

Mr. HORTON. That is the point.

Mr. BOWMAN. I am perfectly amenable to this type of suggestion.

Mr. HORTON. What goes into that data bank will be very important. I do not think your study or your committee or your task force has been doing much in that connection. You will have a hard time limiting it, because you will be seeking this information from agencies that have it. It will be a lot more efficient for you to get this information from the Census Bureau, and there are some personal questions that are asked by the Census Bureau. There will be a request sometime soon to get that information.

The point I am making is that you have to guard against that.

One other point I want to make is this: Recently the Congress enacted a Freedom of Information Act. Have you looked at that in connection with the implications which might be involved?

Mr. BOWMAN. Yes, I have. In fact, I looked at it very carefully in connection with my business associates, and have been reasonably well convinced that it does not interfere with the confidentiality practices so far as the statistical program is concerned. It does have an exemption in it which indicates that where information has been collected when confidentiality is pledged, it is protected against making the information available.

Mr. HORTON. There is another point I want to make. In your statement you made reference to the fact that there is an exchange of information on Federal tax data to the Census Bureau which is relieving about 1 million small businessmen. I serve on the Small Business Committee of the House, and I am very much concerned about the problems of the small businessman.

One of the complaints that they have is the complaint about so much paperwork. I can assure you from my experience and my personal contact with a lot of these small businessmen, they do not know that this information is being shared. I think this is a problem of communication to the individual that this information is being used for one purpose or another purpose.

In other words, when he submits income tax information, he ought to know that this information is going to be made available to the Census Bureau or this information is going to be made available to the central data bank, and that fact ought to be on the form that he fills out. It is not on the form now, so far as I know. He does not know this. So, when he furnishes this information, one of the problems that I think we are concerned about is how does he get a chance to know what is in that bank so he can contest it if he wishes, or so his rights, whatever they might happen to be, can be represented.

I do not think this point has been considered. Perhaps you might give some consideration to this before you come back with a proposal to form an octopus that is going to gather all this information so all you have to do is push a key and find out all you want about a particular individual, even if you have all these safeguards that you have proposed.

Mr. BOWMAN. I think it is true a great many people do not know, and the only thing I can say is that the transfer of information from the Internal Revenue to the Census Bureau is under provisions of law as it exists.

Mr. HORTON. The law says we are all presumed to know what the law is, but the people do not know what the law is. I have one right