of thing, or an individual? What steps are taken to protect his privacy?

Mr. ECKLER. If he fears this?

He is supposed to be able to report directly to the crew leader who is the supervisor over the enumerator, or to report directly to the district office under which the crew leaders and enumerators are working.

Now in the future, as we indicated, we have hopes that we may come closer to having this on a mail basis, so that the farmers receive the forms and can mail them directly to the district office and not have them go through an enumerator at all. That would be the means that would be helpful.

Mr. GALLAGHER. The special inquiry would welcome any advancement along this line.

Mr. ECKLER. I think it is an improvement from the point of view that you are expressing interest in, and also from the point of view of efficiency, so it is a direction in which we want to move.

The listing, however, of farm families is a somewhat more difficult matter than the listing of city families, because we do not have equally good means of identifying addresses.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Of course there are many problems there.

Would it be possible—what about a married son of a farmer living in a farmhouse who might not wish to share all of his financial information with his father, or a daughter-in-law who might have built up her standing a little more than she might be entitled to?

For instance, the question on education, or how much formal education she may have had or may not have had. Do these people have an option to protect their privacy in any way?

Mr. ECKLER. I think this same effort that you encouraged us in with regard to the nonrelated people could be extended to the related people, so that in any case where there is any problem, we could have it made clear that separate reports could be made and furnished directly to the district office.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Could we shift the burden a little bit, and advise them affirmatively of this, rather than wait until a problem should arise, and then allow them to take this course?

Could this be made part of the instruction?

Mr. ECKLER. Part of the instructions?

Yes; it could be made part of the general publicity about the census.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Yes?

Mr. ECKLER. Yes; I think that could be done.