

statistical data center. He went on to estimate that in the following 3 years, the costs would be about \$5 million per year, exclusive of computer hardware costs.

Although the center would incorporate several functions designed to further integration, some of these possibilities were mentioned as separate possibilities.

A master list of firms and establishments was proposed to aid in the design and operation of sampling and in the classification of data, for example by area and industry. Under the present situation, the Standard Industrial Classification System does not guarantee that a particular firm or establishment will be classified in the same industry by each of the different agencies, particularly in cases where the firm has several establishments, one or more of which produce products in different industries.

Several witnesses also testified as to the need for an index describing the statistical data collected by the Federal Government. The index would indicate such characteristics as where the data are stored, their accessibility, and sampling characteristics.⁶

The subcommittee probed for suggestions on ways that the Federal Government could encourage cooperation among statistical programs at the Federal, State, and local levels of government. Numerous witnesses stressed the need for Federal aids to promote an integrated network of statistics for the United States. Suggestion was made that operating programs involving two or more levels of government should have provisions to insure comparable and meaningful statistics.

WOULD FURTHER INTEGRATION AND PARTICULARLY A NATIONAL DATA CENTER PRESENT A THREAT TO PERSONAL PRIVACY?

Further integration can and should be attained without sacrificing principles of personal privacy. Modern technological capabilities for data association, storage, and retrieval, like most technological changes, present new possibilities for use or misuse. The rational approach to these new capabilities is not fear to act, but rather action to control technology for man's use.⁷

From the standpoint of the national data center as it relates to the issue of personal privacy, relevant considerations include (1) the determination of what information might go into the center, and (2) the design of adequate safeguards to prevent misuse of information.

In regard to the first point, it should be pointed out that the proposed national data center differs fundamentally in design and purpose from central files designed to hold information about individual people or individual firms. The purpose of the data center under discussion is to furnish information primarily about the "public face" of groups of people, households, firms, etc., and their interrelationships—never about the individual units themselves. This would involve

⁶ The *Supplement to Economic Indicators*, prepared for the Subcommittee on Economic Statistics by the committee staff and the Office of Statistical Standards, Bureau of the Budget, describes some of the most commonly used series in the economic field. Major Federal statistical agencies publish catalogs, price lists, and other types of guides to their statistical publications. Agency catalogs and other guides to statistical publications are listed in and complemented by the bibliography of "Principal Statistical Publications of Federal Agencies" published by the Bureau of the Budget in its booklet, *Statistical Services of the United States Government*.

⁷ The issues concerning personal privacy have been the subject of investigation not only in the recent hearings of this subcommittee, but also hearings of the Special Subcommittee on Invasion of Privacy of the Committee on Government Operations, U.S. House of Representatives; and of the Subcommittee on Administrative Practice and Procedure of the Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. Senate.