

that an advertisement is a stimulus and as such should:

- (a) Stop the reader
- (b) Cause an association of product with the advertiser
- (c) Plant ideas that dispose the reader favorably toward product

The "Impact" method is designed to measure:

- (a) The attention value of an advertisement
- (b) The ideas that register
- (c) The motivations stimulated by the ad

In the "Impact" technique, the respondent is interviewed some time after the publication carrying the advertisement to be measured has been received in the home.

The respondent is required to give proof of exposure to the ad. Then, with the magazine closed, the respondent is asked to mention some item of content and to describe it. The relationship of news content to penetration was discussed and the group seemed to feel that the more news content in an ad, the greater the penetration.

One participant stated that the nation was homogeneous in its reaction to ads. "We could take New Jersey and get practically the same results as with a national sample," he said. He pointed out that re-

action to whisky ads is the same everywhere in the United States regardless of the blend or whisky drinking habits. Another participant did not agree. He said that experience with a product must be reckoned with. People are more prone to notice things they have had experience with. Where there are differences in experiences between areas, a sample from only one area will not do.

Gaps in present media research were discussed. These were listed as:

- (1) Lack of adequate classification data  
Need for data regarding a respondent's propensity to observe and read an ad:
  - (a) Personal experience with the products of the advertiser
  - (b) Exposure to other selling efforts of the advertiser.
- (2) Best advertisement possible not determined  
There is available no technique for determining the best possible ad for a given market in a given situation
- (3) Lack of information on the role of advertising in heterogeneous product competition

Current services provide information on competition between brands within product categories, but no information on competition between products.

## PRESIDENTIAL SESSION

(Saturday, May 16, 1953)

*Chairman:* Bernard Berelson, The Ford Foundation.

*President:* Archibald M. Crossley, Crossley, Inc. "Credo".

*Guest Speaker:* Roscoe Drummond, *The Christian Science Monitor*. "A Journalist Looks at a Presidential Election."

*Session Analyst:* W. Phillips Davison, The Rand Corporation.

President Crossley described his talk as an expression of a personal credo. This description was certainly correct, in the sense that the speaker dealt with goals in the attainment of which he believed the opinion researcher should play a part. In another sense, however, it was a contribution to the discussion of the place which values should occupy in scientific research.

A long range goal of those of us whose business is the interpretation of public opinion, the speaker said, is to discover

ways in which conflict can be eased and goodwill advanced among the peoples of the world. All social science is involved in some way in the study of frustration and conflict. In trying to explain the state of mind of the disgruntled buyer or the dissatisfied worker, for example, opinion researchers are assisting in the process of reducing domestic tension. By joining their techniques to those of the other social sciences, they should be able to assist in decreasing international tensions as well.

A decrease in international tension, in turn, would surely bring closer the goal of a lasting peace. Even if this decrease in tension is very slight — even if it is only 5 per cent in 50 years — it is worth working toward.

Accordingly, public opinion researchers should examine their tools, and the uses to which these tools have already been put, in order to determine how their contribution can best be made. It is clear that the range of problems in the solution of which survey techniques have played a part is steadily growing. In recent years opinion researchers have cooperated with business men, lawyers, physicians, diplomats, educators, and many other groups, in finding solutions to economic, social and political problems. A systematic examination of all these applications should be made, and from this examination we may expect an expanded concept of opinion research. It may be possible to look ahead and to chart a course toward both proximate and distant goals which the profession would like to try and attain. High among these goals should be the reduction of tensions — local, national and international.

"We are in a potentially altruistic profession," concluded Mr. Crossley. "Let us make the most of it."

It is probable that opinions would differ on several of the points made by the speaker. For instance, one can question whether tensions between individuals and between nations are necessarily of the same species. Or one can doubt that examination of progress in opinion research to date would necessarily show a clear path which the profession should tread in the future; such an examination might instead suggest a series of different courses — it might multiply the choices rather than limit them.

But to belabor these bones of possible contention would be to lose sight of something more important. In the opinion of this reviewer, the underlying theme of the address concerned the attitude which the researcher should take toward his science. As an impartial scientist he should strive to keep his inquiries free from value judgments, but as a member of a democratic society he should recognize his responsibility to find ways of using his science

in the advancement of man's highest values. Mr. Crossley's remarks suggest further that perhaps a certain preoccupation with values will speed the development of the science itself. Should opinion researchers generally become interested in the part they can play in reducing tensions, for instance, we might expect that progress in developing techniques for the attainment of this goal would be more rapid.

A second basic thesis suggested by the address is that opinion researchers, and indeed all specialists, can benefit from stopping from time to time and examining the applications being made of their techniques and analyzing what this suggests for the future. A periodic inventory is a device which can help to assure a continuously expanding and vital field of investigation. Exclusive preoccupation with specialized techniques may lead to meaninglessness, unless these are related to a larger whole.

It should not be out of place to suggest that the very high regard in which the speaker is held by his colleagues is not unrelated to his belief that opinion researchers should take an active part in trying to build a better society. Nor is he one who shrinks from social responsibility by taking refuge in more and more specialized techniques. If all practitioners can support a similar credo, then the profession has little cause to worry about the role it is to play in the future.

The guest speaker at Pocono Manor also helped to put some of the subject matter of opinion research in a larger perspective. Speaking as a newspaperman who for several decades had been in charge of the Washington Bureau of the Christian Science Monitor, Roscoe Drummond analyzed some of the broader political implications of the 1952 presidential election.

Even after six months, he pointed out, it is not easy to decide who really won the election. The results seem to indicate simultaneously the unpopularity of the Truman administration and of the Republican Party. Never before have the American people expressed such confidence in a candidate and such a lack of trust in his party. Never has the successful presidential candidate piled up such an impressive popular vote, only to see his party gain control of the House and Senate by a

hair line. The 1952 election was a strong contrast to that of 1948, where Truman polled only 49 per cent of the popular vote, but the Democrats secured a substantial Congressional majority. Analysis also shows that in the 1952 election 24 per cent of those who voted for Stevenson split their ballots and voted for Republican members of Congress, while 45 per cent of those who voted for Eisenhower voted for Democratic Congressmen.

The source of this apparently paradoxical voting behavior goes back 14 years. Since 1938 the American people have elected an essentially conservative Congress — at least, this body has been dominated by a conservative, bi-partisan coalition. And not since 1938 has a major piece of domestic legislation been adopted. On the other hand, for the past 14 years the country has elected a liberal President. When a Republican finally was sent to the White House, he was one who stood considerably to the left of his party.

The speaker suggested that this historical record might provide the key to voting behavior in the 1952 election. It indicates that the people do not want to see new experiments in social legislation (hence a conservative Congress), but they do want to see the social and economic reforms of the past 20 years retained and *prudently* enlarged (hence a liberal Executive). If this interpretation is correct, then the verdict of 1952 was 14 years in the making; the election showed not a paradox, but rather consistency on the part of the voters.

The relationship of polling to the democratic process also came in for a brief scrutiny. Predictive polling may have some value to opinion research, observed the speaker, but it is the analytical role of surveys which can be of great value to democracy. Surveys can help the American people get what they want. For instance, they show that on occasion the public is more sophisticated than political leaders think it is. Recent surveys indicate that there is a consensus throughout the country that taxes should not be reduced until a balanced budget is attained. Yet many politicians are still going on the theory that people want taxes reduced, no matter what the consequences.

Mr. Drummond also commented on the

belief of some researchers that newspapermen fear they are being edged out of their jobs by the polls. ("What does a poll taker mean by making a statement like that without first taking a poll?") This is not the case, he said. Actually, the more perceptive newspapermen are removing themselves from the prediction business and confining themselves to the functions of reporting and analysis. Competing with the polls is not a function of sound journalism, but reporting the results of surveys on important questions certainly is, the speaker concluded.

Since the guest speaker spoke from the standpoint of a journalist, it is difficult to comment on his remarks in terms of opinion research. One can wonder whether Eisenhower's election really had very much to do with the fact that he campaigned on a relatively liberal platform, or whether it was more closely related to the fact that he had had a remarkably successful military career. Perhaps he would have been elected if he had refrained from taking a definite stand on any issues, or if he had adopted the views of Senator Taft. Also, one can question whether it is really possible to speak of a national verdict in elections — whether it is not more likely that local social, economic and historical factors play such an overwhelming role in voting behavior that the national result is merely the figment of adding unlike quantities and not an organic whole. But these are questions which are more likely to be illuminated by research than by discussion.

More important for those who are accustomed to deal with cross-tabulations and multiple correlations is to note how much can be said on the basis of the raw returns which are to be found in the morning paper, and how rich and provocative the historical record can be. Insofar that he suggested by example that researchers show much more imagination in interpreting the figures they have, rather than confining their efforts to devising ways of obtaining more valid figures, Mr. Drummond gave a much-needed sermon to the fraternity.

It should also be remarked that he is certainly one of the most polished and enjoyable speakers whom AAPOR has been privileged to hear.