

Mr. RUGGLES. I would feel that the major difficulty is one of technical know-how. If you are going to engage in an operation of this sort you want to bring to bear on it the best talent that is already available within the Government. Merely to use an existing Government organization is not as important as it is to get the best talent available.

Therefore, I would feel that you have to use some part of the existing statistical system to essentially support the new effort. This would be my inclination.

Representative BOLLING. If I understand correctly, the pool of adequate talent is relatively limited, is that correct, both within and without the Government? Is this not a field in which there is a shortage of real experts?

Mr. RUGGLES. That is true, but it is quite possible that by creating this organization you would economize on the amount of talent needed.

In other words, as it now is constructed, the Federal statistical system is large, sprawling, and highly decentralized. To the extent that a reorganization would introduce more efficiency, the existing resources could be better utilized.

Representative BOLLING. I do not want to pursue this point too far, but I am very much interested in a result, not only of the hearing, but I happen to feel that this kind of thing is perhaps a little overdue. What would be wrong with putting whatever you are going to call it, the servicing center, under the Bureau of the Budget which already has an interagency coordinating authority in this area?

Mr. DUNN. Are you addressing it to me?

Representative BOLLING. To each of you—despite your denials of any competence in the field of organization. I think this is a problem that was one of those difficult ones where it is political and bureaucratic, and it is organizational, but unless it is made very wisely in terms of the techniques involved it could be a disastrous political and organizational decision. I apologize for pursuing it.

Mr. DUNN. My impression is that the Bureau of the Budget would present some special difficulties because in effect it would be giving the Bureau a very substantial operating function when it is not really organized to form operating functions and doesn't really conceptualize its mission in this way. As a matter of fact, I think that some of the difficulties which have beset the Office of Statistics and Standards over the years in performing its functions is because it has had a fairly substantial operating function in a nonoperating agency.

Mr. RUGGLES. I think I would concur in this, and I might add one comment. I think the reasoning behind this is quite sound in that it would be useful to have such an interagency in the Executive Office of the President, and the Bureau of the Budget is in the Executive Office. However, I think that to attach the National Data Center to the Bureau of the Budget would so distort the Bureau of the Budget in terms of operational activity that it would be inappropriate. But there are other agencies in the Executive Office. It might be useful to take the Office of Statistical Standards out of the Bureau of the Budget, move it into a National Data Center, together with some parts of the present Federal statistical system that have both the computer capability and the operational data handling capability. The merger of those elements might be very useful.

Representative BOLLING. Thank you, gentlemen. My time is up.