

## PROGRESS REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON POST-WAR DEVELOPMENT OF THE INSTITUTE

In considering the post-war development of the Institute of Mathematical Statistics, the Committee has recognized two general problems:

- A. The problem of what additional activities the Institute should undertake in order to provide further stimulus to the development of the field of mathematical statistics.
- B. The problem of determining how the Institute can cooperate more effectively with the users of statistical techniques.

Because of rapidly increasing interest in the application of statistical methods in many different fields, the Committee has directed most of its attention thus far to Problem B; the present progress report is concerned with the work of the Committee on this problem. The Committee hopes to submit a report on Problem A at the end of 1945.

With respect to Problem B, it is the opinion of the Committee that a central organization for the statistical societies should be of common interest. Accordingly, a plan was worked out and submitted to the Board of Directors of the Institute at the Wellesley meeting of the Institute. This proposal and its present status are discussed below.

We believe that there is much to be gained from an organization that would form a link between the various statistical societies, and would have the following principal aims:

- (1) To represent the members of the societies in all matters of common interest.
- (2) To promote cooperation between statisticians working in the different fields of application, and between mathematical statistics, applied statistics, scientific research and the industries.
- (3) To develop amongst the public an appreciation of the value of the statistical method in scientific inquiry.

It is our opinion that an organization similar to that of the Institute of Physics would be suitable. The statistical societies, while retaining their present autonomies, would become founding members of a corporation whose governing board would contain representatives from each society. In pursuance of its aims as outlined above, the new organization might:

- (a) Take the lead in formulating policies on questions which concern all statisticians.
- (b) Publish a journal of general interest to statisticians and undertake the routine work in connection with the publication of the journals of the individual societies, the societies retaining in full their present responsibility for the contents of their journals.
- (c) Arrange joint meetings between different statistical societies and between statistical and other scientific societies.

- (d) Assist new groups in organizing for their benefit, either under the auspices of one of the present societies or in a new society, which might at first be given associate membership and later full membership of the central organization.
- (e) Take steps to bring news about the use of statistics in scientific research to the attention of the public and more particularly of leaders in industry, in federal, state and local agencies and in education.
- (f) Investigate the demands for various types and degrees of statistical training, outline courses of training in statistics suitable for meeting these demands and make strenuous efforts to have the recommended courses of training put into effect, in order that statisticians can be of fullest service in the nation's work. In this connection an information and placement bureau may be an appropriate auxiliary.
- (g) Institute an abstracting service in statistical methodology. This might take the form of a periodical publication of abstracts of papers with respect to their methodological content rather than their subject matter. The coverage would include journals of business, marketing, engineering, medicine and agriculture as well as purely statistical publications.

The financial needs of the new organization, which would maintain a paid full-time staff, may be met initially by contributions from the present societies. In view of the extra services which would be rendered to statisticians, some increase in the subscription rates of the present societies appears reasonable. A member who belongs to more than one of the present societies would pay the extra amount only once. Supplementary income might be derived from advertising in the journal of the central organization and from the establishment of sustaining or corporate memberships in the central organization.

At the time of the Wellesley meeting of the Board, there had been only informal contacts between members of this Committee and members of other statistical societies. We considered it our first task to obtain some consensus of opinion from the standpoint of the Institute of Mathematical Statistics. Following general approval by the Board of Directors of the Institute, members of the Committee discussed the proposal for a central organization with representatives of several other statistical societies. The American Statistical Association has a Committee to consider the future structure of the Association and this Committee brought the Institute proposal before the Board of Directors of the Association for action. As the oldest of the statistical societies, the American Statistical Association then invited participation in an intersociety committee by the Institute and nine other societies or sections, directly or indirectly concerned with statistical method. This committee is to explore the possibilities of coordinating the activities of the several statistical societies and report its recommendations back to each organization. The representatives have now been named and the first meeting was held on February 10, 1945, in New York. At this meeting the Institute was represented by W. G. Cochran and Lt. John H. Curtiss.

With regard to the problem of what additional activities the Institute should undertake in order to furnish additional stimulation to the development of the field of mathematical statistics, the Committee has discussed several ideas which appear promising. It is hoped to present a complete report on this phase of the Committee's work at the end of this year.

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