

Mr. BOWMAN. Yes. I think we have a special role. It is not, however, unknown in business. In other words, banks have a recognition of the privileged character of your deposits and other information they may have about you. Doctors have it. Lawyers have it.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. On the contrary, in terms of credit information, I think banks and commercial institutions exchange information quite freely and I think they consider that is one of their commercial assets.

In your statement, Mr. Bowman, you list the members of the task force. They are all very distinguished men. However, I do not note that any of them have made their special mark historically in areas of constitutional responsibilities or awareness of invasions of privacy.

In other words, they are all the statistical type, would you say that?

Mr. BOWMAN. Yes.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. In other words, what bothers me is that—I think the same thing applies to all the members of the committee—there is a group within Government who are statistically oriented and are desirous of following the lead of private industry and taking advantage of computerized facilities who are pushing ahead rather vigorously and yet have taken no overt step either to acknowledge to themselves, to the Congress or to the public, that they have a special responsibility in the field of invasion of privacy.

Mr. BOWMAN. But I haven't done that, have I?

Mr. ROSENTHAL. Until today, what have you done overtly to indicate that you considered this a special responsibility?

Mr. BOWMAN. I did illustrate in my testimony the office and the Bureau of the Budget were very active. The *St. Regis* case; we were active through the lower courts and up to the Supreme Court. We were active in the position that the Solicitor General took before the Supreme Court, which was to argue against the right of the Federal Trade Commission to get the copy of the return from the *St. Regis* Co. The Supreme Court decided elsewhere.

We were active also in helping to sponsor the legislation that eventually corrected this.

All I can say is that the activities of the Bureau of the Budget, my office in particular, have been continuously in the direction of maintaining the confidentiality of statistical information, against its being transferred to agencies that would use it largely for purposes of prosecution or actions against individuals. So the Federal Trade Commission knows that if they came to us with the idea of getting census information that we would strongly support the Census Bureau. If they came to us with the idea of getting information from another statistical agency, we strongly support the nontransfer of that information which identified any individual.

Now, if you say in the writing of these various reports in this area, were we lax in not paying more attention to the writeup of this particular problem, if you want me to plead guilty to that I will plead guilty. Yes, we probably should have made some more mention.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. I am not worried about the writeup. That is a trivial thing as far as I am concerned. I am worried about a commitment—as to the nature of your commitment. I have a sneaking suspicion your commitment lies in the area of getting real sophisticated automated technology into the Federal Government so that you can keep abreast of what the large corporations are doing.