

the requests. The range in costs of these individual programs is from \$100,000 to \$200,000. The total cost for all would approximate \$800,000-\$900,000.

The 1968 Joint Economic Report emphasized that high priority should be accorded to research in the area of prices and price indices and also that Government agencies should push rapidly ahead with the development and regular publication of industry data on output, productivity, prices, capital, labor, and incomes. In view of this we wish to call the committee's attention to the fact that the following programs of the Bureau of Labor Statistics (included in the 1968 and 1969 budget requests and denied by the Congress) were not even included in the 1970 budget:

- (1) Inauguration of a semiannual survey of general changes in wage rates and benefits in the *nonmanufacturing* sector.
- (2) Extension of wholesale price index series to 75 additional industries.
- (3) Collection of data on transaction prices rather than list or quoted prices for 40 major commodities in wholesale markets.
- (4) Initiation of work on obtaining price data for commodities in U.S. import and export trade.

These are certainly high-priority items so far as our economic information needs are concerned, but rate a low priority when it comes to appropriation of funds.

The 1970 budget includes a request of the Office of Business Economics for \$100,000 to strengthen the plant and equipment survey by expanding its coverage to include the service-type industries and nonprofit institutions, and to obtain from all industries a separation of their investment activity as between plant and equipment. In the previous 2 fiscal years, the OBE had requested, but was denied, funds for beginning the preparation of real GNP by industry on a quarterly basis (\$76,000). The 1970 budget does not include this program.

Other priority items included in previous budget requests of OBE are not in the 1970 budget. These include: Publication of personal income by States on a quarterly basis, and initiating work on estimates of the total tangible capital stock of the United States.

The total budget of the Office of Business Economics (\$3.3 million estimated for 1970) is indeed small considering the significance and widespread use made of its data for measuring the state of the U.S. economy and for guiding decisionmakers regarding economic policies and programs.

The need for the above-listed improvements has long been recognized. How much longer must we wait before constructive action is taken to implement these recommendations? Although the most significant increases in statistical programs in recent years has been in the area of social statistics, major advances in economic statistics must not be neglected. We respectfully urge that the Joint Economic Committee emphasize in its report that these are priority items deserving immediate attention and funding.

At this point, we wish to call the attention of the committee to developments in the Congress that could impair the future collection of vital economic data and particularly at subnational levels. The first is a proposal that would allow only six mandatory questions in the 1970 Census of Population and Housing, all other questions being on a vol-