

lent reports that discuss major aspects of it. However, it is of such magnitude, and the Kaysen report, in particular, involves such a sweeping reorganization of all the statistical work of the Government in connection with the establishment of such a center that I feel it has not been adequately studied. It has not been adequately studied, I think, from the standpoint of defining rather precisely what types of information would be consolidated in such a center. We could readily imagine a collection of statistical data so huge that Congress would be quite unwilling to pay the cost of collecting it, let alone processing it, so huge that there would not be space enough, even for the reels of tape and the personnel engaged in processing and providing to users the results of such data.

On the other hand, if the scope of the activity of the data center is very, very small, then some of the dreams about its great contribution to the needs of users would fall by the wayside. I do not find an adequate statement of the extent to which the center would throw added burdens on the existing statistical agencies and require increases in their budgets.

If the user, for example, were to go to the national data center and ask for data that were not already available in precisely the form that he wishes, within the consolidated files, then the national data center would, through its personnel, go to a statistical agency or several and make requests for additional data.

This would then involve activity on the part of the staff of such statistical agencies to get the data available and even before they were made available, to find out what problems might be involved in making them comparable and matching them to the needs of the users.

I think in instance after instance this would develop the fact that the agencies did not have the data that was needed, and that new inquiries would have to be addressed to business firms or to individuals to obtain the data that is needed.

Chairman TALMADGE. It would make more work in addition to what has already gone on.

Mr. STEPHAN. Yes, sir. I would like to approach this much more realistically in terms of the total expansion and development of statistical work in the Government that would be involved if there is a great increase in provision of data for users of statistics to find out the extent to which users of statistics would finance these additional activities. Under some arrangement with statistical agencies the user now pays the additional cost of getting the special tabulations he requires. He does not pay the original cost of getting the data since that has already been provided by congressional appropriations. That is why I speak of a systems analysis and cost benefit study of this problem. Clearly there is an intermediate point at which we will get thoroughly desirable benefits from such a centralizing of important statistical data, but beyond which it would be unwise to carry the development at this stage of the demonstration. Ten years from now, 50 years from now the situation may be quite different.

Professor Kaysen's plan is in some ways a blueprint for long-range development that could well guide a series of future steps toward improving the statistical system in the Federal Government.

Chairman TALMADGE. Do you think that we might start off by having a pilot program, a pilot project in trying to find an optimum point where it might work and might not?