

## SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

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The paper by Bowman and his colleagues brought before those of us who have been long-time users and producers of social statistics, a panorama of the great progress that has been made in our own working life time.

It's easy to take for granted the many excellent statistical series now available and to forget the days, not so long ago, when social scientists struggled with a pitifully small amount of usable data.

We must not become complacent. We must be aware of the many gaps that still exist. I want to emphasize one particular area where much remains to be done.

These words of Spencer quoted by Youmans sound the central theme of what I would like to stress, "...not only the nature and actions of the central government, but also those of local governments, down to their minutest ramifications..."

The authors have touched upon the need for more local area data and on the difficulties of obtaining such data.

Their primary concern, however, has been with national statistics. The growing wealth of national data points up more sharply the gaps in regional information. For a proper understanding of what is going on in the nation, it is necessary to know what is happening to its parts.

We have gone a long way in many states in producing a varied array of social and economic

statistics for local areas. I am very proud of the accomplishments of my own State, California.

The quantity and quality of state and local area statistics varies considerably throughout the nation. But even in those states that have made the greatest progress -- where the quantity and quality is high -- most of the series are those that come out of a repetitive mass statistical operation and are in terms of aggregates.

What we need, and need badly, are more statistics on characteristics of individuals. We need for state and local areas more of the kind of information of the type produced by the Current Population Survey.

I am aware that the decennial census gives us a great deal of data on the characteristics of individuals and families for state and local areas. But in a state that is growing as fast as California, much of the data becomes obsolete even before publication.

I would like to see an expansion of the size of the Current Population Survey sample so that data can be developed for states and local areas.

Who should finance this is a question that immediately arises. Perhaps some arrangement for joint financing -- Federal and State -- can be made.

As social scientists we must press hard to fill this important gap. We must press to make some of our wishes come true so that some beggars may ride.