

They do do much of this in terms of what I call the macrodata but even there we have a big consumer right within the Federal Government and I think what I would like to do is to serve them economically with the overall body of Federal data and I think we would save money. I do not claim—you know, I do not claim any large figures like you cited but I think we would do a better job at a less cost if we could have the kind of data center I tried to describe to you a little earlier.

Representative RUMSFELD. Returning to the costs, then, for a minute, in our patent programs we have tried to the extent possible, to have them paid by the user, I am told. In the public records law I mentioned previously there is a provision that will permit, and in fact in some cases require, that users of records pay for the cost of producing that record. So user fees are not unknown.

This bill I was referring to, the standard reference data bill, the Federal Government will be paying millions of dollars and will not be receiving from users but a fraction of the cost of accumulating that information.

What is your view on this data center? Do you have in mind that it should be a break-even operation for the Government and that to the extent that people want to purchase this information, that they will in fact pay and pay something approximating the cost, not a profit, maybe, to the Government, but at least the full cost of accumulating it?

Mr. BOWMAN. This is a point I should have mentioned. We would think of the data center serving its users, charging what I would call as an economist marginal cost of the operation. In other words, the direct cost associated with servicing a customer. We would not think of them as being charged an overhead which went right straight back to the original collection of the data. We think that is a function that the Federal Government, for a wide variety of reasons, is making available to the public generally. But any special costs associated with special tabulations, with the development of special tapes, with special searches, we would think of as being paid for by the user.

Now, we would have—there are difficult problems here. In other words, suppose you as a professor at Harvard University come in with a special tabulation and we tell you it will cost you \$10,000. You probably got a grant and you say, "OK, I will pay the \$10,000." Suppose later on somebody else comes along and wants the same kind of a tabulation. Do we charge him \$10,000, too, when maybe it only costs a hundred dollars to run the same tape that we had prepared for you originally?

So, a data center will have to try to work out whether or not there are some packages in which the costs can be distributed.

Now, remember, my interest is making information as available as possible because in my opinion, this is what promotes the growth of the American economy. So, I am not trying to hide it once we have it. But, I do agree there is no reason why the special user should not pay all the costs of the special use and the only thing I am saying is there are some special problems even in fixing the special costs.

Representative RUMSFELD. Thank you. I will stop there, Mr. Chairman.

Representative BOLLING. Mr. Bowman, I discovered a long, long time ago when I was chairman of this subcommittee for a number of