

RECOMMENDATIONS

Accordingly, it is recommended that a National Data Service Center be established with the capability to:

- (1) Manage archival records;
 - (2) Develop referral and reference services;
 - (3) Provide explicit facilitating services for users including:
 - (a) File rearrangement, cost tabulation and extended output options;
 - (b) Tape translation and file modification;
 - (c) Record matching;
 - (d) Disclosure bypassing; and
 - (e) Standard statistical routines.
 - (4) Develop computer hardware and software systems essential to above;
 - (5) Provide staff support to work in conjunction with the Bureau of the Budget to develop and establish and monitor standards essential to the system capability; and
 - (6) Establish a research capability directed to an analytical evaluation of user requirements for the purpose of designing and developing the system components essential to perform these services.
- The National Data Service Center would perform these services for:
- (1) Archival records under direct management control of the Center;
 - (2) The current and accumulated records of administrative and regulatory agencies;
 - (3) As a system resource to be used in connection with the current records of any agency not in a position to meet the needs independently.

RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

Figures are offered that represent estimates of program costs for several components of these functions but it is pointed out that there are joint-product, joint-cost relationships between these service activities that make these estimates questionable as a guide to overall program costs. A judgment is made that the range of services and program adjustments required (including resources for modifying agency programs to be consistent with system requirements) would call for expenditure of between \$1 and \$2 million annually during the first year or two and rising to the neighborhood of \$10 million annually over a period of 5-10 years. A serious problem will be the assembly of the kind of intellectual resources required.

ISSUES OF ORGANIZATION

All of this really raises the issue of what kind of Federal statistical system we want to develop in the next generation, and encompasses a number of issues of organization and mission that will need to be addressed in a broad context. Further progress on the whole effort must depend on some understanding of the issues at the top policy level and some preliminary policy decisions to guide the direction of further effort.

PRIORITIES

If an effort is made to undertake this kind of system development there are certain immediate requirements that need to be fulfilled.

- (a) A continuous focus of leadership needs to be established.
- (b) This focus needs to be provided with staff support providing the kind of research-analytic capacity that can evaluate use requirements as a guide to specifying program options and reduce these options to specifications, costs and a logical order of time phasing.

- (c) Begin under existing authority to:

- (1) Develop the standards for archives and compatible statistical building blocks, and
- (2) Begin work on the 9,000 tape nucleus archive identified in appendix B.

The Bureau of the Budget should give serious consideration to requesting funds to support these efforts in the fiscal 1967 budget.

INTRODUCTION

The assignment leading to this report originated 6 months ago in the form of a request to seek out and identify ways of implementing the proposal for a National Data Center presented by the Subcommittee on the Preservation and Use of Economic Data of the Social Science Research Council (the Ruggles