

25th February, 1956.

My dear Chester,

I am enclosing proposal form for George Owen for the International Statistical Institute, he, as you may know, being the Treasurer of the British Region of the Biometric Society. I think, therefore, he should have your support if you feel like it, and perhaps while the form is on your side you might encounter some other appropriate supporter. I presume Fieller and Finney at least will be supporting him in this country.

I have today received your papers on proposals for the amendment of the Statutes of the International Statistical Institute. When I suggested an age rule at the Quitandinha last summer, it was with the intention of meeting a quite temporary stringency in the elections; I did not think that any permanent alteration was needed on the scale of your second amendment, setting the limit for membership for any one Confederation of States at one-sixth. I think, for my own part, that this is too high a fraction to set as the maximum, and that it will militate against there being room in the Union for isolated and remote people, such as

the representationⁱⁿ of Uruguay or Jordan.

I am, of course, sure that you will have United States support for this step, for like other nations, citizens of your own great country are capable of overr^{at}~~riding~~ing their superiority to the inhabitants of other lands, and Rice left us in no doubt at the Quitandinha that he considered that no one could doubt an overwhelming American leadership in the statistical sciences.

For my own part I do not take this view. The educational effort in statistics in the United States is magnificent, but it would not be true to say that members of the Institute recently elected from that country are appreciably superior to those of other countries. Moreover if it were true I think it is a circumstance that we should appreciate, and by no means resent, if those elected from my country, or yours, or others tolerably enlightened, should really be better than those available from countries to which statistics is a comparatively new study.

In my opinion by about 1935 the United States was taking a definite lead in statistics, but that the propagandist activity in the mathematical departments of your country in favour of ideas fantastically remote from the natural sciences has left the United States rather in the position of a rewarding field for missionary enterprise.

Consequently, I am rather sorry that you have gone ahead

without our knowledge in this country, for I was certainly not the only one whom Rice's attitude in Brazil struck as being arrogantly nationalistic. Of course ill-feeling on exactly these grounds was, I imagine, just what M. Vincent was gunning for in pointing out the irregularities in respect of national quotas which had been allowed during Rice's Presidency.

I am sorry for all this, but there it is. Apart from George Owen, I wonder if you would care to support the candidature also of Norman Bailey, whom you probably know as Finney's successor at Oxford.

Sincerely yours,

Enc.