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February 12, 1969

TO: Senator Clements
Fred Haas
Henry Ramm
Paul Smith
Add Yeaman

*new file
(Congress -
Truth in
Statistics)*

Re: Truth in Statistics

I am enclosing herewith a lengthy memorandum from Professor Sterling to me dated January 31. I feel that, although Professor Sterling does not in this memorandum do what I had requested, his thoughts expressed in the memorandum are definitely worth study and consideration. After a further conference last Friday in which it was explained to him that he had not specified guidelines to be followed, he wrote me a letter of February 10 simply making additional comments on his memorandum. I also enclose that letter.

This morning I talked with Professor Sterling, again pointing out that he still had not given us the guidelines for Public Health surveys which I had requested. He then, for the first time, explained that it is impossible to develop guidelines that would be applicable to all studies. Instead, it is important to have competent personnel who will be able to formulate guidelines for each study, fitting the guidelines to the nature and purpose of the particular study under consideration. Thus, it would be necessary for a committee or commission to be consulted in advance to determine guidelines for a particular study and then to examine the work done before publication to determine whether the guidelines had been followed, and whether the data accumulated justified the conclusions made therefrom.

In Professor Sterling's memorandum he mentions several instances of defective surveys or unjustified conclusions. In our telephone conversation, he added the following:

A study by Schroeder and others done under Public Health Service grant on "Hard and Soft Water Related to Heart Disease;"

Various air pollution studies;

The Cranberry Study; and

Hormones in Chicken Feed.

All of these he labeled as defective and misleading.

I have advised Professor Sterling that he need do nothing further on this particular matter unless and until he hears from us.

Sincerely,



David R. Hardy

DRH/v

cc: Abe Krash
H. T. Austern