The Seventh Morris Hansen Lecture

OPENING REMARKS

It is a genuine privilege to preside at this seventh lecture in the annual series that was established to honor Morris Hansen. Two years ago, when I served as a discussant at the fifth Hansen lecture, I noted that my encounters with Morris were somewhat different from those of colleagues who worked with him in areas such as methods of sampling and measurement of errors. Rather, I came to know Morris Hansen's wisdom and guidance through the monthly luncheon forums at the Cosmos Club, where several distinguished gentlemen would gather to pose challenging questions and offer seasoned insights to those still on the front lines in the Federal statistical system. It was through those discussions that I also came to know of Morris' broad interest in what might be described as the ''less technical'' issues confronting the Federal statistical agencies – and I am confident he would be pleased by the choice of today's speaker and his topic.

Norman Bradburn, the Tiffany and Margaret Blake Distinguished Service Professor at the University of Chicago, has been a colleague to many of us in the Federal statistical system through his work over the years at the National Opinion Research Center, where he currently serves as vice president and director of research. More recently, during the past four years, Norman has generously shared his talents by chairing the Committee on National Statistics at the National Academy of Sciences. His longstanding associations with the Federal statistical agencies, and perhaps most vividly his involvement with CNSTAT, certainly have acquainted Norman with the challenges we face as Federal statisticians. Addressing ''The Future of Federal Statistics in the Information Age,'' Norman Bradburn will discuss a number of those challenges, how technological advances may interact with those challenges, and what institutional structures may be needed to meet the challenges.

TerriAnn Löwenthal, currently a principal in the Rothleder-Löwenthal Group, will serve as our discussant. TerriAnn is best known to many of us from her tenure as Staff Director for the House Subcommittee on Census, Statistics and Postal Personnel. In that capacity, she was (and remains today) a key advocate for ensuring that statistical methods are understood and appropriately embraced as funding and other policy decisions are carried out in the legislative process. Her discussion will highlight some of the challenges we must address in working with the Congress, and avenues we as statisticians might pursue with members of the media and with stakeholders – the users of our products – to meet these challenges.

Katherine K. Wallman
U.S. Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503
U.S.A.