

Washington Statistical Society

CHAPTER-AMERICAN STATISTICAL ASSOCIATION

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NEWS LETTER

February 1949

MEETING ON 1950 CENSUSES FEBRUARY 14

"Plans for the 1950 Censuses of Population and Agriculture" will be the subject of a joint meeting of the Washington Statistical Society and the District chapter of the American Sociological Society on February 14.

The Seventeenth Decennial Census, of which the 1950 Censuses of Population and Agriculture are parts, will be the largest task so far undertaken by the Bureau of the Census. Some of the plans for carrying out the Censuses, results of experimental work done, and expected results will be discussed.

Speakers will be:

J.C. Capt, Director, Bureau of the Census
Chairman

Morris B. Hansen, Statistical Assistant to the Director
Summary of Experimental Work on Field and Washington Operations

Howard G. Brunsman, Chief, Population Division
Plans for the 1950 Censuses of Population and Housing

Ray Hurley, Chief, Agriculture Division
Plans for the 1950 Census of Agriculture

The meeting will be held at 8 pm, Monday, February 14 in Room 102, Hall of Government, George Washington University, 21st and G Streets, N.W. Discussion from the floor will conclude the meeting.

UTILIZING THE AMERICAN STATISTICIAN

The American Statistician is now approaching the end of the second year of its existence. It has met many needs of statisticians which could not be met by the technical publications of the American Statistical Association. Still, members of the Association have so far made little use of the magazine as a public forum for the discussion of professional problems. Letters and articles either outlining problems or suggesting solutions as well as letters discussing articles published would surely be welcomed by the editors.

In the case of questions submitted for the Question and Answer Department, many members may withhold questions on survey or operating techniques or requests for bibliographies because they are felt not to be as advanced as some of the mathematical questions answered. We have been assured that the

department is intended for all questions of interest to statisticians and that an attempt will be made to answer any question submitted.

News items about members or about new or changed projects should also be sent in to keep our members informed. Any of these letters, articles, or news notes may be sent directly to The American Statistical Association at 1603 K Street, N.W., or to the Secretary-Treasurer of the Washington Statistical Society.

COMING MEETING

A meeting on Von Neumann and Morgenstern's Theory of Games is planned by the Society. It may be possible to arrange this meeting in March. Details will appear in later News Letters.

JANUARY DINNER MEETING

The "Economic Outlook for 1949" was the question discussed by Leon H. Keyserling, vice-chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, and George C. Smith, Research Economist of the United States Chamber of Commerce, at a dinner given by the Washington Statistical Society Tuesday evening, January 11th. Dr. Smith said that most economic indicators pointed to a continued high level of economic activity with a moderate downturn in prices during 1949. Dr. Keyserling indicated that he opposed economic forecasting, but agreed generally as to coming trends. They differed sharply over government economic policy.

Dr. Keyserling described three present or portending "maldistributions" in the economy. They were: the wide range in income distribution, the incipient imbalance between prices for farm products and industrial goods, and the size of profits in relation to employee income. Selective remedial measures were needed in these areas while a National Prosperity Budget was proposed to prevent extreme cyclical movements. The Budget would estimate our economic capacities and outline production goals.

This proposal was opposed by Dr. Smith who stated it meant eventual authoritarian economic rule. It would continue, he said, the contradictory program recommended by President Truman in his Economic Report. Therein, the continuation or adoption of legislation which permitted government intervention in the economy was requested while at the same time, the maintenance of "democratic self-responsibility" was stressed. He also cited statements from the Report of the Council of Economic Advisers which, he said, indicated that economic planning of the type suggested would always be subordinated to political expediency.

Dr. Keyserling replied that the degree of intervention was limited and precluded any violation of the freedoms or responsibilities of democratic man.

SPEAKERS

Interest in meetings discussing Government statistical programs has been expressed by ASA Chapters in various parts of the country. Government statisticians making out-of-town trips in the course of their duties are asked to call the Secretary-Treasurer if they are willing to address Chapter meetings.

Samuel Weiss
Secretary-Treasurer