

Merger I

John Bibby

THE MERGER - A POSITION PAPER

I have been asked to put a few words together to express a personal point of view concerning the proposed merger between the RSS and the Institute. My main points would be the following:

- . Statistics depends and has historically depended for its life-blood upon an "open-ness" to people and ideas from outside the mainstream of the profession.
- . It is essential that any reorganisation of the profession retains this open-ness.
- . Statistics is an area in which deference to technique expertise may be commendable, yet the professional body should not seek to formalise a hierarchy based on such expertise, least of all an expertise assessed largely by examination performance. Criticism is the key to open-ness and the motor of progress.
- . Nevertheless, members of the RSS have much to gain from closer contact with the Institute.
- . I am in favour of a merger, but not a merger at any cost.
- . The proposed merger into a hierarchical society is unacceptable.
- . However it is important to pursue further the possibility of other forms of merger and/or collaboration.
- . Our main aim should therefore be towards reconvening the working party, possibly with new membership, and new terms of reference which take into account the points made above.

JOHN BIBBY

The Open University