

Presidential Address
AAPOR TIMES 21

BY PAUL B. SHEATSLEY*

ONE of my distinguished predecessors in this office, Paul Lazarsfeld, once compared the life of an AAPOR President to that of some rare moth, which emerges from its cocoon for one brief and resplendent day of life, and then dies. Thus too the AAPOR President would serve his year's time in relative idleness and anonymity and then, on the final day of his office, burst forth in glory to conduct the annual business meeting, deliver his presidential address, accept the plaudits of the membership, and turn the gavel over to his successor.

But Dr. Lazarsfeld made his comparison of the AAPOR presidency to the moth in 1950, when AAPOR was three years old and when its total membership was well under 200 individuals. Now, eighteen years later, the AAPOR President presides over an active and growing society of almost 800, and his life is just a little more full. AAPOR, it should be known, has this year attained its majority, having reached the youthful and vigorous age of 21—a fact which has provided excuse for the title of this paper.

One can easily understand and forgive a certain amount of confusion about the age of our organization, when we consider that this is the twenty-third annual conference on public opinion research, held twenty-two years after the first one in Central City, Colorado. How then is AAPOR now 21? Because that first conference was not an AAPOR conference. It was a planning conference, out of which evolved a committee which wrote a constitution for the incipient AAPOR, which constitution was formally adopted and AAPOR established at Williamstown, Massachusetts, in 1947, with Clyde W. Hart as its first President and Elmo C. Wilson as Vice President. Thus, in 1948 AAPOR was one year old, and today in 1968 it is 21 years old.

The story of how the seeds of a public opinion research association were planted high in the Rockies at Central City and carried east to Williamstown where that association became AAPOR—much like the story of how jazz came up the river from New Orleans—has often

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been told. David Wallace,¹ in his presidential address at Lake George in 1959, reviewed much of this history, but I hope that he and you will forgive me for going over some of the same ground. I ask this forbearance for several reasons. First, the record raises the question: Can an association born in a small mining town in the Rockies find happiness on Madison Avenue and the college campus? It behooves the members of our society, if we are to meet the problems of the sixties and seventies, to think back occasionally to the conditions that led us to band together and to consider from time to time what our purposes are and how we mean to achieve them. Second, the age of 21 is an appropriate time for such stocktaking, as we set forth into the world as adults. And lastly, after reflecting for a year or more on whether this address should report on one or another research project I have been engaged in, or should take a long look at the role of public opinion research in an increasingly short-tempered and technological society, or should concern itself with any of a hundred other matters that might appropriately be discussed here tonight—after reflecting on all this, it seemed to me that, as one of the shrinking band of oldsters who recall the early days of our field and who participated in them, I might most effectively try to review briefly our history and traditions, and how these might shape our response to present and future problems.

The fact that many of us *can* recall the early days of public opinion research indicates that our field is yet a young one. Many of the founding fathers are still with us. For public opinion research as we know it today did not really come into existence until the newly established Gallup, Crossley, and *Fortune* polls correctly predicted Franklin Delano Roosevelt's landslide victory over Alf M. Landon in the 1936 presidential election. Until then the standard of election forecasts had been the *Literary Digest*, with its millions of paper ballots mailed to telephone and automobile owners, and various other newspaper and magazine straw polls. It was Gallup, Roper, and Crossley who first applied, on a nationwide scale, the techniques of sampling, standardized questionnaire, and personal interview to the measurement of public opinion. The vindication of these methods in the 1936 election had enormous consequences for our profession. Older research methods, such as mail and telephone surveys, sidewalk interviews, straw polls, and content analysis were at least temporarily discredited. For the first time—thanks to these market researchers turned polltakers—political scientists, sociologists, psychologists, and other social scientists had suitable tools to test their

¹ David Wallace, "A Tribute to the Second Sigma," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 23, 1959, pp. 311-325.

theories and hypotheses on large and representative samples. Modern public opinion research had been born. It is no coincidence that the first issue of AAPOR's official organ, the *Public Opinion Quarterly*, appeared in print only two months after that 1936 presidential election.

Before United States involvement in World War II, therefore, public opinion research had only a brief five-year history. Looked at by today's standards, those few prewar years were quiet ones. The relatively few practitioners in the field worked independently, and for the most part with little public notice. Market researchers dealt with relatively unsophisticated clients, and little or none of their work was seen or judged by anyone except the client. Aside from a few pioneers like Hadley Cantril at the Office of Public Opinion Research at Princeton and Paul Lazarsfeld at the then Office of Radio Research at Columbia, academia itself was slow to interest itself in the new techniques of opinion measurement. Not until 1941 was Harry Field able to establish a university-affiliated research center with national polling facilities. Of course, that was long before the days of large government grants and contracts for survey research. The only government use of public opinion research, as we now know it, before World War II was that conducted by Rensis Likert and his colleagues in the Agriculture Department's Division of Program Surveys.

It was World War II that provided the second great thrust for public opinion research, for largely through the efforts of such men as Likert, Lazarsfeld, Cantril, Roper, and Samuel Stouffer, the Administration's leadership was persuaded that the attitudes and behavior of the American people, upon whom ultimately the successful management and prosecution of the war effort rested, could most reliably be ascertained only through public opinion research. A large number of survey operations were mounted by various agencies of government at various times during World War II, but two programs in particular strongly influenced the future course of our profession. One of these was the Research Branch of the War Department's Information and Education Division, which, under Stouffer's direction, conducted the hundreds of surveys that were reported in the classic volumes of *The American Soldier*. The other was the Office of War Information's Surveys Division, under the direction of Elmo C. Wilson, through which were funneled most of the government's surveys of the civilian population.

What was remarkable about both of these wartime research operations was that both Stouffer and Wilson staffed their divisions largely with recruits from academia rather than from the world of market

research. Working with Wilson were such people as Hazel Gaudet, Jack Riley, Julian Woodward, and Herb Hyman. Working with Stouffer were Jack Elinson, Bob Ford, Shirley Star. The very names suggest the influence that these wartime programs would have on the future founding and development of AAPOR. And most of these people, of whom I have named only a tiny fraction, brought to their work, not a long background in market research or political polling, but the skills and approach of the social scientist.

They took the still crude methodology of public opinion research and they creatively improved it, through innovations in sampling, questionnaire design, interviewing, and analysis of their data. They were not interested in using research to predict elections or product sales, or to measure readership or radio audiences. They were interested in describing and explaining human behavior. But for that very reason, of course, they had much in common with the polltakers and the market researchers. For the factors that led people to vote for one candidate rather than another, or to choose one brand of soap or cereal rather than another, or to attend or not attend to a particular advertising message, were not much different from the factors that governed the public's response to the wartime issues and messages the academic researchers were studying.

The stage then was set for the third great thrust in our profession. With the end of the war, it was clear that public opinion research faced both new opportunities and new dangers. Compared with only five years before, its methods had become far more sophisticated and flexible. Its increasingly successful application to a wide range of problems virtually guaranteed a sharply expanded use of survey research by government, business, universities, and private interests of all kinds. Furthermore, the return of peace to the world, the democratization of Japan and Germany, and the emergence of formerly colonial nations to independence strongly suggested an immense expansion of public opinion research all over the world. Finally, many of the erstwhile academics who had manned the government's wartime research efforts now considered themselves professional survey researchers, and they were eager to continue their careers. Given all this, it was unlikely that conditions would revert to the leisurely days of the thirties.

It was in these circumstances and at this time that Harry H. Field, founder and director of the National Opinion Research Center, then located at the University of Denver, sent out his call for a conference on public opinion research in the summer of 1946. Now the objects of his call were an interesting group. Most of us at the time would have invited Messrs. Gallup, Roper, and Crossley; the directors of

the various state polls that had by then come into existence; other leading market researchers; probably Drs. Lazarsfeld, Stouffer, Cantril, Likert, and a few other prestigious academics—and that would have been it. Harry Field invited all of these, but he invited many more. He was keenly aware of the wartime research, and he invited young kids like Herb Hyman and Bob Ford. He invited a host of academics who were concerned with public opinion research, including the late Norman Meier of Iowa, and Stuart Dodd, who had done and was to do so much in spreading the research gospel internationally. He invited users and clients of public opinion research, as well as those who practiced it, such as the research chiefs of CBS, NBC, *Reader's Digest*, *Time* and *Life*. He invited interviewer supervisors like Nancy Cooley, and he invited sampling experts like Morris Hansen. He invited journalists, ad agency people, government officials; somehow even a few graduate students showed up, including our present Secretary-Treasurer, Dick Baxter.

This was the conference which was held at Central City. Practically all of those invited showed up, but the total attendance was not much over seventy-five, including about a dozen of Harry Field's NORC staff. Even this number, however, strained the limited facilities of Central City, Colorado. The formal program at this conference was not especially memorable, although it was here that many of us learned for the first time of the experimental work that was to lead to Guttman scaling, and were exposed to Hansen's strictures on probability, as opposed to quota, sampling. There were sessions on interviewing, and political polling, and the role of public opinion research in a democracy—the same kind of thing we're still doing—but what was and still is memorable was the communication that occurred during the three days in which the conferees were cut off from the world. For perhaps the first time, the pollsters realized that their work was interesting not only to politicians, the press, and the public, but also to university scholars; the academics realized that their work was interesting not only to their colleagues but to the world of market research; the market researchers realized that the techniques they were using were of interest to the government and the universities; and all four—government, academia, market research, and the polls—realized that what they were doing had important implications for postwar society, not only in the United States, but in western Europe, the former Axis nations, and the underdeveloped world.

Even before Central City, there had been discussions among the leading polltakers about forming an association to do mainly two things: to formulate and maintain standards of competence in polling

and, through a public relations program, to foster better understanding of the uses and limitations of polls. In a session on Technical and Ethical Standards in Public Opinion Research at the Central City conference, Julian Woodward, representing Elmo Roper, reported that Gallup, Roper, and Crossley had agreed to sponsor such an association and that it would probably include the national polls, the state polls, and certain community polls.²

But what happened at Central City was that this embryonic idea was broadened to include *all* of public opinion research and not just the polls. At the closing general session of the conference, five resolutions were unanimously adopted. First, that a Continuing Committee Audrey Janice Buster No. 7 7-23 10|12-26 Bask. Public Op. 3578 be elected to plan for a second conference in 1947; second, "This conference favors the creation of a national association of opinion research organizations, dedicated to the improvement of research standards and to the wider employment of opinion research techniques"; third, that a Committee on Standards be appointed; fourth, "This conference favors the ultimate establishment of an international organization for the encouragement of opinion research on a world-wide scale"; and fifth, a vote of thanks to Harry Field.³

It will be noted that the second resolution called for an association of opinion research *organizations*. If implemented, this would have had drastic consequences for AAPOR, which would then have reflected the characteristics of a trade association rather than those of a professional society. But sometime in the course of the next year, as the Committee on Standards—consisting of Elmo Wilson, Morris Hansen, and Henry David, then of Queens College—and the Continuing Committee—chaired by Clyde Hart and including Gallup, Stouffer, Wilson, Woodward, and Lloyd Borg, then director of the Minnesota Poll—as these men wrestled with the problems of writing a constitution for the proposed association, the idea of a group of *individuals* who were *interested* in opinion research became more attractive than restriction of membership to a group of *organizations* that were *practicing* research.

The latter type of association would probably have denied representation in AAPOR to most government and academic researchers and would similarly have excluded from membership clients and users of opinion research, teachers of survey research methods, and the occasional journalist or other layman who is simply interested in how the field works. This and other controversial matters were dis-

² *Proceedings of the Central City Conference on Public Opinion Research*, National Opinion Research Center, 1946, p. 14.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 106-107.

cussed at the second conference held at Williamstown in 1947. I can still remember one participant in the discussion arguing heatedly that to invite membership from any interested person, rather than restricting it to qualified individuals, would open up the Association to Communist infiltration and subsequent takeover as a Red front. Fortunately, this has never happened—at least to my knowledge—though I suppose we must continue to be vigilant.

Many other matters were thrashed out at Williamstown, for this is where AAPOR was born. Copies of the proposed constitution had been circulated in advance to the 194 registrants at this conference, and action on adoption of this document was the first order of business at the organization meeting. Almost immediately there was discord, centering around a proposed Board of Standards, an appointed group whose rather vaguely defined authority was seen as threatening by many of the market researchers present. To them this was an undemocratic proposal through which a small group of unknown appointees would have authority to speak for the profession in laying down standards of research. In vain, proponents of the Board argued that it would have no authority, would merely try to agree on standards and submit them to the membership. A motion to delete the entire paragraph dealing with standards was narrowly defeated, only after several eloquent pleas that the encouragement of standards was basic to AAPOR's declared purposes and that a vote against a Standards Board would be tantamount to a vote against the Association. The matter was compromised by changing the Board to a committee with an elected chairman and by specifying or, rather, generalizing the committee's task and purpose as "fulfilling the declared purpose of the Association to contribute to the elevation of professional standards." With that, the remainder of the constitution was quickly adopted and AAPOR was in business.⁴

Among the 194 conferees at Williamstown were fifteen from outside the United States—from England, Mexico, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Australia, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Switzerland, and Germany. The larger part of this non-United States representation was made possible by a Rockefeller Foundation grant, which was used to pay the travel expenses of foreign researchers who would not otherwise have been able to attend. The grant was obtained by still another committee—a subcommittee on international organization whose task was to carry out the fourth resolution of the Central City conference—to establish a world-wide opinion research association. Co-chairmen were Stuart Dodd and George Gallup. Also serving were Rensis

⁴ *Second International Conference on Public Opinion Research*, National Opinion Research Center, Chicago, 1948, pp. 136-140.

Likert, Elmo Wilson, and Wilfrid Sanders, then director of the Canadian Institute of Public Opinion. The day after the AAPOR constitution was adopted, a similar constitution was voted into effect by an organization meeting on an international association for public opinion research and the fledgling was named the World Congress on Public Opinion Research—changed just one year later to the World Association for Public Opinion Research, now universally known as WAPOR.⁵

I have dwelt at length on the first two of our conferences and I am sure you will pardon me if I do not devote equal time to those of 1948, 1949, 1950, etc. I would, however, like to touch on some of the major changes that have taken place in AAPOR as it has progressed from infancy through adolescence.

One of these changes, I believe, has been a marked trend toward greater unity among our disparate membership. We have seen how the academic, government, and market researchers, and the political polls, recognized their common interests in coming together to form AAPOR, but the partnership was often an uneasy one. Representatives of commercial research were inclined perhaps to be suspicious of the academics' motives, fearing their intent to "reform" market research and to lay down rigorous and perhaps unrealistic standards for conducting opinion research. Noncommercial representatives, on the other hand, were outnumbered in the group and were reluctant to see the Association they had done so much to establish become a do-nothing society whose main activity would consist of announcing pious platitudes and having a good time at the annual conventions.

Today one still hears occasional complaints that AAPOR programs are "too academic" or, on the other hand, that the resort hotels at which we usually meet are suited only for commercial expense accounts. But, unless I am greatly mistaken, the distinctions have blurred and there is simply no issue any more. In part this has been due to the accelerating forces that make all of us in public opinion research increasingly interdependent. It is even more true today than it was in 1946 and 1947 that none of us is an island. Market researchers now routinely compete for government contracts and even perform services for university researchers. Academic researchers lend their expertise to the world of business, and non-commercial agencies often do work that looks suspiciously like market research. The blurring of the differences has also been encouraged by the growing frequency with which AAPOR members move from one of the two worlds to the other.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 151-155.

Allied with this trend toward unity in our ranks has been the declining importance of the formerly divisive issue of standards. This is not to say that we are any less concerned today than formerly with the development of sound practices in our profession. AAPOR Standards Committees are probably the hardest working of all, and seem to get busier every year. But we have perhaps achieved some sort of consensus on what AAPOR can and cannot do. There can be little doubt that some of the founders of AAPOR had unrealistic expectations of the role an association might play in the setting and enforcing of research standards. The Board of Standards originally proposed at Williamstown, according to one of its proponents, would have attempted to "codify the underlying principles governing scientific method in this work."⁶ The first code of professional practices submitted by Standards Chairman Philip Hauser in 1948—which was gingerly "commended" by AAPOR, but not endorsed or adopted—was criticized by some as a mere collection of pious principles which did not go nearly far enough.⁷ The issue was exacerbated later that year by the widely publicized failure of the public opinion polls to predict President Truman's election. To some members, this failure of the polls simply confirmed their conviction that AAPOR must establish strict standards of polling procedure, and that if the Association itself did not act, forces outside the profession would inevitably feel compelled to impose such standards.⁸

But this view was never able to gather any appreciable membership support. While most of the commercial researchers were willing to endorse a code expressed in terms of ethics, they strongly resisted any code that would set technical standards. And the majority of academic researchers felt the same way. In a profession which was constantly adapting, improving, and experimenting with its methodology, and which was exploring the broadest possible spectrum of problems in various ranges of depth, it was pointed out that rigid technical standards were inappropriate. Such rigidity might inhibit or penalize creative work, while to make the standards loose enough to cover all situations would hardly provide any standards at all. Even more persuasive was the argument that, as an association of individuals, AAPOR could hardly exercise direct authority or sanctions over corporate practices. Successive Standards Committee chairmen devoted more or less attention to problems of a code, until

⁶ *Second International Conference on Public Opinion Research, op cit.*, p. 138.

⁷ "Proceedings of the American Association for Public Opinion Research," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 12, 1948-49, pp. 836-838.

⁸ This viewpoint was cogently argued at the time by Alfred McClung Lee in "Implementation of Opinion Survey Standards," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 13, 1949-50, pp. 645-652.

finally, under the successive chairmanships of Bob Ford and Leo Bogart, the present code of professional ethics and practices was presented to the membership and formally endorsed by Council in 1960.⁹ This code is now incorporated into our by-laws and every applicant for AAPOR membership must acknowledge in writing that he has read it.

In more recent years AAPOR Standards Committees have been kept busy acting on complaints, of which a number are received in any given year. A magazine sales company's representatives say they are doing a "survey" and then proceed to sign up the respondents for subscriptions. An automobile company does a "survey" to determine prospective car buyers and then turns over the names of potential purchasers to its dealers. A market research company invites respondents to a group meeting and then covertly records or films their actions. A political "survey" determines who is undecided and then sends party workers to convince them how to vote. In all such cases, the alleged offender is advised of the complaint and asked for his version of the facts; and, if it appears that the AAPOR code has been violated, he is so informed. There is no threat of sanctions. In the most important case of this kind, a quiet meeting of AAPOR representatives with the offender produced discontinuance of a practice which, if not stopped, might have resulted in serious public resistance to survey research. But the Standards Committee is acting, as well as reacting. The present committee, under Irving Crespi's leadership, has been working for over a year on the proposed code of disclosure of survey results which was presented at this afternoon's business meeting.

A further major change in AAPOR since its early years, I believe, has been its trend toward *more* democratic procedures rather than less. This is a switch on the usual sociological dictum that organizations become more bureaucratic and authoritarian as they get larger, and I think it is something of which we can be proud. We do hear occasionally that AAPOR is a "closed society" and that "the same old faces" keep running things. Shirley Star has told me she is engaged in a sociological analysis of the AAPOR power structure over the years, and her investigations, which I hope will be published, should throw some light on the matter. But a power structure is necessarily to be found in any society and it seems to me that AAPOR is much more open than most. Certainly it is true that AAPOR in its early years was much less democratic than it is today.

The original constitution, for example, provided for ten voting

⁹ The AAPOR Code was published in *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 24, 1960, pp. 529-530.

members of Council, including nine elected members and the preceding year's President. But three other Council members—the Editor and the Chairmen of the Publications and Public Relations Committees—were appointed by the elected members and had no vote in Council.¹⁰ Today all members of the Executive Council are directly elected by the membership and all 14 have equal votes. For another example, all Association business requiring a vote of the membership, including the all-important election of members to the Council, was formerly transacted at the annual business meeting of the conference, with voting obviously restricted to those in attendance. It was not until 1954 that election of officers and Council members was conducted by mail ballot of the entire membership,¹¹ and not until 1964 that the annual business meeting at the conference became simply an advisory meeting with no power to act for the total membership.¹²

The means of nominating AAPOR candidates is so democratic as to be cumbersome and inefficient, but I suspect we will keep it that way anyhow. First, the entire membership is polled for suggested nominees to be written in on a return post card. The Nominations Committee, chosen for geographical balance and representation of all interests, studies these membership suggestions and selects candidates for each office. In 1949, by the way, the Nominations Committee presented a single slate. Even though the slate was a popular one, it was indignantly rejected on the floor of the meeting and the Committee was sent back to come up with contests for all offices. Nominations are discussed, and approved, with or without change, by the Executive Council, after which they are submitted to the membership. At that point the membership is reminded by mail that any group of 25 members may, by signed petition, nominate *additional* candidates for any office. As far as the records show, this right has never been exercised, but it remains on the books and can always be taken advantage of.

Finally, AAPOR Councils have always been solicitous of membership opinion. At least three mail surveys have been conducted over the years, and the fact that our conferences are usually held in mid-May, in resort hotels outside of large cities, and two years out of three in the East, one year in six in the Midwest, and one year in

¹⁰ *Second International Conference on Public Opinion Research, op. cit.*, p. 148.

¹¹ "Proceedings of the American Association for Public Opinion Research," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 18, 1954-55, p. 462.

¹² *Certificate of Incorporation and By-laws of American Association for Public Opinion Research*, available on request to AAPOR, 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y., 10003.

six in the West, directly reflects the preferences of the majority of the membership.

A fourth major change, and I think the final one on which I want to comment tonight, has been almost a curvilinear one. It relates to our degree of professionalism. As I perhaps suggested in my earlier remarks, the small band who came together at Central City and at Williamstown were inspired by an almost crusading zeal. They recognized their common interest in public opinion research, and public opinion research would change the postwar world. But as they came to grips with problems like standards, as academic and commercial research interests were sometimes seen to be in conflict, some of the zeal wavered. Zeal is in any case likely to flag in the absence of either a challenge or a threat. And as public opinion research did expand mightily in the postwar years, and as it became clear that the 1948 election debacle was not going to kill the boom, and as everyone was reasonably or exceptionally prosperous, it was hard to recapture the starry-eyed fervor of the earlier days.

Indeed, there were years when the predictions that AAPOR would become no more than a marching and chowder society were almost the fact. As the excitement about standards died down, business meetings became more perfunctory and more sparsely attended. The Council busied itself mostly with next year's conference program. The treasury was modest, and in fact the Association was subsidized to a considerable extent by the employers of successive Presidents, Secretary-Treasurers, and Chairmen of Conference Committees.¹³ But the annual conferences were usually a "gas" and the mood is well summed up in the immortal lyrics of Dave Wallace's song, "Je Vous Aime, AAPOR."¹⁴

A shift back to the earlier seriousness of purpose and professional

¹³ An unpublished report to the AAPOR Executive Council by a subcommittee headed by Herb Abelson, September 1965, estimated, on the basis of a mail survey of recent Council members, that the members and/or their employers annually absorbed an average of \$4,335 of unreimbursed expenses properly chargeable to AAPOR.

¹⁴ These lyrics, never before printed to my knowledge, should be placed on the record. They are sung to the tune of "The Band Played On."

All through the year, dear, our dreams are of you, Je vous aime, AAPOR
 We pass others by when your meetings draw nigh, Je vous aime, AAPOR
 With lots of psychology and sociology,
 Gee, they are things we adore,
 We soar to Cloud 8 as we pontificate, Je vous aime, AAPOR.

• • •
 And as a P.S., we might also confess, Je vous aime, AAPOR
 The three days away from our work can be play, Je vous aime, AAPOR
 So we skip the psychology and sociology,
 Sometimes these things are a bore
 When they interfere with our social life, dear, Je vous aime, AAPOR.

responsibility seems to me to have occurred around 1960, and I attribute it to a new generation of AAPOR leaders—men like Bob Carlson, Joe Klapper, Herb Krugman, Ray Bauer, Leo Bogart, among others—men who had played little or no role in the founding of AAPOR and in its early struggles, but who had much the same zeal that the founders had to elevate the standards of public opinion research and to foster its use in the formation of public and private policy. Typically, these new leaders had attained their doctorate in one or another of the social sciences and had published widely in professional journals; yet all of them had, or were to have, close ties with the business world. These men saw lots of challenges and they saw lots of threats. If public opinion research were to continue to grow and to prosper, many things needed doing which could only be done by a strong and active professional association.

But there were two hangups. First, AAPOR was operating as an informal association under a patchwork constitution, without legal standing and without tax exemption. Indeed, upon consulting legal advisers, Council members were horrified to learn, among other things, that if any of them or if AAPOR itself were ever sued by someone claiming damage to his interests or business by reason of some AAPOR action or statement, then every member of the Council and perhaps every member of the Association would be individually liable for any reparations or costs awarded to the plaintiff. For this and many other reasons AAPOR decided to incorporate. A subcommittee worked for almost a year with a team of lawyers devising articles of incorporation and by-laws. And then came the second hangup. The lawyers' bill was of the order of \$3,500, at a time when AAPOR's bank balance was not much more than that figure. In the old days, AAPOR would have done one of two things. They would have passed the hat around to some friendly and well-heeled individuals and corporations, or they would have pleaded poverty, and the law firm would have written off all or part of the bill in consideration for the large amount of business it received from the employer of one of the AAPOR officers. But this time, AAPOR Council decided otherwise. They reasoned roughly as follows: If this Association is worth anything at all, if it is to be more than a marching and chowder society, it should pay its own way. So, courageously to my mind, Council doubled the membership dues.

I say courageously, because the new basic annual dues of \$20 represented a sizable sum to many, and because AAPOR was known to be the *second or third society of many members*, whose primary allegiance is to the society of their professional discipline and/or to various marketing, advertising, or trade groups. Raising the dues

was a calculated risk because it might have meant the loss of a substantial portion of the membership and, worse, the loss of those younger and less affluent people, many in noncommercial research, who could least afford to pay. Fortunately, this did not happen. There was an initial loss of less than 100 out of some 750, but membership today is the highest ever. I consider this result an empirical test of AAPOR's viability. It is apparent to members of recent, past, and future Executive Councils that somebody out there wants a strong AAPOR and an active AAPOR.

But there is still a danger, if AAPOR does not continually seek to meet its *professional* responsibilities, that our society will become merely a sort of trade guild—opposing legislation that might adversely affect our interests, trying to stamp out pseudo-surveys, and so on—but otherwise no more than a group of congenial people whose annual conferences provide an opportunity to meet old friends, promote our business interests, and learn what our competitors and clients are up to. This, in my view, must not be allowed to happen and I don't think it will be allowed to happen.

As AAPOR enters its adult years, I believe we have overcome our adolescent identity crisis and that we have attained at least a degree of maturity. We have a large and faithful membership, a permanent office and secretariat, and a strong treasury. There is no lack of tasks before us, but membership interest, participation, and help are required. I have tried to show that AAPOR is not a closed society, but a democratic one. Talk to your fellow members about AAPOR activities; telephone Council members or write letters to Council whenever you have anything to suggest; volunteer your ideas for conference programs; let future program chairmen know of any papers you would like to present at our meetings; attend the annual conferences and business meetings. The doors are open for all of us to participate.

No more than any of you can I predict what the future holds for AAPOR and for public opinion research. But I'll tell you this. I'm looking forward to it.