



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

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THE Actuary

New public relations campaign set for 1990

by Erich Parker

An advisory group representing six North American actuarial societies recently helped design a new public awareness campaign for the actuarial profession in North America, which will extend Forecast 2000 into its second year. The advisory group – comprising representatives from the American Academy of Actuaries, American Society of Pension Actuaries, Canadian Institute of Actuaries (CIA), Casualty Actuarial Society, Conference of Actuaries in Public Practice, and the Society of Actuaries – recently met with public relations staff from the Academy and Edelman Public Relations to complete plans for the new campaign.

This new 1990 campaign will build upon the considerable successes achieved last year, which included media exposure and enhanced recognition of actuaries as experts in analyzing and forecasting future costs and business risks. Last year's Forecast 2000 won the Thoth award from the Public Relations Society of America, Washington, D.C., Chapter, for the best institutional public relations program in 1989. The cosponsoring organizations of the Centennial received awards in July for their involvement in the campaign. For the 1990 campaign, efforts will again focus on reaching business and opinion leaders, public policymakers, and the general public through a variety of news outlets (print and broadcast, national and regional, general audience and trade press).

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Interviews with presidential candidates

by Linda B. Emory

Included in this special issue of *The Actuary* are interviews with the Society of Actuaries second-ballot presidential candidates. The Committee on Elections asked *The Actuary* staff to interview the second-ballot presidential candidates and to publish the interviews to help members become more familiar with the candidates. These interviews are part of the changes being made in the Society 1990 elections procedures. All changes were explained in the "Elections Report" supplement to the April 1990 *Actuary*. The second ballot, which will also contain a 200-word position statement from each presidential candidate, will be mailed to Fellows July 24.

Since this was the first time such an interview process has been conducted, we thought you might like to know about the procedure followed. First, the questions were prepared by *The Actuary* Editorial Board. Gary Corbett, Chairperson of the Committee on Elections, reviewed the questions in advance. The questions were based to some extent upon responses from a recent questionnaire where members identified issues of most concern to them.

Once the second-ballot presidential candidates were known, they were invited to Chicago for individual interviews. For each interview, Linda Delgadillo read the same questions in the same sequence to each candidate. All answers were tape-recorded. Steve Radcliffe, Associate Editor of *The Actuary*, was present for three of the four interviews to introduce the process and assure that each interview

was conducted equitably and impartially. John O'Connor, SOA Executive Director, sat in for Radcliffe at the fourth interview. *The Actuary* staff edited the interview transcripts, and these were reviewed by Delgadillo, Radcliffe, and me. Pictures were also taken throughout the interviews by a professional photographer. Each candidate was allowed to read and edit the responses printed. The name chosen for the first interview printed was by random draw after eliminating the name previously chosen to appear first on the second ballot. The other three names appear in alphabetical order.

We would like to express our appreciation to the candidates for their cooperation and patience in this first interview endeavor. If this process is repeated, other candidates will have a better idea of what to expect.

The Board of Governors, *The Actuary* Editorial Board and the Committee on Elections encourage members to write letters giving their reaction both to the interview content and this process.

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Rappaport interview cont'd

Question: What do you think the Society can do to increase public recognition of the actuarial profession?

Rappaport: I'd start with the way we focus on issues. There are a couple of different problems with public recognition. Historically, people haven't known who we were, although I think more people know who we are today. One of the issues is how we apply our discipline. If we apply it very narrowly, then people will see us as narrowly focused; so we need to apply our discipline more widely.

I'm very encouraged by *Contingencies*. *Contingencies* has been great in terms of taking current issues, getting actuarial perspective, and then disseminating that information. We need broader focus, and we need to reach more audiences, but we also need to be careful about our perspective. I've spent some time in Washington. Some people don't know who we are, but a lot do. The problem is that often they think we're an interest group representing the insurance industry.

More individual actuaries should take a broader focus and try to publish their work. We can seek to publish our work in nonactuarial as well as actuarial publications. For example, financial security is a topic that has received more public attention in the last few years. *Businessweek*, *Newsweek*, *Time*, all regularly publish articles about Social Security, pensions, healthcare, etc.

Question: How can the Society best support the Academy and the Canadian Institute in their efforts to carry out public interface responsibilities for the profession?

Rappaport: Let's return to an earlier comment. Building the knowledge base and being broad based in the way we do that is critical. In many cases, we start to focus on an issue when it's already at the point for public interface. If we've built the knowledge base before that time, that will really help. A lot that we do is driven by underlying social forces, and one of the key forces is demographics. If we look at the demographics and the dynamics of aging in the United States — the aging baby boom population, what we know as retirement age today and its implications by 2020, 2025, and after that, and similar issues — we can see issues coming along that are related to demographics.

We need to do research. Then from the point of view of the Academy, when issues get into the public policy arena, the foundations are there. If we don't look at those issues earlier, when things surface in the public policy arena, it may be too late. I think the issues faced by the CIA might be quite different, and I'm not sure if we need to support the CIA in the same way but, again, I think the knowledge base is important. Also we need to make sure our education system responds well to Canadian needs. If we build our knowledge base, we facilitate research, we publish it well, and we reflect the knowledge base in our education, then that provides the support we need to be effective in public interface.

Question: If you are elected President of the Society, what one issue or task would receive your greatest attention?

Rappaport: Building the knowledge base and making the knowledge base respond to the outside issues would be my focus.

Question: Is there anything else you would like to comment on or emphasize?

Rappaport: I see this as a really critical time for the profession. With the federal budget deficit driving public policy, with so much public policy related to financial security, so much legislation affecting employee benefits in the last decade, and so much threat of further legislation, it's really important that we focus broadly on outside issues.

Actuarial research conference

The Twenty-Fifth Actuarial Research Conference will be conducted August 23-25 at the University of Western Ontario. To obtain a registration form, call the University of Western Ontario at 519-661-3613 or 519-661-3617, fax a request at 519-661-3813, or address a request to the 25th Actuarial Research Conference, Department of Statistical & Actuarial Sciences, University of Western Ontario, London, Canada N6A 5B9.

In memoriam

Charles E. Probst FSA 1948

1990 PR campaign cont'd

The program officially opened at a press briefing at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., where it was announced what the profession believes to be the five greatest challenges facing the continent in the next century. Those challenges are: (1) Providing medical care in a high cost environment, which includes such subject matter as healthcare for the uninsured, catastrophic care, and long-term care; (2) Financing automobile insurance, which includes risk classification issues, rate rollback provisions, uninsured motorists, and no-fault insurance; (3) Saving for retirement, which includes Social Security and deficit reduction issues, private pension plans, and tax incentives for individual savings; (4) Environmental risk, which includes insurance coverage for both natural disasters and such events as oil spills and nuclear accidents; and (5) The graying of the continent, which includes topics like mortality rates, changing demographics, the cost of living longer, and changing education and immigration patterns.

These challenges, plus an ever-growing list of subheadings, resulted from discussions among advisory group members. These five broad headings make up the framework of the campaign and will be worked into breaking news stories with actuarial components. Fact sheets on each broad subject area will be prepared from already-existing material and data from a variety of sources.

The campaign will include presentations throughout the year from three trained and well-rehearsed spokespersons: Robert L. Brown, of the University of Waterloo Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science and president of the CIA, will speak on Canadian subjects; Jim Murphy, executive vice president of the Academy, will speak about U.S. topics other than casualty; and actuarial consultant Fred Kilbourne will talk on U.S. casualty issues. These individuals will not express any actuarial organization's collective thoughts or public statements on these challenges. They will express their personal views, drawing upon the actuarial thought reflected in the background information prepared for them and the nation's news media. The key to this campaign is to point out that actuarial expertise exists on a variety of issues that affect people's lives in very important ways.