

THE EDITORIAL

Roy Car-Hill confessed to having problems about what to put in the last newsletter. Us too! The difficulty was not only managing to get our hands on that valuable promised copy, but also the fact that selection of suitable articles is difficult when there is no clear editorial policy. This lack of a clear policy is partly because we are a loosely knit collection of statisticians with varying views, perspectives and interests. One thing however which in recent weeks has struck a common chord is the election of the RSS president. Whilst in itself Henry Wynn's election is a victory for democratisation, in practice any democratisation program within RSS may well be met with opposition within the Council and apathy in the membership. Thanks are due to Liz for her hard work on Council to date, and we wish the new President success.

Another point of common ground is the belief that as a group we should not be introspective but more outward looking. With respect to the education function, we are agreed that we should provide statistical expertise, help and information to groups in the community who need and want it. This is obviously already taking place at an individual level and it would be nice to hear more about what is going on in this respect in future newsletters.

At the more general level pamphlets like "Whose Priorities" and ones currently being worked on by the Health and Education groups are important information sources. It is good to hear that first drafts for "Demystifying Social Statistics" are complete and should be ready for the publishers by early 1978. The other book is the "Workers' Handbook of Statistics" which is going to follow close on its heels. It is of course desirable to help the 'man-in-the-street' to find and interpret the statistics available in official (and other) sources and also help correct the popular fallacies and misinterpretations of statistics. In this context see our article on immigration.

Dave Drew

Tony Bendell

Maths and Stats Dept.,
Sheffield City Polytechnic