

prospective applicants for research funds, making clear that the Office of Education will carefully review all questionnaires submitted to it, to prevent injuring public sensitivities in such matters as the challenging of established morals, the invasion of privacy, the extraction of self-demeaning or self-incriminating disclosures, and the unnecessary or offensive intrusion of inquiries regarding religion, sex, politics, et cetera. In addition, the non-Government consultants who pass upon applications will be alerted to the importance attached to enforcing these instructions to applicants. Where the questionnaires are not fully developed until after project approval, the questionnaires will be examined by a special Internal Clearance Committee already established within the Office of Education. This committee will normally comprise at least three senior staff members (including, as Chairman, the program evaluation officer of the Bureau of Research); in difficult cases, the Chairman will call for the judgment of additional members and, if necessary, for the judgment of the Associate Commissioner for Research and the Commissioner of Education.

The procedure briefly sketched above indicates the importance that the Office of Education attaches to this matter. At the same time, the matter should be seen in proper perspective. In the first place, in very few projects supported by the Office of Education are questionnaires employed; and where questionnaires are employed, they attempt usually to collect objective information, such as the number of librarians, the academic qualifications of teachers, the kinds of courses offered in certain professional curriculums, figures on costs, et cetera. Out of the first 800 projects supported by the cooperative research program, for example, only 25 projects—or 3 percent—made use of personality questionnaires. Even in these cases, the issue of privacy is attenuated by the fact that, in the research studies supported by the Office of Education, the responses are used solely for statistical purposes and are not identified with any particular individuals. For all practical purposes, the individual's identity is "lost" in the statistics and the responses are fully as confidential as, say, responses made by persons answering census questions on age, marital status, education, employment, and income.

Let me also say that there is another side to this matter. School-children—and their parents—should respect and honor knowledge and learning; and they should be willing to cooperate in efforts to extend knowledge and learning which are essential to the advancement of the entire human race even when, individually, they gain no immediate personal benefits from doing so. Some such cooperation is essential if education is to be advanced as much and as rapidly as it must be.

The safeguards against the abuse of questionnaires may be classified as "professional," "institutional," and "governmental." Professional ethics help greatly to keep questionnaire items within reasonable bounds. Our various educational institutions, both public and private, have historically well protected their children against potential damage from researchers who may be excessively zealous. Finally, in the case of Government-supported research, the review panels and examining committees—and the diligence of congressional inquiries such as yours—exercise a restraining influence. In this connection, it deserves notice that the entire present governmental effort is coordinated by the Office of Statistical Standards, in the Bureau of the Budget.