

I would say that so far as there being in a statistical data center the information which we now have, in the same general forms as we now have it in separate centers, I see no reason why that information in that center cannot be protected in the same way as it is being protected in the 20 or 25 centers in which we now have it.

Mr. GALLAGHER. You don't see a shade of difference in having that information protected by the law, but subject to a tampering with the law in 25 sections and putting all of this into one area where the same weaknesses could exist?

Mr. BOWMAN. If I see a difference, I see an answer in the centralization.

Mr. GALLAGHER. You don't see the disadvantages to the individual's problem, or the confidentiality aspects? You see no difference in having a centrally located center of information and having it presently exist in 20 or 25 different areas?

The risk has been reduced to acquire information.

Mr. BOWMAN. I don't believe putting it in various pools has significantly reduced the risk, no.

Mr. GALLAGHER. If there is a breakdown in the security of one agency, there is not necessarily a breakdown in the other agencies, but if there is a breakdown in the central data bank, it seems to me we now have a problem.

Mr. BOWMAN. There is, of course, the problem of whether you have all your eggs in one basket or in different baskets, but I would say a well regulated data—

Mr. GALLAGHER. Right there, the egg in the basket. Supposing someone picks up the one basket with all the eggs?

Mr. BOWMAN. You get them all broken. On the other hand, suppose you are very careful about handling the big basket with all the eggs in it and very careless about handling the—

Mr. GALLAGHER. You have not assured me that we have an egg carrier or an egg transmission system fully capable of doing this.

Mr. BOWMAN. Not a transmission system, but I hope I have assured you, Mr. Chairman, that if you can develop a practice of confidentiality as we have in the statistical program, if you can develop that practice and the whole business community and everybody else has confidence in it, that we could develop an agency—maybe part of one of these agencies—that would have all of the data of the various statistical agencies for general use, for which this same reputation would be present.

I hope I have assured you of that. Maybe I haven't.

Mr. GALLAGHER. You have assured me, Mr. Bowman, of your very good intentions. I am not assured that those good intentions can be carried out. That is what worries us. That is what worried us at the very beginning.

May I ask you just one question? Do you now have an inventory of statistical information that is centrally available?

Mr. BOWMAN. An inventory of all statistical information?

Mr. GALLAGHER. That all of the agencies now have.

Mr. BOWMAN. No.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Wouldn't it be cheaper or more efficient if you had an inventory of what data is available in the various agencies now and after a period of a year or two, add up how many requests have