

mation is released. Title 18, United States Code, section 1905 provides for penalties (fine or imprisonment, or both, and removal from office) for Federal employees who disclose confidential statistical data. These legal requirements can be reinforced by providing that all information in the statistical data center—under whatever conditions collected—will not be released by the center in such a way as to disclose information furnished by individual persons or businesses.

A statistical data center, as we conceive of it, is a way to improve storage of and access to information for statistical uses. It would not have an interest in building up dossiers on individuals because statistical interests do not center on individual cases. Use of data in the files of the center for other than statistical purposes would be prohibited.

I think, Mr. Chairman, even a reading of the report we have made available to the committee would indicate that some comments about them have been out of context.

In conclusion, let me note that nothing I have said should be interpreted to mean that the privacy of individuals does not require continuing and careful attention not only with respect to information now in the possession of Government, but also with respect to the collection of new or additional information.

I have made my prepared remarks brief. I hope they covered the main points. If there are questions, I shall try to answer them to the best of my ability.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Thank you very much, Mr. Bowman.

I agree that perhaps some of the remarks have been a bit out of context, but I would hope that you would agree that it would not be beyond the concern of all of those of us who have some share of responsibility to ascertain whether or not there could be a breach of confidentiality of the names of millions of Americans whose dossiers would be in a data center. The issue is not whether or not you could legally release them. The issue, to my mind, is whether or not this data will be stored with names so people would have access to this information in a central data bank.

I am sure no one would breach a law to release such information, but the fact that it is in a centralized institution where human beings will have access to it is the chief concern.

If you would assure this body today that the identification of no individual would be in your statistical bank, I think we would be very happy to say "Go about your business, and you have met your requirements or you have met at least the elements of our concern."

Mr. BOWMAN. May I comment on your statement, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. GALLAGHER. Yes.

Mr. BOWMAN. I would not want to say that within the data center, within the statistical data center that I am talking about, there would be no identification of information with an individual, just as the Census Bureau can now identify information about a particular business firm and about a particular individual. You would not be able to use this information meaningfully unless this kind of identification were maintained, particularly by the agency which collects the information or the agency which wants to assemble it for analytical purposes.

But I can definitely assure you, Mr. Chairman, that in a data center the availability of information to the staff of the center would probably be much less than the availability of the information to the staff