

## ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION

### ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OPERATIONS OFFICE

The Puerto Rico Census Operations Office, a branch of the Decennial Operations Division of the U. S. Bureau of the Census, was opened during the latter part of April 1960. The office remained in operation until September 8, 1961, a period of approximately 18 months.

The office itself was installed on two floors totaling about 13,000 square feet of space in a newly constructed commercial building in the Hato Rey section of the City of San Juan. It was made available to the Census Bureau by the Commonwealth Planning Board. This space was highly satisfactory; however, various modifications had to be made before it could be used for the data-processing operations. The most important of these were: (1) increasing appreciably the available power supply to provide the electrical power required for the IBM machine installation, and (2) installation of adequate lighting to meet the needs of the card punchers and clerical personnel for the performance of their work.

### OFFICE SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT

Prior to opening the Puerto Rico Operations Office, the staff of the Decennial Operations Division in Washington developed estimates of the kinds and quantity of furniture, equipment, and supplies required for use in Puerto Rico. Studies were made of the cost of shipping these items from surplus stocks in the United States versus the cost of buying or renting them in Puerto Rico. It was determined that it would be cheaper to acquire the furniture and office equipment from surplus stocks of the Census Bureau and other Federal agencies in the United States and pay the transportation to Puerto Rico. The total cost of shipping these items to Puerto Rico was \$2,222. These items were later disposed of by turning them over to other Federal Government agencies located in Puerto Rico.

The tabulating machines used in Puerto Rico were obtained under rental agreements in the United States and shipped to Puerto Rico. Total shipping costs charged to the Census Bureau were \$4,415. Rental charges began with the date of installation of the machine in the Puerto Rico Operations Office.

The first 6-month's supply of general office supplies, forms and stationery items for use in the Puerto Rico Operations Office were also shipped from Washington. After the office started operations, replenishment of office supplies was handled by submission of regular purchase order requisitions from Puerto Rico to the U.S. General Services Administration in New York or through the use of an "Imprest Fund" (see "Fiscal Management," below).

### PERSONNEL

The staffing plan was based upon anticipated workload and processing requirements, and recruiting and appoint-

ment of personnel to fill these positions was carried out in accordance with regular Civil Service Commission procedures. The testing of candidates was carried out for the Census Bureau by the Department of Labor of the Government of Puerto Rico, using its standard clerical and mechanical aptitude tests. All persons were hired in order of examination rating and were given temporary appointments for a period not to exceed one year. The average length of employment was about nine months.

An experienced senior staff member of the Decennial Operations Division was detailed from Washington to serve as Chief of the Operations Office. The machine tabulation supervisor was also supplied from the Washington Office of the Bureau. With the exception of the two positions above mentioned, all other positions in the Operations Office were filled by local Puerto Ricans. However, various specialists from Washington were sent to Puerto Rico from time to time to advise on specific aspects of the work. Total employment reached a peak of 87 persons.

The Census Bureau used a special pay plan for employees of the Puerto Rico Operations Office which established salaries at the same levels paid by private industry in Puerto Rico and by the Puerto Rican Government. This pay plan was intended to make it possible for the Commonwealth Planning Board to absorb key personnel into its own statistical office after completion of the census processing. (It later proved not possible to do this.) In general, the pay plan proved satisfactory. Recruiting efforts resulted in plentiful supply of qualified applicants, and attrition rates were low. However, at some of the higher supervisory grades, particularly those requiring machine-processing experience, this pay scale proved to be somewhat low. This resulted in the loss of several key supervisors who received offers of higher paying employment elsewhere as a result of the training and experience gained in census processing.

### FISCAL MANAGEMENT

The payrolling of all the personnel of the Operations Office with the exception of the Chief of the Office and the machine tabulation supervisor were handled in Puerto Rico. The payroll was submitted to the Treasury Regional Disbursing Officer in Puerto Rico who in turn prepared the checks for salary payments to the employees.

An "Imprest Fund," or petty cash fund, was also assigned to the Operations Office for the purpose of purchasing locally immediately needed supplies or services.

Budgetary control was maintained in Washington. However, the Chief of the Puerto Rico Operations Office had the responsibility of analyzing budget allocations in the light of processing requirements and notifying Washington if they appeared to be out of balance.