

family data for about 15,000 families. Many Government agencies wanted the use of these data, many private agencies also. We produced tapes in the Bureau of Labor Statistics which we made available for a price to these other agencies. What we found is that we needed to supply also both staff and machine time in order to answer the questions that inevitably arose from the users trying to use data with which they were not directly familiar.

So, I would emphasize to your committee that the setting up of a National Data Center should include the supplying of either funds or staff to the contributing agencies who will be supplying their data so that the users can be properly serviced by the Center.

My third topic relates to the administration of statistics. In my long experience in trying to get funds for statistics in the Federal Government, I have run up against three perennial problems.

No. 1 is the maintenance of standards in the continuing series, such as the Consumer Price Index, the employment statistics, and many others. Over a period of time, months, and years, a series will inevitably decay, accumulate weaknesses as it goes along, unless it is continually reviewed, tested, and improved. One of the difficulties is that this deterioration may proceed for some time until it breaks out in the form of public criticism. Then, indeed, we get action, but we are picking up the pieces from what might have been prevented.

You may recall that 5 years ago there was a vigorous attack on the unemployment statistics. Your Joint Economic Committee promptly held hearings, at which the Bureau of Labor Statistics was able to answer these criticisms in public. President Kennedy appointed a Committee to Appraise Employment and Unemployment Statistics. The report of this Committee was mentioned by Mr. Bowman yesterday. Congress acted upon the Committee's recommendations, at least to the extent of providing the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Census with a special test sample, so that we could test alternative methods of getting employment and unemployment statistics. And now, the new revised employment and unemployment statistics of 1967 are the fruit of that activity.

However, my main point is that the statisticians in the Federal Service can document for your committee their weaknesses and limitations and their growing difficulties. I hope that you will continue to provide a forum in this committee for the statisticians to express their judgments on this point, so that positive action can be taken before something breaks open in public criticism.

That concerns the maintenance of standards. My second point under the administration of statistics concerns analysis and interpretation. And here I believe strongly that, in the first instance, adequate funds for analysis and interpretation should be in the hands of the producing agency itself. They must have the necessary analytical staff, so that they can deal with the problem of public presentation and public understanding of the figures and, therefore, be able to take care of developing criticism on the outside which arises from misunderstanding. This does not mean shutting out other agencies in the Government or outside the Government from doing further analytical work on any continuing series. I simply stress the importance of getting adequate funds for the producing agency itself. I know from experience the way in which operating priorities can push aside these analytical jobs. We had to get our Consumer Price Index on time. That is so important that