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Her Majesty The Queen
Buckingham Palace
London SW1A 1AA

Dear Elizabeth,

Thank you for asking, in November 2008, why no one saw the financial crisis coming as noted in The Economist magazine (July 16, 2016). According to an article in the Daily Mail November 6, 2008, *"Explaining the origins and effects of the credit crisis, Professor Garicano said he told the Queen: 'At every stage, someone was relying on somebody else and everyone thought they were doing the right thing.'"*

As it turns out, Professor Garicano's statement is not true in every instance. May I add my experience while serving as an Economist with the position of Population Analyst in the Provincial Government of British Columbia, Official Statistical Agency, BC Statistics from 2002 to 2006.

After studying migration patterns along with indicators of economic activity, in 2004 colleagues and I forecast the increase in economic activity to peak in 2007-08 followed by another economic downturn. The severity of the downturn would depend on how rapidly the economy grew between 2004 and 2007-08. As you may be aware, many economists did see this coming as well as the role of fraud in the severity of the downturn. But why were you and many others not aware of such forecasts?

Astoundingly, on February 28, 2005, (this date comes up again) I was angrily accused by a new manager of making a female co-worker feel unsafe. My requests for mediation over the next many months were ignored and instead I was removed from all responsibility, removed from the contacts list, given more and more of my co-workers' menial tasks with shorter and shorter time limits. Seeking a resolution to the accusation, I was required to file a grievance against the manager. The new Executive Director, (who had hired the manager) determined – *"the resolution is that there is no resolution"* December 2005.

Shortly after forwarding my required grievance to the Deputy Minister, I was ordered to turn in my security pass and ordered to leave the building. A week later I was ordered to return to work but required to have a psychological assessment for a believed behavioural problem – not being able to control one's behaviour. I continued to advocate mediation, rather than following an inapplicable direction; instead, I was dismissed for insubordination (going down the wrong channel).

It appears to be unlikely that the harsh treatment was motivated by my suggestions for refinements such as the cyclical scenario. Perhaps, there is another explanation for the dismissal? As it turned out, something else happened on February 28, 2005.

Hundreds of letters and many years later, in 2010, while investigating how our school district's enrolment forecast was created (used to justify closing one quarter of the public schools in our district), I discovered that the methods and data provided by BC Statistics were not the real methods and data used to create the numbers. The report, recommending the closure of one quarter of our public schools, referred readers to BC Statistics 1998 population estimation methods paper.

The lack of published updates between 1998 and 2010 surprised me because I knew the methods and data had changed many times since 1998. For example, in 2002, the change in the number of telephone landline hookups was adopted as an indicator of population change. While serving as Population Analyst, I had regularly pointed out the need for a different indicator.

Regardless, in 2011, we were assured that the incorrect methods, data and unfounded population numbers were acceptable because in 2005 Statistics Canada found that BC Statistics' methods and data were of "better quality" than any of Statistics Canada's. Perhaps Statistics Canada should also use the change in the number of telephone landline hookups as an indicator of population change?

I found this assertion of "better quality" very interesting because while serving as Population Analyst in 2005, I proved beyond reasonable doubt that Statistics Canada's methods and data provided estimates of better quality than BC Statistics. As you can appreciate, I was very curious and asked for a copy, or at least the title, of the 2005 Statistics Canada report used to assert the "integrity" of BC Statistics.

After many months of unanswered requests, I filed a Freedom of Information request (May 2012). Unfortunately, this request for the source of the quote ("better quality") was denied claiming "*disclosure harmful to intergovernmental negotiations or relations*". Little wonder that the Premier of the Province of British Columbia, in May 2012, expressed the frustration felt by many, that there is a "sick culture" in the capital, Victoria British Columbia.

Thankfully, we did receive a copy of the report from Statistics Canada (an example of an agency that has integrity). The title is "The Equalization Program and the Property Tax Base: Feasibility Study Conducted by Statistics Canada" (study conducted Sept. 23, 2004 to February 28, 2005 received June 18, 2012), wherein it shows that BC Statistics provided the no longer used 1998 method and data along with false error calculations resulting in Statistics Canada's erroneous claim that BC Statistics' method and data were found to be of "*better quality*" than any of Statistics Canada's. I asked Statistics Canada if they verified BC Statistics methods, data, and error calculations. They had not.

Now I know why I was removed from the contacts list and dismissed for insubordination. Anyone in the position of Population Analyst would be considered a threat by those who were

disseminating false information to Statistics Canada and Finance Canada used to determine interprovincial equalization/transfer payments.

Perhaps the denial of the freedom of information request should read *“disclosure helpful to everyone but harmful to BC Statistics Officials’ careers”*.

I hope that this description shines more light upon one of the ‘reasons’ that relevant information is stifled while unreliable information spreads from organizations, such as the Provincial Government of British Columbia’s Official Statistical Agency, BC Statistics.

Thank you again for having asked the question about why people did not see the 2008 financial crisis coming. My apologies for not having written sooner as I was busy requesting that “insubordination” be removed from my employment record and did not know about your question until recently.

I hope you do not mind me sending a copy of this letter to your representatives in Canada and British Columbia, as well as others interested in being aware of where we are and where we are heading on current trends.

Happy belated 90th birthday.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "W. Munroe". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

William Warren Munroe
Population Projections Project