

Mr. ROMNEY. Dr. Eckler, I wonder if it would be possible, when you have some fairly definite results, that you can draw conclusions from, if you could supply us with this information, supply the special inquiry with this information?

Mr. ECKLER. We will be very happy to do so, Mr. Romney.

Mr. CORNISH. Mr. Director, you state that the outside income is broken down into categories in order to arrive at a more accurate figure.

Mr. RANDALL. I stated that.

Mr. CORNISH. You indicated it somewhere.

Mr. ECKLER. Yes; I think it is implied also in my statement.

Mr. CORNISH. Both of you did, actually?

Mr. ECKLER. Yes.

Mr. CORNISH. I wonder when the enumerator goes to the farm, could he not ask the farmer if his total outside income figure included all of the items listed in the categories; would this not give you a similar accuracy without a written breakdown on the form itself?

Mr. RANDALL. There are really two problems here as far as I am concerned.

One is the figure for the year of the census itself, and I think Mr. Eckler's questions about details related to that question.

The other question as far as I am concerned, or as far as the Department is concerned, is that we do not have census information or sample information for every year. We do need to make an estimate for every year.

And so, since the components do not necessarily change from one year to the next in the same way, in our opinion at least we can make a better estimate for the years for which we do not have a census figure, if we have the components so that we can take wages and salaries, for example, and estimate the changes in that component, and take income from off-farm business and estimate the changes in that component, and do it with each of these separate components and add them together which gives us a better estimate for the years in between censuses than we could if we just had a global total and were forced to somehow or other estimate how this total changed from one year to the next. This is the importance of the separate components from our point of view.

Mr. ECKLER. I think I would add that, in addition to Mr. Randall's testimony regarding the need for the parts, that the total would also be more accurately obtained if we got the parts and put them together, rather than to do this checklist approach.

I think we cannot be sure that the enumerators will do that very consistently or the person responding will respond very consistently. He will just say yes. We get more complete reports by going through the parts.

Mr. CORNISH. Under the present system, the farm operator indeed provides this information for other people. I wonder if it would not be more accurate, which is one of your objectives as you have just said, if the financial information was gained from the individuals rather than someone else.

Mr. ECKLER. I think it would be.

Mr. CORNISH. And also before you were talking about the fact that there seemed to be very few objections to the types of questions asked on such questionnaires as the farm census. I think this was explicitly pointed to in the sample which was mentioned earlier.