

**TRANSACTIONS OF SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES  
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**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

In view of the limited time allotted to this report and the potentially wide range of topics, I have thought that the best approach would be to offer my personal comments on a very few specific areas.

The activities of the Society office and of myself can be divided into two general categories—development activities and administrative activities. Two of the subjects I wish to touch on lie in the development area—continuing education and public relations—while the third lies in the field of administration. I will deal with this first.

On September 15, the Society of Actuaries passed a milestone. After twenty years of occupying only one office location, we made a major move—upstairs, one floor. The change in respects other than geographical has been major, though. With about 50 percent more office space, we are able to accommodate our activities much more efficiently; for example, no longer do we have to suspend a second layer of desks from the ceiling. The phone system has been expanded. The office furnishings have been improved. Our twenty-year-old desks have been replaced, and we are phasing out the quill pens with ballpoints. Seriously, though, the office facilities are remarkably improved, and we do anticipate that this will enable us to carry out our duties much more efficiently. (We might even shave another week or two off the delivery time for the *Year Book*.) If any of you are in the Chicago area, I hope you will take the opportunity to drop in to see us.

Turning back to the development sphere—administration is preservation—I want to say a word or two on continuing education. In my last year's report, I suggested that this was an area which would require deep involvement on the part of myself and the Society as a whole. Today, this is about to come to pass. As you know, a working committee has been appointed under Jack Bragg's able chairmanship, a course of action has been determined, and the necessary research is now being undertaken. You have all seen—and I hope responded to—the questionnaire on interests and talents which was the first fruit of this committee's work. Jack himself will be speaking to you about this later in the meeting. Another small, but worthwhile, step has just been taken. It has been agreed that the Examination Study Notes will now be priced individually, so that if you want to buy a particular note, you will not have to lay out your treasure for a full (3,000-page) set. This, combined with publicity on what notes are available, should greatly enhance their usefulness.

What I did want to emphasize is this. Continuing education is, to my mind, the most vital work that the Society can undertake for its members today. Granted that, in comparison with medicine or engineering, the rate of change of actuarial knowledge is glacial at best, it does change. When I completed my examinations, variable annuities, let alone variable life insurance, were merely a gleam in someone's eye, and grading premiums by policy size was the new matinee idol—too new to appear on the syllabus. And there are many here today whose study track stopped before that. For all of us, the opportunity to acquire the new knowledge exists, but it is fragmentary, spasmodic, and just downright inconvenient. The point is, we must acquire it, or some of it at least, and a continuing education program is the only satisfactory way to do so. Without such a program, our profession's success in its own chosen field must be doubtful, not to mention success in all the other fields that are susceptible to actuarial application. This is the job that the committee will be involved in, and I will be involved in, and we hope that all of you will in some way be involved in it too.

The second development area I want to talk about is that of public relations.

In the peculiar jargon of the Society, public relations means primarily recruitment, whatever it might mean elsewhere. The importance of this role might be capsulated by pointing out that, although the study embodied in the Klem Committee Report on the Future Course of the Society pointed to a minimum need of some two hundred Fellows a year in 1970, this past year we have only matriculated about one hundred and fifty. There is still a Fellow gap, and it is real. I would therefore conclude that the work of the Public Relations Committee—which includes responsibility for the Actuarial Aptitude Test; communications with the high schools, universities, and colleges; the provision of speakers for schools; co-ordination with the High School Mathematics Contest; and the running of National Science Foundation forums—deserves the support of all of us.

This is particularly true since these are not usual times. For one thing, the economic slowdown which now affects our countries has led to interest in the actuarial profession on the part of a significant number of persons who might not normally have considered such a step—qualified engineers, mathematicians, and physicists. These are people who may be difficult to fit within our profession; they may be entering it at a higher-than-normal age and with greater-than-normal responsibilities, and, perhaps more importantly, they may bring a more critical attitude toward it. Nonetheless, such persons can enrich our profession, but it may well require a con-

scious effort to enroll them, and this effort must be made by the Public Relations Committee, and, through them, by you.

Another area of increased importance is that of disadvantaged persons. We are aware that certain individuals, even certain college students, are disadvantaged in their efforts to seek satisfactory employment by reason of race, color, or just plain lack of money. An ad hoc committee of New York actuaries has been trying to work on one area of this problem—that of encouraging more black actuarial students—and this may be an activity in which other Society members will feel called to play a role before long.

I would add one other area of involvement. Certainly the major need of schools today is for more funds to support programs and to support students. The Public Relations Committee as such cannot operate in this area, but individual actuaries and their employers can, and I would commend to you the thought that increased financial support of schools with actuarial programs may be a responsibility which all must bear if the actuarial profession is to survive and prosper.

I have tried to touch on some of the areas of my work that may be of interest to the members. I would stress that your comments and criticisms are always welcome.

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