

my impression is that those users who tend to specialize in particular fields have good communications with the agencies involved and that is a two-way street, in that the agencies come to the users to discuss possible changes in the nature of the data as well as the users expressing their own concern about difficulties.

As a matter of fact, I think that something that is emerging now in the use of statistics is simply that we are getting sufficiently sophisticated so that we are changing the nature of the data, improving them, I think, in almost every instance, but improving—changing them sufficiently frequently so that it is a little awkward to maintain a series over time. I don't want to be placed in the position here of arguing against improvements, but I wish that they would come along perhaps a little less frequently than they do.

In respect to an earlier question, in fact, that first one that you asked, I think one further point should be made.

You asked, if I understood you correctly, how improved communications might occur between the Federal agencies providing data and the users of the data and I think one potential answer to that question is through the medium of a national data center. We are not in a position in the Federal Statistics Users' Conference to take a specific position on a data center at this time. But certainly one of the functions which it can provide is as a medium or a channel by which users could be placed in connection with, in contact with the producers of statistics.

Mr. FRIEDMAN. I just want to comment, Mr. Chairman, in connection with the question of the relationship of users to the agencies and how this is sometimes informal—without mentioning agencies—a year or so ago a problem arose in connection with a statistical program and we got in touch with the agency and explored it with them. We had very little contact with them before, but in the process of exploring it, the suggestion was made that it would be a pretty good idea for the agency to have an advisory committee on the statistical program and the person with whom we were talking said it was a wonderful idea, the point being that in many cases these things just aren't thought of until the problem arises directly.

Chairman TALMADGE. Yes, sir.

Mr. AIKEN. I can give another recent example. One of the agencies came to me and said that they had assembled a great deal of statistical data from various sources and consolidated them in a group of tables for their own internal use and they had a feeling that this might be valuable to those outside of the Government if they were put in published form. They asked me if I could give them a list of our members. They didn't want to solicit all of them, but would contact a selected number and tell them what they had in mind in order to find out if it would be valuable to them to put this out in published form. They came to us and I think the communications were good. And we were glad to be able to participate in that regard.

Chairman TALMADGE. What are some of the major uses of Government statistics on the part of business firms and labor organizations?

Mr. MOOR. Mr. Chairman, there is one very simple and very direct answer to that which I discovered very quickly after I got into business.

I would say the great overwhelming use, at least by users of Federal statistics of all sorts, is for the purpose of forecasting. The economist, at least as identified in business, is one who is considered to know some-