

## THE END OF THE BEGINNING

As I come to the end of my term of office, I have come to realize that one year is far too short a period to accomplish all that was ambitiously planned at the outset. In looking back over the past twelve months, it seems that far more has been started than has been successfully concluded or terminated. Thus, while I feel somewhat frustrated in not completing all that I had hoped, at least for many of the new initiatives I can safely say we are at the end of the beginning.

We are meeting in Sudbury today at a time of severe economic recession, at a time when unemployment is the highest ever in Canada's history, a national calamity of which this community has borne the brunt and from which engineers have not been immune. During the year about 6% of our members at some stage were drawing UIC benefits. That figure is small compared with Sudbury's 33% at peak. Nevertheless, it is unprecedented in our Association's experience, and more than ironic in view of the dazzling prospects that multi-billion dollar mega-projects seemed to offer to engineers a year or two ago.

Sudbury is slowly beginning to emerge from its long winter of discontent with the return to work of some, but unfortunately not all, of those who had been laid off. For this community, it is the end of the beginning in its struggle towards a brighter future. As an indication of our confidence in Sudbury's ultimate recovery and our desire to be associated with it and with Sudbury's Centennial celebrations, APEO is holding its Annual Meeting here.

I might add that this year we have focussed on the north. In October, 1982, Council held its first meeting ever in the north at Sault Ste. Marie.

As engineers, our future is also linked to recovery. Our survival as a trading nation increasingly depends upon the ability of our industries to innovate in a highly competitive world market, and innovation is the hallmark of our profession.

Technological progress is an essential ingredient of economic renewal. In articles in Engineering Dimensions and in speeches to engineers and other groups during the year, I have pointed out the challenges -- and also the opportunities -- that a rapidly changing technology presents to society and to our profession. In particular, I have stressed the need for engineers to take the lead in assimilating and applying the new technologies that are revolutionizing the marketplace

and the workplace, keeping in mind always the social impact of these changes in the lives of those affected by them.

The past year has seen the end of the beginning of a number of issues and projects directly affecting the Association. We now have a draft bill of our new Act which we discussed at the special President's Congress yesterday. This is the culmination of a long, hard-grinding process in which five of my predecessors, their Councils, various boards and committees, the staff and others have been actively involved. We can expect to see the introduction and enactment of the new legislation during the term of my successor. Much has been accomplished but much still remains to be completed before a new Act is in place which will govern our profession for the foreseeable future.

Despite the priority that revising the Act has laid on our time and resources, the Association has maintained its momentum in a number of directions. Indeed, in anticipation of the new legislation, we have taken steps to restructure certain of our procedures, some of which were completed during the year and others initiated.

The admission examination in professional practice, ethics and legal liability for all applicants for registration is now firmly established. Two exams were held during the

year and roughly 80% of the 734 candidates were successful. In addition, a new admission policy, in effect since last July, has eliminated concessionary allowances to non-Canadian applicants. With very limited exceptions, all applicants who have not graduated from an accredited engineering program must now write a set of confirmatory examinations.

This updating of admission requirements is designed to ensure that APEO admission procedures will be uniformly fair for all applicants for registration. Council review of the admissions process has confirmed that the work of the department is being carried out conscientiously, capably and with a minimum of delay consistent with the need to be thorough in marginal cases.

During the year, the Association followed up the concerns expressed by Deans of Engineering about the deterioration in the quality of engineering programs at Ontario universities, resulting largely from government underfunding. We have sought assurance from the Canadian Accreditation Board that more frequent accreditation visits will be made where needed to ensure maintenance of program standards.

I hasten to assure you that there has been no sign of any reduction in the quality of graduates. Indeed, just the reverse has been observed. There appears to have been a steady improvement in the quality and maturity of graduates

over recent years. I suspect this is due, in part, to the increasingly stringent entrance requirements for engineering brought on by the expanding numbers of young people of both sexes selecting engineering as their first choice in a university program.

The recent economic turndown has created a crisis among the last two years of graduating classes in engineering. Approximately 25% of the class of 1982 have not obtained jobs as of this date, and over 75% of the class of 1983 have not yet found employment. Many of them have given up in despair, and are not even searching for an engineering job. This is equivalent to a full year of graduates that could be lost to the engineering labour force forever - approximately 2,800 potential engineers. The Association is deeply concerned about this "missing year" of graduates, and is about to mount a campaign to contact them in order to provide whatever guidance we can during this difficult period.

Fortunately some have chosen to return for graduate studies which will help to provide important manpower to the high technology sector, and some may well seek a career in the academic sector whose ranks have been seriously depleted in recent years, which brings me to something that hasn't

depleted - the membership of this Association. APEO is now the largest self-governing professional organization in Canada and perhaps in all of North America. As of March 31st, 1983, our membership reached 49,464. During the 1982 calendar year, there was a 3% increase in membership. At this rate total membership should exceed 50,000 during the term of my successor.

While size in itself can be impressive, how effective our size is and how we use it are the important considerations. The new act confirms our status as a self-regulating and disciplinary body. It reiterates that we have been given public responsibilities and not self-interest rights. As a profession, we must remain accountable and committed to the public interest.

Since its formation in 1960, the chapter system has been both a source of strength and a matter of frustration. In theory, it should constitute a decentralized Association presence, enabling chapter members to feel part of an integrated operation whose focus is province-wide. In practice, in some but certainly not all cases, membership interest and participation has been disappointing.

A beginning has been made to restructure and revitalize the chapter system through proposals that have been laid before

Council and accepted in principle. Underlying the proposals is the real concern that chapter objectives are not fully congruent with the Objects of the Association is laid out in the Act and thus constitute, in part, a non-statutory activity. While the Association does indeed support some non-statutory programs, the costs of the chapter system have climbed to a level where they are now a very significant portion of members' fees (approximately 14%). For this reason, Chapter objectives need to be reviewed, and budgets recast within a policy framework that reflects the degree of congruency and the constituency served. In short, the chapters cost too much and we must find ways of reducing these costs.

Throughout the year, we have had significant dealings with other organizations, mainly in connection with the new Act. We continue to hold regular meetings with the Consulting Engineers of Ontario where we have maintained a strong, close and cordial relationship. This year, relations with the Ontario Association of Architects focussed on the timing of our respective Acts. It is the Government's desire to introduce them to the Legislature at the same time. Contact with the Canadian Society for Professional Engineers, the Ontario Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists, and the Canadian Association of Physicists

centred principally around meetings with the Ministry of the Attorney General. CSPE were concerned with certain of the proposed objects in the new Act, while OACETT and the CAP pressed for broader exemptions for those who could practice professional engineering. I believe these issues have been resolved to our satisfaction.

Last fall, APEO joined its sister Associations across Canada in opposing the decision of the Quebec Government to proclaim that the OIQ must admit Bachelor of Technology graduates from the Ecole De Technologie Superieure (ETC) into the Ordre as if they had graduated from an accredited engineering program. I appeared as a witness on behalf of the Ordre before the Quebec Court. The verdict on this case, important to the profession-at-large, still has not been handed down.

Disciplinary cases continue to be a cause for concern. This year 50 new discipline or complaint files were opened. Starting with a backlog of 37 files, 44 were disposed of including 9 through formal disciplinary hearings, to end with a backlog of 43 cases. On enforcement, 77 new cases were opened this year which were added to 39 in the backlog. The Department of Legal and Professional Affairs closed 86 such cases to leave 30 presently outstanding. Two cases taken to the courts resulted in convictions, five more await disposition in the courts. It has been a busy year for this department.



As one of a number of steps in promoting greater membership awareness of maintaining strict professional standards, APEO produced its first case study film on professional practice and ethics, "The Trueteel Affair", which has had its premiere showing at this meeting. This film is available for chapter use and should promote some lively discussion.

During the year the Association conducted two member surveys. The Employment Practices Committee sponsored a survey of 6,000 members concerning "Non-Salary Benefits" practices of engineering employers in Ontario. The results were published in the November/December 1982 issue of Engineering Dimensions. A second survey was directed to the readers of Dimensions. It was mailed to 39,000 members in late 1982 and more than 13,000 responses were received. The results will appear in a future issue. Our Association should take great pride in this publication which, I think, you would agree is a superb window on our profession with a growing reputation for editorial and graphic excellence.

I have taken a particular interest this year in examining and improving our ability as a profession and as an Association in communicating with the public as well as with our own members. To this end, and through the Long Range Planning Committee, we plan to establish a Communications Advisory Committee to assist in planning the annual communications and public relations programs, including themes and issues of current concern to the profession.

Each incoming president aspires to initiate some new project as his individual contribution to the progress of the Association. In an effort to establish a closer link between employers of engineering services and the profession, I convened a two-day seminar in Toronto on the general theme of the Quality and Suitability of Engineering Graduates for the work they do in industry. The purpose was to obtain feedback on the satisfaction of users with the product of our admissions process, thus closing the loop on how we regulate the profession. The response of a representative group of 22 employers was positive and constructive and, as a result, a mechanism is being established to continue the dialogue.

While occupied with current affairs, each new Council must make some provision for the future. For some time we have been concerned about the need for more accommodation to meet the Association's expanding needs. During the year Council accepted a recommendation to lease premises in a building, yet to be constructed, just north of our present headquarters. The lease has not yet been signed but, providing a few outstanding matters are resolved, APEO will move to the new location by the summer of 1984.

Of equal importance is succession planning which is now being undertaken to ensure continuity of administration. Some of our senior staff who have served APEO wisely and well in the past are approaching retirement, and careful thought is being given to their eventual replacement. This is perhaps the appropriate place to acknowledge the indebtedness a President owes to his staff, without whose support and willingness to go the extra mile he could not function. I would like to acknowledge particularly the strong support and wise counsel provided by the Executive Director and General Secretary.

And, indeed, my gratitude for a job well done is extended to the Boards and Committees whose work, carried out quietly but competently, often in the background and out-of-sight, lays the solid foundation on which Council policies are built.

I would like to pay special tribute to the 1982-83 Council and to my Committee of Officers. Their support through many difficult meetings, where we have dealt with some very explosive subjects has been phenomenal - a statement I can say with sincere conviction after eleven years on Council. My fellow Officers have been a joy to work with. To all of you, a heartfelt "Thank You".

A president's term is not the same for the holder of the office as for those who must work with him. To the president, it is too, too brief for what he wants to do. For those who must put up with his whims and idiosyncrasies, it can be a grim foretaste of eternity. One is reminded of the story of the young man who came to a new job fired with enthusiasm - and left the same way.

A President's Report to the Members should be a progress report of the main events and issues of his year -- and I have attempted to do that this morning. Before closing, I would like to acknowledge the presence of representatives from some of our sister Associations across Canada. Also, I am happy to see old friends from the Canadian Council of Professional Engineers among us this morning. As you all know, the CCPE carries out important national functions including accreditation, manpower activities and represents the profession nationally and internationally.

At the start I suggested that the past year has been the "end of the beginning" for many initiatives in which the Association is involved, not least the new Act. To my successor, I leave the unenviable task of bringing some of them to fruition. As Past President I will be there to help -- but the onus now falls upon him to carry through what already has begun. I wish him the best of success.

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