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CANADIAN SCORES U.S. DATA 3

Pollution, Smoking 'Secrecy' Hit

WASHINGTON — (AP) — A Canadian scientist said Wednesday that American industry, private health agencies and government research centers have cast a "pall of secrecy" over much of the information needed to assess the health effects of pollution and cigarette smoking.

Furthermore, said Prof. Theodore D. Sterling, evidence that has so far been made public on these questions "appears to be derived from many inadequate studies."

In a report for the 139th meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of

Science, Sterling, a statistical specialist from Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B. C., declared:

"By and large, studies on the effects of pollutants are so designed that they tend to underplay the effects of industrial or air pollutants on health, while studies on the effects of smoking are so designed that they would overestimate the effects of smoking on health."

"A more serious hindrance than these technical flaws is the pall of secrecy that hangs over much of the crucial information that is needed to form a balancing conclusion."

"Almost all American parties involved in these areas of investigation—industry, private agencies, and government research centers—have been guilty of withholding data from the community of concerned scientists and are violating the fundamental tenets of science that its transactions must be public."

He said it is difficult to justify "any but the most tentative conclusions concerning the relative role of pollution and smoking."

Sterling singled out the American Cancer Society and the U.S. Public Health Service for withholding detailed information of the type he suggested is needed for a "dispassionate evaluation" of contentions by those two organizations that cigarette smoking is the chief cause of lung cancer.

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