

206 COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT STATISTICAL PROGRAMS

Accordingly, I suggest that your Subcommittee consider proposing to Congress a comprehensive survey of:

1. Economic Statistical Resources and Services.
2. Description of actual uses and actual application
3. Description of users
4. Statistical needs
5. Description of potential users and potential applications among non-users

A survey of this kind would in part follow through the requests received by various agencies to determine the use to which the statistics were applied and possibly their contribution to a specific action. In order to sample properly the various services, institutions, population groups and resources I recommend that Census Bureau statisticians be consulted in view of their proficiency in sampling.

National Data Center

The need for a central file for statistical data is obvious to me for it would make available in relatively convenient form the statistical resources of the nation and minimize, if not eliminate, any duplication that may exist. A National Data Center would perhaps be best as a coordinating body rather than a controlling one. The individual agencies would continue to collect, analyze and control their data while filing with the National Data Center.

The Library of Congress would seem the most appropriate governmental body for maintaining the Central Computer file for data.

Individual Confidence

Much of the data collected for government and other institutions are dependent upon the voluntary cooperation of individuals and the organizations they represent. Legal safeguards should be provided to insure cooperation for surveys to be used for statistical purposes. The Bureau of Deceptive Practices of The Federal Trade Commission can provide you with further background information on the potential dangers when these confidences are violated.

With the increased electronic data processing and growing sophistication in statistical techniques applied to government, military, business, education and welfare and agriculture our needs are becoming such that the costs of conventional collection and analysis of data may far exceed our ability to meet them. For this reason and the pressing problems in every sector of the nation, dependent upon impartial data, in need of solution I cannot stress enough the importance of your committee and how appreciative many of us are of your efforts.

Very truly yours,

ARTHUR KOPONEN.