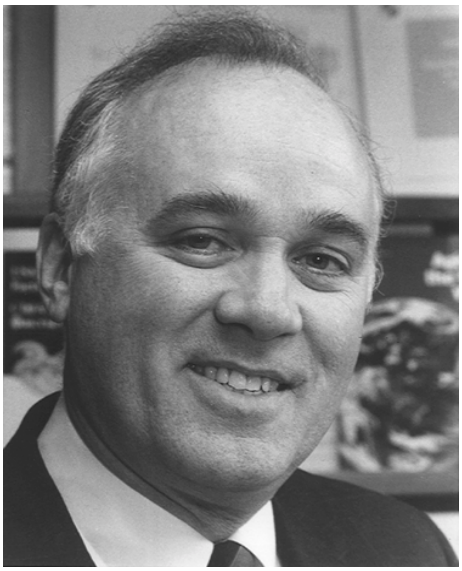


Oral History—

William P. Butz

This is an interview conducted on September 8, 1998, with former Census Bureau Acting Associate Director for Demographic Fields [September 1982 until December 1982]; Associate Director for Demographic Fields [December 1982 until January 1987]; Acting Associate Director for Statistical Standards and Methodology, [Jan. 1989 until Mar. 1990]; and Associate Director for Demographic Programs [January 1987 until August 1995] William P. Butz. The interviewer is David M. Pemberton and Michael A. Hovland and William F. Micarelli [observers]

Pemberton: **Good morning Mr. Butz, glad to be here, thank you very much for coming.**

Mr. Butz: Good morning Dave. You're very welcome. It is a pleasure to come back to the Bureau.

Pemberton: **I'd like to start out by asking you for some comments about your background, such things as birth date, place, education, etc.**

Mr. Butz: Sure, I was born in July 1943 in West Lafayette, Indiana. My father was a college professor, department head, and dean. I lived in West Lafayette until I was 18, except for 3 years in Washington when he was with the government; I was in junior high school at that time. In those years, I became accustomed to academics at dinner, academics at lunch, occasionally academics at breakfast. My dad was and is an agriculture economist, so he was talking about the price of wheat, the price of hogs, and things of that sort; therefore, I was quite sure I never wanted to grow up having anything to do with economics or numbers. I went to college thinking I wanted to be a geneticist. I discovered at a science institute one summer that I really did not want to spend my life at the bench doing science. About the same time, I discovered economics anew as an intellectual discipline rather than something to hear about at the dinner table. What I liked about economics was the mixture of scientific and statistical rigor on the one hand with real people's lives on the other. It was that combination that drew me to economics. After I graduated from Indiana, I went to the University of Chicago for 4 years for graduate school in economics. I did not complete my Ph.D. because I left to go to the Rand Corporation. I got so interested in other things about two-thirds of the way through my dissertation that the dissertation was never interesting enough to go back to; therefore, I didn't. When I arrived at the Rand Corporation in California in 1970, I began working with a couple of people, notably Paul Schulz [the Rand Corporation Senior Economist], who were interested in problems of economic development. They were interested specifically in how the behavior of family members changes during the development process. This is something I had studied in graduate school, and I became very interested in it.

Early in my career, I managed projects in Guatemala and then in Malaysia that involved sample surveys, modeling, statistical estimation, and drawing inferences from those estimates—all concerning the role of families during the development process. I was particularly interested in child spacing, child feeding, infant mortality, child development, and how these outcomes related to the mother's role in the labor market and in household production, as well as to income, education, the nearness of family planning clinics, and the like. So, those were good years at the Rand Corporation. I managed surveys; I did research; and eventually I taught, first at the University of California at Santa Barbara and then at the University of California, Los Angeles. I found teaching difficult but fun, stimulating but tiring. In fact, that first year when I went up on Friday afternoon to teach at Santa Barbara I came back so exhausted that I was literally hardly ready psychologically to go to work on Monday morning. It got easier, but it was still difficult. So, the years at the Rand Corporation were years of conducting surveys, doing research, publishing journal papers, and of teaching.

Pemberton: **How did you get recruited to work at the Census Bureau? Was this something you had been looking for or was this something that just kind of happened?**

Butz: I wasn't looking for another job. I was happy at the Rand Corporation. Things were going well. Certainly in the early 1980s, it was more difficult to get grants from the Federal Government than it had been in the early and mid-1970s. Nevertheless, I was still spending a small enough amount of time writing proposals and a large enough amount of time researching that it was still very enjoyable. Rand was a terrific place to work. So no, I wasn't looking at all. The first indication I had of a job was when Al Teller [Alfred J. Teller, Special Advisor, from Aug. 1973 to April 1986] called me. Al was then working at the Census Bureau. I had known Al, not well, for some years partly because of his academic reputation. I studied a paper of his in graduate school. Al called me and told me this job was open at the Census Bureau and my first reaction was—Al, I guess you don't know me very well. I do surveying and research, and although I manage survey teams, I certainly don't have any interest in managing a great many people. About a week later in the spring of 1982, my wife and I had a baby, our current 16 year old Matthew. Therefore, I really wasn't in any mood to change jobs. About a week later, Al called me back and again said, "Bill, I think you ought to take a look at this job. It's interesting; it looks like you; it's an important job, it's a fun job; it's a job that could probably use your talents." Well, at that point for the first time I made a phone call or two because I really didn't know about the job of associate director, nor did I know how the Census Bureau was organized. I knew people at the Census Bureau, a good many people, particularly in the Population Division because of the work I did in fertility, in child development, using Census Bureau data over the years. I didn't know anything about the management or leadership of the Census Bureau, so I called a few people and discovered that indeed this was an interesting job; indeed, it was a job that might be amenable to what I had to offer, but I still didn't call Al back. Then, 3 weeks later somebody else called me; I think it was Louis Kincannon [Charles Louis Kincannon, Deputy Director, from Jan. 1982 to Sept. 1992]; I can't remember the first call other than Al. Whoever it was, he piqued my interest enough, so that night I went home and for the first time told my wife that there was this possibility. She did not want to move. We had three older kids—that's four kids in school. My wife had her friends, her life; I had my friends, my life. There was no reason to move. Over the next several months, we talked more and more about it. As we did, two things happened. First, I realized that there were some things about my job at the Rand Corporation that I didn't like. When I really started thinking about them, well I thought—you know this is really starting to make me frustrated, and I am kind of

disappointed in that. Therefore, I began thinking that maybe it was time to do something else. I think the kicker was that one evening Vicki, my wife, said as we were setting the table, "Bill, when we are 65 years old, are we going to be living in southern California and are you going to be working at the Rand Corporation?" Then, without even hesitating, I said, "Of course not." That kind of broke the dam. From that point on, both of us started considering the Census Bureau's position seriously. I was flown to Washington to meet Louis Kincannon and a couple of other people. We talked. Bruce Chapman [Bruce K. Chapman, Director, from Oct. 1981 to July 1983] was not here then. Several weeks later, I flew to Seattle for a Regional Directors' Meeting to meet Bruce and Louis. They offered me the job, and I took it.

Pemberton: **Very interesting. Quite a move from Santa Monica to Washington, DC.**

Butz: Well, it was a big move. Let me tell you an anecdote to suggest how big it was. During that fall of 1982, Louis Kincannon had a consultant, I believe his name was Lynn Hersch, working here at the Census Bureau. He was going around interviewing people, talking to them, preparing a report on the internal workings of the Census Bureau—i.e., the process, the organization and management, and how the personnel policy and practices might be improved. Well then, I picked up the phone one day and it was Lynn Hersch from Washington. Louis had warned me he might call, and Lynn said he would like to fly out to Los Angeles and talk to me, get to know me. So he did. I remember it very well. It was a warm fall day, perhaps in October. I was wearing blue jeans and sandals without socks and my office as always was stacked up to the top with computer printouts, and there was a little place in the middle of my desk where I could see who was at the door. I was sitting there working, and I had some kind of a tee-shirt on. My secretary said, "Mr. Hersch is here." This man appeared in my doorway and before I could say anything he said, "Bill Butz?" I said yes. He looked at me and exclaimed, "Boy is your life going to change!" I think that's a good indication of how much it did change, from the jeans to the suit pants, from the tee-shirt to the tie, from the stacks of computer printout to reading somebody else's work rather than doing my own.

Pemberton: **The position that you came to occupy at the Census Bureau had been vacant for over 1 year when you came. Its previous occupant was George Hall who had left the Census Bureau in May 1981. Then there had been a couple acting associate directors. How was the situation at the Bureau overall or in the demographic directorate when you arrived?**

Butz: Well, I had not met the people that I was going to supervise directly because there was a philosophy told to me that at the Census Bureau, at that time, the Indians didn't get to help select the Chief. So while I had known a few of the division chiefs, just barely, I didn't really talk to them about this job before I took it. I knew, of course, of the technical skill of the staff at the Census Bureau, but I was not prepared for the amount of dedication, expertise, loyalty, knowledge, and focus on mission that I found when I came here. Nor was I prepared for the excellent secretary that I had, Helen Collins. After 3 weeks on the job, I realized that Louis and Bruce either thought I needed a lot of help or else they thought I was really good, because either way that's the only way they could explain giving me a secretary like Helen Collins. She was absolutely extraordinary. She knew everyone at the Bureau. She knew how to get things done formally and usually informally (above board or sometimes through guerilla warfare), and she kept me generally on the straight and narrow. So she helped smooth my first months, and they needed smoothing because life in a large bureaucracy with some seven or eight hundred staff responsible to me was very different from the life that I had lived before.

Pemberton: **What were your areas of responsibility when you came to the Bureau?**

Butz: The areas of responsibility were the demographic surveys, more properly called the household surveys because, of course, some of the so-called demographic surveys concern economics. The poverty and income measures, for example, and the consumer expenditure survey are examples. So the principle part of my responsibility was the household surveys—their design, management, coordination with the sponsors (the other statistical agencies principally), and their operation—but not directly the field aspects which are managed under the field directorate. In addition to the household surveys, I also at that time had responsibility for the planning of the 1990 census, the population estimates and, very importantly, the international programs of the Census Bureau. There were a variety of other important programs, for example housing and population statistics, which I would include along with the survey programs.

Pemberton: **Did you find, when you arrived at the Bureau, any noticeable morale difficulties perhaps related to the substantial reduction in force (RIF) that had taken place prior to your arrival.**

Butz: I've thought about this over the years, and it's occurred to me that I must have been very naive or in considerable shock, because I really didn't notice the effect. The changes to me from what I was accustomed to, to what I was now beginning, were so large. I had no previous bureaucratic experience in a large Federal Government agency, much less specific to the Census Bureau, to learn from. All I saw was lots and lots of change from anything I had known before, so I was not really able to judge how morale had been before or how it was after. However, indirectly I certainly heard a good deal about it, particularly from the executive staff, but also from others, and I found this to be a highly traumatic experience—one that no one ever wanted to undergo again, one that caused immense dislocations and real suffering in people's professional lives, and that resulted in problems for Census Bureau operations, processes and products.

Pemberton: **Did you consider the budget you had to work with adequate for the programs you had to manage, and how did you go about thinking about increasing it for programs that you might wish to add?**

Butz: Well, I wonder if you ever have someone answer "yes" to that question! No, I didn't consider it adequate for everything that was important. However, I believed the budget was adequate for conducting programs and improving them. The budget did permit us to do our work, but not much else. In fact, one of the principal things that I am proud of during my term at the Census Bureau, during my 15 or so years, was the tremendous growth in our reimbursable work, principally for other Government agencies. That was a minor part of our total budget, with the Department of Commerce being a larger part, when I came and by the time I left that amount had expanded greatly. It really didn't happen by accident. It happened because of the concerted effort of a lot of people, partly the Census Quality Management process that led us all to focus more on what our customers want and to realize that the congressionally allocated budgets were not going to increase much for the Census Bureau or for our work. Therefore, if we wanted to have the money to improve, to innovate, and to expand, the Census Bureau was going to have to get it or get large parts of it from other sources. Although the budget was not adequate for substantial growth and improvement when I came, I think it was adequate for getting the job done, turning the crank, turning the handle, getting the outputs out.

Pemberton: **When you arrived, how did you assess the status of your piece of the Census Bureau—that is, what kinds of problems did you find? You mentioned one with morale following the RIF in the early 1980s. What kind of opportunities did you discover for either expanding programs, improving data collection, data processing, dissemination—basically improving the work of your area?**

Butz: The main thing I found when I came, as I said, was the strength of the people here. The second thing I found was that I was not at all prepared for the strength and the terrific work of the Census Bureau's friends and critics outside the agency. Many of them had worked here before, such as Joe Waksberg [Joseph Waksberg, Acting Associate Director for Statistical Standards and Methodology, from January 1972 to June 1972 and Associate Director for Statistical Standards and Methodology, from June 1972 to June 1973], Morris Hansen [Associate Director for Research and Development, from 1951 to 1961], Con Taeuber [Conrad Taeuber, Assistant Director for Demographic Fields, from April 1951 to March 1968; Associate Director for Demographic Fields, from March 1968 to January 1973], Danny Levine [Daniel L. Levine, Deputy Director, from May 1979 to January 1982], and George Hall [George E. Hall, Associate Director for Demographic Fields, from July 1979 to May 1981]. Then, there were the people outside the Bureau who were in our client agencies—people like Tom Plewes, Charlie Kindermann, Manning Feinleib, Monroe Sirker, Eva Jacobs, Emerson Elliott, and Janet Norwood [Commissioner of Labor Statistics, from May 1979 to December 1991]. Finally, there were people who were not in either of the above categories who were really interested in and concerned with what the Bureau was doing, like Kathy Wallman [Katherine K. Wallman, Chief, Statistical Policy Office, The Office of Management and Budget, from December 1992]. So, this strength of what I sometimes affectionately called the Census Bureau groupies was significant to me. I learned quickly that these were people that I could go to for advice and constructive criticism. Within the Bureau, one of the challenges that I had was to manage the international area because it, prior to my arrival at the Bureau, had not been in the demographic directorate, at least not recently. Louis Kincannon told me that he would like to move it there partly because my own professional experience had been concentrated on international data gathering and analysis. I was delighted to have that as part of my portfolio, and I was always very, very, interested in international training, international technical assistance, data gathering, and research. But, it was a challenge at the beginning. As a matter of fact, all the way through my Census Bureau career, I tried to integrate the international work more with the domestic work.

The planning for the 1990 census, of course, while it was already underway, was really only beginning in earnest in a way that was reflected in the Census Bureau's budget. So, the staffs were beginning to develop the plans and the organizational chart at the same time that I was learning. One surprise I experienced when I arrived at the Bureau was the proliferation of stakeholder conferences. The first 6 months I thought and commented to people that conferences seemed to me a waste of money. Why were we getting all these people together, particularly when we probably knew more about this than the people we were talking to? It didn't take long for me to realize that in that context and many other contexts at the Census Bureau, the opinions and expertise of as many people as possible are very important when somebody at the Census Bureau is making an important decision that affects the reapportionment of the U.S. House of Representatives. It also became evident to me after a while that "buy in" from these people is very important. So, it was some time between my 6th

month and my 12th month that I realized that this was not a waste of money at all. These conferences were worthwhile and were necessary and certainly worth my energy and my participation.

Pemberton: **I believe one of the more important surveys that you were involved with establishing and solidifying at the Bureau was the Survey of Income and Program Participation. Perhaps you could tell us a little bit about where it came from and what its goal was in terms of data collection and some of your experiences with getting it up and underway.**

Butz: Well, the Survey of Income and Program Participation was a wonderful thing during my whole term at the Bureau. It was a never ending source of challenge, of innovation, and of pride on the part of Census Bureau staff and on my part. When I came to the agency, there had been a program called the Income Survey Development Program which ran from the mid-1970s to about 1981. This program was the explicit precursor of the Survey of Income and Program Participation—that is, it was designed experimentally to test such things as the optimal length of recall period and the optimal period between waves (that is, between interviews at the same unit) and to test questions to see how one would best elicit information about something that happened months ago and how one would link people to be sure that you had the same family now as you had, let's say 6 months earlier or 6 months before that. The Income Survey Development Program resulted in an explicit plan for the Survey of Income and Program Participation when I came to the Census Bureau. The money for the Survey for Income and Program Participation was just in the process of being allocated and its design was just in the process of being approved. It was during my first months that Bruce Chapman committed that the survey would have its first data products available to the public by December of 1983. This was a staff commitment. We agreed to it. Some of us thought it was awfully ambitious, but I thought that we had to make this commitment in order to get the funds and the go ahead from "the powers that be" to start the survey. We got the first round of the survey done; we got the analysis done; we got the report out; and this was simply the first of many times that the Survey of Income and Program Participation staff and the staff of all the Bureau's other surveys did yeoman work, frequently under difficult circumstances, to get the product out.

Pemberton: **There are several unique and extremely important and distinctive things about the Survey of Income and Program Participation that I would like to ask you about, at least briefly. But before we get to that, I think that one of the things that was unusual about it was essentially that it was, as you had said before, getting increasingly difficult to get Federal funds while you were at the Rand Corporation. The Survey of Income and Program Participation was a significant expenditure of money, and these funds were allocated, I believe, to the Census Bureau rather than to another agency.**

Butz: That's correct.

Pemberton: **How did you go about persuading an Administration and Congress that this was a worthwhile and important survey and one that deserved to be funded at the level that you ultimately achieved?**

Butz: The convincing wasn't done by me. The convincing was largely done before I got here. The important people were Roger Herriot [Chief, Population Division, from 1980 to October 1985; Acting Chief, from October 1985 to January 1986] and Bruce Chapman. Also, there

were others, certainly people on Capital Hill, certainly people in the Office of Management and Budget, and people in the Department of Commerce. However, from my point of view, which was limited at the time, those two individuals made it happen. Roger was the creative brains behind the operation—the one who at that point was putting together and finessing the design of the survey. Bruce was the one who wanted it to happen and made sure it did happen. He really laid a good deal of his chips on the line to make it happen. There were other important people who at that time were in other Federal agencies, but who knew that the Survey of Income and Program Participation would provide essential information that had not before been available and would help them to evaluate and to target public programs and save the taxpayers' money.

Pemberton: **Here again, one of the primary purposes of the Survey of Income and Program Participation was to determine some of the concomitance of how long people remain recipients of certain program funds. One of the challenges of the survey was that it was a longitudinal study, so that you were going back to the same people, at least initially I believe, for 2 ½ years.**

Butz: Yes.

Pemberton: **How did you and the folks that were working with you confront some of the technical challenges of putting the Survey of Income and Program Participation together, such as the issue of longitudinal weighing? I believe the initial sample size was approximately 20,000 households.**

Butz: I think that's right.

Pemberton: **One of the problems that probably was not unexpected but became apparent fairly soon, I believe, was sample attrition.**

Butz: Correct.

Pemberton: **How did you deal with these and other challenges of the Survey of Income and Program Participation?**

Butz: You've asked a question that would take me hours to answer. If you were to ask it of a person like Jay Waite [Preston Jay Waite, Assistant Director for Decennial Census, from 1999], who knows a great deal more technically, it would take months to answer. Let me just pick up a few threads of what you asked. You mentioned that the Survey of Income and Program Participation was a longitudinal survey, which was certainly an innovation. The Census Bureau had done other surveys that were longitudinal in various respects. The Current Population Survey was and still is a longitudinal survey. The American Housing Survey was and is longitudinal in structure. There were other such surveys, but the Survey of Income and Program Participation was the survey the Census Bureau did that was designed first and foremost to be longitudinal. Did a family join a public program because of a death in the family or was it in fact a job change? If there was a job change, what kind of public programs do families of different kinds join afterwards? For example, do they get food stamps? Do these things tend to happen together or separately? These kinds of questions are important for designing and evaluating public programs, and they can only be answered with longitudinal panel data. It's interesting that as the Survey of Income and Program Participation began to be used more and more from 1983 on and as it became more central to different users, principally in the Federal Government, a conflict began to develop in that survey. That con-

flict was between the use of the survey data for cross sectional purposes—that is, to be able at a point in time to compare income or program participation by race and ethnic group, by age, by family structure, or the like. Those are cross-sectional uses versus time-series uses (what are the changes in the cross-sectional data from year to year) or longitudinal uses of the data of the kind that I just described which require one to know what happened first and what happened second. When times are good, resources are plentiful, the sample size is large, and staff size and energy are sufficient to do all things, then it doesn't matter because the survey can be used all three ways. However, when budgets dictate that the sample size must begin falling, when the demands for data increase, or when staff energy and size diminish, then, in any kind of a statistical operation one must make a choice. The principal choice that had to be made in the case of the Survey of Income and Program Participation was—Is this principally a longitudinal survey or is it principally a cross-sectional survey? In the early 1990s, pressures began building principally outside but partly inside the Census Bureau for the Survey of Income and Program Participation to be used officially (perhaps along with the Current Population Survey) as the source of the Government's annual income and poverty measures. This is important because the design of the sample differs depending on what the data will be used for, but also because the technical problems that one addresses differ—longitudinal imputation, weighing, etc. You input for missing values in a different way; you even follow up nonresponse in the field in a different way, if survey data are going to be used one way rather than the other. And so, we were constantly facing this trade off until late in the 1980s. I decided at that time that the Survey of Income and Program Participation would be principally a longitudinal survey. When push came to shove and resources were not adequate to do everything, we then would make decisions in favor of longitudinality, whether it was about statistical research, how to put the data out in data files, how to publish the data, how to redesign the survey, or how to augment the sample.

Pemberton: **Picking up on one of the points you made, I believe that the idea of using the Survey of Income and Program Participation data either alone or in combination with the Current Population Survey statistics as the official indicator of poverty in the United States is a subject that has not yet been decided. I think one of the reasons that it hasn't been decided one way or the other is that there were some disturbing differences between what the Current Population Survey showed in terms of poverty and numbers of people versus what the Survey of Income and Program Participation showed. I believe that those differences have remained, and I am not sure I quite understand what they are. For a layman, could you explain at least a little bit about what this uncertainty is?**

Butz: Well, I can tell you what they were. I am not up to date, although I follow these matters somewhat, particularly through the Census Bureaus' excellent web site and through professional meetings when I talk to my former colleagues. I'm sure, however, that I'm not up to date, and I'm not the best person to comment on the current relationship between the Survey of Income and Program Participation and the Current Population Survey. But in general, they measure things in different ways. For example, take income. Before a person can measure income, he or she needs to know to what purpose the measure will be put. There is (1) per capita income, (2) per household income, (3) family income, (4) income derived only from wage sources, (5) additional income from assets, (6) transfers from the Government, and (7) monetized value of direct transfers that do not take place in the form of money. Then, with all of that, one can use the income in current or constant dollars. So, that's simply an example of different kinds of decisions one must make. Beyond that, there are

conceptional decisions that guide how one surveys income, race, ethnicity, or household composition, as examples. Beyond the conceptual matters, there are also issues about the way the sample is constructed and the way the questions are asked. So, there is, in general, much more reason to expect differences across data sources than there is to expect them to be exactly the same. One could throw in administrative record data here too. There are differences not only in income and other things between the Survey of Income and Program Participation and the Current Population Survey. Also, there were differences between the Survey of Income and Program Participation findings on, for example, numbers of people who use food stamps and their characteristics, and the food stamp records from the Department of Agriculture. The same applies to the Current Population Survey when it asks questions of that kind, between what the decennial census finds and what these survey find. These differences are to be expected. It's important to understand them to the extent the Bureau can, because one goal is to use these data together. So, one tries to understand the differences; however, in most cases, we can't measure and understand them all. One that I didn't mention is the mode of data collection—whether it's collected by (1) mail, (2) personal interview, (3) telephone interview, (4) computer assisted phone interview, or (5) computer assisted personal interview. It's well known that these different modes of data collection can affect the answers. There is something about the interaction between the respondent and the interviewer and something about the interaction between the respondent and the question that changes in these circumstances. So we should not be alarmed to find different data sources producing different data; that should certainly not lead us to want to cut back on the number of data sources because redundancy is valuable, but also it should not lead us necessarily to call these data differences disturbing.

Pemberton: **It also, however, raises some questions dealing with the apparent intention of the Bureau and much of the Government to substitute the American Community Survey in the 2010 Census for the long-form questionnaire. Now this is something that is upcoming; it is not yet determined. But one of the things that would be a result of this would, in fact, be the loss of the multiplicity of responses which allow one to get a fuller feeling and more precision on various aspects of whether it's income, race, ethnicity, or family composition structure.**

Butz: Well, the American Community Survey is an enterprise that I supported strongly in its very first incarnations in the late 1980s and which I still support. I think substituting that for the long-form questionnaire or most of the long form in 2010 will be fine. I think we will know enough about the operation of the survey, more than enough by then, to do that and to get along only with what necessary calibration measures that we have to have based on a few questions—a few long-form type questions on the 2010 census. Roger Harriott whom I've mentioned before, is the source of a number of things that I take most pride in, and my pride where Roger is concerned is really due only to my role in giving him a lot of rope, protecting him from the bureaucracy, protecting him from critics, and trying to give him support where he was weak. It was Roger who was the first person at the Census Bureau who came up with the idea of some kind of a large survey, very, very large survey, between the censuses—so large that it would produce data at the state and the large city levels and would thereby open up to data users of all kinds a "new world" of information about the things they were studying. For 4 or 5 years, Roger and others worked on plans for this. They talked to people on the outside, had breakfasts and lunches, and they talked about it at professional meetings and at the annual research conference without making much headway. But eventually they did; eventually it got started; and it has become what it is now. I'm

really quite proud of the effort. I follow it on the web site. I follow it by talking to people, like Larry McGinn and Chip Alexander, who have been major moving forces, and now of course there are a good many others. In addition, I must say one of the things that gives me pleasure is to attend professional meetings as I did just 2 weeks ago in San Francisco to hear important, knowledgeable, and influential data users outside the Census Bureau praise the prospect of the American Community Survey. That was not the case 6 or 7 years ago.

Pemberton: **Progress.**

Butz: Yes.

Pemberton: **You mentioned, going back to the Survey of Income and Program Participation briefly, that the primary data users, at least initially, were Federal agencies. I'm wondering—toward the end of your tenure here, in the mid-1990s, were they still the primary users or had it spread to academia or other groups of users.**

Butz: It had spread indeed. However, during the entire course of the Survey of Income and Program Participation this, along with the longitude cross-sectional conflict, was one of the continuing conflicts in the background—that is, should the Survey of Income and Program Participation primarily be aimed at use by Federal agencies or by academic researchers? Now really, the answer to that was always clear because it was the Federal agencies that really principally participated, although not entirely, in the Survey of Income and Program Participation formation, and it was the Federal agencies' mandates for evaluation purposes and planning purposes that guided the Survey of Income and Program Participation in its early years. Nevertheless, from the beginning there were organized efforts, very helpful efforts, to bring academics and academic researchers to bear on the design and the products of the survey. An early case was a survey committee of the Social Science Research Council of New York. I would say, though, that over the years the academic researchers, while their use of the Survey of Income and Program Participation has grown by leaps and bounds and, by the time I left, had numbered in the hundreds of people who were actively using survey data in universities.... Even though that was the case, I would say there remained disappointment in academia about the survey and a clear wish that in the survey's design and in data products, the Census Bureau should pay more attention to the needs of the academic research data uses.

Pemberton: **I knew that there were certainly efforts to redesign some of the data products in order to make them more usable by users. In some ways in the early years, I believe, the actual layout of the data files tended to be more friendly to the people who put the data on the file rather than the people who wished to take the data off the file and use them.**

Butz: That's very well put, I'm sorry to say. Also, I mentioned the Social Science Research Council Committee; there was also a group put together by the Association of Public Data Users. This group was very helpful all the way through the 1980s in keeping the Census Bureau focused on producing data in formats that would be useable to the users and in documenting what we did to the data between the time they left the respondents' lips and the time they ended up on a computer file. I don't know that Pat and Connie were ever satisfied with that. Of course, Pat is now in a position to do something about it; she now works at the Census Bureau. I don't know if they were ever satisfied, but the agency did make strong efforts during the 1980s. Certainly Chet Bowie [Chester E. Bowie, Chief of the Survey of Income and

Program Participation in the 1980s] made strong efforts as did Raj Singh and others to make the data files more useable. There were questions of "flat file" versus "hierarchical files" and which should be released. We wondered if the Bureau should provide more public use microfiles and how much information to provide about weights. Part of the issue was, I think, as the data got to be more used by more agencies and by more people, the competing demands grew for how the data should be (1) produced, (2) formatted, and (3) disseminated. However, I would say that not until perhaps 5 years ago did the Bureau really catch up in a significant way with those demands. It was really the CD-ROM and electronic dissemination of data that made it possible for the Census Bureau to let users have available to them much richer data products, which is what they wanted.

Pemberton: **That raises another issue that I wanted to ask you about. I believe in the late 1980s there were some discussions and explorations of the possibility of electronic dissemination of census data. Initially, looking at the 1990 census and the dissemination of virtually all the data the agency produces, were you involved in that assessment of possibly shifting the bulk of the data products, mostly paper products and computer tapes, to CD-ROM and cartridge, and ultimately also to dissemination via the intranet?**

Butz: There was a wholesale reorientation of viewpoint in this regard in many parts of the Census Bureau between the late 1980's and 1990's. Our products at the beginning of the period looked much as they had 20 years earlier. Indeed, with the exception of the public-use microdata files, which came on the scene in the late 1960's, these products looked much as they had 40 years earlier! You could start to see changes the "Statistical Briefs" series, which began in the mid-1980's, but this was only a beginning. Then, in the ensuing 5-to-7 years, the old data products—standardized large reports and tapes with the same format from year to year—gave way quickly to shorter, flashier written products tailored to specific audiences with particular interests, and to CD-ROMs that opened demographic data to many more people. The "democratization of data," some called it. In the 1980s, I used to quip to audiences that trying to use data from the Census Bureau was like trying to get a drink of water from a fire hydrant! By 1995, most users could get only a gallon at a time. By now, with the American FactFinder system and similar Internet data accessing systems, we'll very soon be able to get just the small portion of data we want, each of us according to our own interests. This has been a remarkable transformation in a short time. You asked about my role. I don't think, quite frankly, that it took a great deal of high-powered leadership from the top to pull this one off, at least not within the Demographic Directorate. We had lots of "change agents" within the staff, spread all around the organization. Plus the handwriting was on the wall for this one. My philosophy here was to let many flowers grow, so we had new, more flexible data products springing up all over. Some of the old ones died pretty hard, it's true, but there was no problem finding midwives for the new ones.

Pemberton: **Another big change around that time was the Total Quality Management (TQM) movement. At least at first, this was pretty controversial among Bureau staff who had seen many management fads come and go. What was your attitude toward TQM?**

Butz: I didn't think anything at all good about Total Quality Management the first few times I heard about it in the context of the Census Bureau. The earliest point that I remember having to focus on it was a visit by Mike, well I can't remember his name, from 3M company in St. Paul, to the Census Bureau. He could have been invited by either Jack Keane

[John G. Keane, Director, from March 1984 to January 1989] or Barbara Bryant [Barbara Everitt Bryant, Director, from November 1989 to January 1993], or presumably Jack or Louis Kincannon, who played, by the way, an extremely critical and important role in the Census Quality Management movement, particularly between Jack's and Barbara's terms here. This guy came to the Bureau talking about how terrific Census Quality Management was and how the Bureau needed to pay more attention to our customers. I sat there thinking—"How in the hell is the Bureau going to define its customers?" How do you define decennial census customers when they don't agree? What do we do about that? The Census Bureau did not have a "bottom line" here like the 3M company does—profit, loss, etc.,—so how do we make these valuations? I distinctly remember what won me over, and that was the second visit by Mike—a visit when he brought with him a man who was senior vice president of the 3M company in charge of administration and computing. He had personnel, organization, training, budget, finance, and computers, everything like that under him. He came and sat down and explained how the Total Quality Management movement at 3M (which had been going on since the early 1980s) had transformed his organization into one in which his people were considering themselves the providers of services to everyone else at 3M. He had documentation and chapter and verse to show how they had opened up competitions so that people could go elsewhere for their publication services. Other departments could go out of the organization for their computer services if they wanted, and he still held on to their business by outcompeting those outside organizations. I remember distinctly sitting at that table and saying to myself—"If this can do that for the Census Bureau, I'm for it!" So, I have to admit that my initial enthusiasm was for a selfish reason—I thought that my part of the Bureau could do its job better by getting more cooperation within the Bureau and possibly from the Commerce Department. But very quickly, I came to realize that the major part of Total Quality Management (then Census Quality Management) wasn't going to be what we could get, but what we could give. The way we could give would be to give more attention to our customers and to give more attention to our employees.

Pemberton: **Do you feel on balance that the program as implemented at the Bureau was beneficial during your tenure here?**

Butz: I do. Both in the overall orientation that I've described and in the minute-to-minute daily techniques of brainstorming and problem solving, and how to raise issues in an organized way, in the growing use of facilitators at the Census Bureau to start a process or to run meetings, and in a variety of other ways. Certainly before I had left the Bureau, Census Quality Management was already being criticized and dismissed, and we didn't use these initials anymore; it was something else by then. But that's okay. I think the overall orientation has taken hold and is not going to go away. I think that it was all of the training, the discussion, and the hard attempts to pay more proactive attention to what our staffs and what our clients thought that led principally to this change.

Pemberton: **Shifting gears a bit. You had mentioned that one of the more important areas and certainly one of the more interesting was the international program. The international program had had two main divisions, the International Statistical Programs Center and the Center for International Research. Could you describe a little bit about what you found in those areas when you got here? We know a little bit about the Professional Skills Development Program training, what directions you wanted to push these areas in after you had a chance to become acclimated to them.**

Butz: What did I find when I came here? I found in each division a cadre of people who were among the best or the best in the world at what they did. I found a collection of customers in the form of scores of statistical agencies in other countries who agreed with that assessment, who in fact, knew the whole Census Bureau only through the International Statistical Programs Center or to a lesser extent the Center for International Research. However, these two Census Bureau units were dangerously separate from the rest of the Census Bureau and had been so for 40 years. Geographically separate, separate in a budgetary way, separate in the kinds of customers that they served, separate even in the ways they did the same things. An example of the last point is that the International Statistical Programs Center was teaching statistical agencies around the world how to (1) collect data, (2) process data, and (3) analyze them in ways that were very different from the way we were doing it at the Census Bureau. Not to say one was right or wrong; they might have both been right. After all, less developed countries' situations for gathering and processing data are different, but there was much to learn from each other. But there was no learning taking place because there was virtually no staff transfers between the two places. This was a worry to me immediately for more than one reason. We were losing the synergism, the cross fertilization of knowledge between the two areas. Also, if hard times came in terms of budget, in terms of some event in the international area that was unpopular or got us into some difficulties somewhere, it seemed to me that the "capital" in the other part of the Census Bureau was dangerously low. Bureau headquarters had very little budget invested in it. Most of the people here didn't really know most of the people in International Statistical Programs Center. It wasn't part of the Commerce Department's goals. It seemed to me that the International Statistical Programs Center was in a precarious position, and that the "distance" in all these ways between the international area and the rest of the Bureau needed to be narrowed. One of my real failures as Associate Director, I think, is that I was unable to successfully narrow that distance, even though by the time I left the international areas were organizationally integrated into the rest of the Bureau. I hope by now that has happened; I don't know whether that has or not.

Pemberton: **I'm not sure either. If memory serves me correctly, I'm pretty sure the that Center for International Research was not self funded; it was relatively autonomous in terms of funding.**

Butz: They both were.

Pemberton: **Okay. That was the point of least emphasis at some level. What you are saying is that kept those two divisions separate from the rest of the agency. This must have caused you difficult moments. You were possibly having to fight for more budget, for entities that previously had taken care of themselves and not bothered anyone. They just did their business. One of the things that seemed to me that happened by placing the Professional Skills Development Program under the International Statistical Programs Center was that you were able to get some "circulation" from people who worked in buildings three and four and possibly Jeffersonville through as instructors. I don't know whether this happened to the same extent for the training of foreign statisticians, but there was certainly some circulation among the folks doing the training of new professionals at the Census Bureau.**

Butz: There was always some circulation. I overstate the case if I say that the organizations were entirely separate because they were never entirely separate; there was always some learning going on, just small relative to what it could have been. Yes, the Professional Skills Development Program did get all new hires physically into the facility where the international program was doing its work. However, they could take the elevator and get off and walk right into that facility. I think that the people who were in that facility doing the training eventually had less and less relationship with the rest of the International Statistical Programs Center, and in a way they became a third staff. The main Bureau staff, if you will, the international staff, and the Professional Skills Development Program. Again, I don't want to overemphasize that, but I also don't want to give the idea that the Professional Skills Development Program brought the international and domestic parts of the Census Bureau together. I don't think that happened.

Pemberton: **When I first came to the Bureau, we had an orientation. One of the points of humor in the introduction about the Bureau was to say that the agency had a relatively little known division (the Center for International Research) that was the Bureau's contribution to the intelligence community. Basically data collection and analysis was funded initially through the Agency for International Development, I believe. But ultimately it had another sponsor, which was the Central Intelligence Agency. It became a sponsor because of its annual effort to put together basically country profiles, surveying a large amount of material, and condensing it in such a way that policymakers could have a reasonable understanding of what it is that country, "a," "b," "c," "z," had to offer in terms of a variety of kinds of activities. Was this something that you knew very much about when you got to the Census Bureau, and was this an area that was intriguing for you? It was certainly different from what most of the agency does.**

Butz: I did know about it shortly after I came to the Census Bureau. The Central Intelligence Agency was one of a number of clients of the Center for International Research in those years. In those early years when I worked at the Census Bureau, the work of the Center for International Research with the Central Intelligence Agency was valuable for the Census Bureau. You described it well. Much of that work also was available in the "open literature" in terms of demographic and economic studies of a number of countries around the world. It was a good source of money from reimbursable work, and the Central Intelligence Agency was a good client. From time to time, the work worried me and others. We felt that having the Central Intelligence Agency for a client could be damaging to the public's perceptions of the Census Bureau. The Internal Revenue Service was another client relationship that worried people from time to time. The Census Bureau was careful about the kinds of work that it did with the Internal Revenue Service or the work it did for us.

Pemberton: **In fact, the Census Bureau still does some of this work. When the Center for International Research was established, I believe it essentially had three areas of focus, eastern Europe at the time, the Soviet Union, and China. Of course, you have to have linguistic specialization, and it helps to have statistical training so that a person can read the literature and then fit it into context. In other areas of the world where the agency developed relationships or interests, the Federal Government needed to have some understanding of what was going on there as well. There is an interesting overlap between the kind of training to be the kind of statistician that was needed and the language skills that is fairly focused.**

Butz: Let me comment that it was the Center for International Research that led the rest of the Bureau's demographic area to aggressively seek a wider variety of customers. Barbara Torrey, who still works at the Bureau, was aggressive and very successful in this effort and substantially increased the number of different Federal agencies and others who were paying the Census Bureau to do work. In my mind at that time, they had to because this was virtually their only source of money. In my mind, I came to feel that the demographic area of the Census Bureau could succeed in doing the same thing.

Pemberton: **Unfortunately, your comments lead me to another issue I would like to raise which was a severe cutback in the international programs. It took place right around the time that you were leaving the Bureau. I mean it was actualized at that point, but the decisions obviously had to have been made earlier. Can you indicate what had changed that basically made it impossible to continue the structure as it was and required some kind of significant modification.**

Butz: Well, I'm sure I don't know all of this. The impetus for change came principally from above me—how far above I don't know. The manifestation of it was a lessening of interest in the international programs. You mentioned earlier and I mentioned that they were separate from the rest of the Bureau in many ways. During the early 1990s, there was clearly a lot less interest in the international programs by my supervisors and by the Commerce Department then there had been previously. Whether this was the cause of the change you mentioned, I don't know. We did a major evaluation of the International Statistical Programs Center training programs in the early 1990s. Howard Bryant and I set this up, and it was carried out by Howard, me, and the International Statistical Programs Center's staff, and several other executive staff people too. We visited countries around the world to access the effectiveness of the International Statistical Programs Center's training. The results were very favorable. The results indicated that the training had been important in preparing the statistical staffs of a number of countries. The results also suggested various improvements that could be made. The results suggested that the long-term training was more costly for the home statistical agency and, therefore, less valuable than shorter-term technical assistance training, particularly if carried out in the country or in the region. The results also suggested that particular kinds of courses might be good to add to the curriculum. So this was very useful and very interesting. During this time, support for international programs did fall. There were budget and hiring stringencies, and the decision was made; I collaborated in the decision. I was asked and so were the leadership of the two divisions. The decision was made to cut staff, to move some of the functions to other parts of the Bureau, and to combine the staffs organizationally.

Pemberton: **So many of the functions continued but at a lower level of intensity with lower staff involvement, as far as I know.**

Butz: That was correct at the time, and I don't know what's happened since. I would emphasize though that the real heart of the international programs was the highly skilled people who worked in that area.

Pemberton: **Now one of the things that came up during your tenure was a sexual harassment suit, and it took a while to play out. Its obviously a difficult kind of issue or question to deal with. I was wondering how you did deal with it? What if any, either policy or programmatic, changes resulted from this or similar kinds of issues?**

Butz: I had several explicit sexual harassment cases that I hesitate to speak specifically about for fear that the details would immediately identify somebody and unfairly stigmatize them. Let me say a couple of things in general. One is that, to my knowledge, there were few such claims while I was at the Census Bureau. I hope that I set and that managers around me and under me set an atmosphere in which people would feel free to come forward. Certainly we all had training on a regular basis to deal with this. I remember, sitting here now, three cases; they all differed, and they all differed in the process through which they were handled. I cannot say that I am entirely satisfied with the process in each case as I look back. I do not feel that grave injustices were done, but I do regret that at the Bureau, more than in most areas of my professional life, there is the necessity to make decisions in the face of incomplete information. That's the role of a manager, a decision maker. You never have enough information; if you do, you waited too long. You have to make the decision. But in a case where the decision hurts somebody, hurts their career—and these allegations do hurt people's careers one way or another—then you can't decide them without doing that. In these cases, one really regrets having to decide things before one has complete information. However, you simply decide, "Am I likely to get any more information than I have?" If the answer is no, you might as well go ahead and decide. That's what I always tried to do.

Pemberton: **I realize our time is getting a little short. I have maybe one or two other things to ask. A broader view here would deal with the nature of the Census Bureau's relationships to its parent, the Department of Commerce, to other Federal agencies, to the Congress, either foreign governments or other entities, or to state governments. The senior staff of the Census Bureau does have more opportunities to deal with this broad variety of audiences. My first question is more focused on the Department of Commerce. I was wondering, over the 13 years you were here (from the aftermath of the 1980 census through the bulk of the aftermath of the 1990 census and significant amounts of planning for the Census 2000 and the various difficulties that have begun to grow up out of that) is it your experience that the Department of Commerce has become more involved in the implementation of policies and the kind of oversight of that implementation during the course of your tenure?**

Butz: There is no question that between 1987 and 1992 there was a sea change in the relationship between the Commerce Department and the Census Bureau. I well recall Harry Scarr [Deputy Director, from 1992 to 1995 and Acting Director from 1993 to 1994] telling me on the phone one afternoon when we were talking about a particular case. "Bill, the involvement of the Commerce Department in Census Bureau business is only going to increase; you and I might like it or not like it, but that's the way it's going to be". That was 1987. And truer words have not been spoken. I do have a very focused view on this now because the agency that I have been with for the last 3 years doesn't have a department. The National Science Foundation is an independent agency; it reports to the President, to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, but it doesn't have a department to answer to. The main result of this from my viewpoint is that you really can at the National Science Foundation get everybody in the same room who can say "no!" Whether it's a personnel action, a hiring action, a policy change, a new thrust, stopping doing something that somebody wants done on the outside, whatever it is, you can get them in the same room, and if they say okay, that's it, you can do it. Nobody later says no. That is the biggest change. The most frustrating constraint on management in my time at the Census Bureau, among several, was the inability to make hard decisions stick. Sometimes hard decisions, which had been agreed to at the Census Bureau, were changed at the Census Bureau; but when that

happened it was usually an anticipation of trouble to come from the Commerce Department. Too many hard decisions in my view were changed later or altered at the Commerce Department. Some should be. But many of them that were, in my opinion, should not have been changed by the Department. The ones that I regretted the most were the cases in which the people doing the reviewing and making the decision really knew little about the Census Bureau or little about its customers or operations. As nearly as I could tell, they had only one criterion in mind and that is—no letter to a Representative. That criterion leads to an extremely conservative decision structure—one which mitigates against stopping things that anybody important values, mitigates against decisions that someone on the staff or outside doesn't like. When you don't stop things that aren't of value anymore and when you don't try to stop behaviors that are inappropriate because you fear you are going to be overturned or not supported, then it becomes much more difficult to do your work. I hasten to add that in my experience, the Census Bureau could not have survived in many cases without the expertise and involvement of good people in the Department's Undersecretary's Office and in the Administrative Offices. Help was there many times when I needed it. I just regret the deadening conservative force of review on management decision making.

Pemberton: **Are there any particular examples that you could give? Examples of the countermanding or modification of decisions that had taken place at the Census Bureau for whatever reasons were seen to be necessary. That was a negative. A positive was that people, in fact, with their expertise helped you and your area get through some difficulty that you dealt with.**

Butz: Harry Scarr, Fred "Nick" Knickerbocker [Frederick T. Knickerbocker, Associate Director for Economic Programs, from March 1995], and Mark Plant [Mark W. Plant, Deputy Undersecretary of Economic Affairs] were the three people that I particularly remember as trying whenever they could to clear the path to get obstacles out of the way, so that we could get our work done. That doesn't mean they weren't critical and didn't raise their voices from time to time, mostly as I recall, when it was justified. But they were helpful. Let me take up a negative case, one in which the Commerce Department had reason to be involved, but I think hurt. That was during the conduct of the 1990 Census of Population and Housing in which my perception was, from where I sat, that the Census Bureau was continually stifled from answering our critics, from getting facts out when untruths were being promulgated by people who had an interest in census processes or results conforming to their particular interests. I think this did great damage to the credibility of the 1990 census and the Census Bureau. I don't know whether it was a strategic decision not to talk back or whether it was just case by case, and hindsight is terrific. I was quite angry about it at the time, and I continue to think it was a mistake. I hasten to add that's an area were the Commerce Department was legitimately and rightfully involved and should have been. I simply don't like the decision. So that's a relatively minor order of criticism. At least there was a decision, which is what one hungers for in the bureaucracy. Whether I agree with it or I don't agree with it; for heaven's sakes, get me a decision so that we can go on and do something else: that's what we all hunger for. And here was a case where decisions were made, but I didn't like and don't like it still. Here is another particular example, occurring around the same time. I felt quite sure that some people in the Commerce Department were trying to influence the way the Bureau presented data to make them look a bit more this way and less that way. I never tried to pin it down and never heard it pinned down, but from where I sat there was a pattern in several periods of time that persisted. The signals came from different directions, but seemed to me to have the same kind of intent. To my knowledge, those efforts never got anywhere. I think the Census Bureau staff and the people outside the Bureau who

cared about what we do are so sensitive that, quite frankly, I didn't worry—I still don't worry—about the ability of people with political influence to have a bearing on technical Census Bureau decisions and operations.

Pemberton: **I think one of the areas where this kind of thing plays out would be with regard to the approval of press releases that are one-to-two page summaries of frequently fairly thick and complex reports. It's not so much a question of someone at the Department of Commerce changing something. It's merely a question of relative emphasis. Does that square with your recollection?**

Butz: Well, it certainly can be a question of relative emphasis. Let's take the annual Income and Poverty Reports. Those were Commerce Department press releases. Now it's true that during the early 1990s many of us at the Bureau were told by some of the principal reporters around the country reporting those results that they no longer paid any attention to the Commerce Department's press releases. Instead, they just got a staffer on the phone who they knew would give them the straight scoop. So again, I think that kind of effort is self defeating. It reduces the influence of those who try to do it very quickly because the people they're dealing with are smart.

Pemberton: **The Census Bureau is perhaps the preeminent Federal statistical agency, but there are certainly many others, and many of them are clients. How would you say that your dealing with other agencies either changed over the time period that you were here or how were they characterized? The Bureau of Labor Statistics strikes me as one of our largest and long-term clients, but we have many others among Federal statistical agencies. How were your relations with those other agencies?**

Butz: Well my relations personally were excellent, and I think the relations of staff were, by and large, excellent. I did think in the first year I was here that some of those relationships between our staff and staff at other agencies had become too cozy, and the staffs were not acting always the way customers should act—that is, demanding the best thing for their clients—or the way a producer should act (i.e., looking for the best way in our case to reduce burden on our respondents or help our interviewers). Instead, I think there was a lot of compromising taking place that wouldn't have stood the test of scrutiny. I know that diminished over time. I will say that relationships with my colleagues in other agencies were one of the real joys of working at the Census Bureau. The professionalism, the dedication, the common striving for the best data that could be produced for the money was everywhere—in all the statistical agencies, and in the statistical office at the Office of Management and Budget, and very frequently on the staff of our oversight committees in Congress. It was a joy working with these people. Hardly an encounter in my memory was regrettable. There were certainly a few that weren't particularly pleasant, but they were with friends, they were for a good purpose, and I don't regret even those.

Pemberton: **I suspect it becomes difficult when funding, for example, for the Bureau of Labor Statistics gets reduced; as a result, the sample size of the Current Population Survey has to be reduced as well. I think this happened more recently then your tenure. But these would be some of the kinds of things that would take place, and the Census Bureau would have to deal with this.**

Butz: Well, we had to plan on several such instances with the Current Population Survey while I was here. I don't recall if any of them came into being, but certainly the Health Interview Survey, the American Housing Survey, the Crime Victimization Survey, and the Survey of Income and Program Participation were subject to sample cuts while I was here. Those were instances in which the months and years of technical collaboration that built trust between the staffs at the Census Bureau and in our sister agencies came to fruition and paid off. We got through those well, without rancor, without lasting animosities, and that speaks volumes for the people involved.

Pemberton: **One Federal agency that other federal agencies learned to fear with some justification was the Office of Management and Budget because it (at least in part) is responsible for putting together the entire budget for the Federal Government after each department has submitted its own request. In our case, the Census Bureau's component would have been in the Department of Commerce's budget submission. Were you ever involved in the budget discussions with the Office of Management and Budget? Also, I would be interested in your relationship with the statistical part of the Office of Management and Budget with respect to such technical issues as defining metropolitan statistical areas and a variety of other issues like respondent burden.**

Butz: In memory, I have no serious complaints about dealing with the Office of Management and Budget on budget or statistical policies. The Census Bureau's executive staff, of course, took an active role in planning and defining the budgets. It was always working on budgets for one year or another. The executive staff would go to the Office of Management and Budget at least several times a year to present various budget estimates and to explain and justify those budgets. In addition, I was there a number of times on budget matters for the Survey of Income and Program Participation and on other matters. Marie Gonzales, one of our good colleagues at the Office of Management and Budget for a number of years, had chaired several technical committees that I sat on. Kathy Wollman has a very difficult job, and she doesn't have the resources, in my estimation, to do an adequate job of coordinating statistical policy much less the opportunity to bring innovation to it. It's remarkable what she and that office do given the resources. The budget analysts and branch chiefs from Kate Newman, who was our budget analyst when I first arrived at the Census Bureau, through the others have been competent, dedicated people. When they ask questions I always hoped they would be the toughest questions possible because I knew what they were doing—preparing for the higher level reviews. If we ever came out of a session without tough questions being asked, I sensed there was something wrong. There was only one exception—a person from the Office of Management and Budget who consistently fell asleep in meetings 2 feet in front of my face while I was briefing him. All of the other people there I thought were competent, hard working and a real part of the team.

Pemberton: **A group of people who are among the Census Bureau's most important customers is the Congress. They provide the Census Bureau's yearly funding either by passing the budgets for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, Treasury, and the Judiciary or they don't. The Bureau has recently been doing a good deal of testifying before Congress, but the Census Bureau always does some testifying. Also, we do a good deal of briefing of congressional staff and briefing of individual Representatives or Senators when they request it. Sometimes the Census Bureau's impetus is to explain some problem or some issue that individual Representatives or Senators may not even be aware of. How would you characterize either the Bureau's generally or the demographic directorate's, in particular, relations with Congress in terms of just simply maintaining open channels of communication, being able to have mutual access between the Bureau and the Congress and its staff?**

Butz: Here I would particularly draw a distinction between the past, which is what I will talk about, and the present, about which I know relatively little. During the time that I was at the Bureau the chairpersons of the House of Representatives Oversight Committee during most of that period, were exceptionally supportive people. That doesn't mean they weren't critical; however, they were supportive. We were in the "boat together" trying to get to the same place. The Oversight Committee's staff was very much the same way. They were knowledgeable, active, involved, made sure they stayed aware of the major issues, and when push came to shove on important issues where it really mattered, they were there. That aspect of dealing with the Congress, while I certainly didn't always find it pleasurable (I frequently found it stressful), I found to be productive. That was certainly an area where the Commerce Department had a say, as they should. But I do think that the arm's length at which they held the Census Bureau during some years was harmful. It was difficult for us to discern what we were being told by the Congress because frequently Census Bureau representatives during some of those years were not even present at the meetings and hearings to learn, and that seems to me not to have been a good idea. The other kind of interaction that I had with the Congress was to report Census Bureau results in the context of legislation being planned in some other area. I recall testifying on income and about estimates before Senator Percy, Senator Moynihan, and others. These were occasions when I frequently took the Bureau's expert staff along to help if needed. It was always a pleasure, frequently stressful, but always a pleasure to be able to represent the Census Bureau and its good work in helping the Congress do its work.