

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

### *Presidential Address :*

*Delivered by Sri S. Chatterjee, In the Annual General Meeting of the Association of Engineers held on the 5th March, 1970*

### Introduction :

We have celebrated the Golden Jubilee of the Association of Engineers last year with pomp and gaiety. It was a landmark in the progress of our Association which has closed a chapter extending over half a century. No doubt, the achievement was considerable with the help of our enthusiastic members and executive body but still we have a long way to go to reach our destination. We cannot remain content only with our glorious past but we have to look forward for the future and compare our success in relation to the progress in the advanced countries of the world. Though the Association of Engineers is the oldest engineering association of India, it has to function as a pioneer by setting lofty standard which will be enviable for other organisations. To attain our desired goal I appeal to the present members to bring about a bright future through a dynamic plan of action. We shall have to make our Association at least at par with the other technical Associations of the world like the Institution of Civil Engineers, Institution of Mechanical Engineers, Institution of Electrical Engineers, Institution of Structural Engineers, American Society of Civil Engineers and similar organisations abroad.

### Programme before the Association :

In order to establish our position as a high ranking technical Association, concerted efforts and active participation of members of all grades are necessary in the lines suggested below :—

- i) To get the recognition of our Association by the Govt. of India.
- ii) Construction of a building for Head Quarters of the Association.
- iii) Recognition of the graduate engineers of the Association by the Public Service Commission as equivalent to graduate engineers.
- iv) To scrutinise the qualifications of our future members to be admitted to our Association by the Executive Committee so that superior standard can be maintained.
- v) Examination held by our Association should be of high standard and not less than those held by the University for the engineering graduates.
- vi) To raise the standard of our journals with original engineering

articles and discussion so that we may not feel small and embarrassed at the time of exchange of our journals with foreign technical journals.

- vii) To establish branches of this Association throughout the length and breadth of India.
- viii) To invite renowned engineers to deliver lectures on technical and engineering subjects and highlight results in our meeting.
- ix) To insist on the Government to accept representatives from this organisation in Committees, Boards and Special Committees set up by the Government, state and centre from time to time.
- x) To publish some technical books, specially of Handbook type by our Association.
- xi) To press our demand for recognition of our organisation of equal status with that given to the other organisations after enactment of Registration of Engineers Bills.
- xii) To raise financial status of the Association by introduction of various drives in different directions, e.g. to raise subscription rate to different grades of members of the Association.

I shall, therefore, fervently request my friends and associates to take those matters seriously and make conjoint effort to attain our goal.

## Technological progress & delay of the past :

You are probably aware that during the last two decades number of engineers produced is more than the engineers produced in the last two millennium. During the last two decades engineering activities and inventions were so vast and astounding that these resulted in launching astronauts to land on the moon, in sending train-load of passengers through Jamboo jets, in televising pictures from the surface of moon, in harnessing energy by breaking up of atoms and in many types of expansion in various branches of technology. So the present age may be aptly termed as Age of Technology.

Probably you may remember that one of the examples of renowned engineering activities in the middle age was the construction of St. Peters of Rome ( 1506-1626 A. D ) which took 120 years for completion. Now in these age of jet, this type of slow and sluggish advancement will not be tolerated by the present generation. Rome accepted in the past this temple of worship to be completed in such a long time but present generation whose ideology is "Work is Worship" ( with little apology for immediate present situation ) and whose temples of worship are in factories and workshops, steelworks and ship-yards, giant dams and barrages, fertiliser factories and power stations cannot tolerate any inordinate delay where thousands of people are likely to be employed and to earn their livelihood.

## Problems of Calcutta :

Calcutta is suffering from retrogradation of civic amenities in her metropolitan region. More than a decade back endeavour to im-

prove the water supply and environmental sanitation condition of the Metropolitan Calcutta was made for this problem ridden and lawless city of Calcutta but real remedial measure has not yet been adopted in right earnest and in full swing. With the increase in population with time, the necessity for more water, more sanitation, communication, housing, transportation and other civic amenities have been realised. But no worthwhile preventive and curative steps have been taken to stop deterioration and to set right the backlog. CMPO was established in 1962 to assess the existing conditions of the Metropolitan Calcutta and to suggest ways and means to remedy these defects, to promote more dynamic growth of the metropolitan economy, to develop an urban environment which is socially satisfactory and capable of sustaining with the suitable facilities for increasing population, to create the machinery for sustained development & planning and for effective plan implementation with coherent growth framework and to strengthen the local Govt. and people's participation in the development. With those objective the Basic Development Plan for the Calcutta Metropolitan District covering 490 sq. miles having 3 Corporations, 32 Municipalities, 34 non-municipal urban areas and adjacent urbanisable rural fringes was framed.

Master Plan for water supply, sewerage and drainage and that for Traffic and Transportation were prepared in 1966 and 1967 respectively. Master Plan for bustee improvement, housing, education & industrial & commercial development are yet to be framed. The estimated cost for the water supply, sewerage and drainage as recommended in the Master Plan ( 1966 to 2001 A. D ) is Rs. 340.5 crores of which the cost of water supply is

Rs. 154 crores. Master Plan recommendation for traffic and transportation will cost Rs. 142 crores excluding construction of second bridge across the river Hooghly which is about to start and the semi-circular railway. Our need is great and expectation is big but resources are meagre. Suitable compromise has to be made as there is no escape. The cost of administration ( you may call it mal-administration ) is mounting day by day which is approaching some time more than half the expenditure on works. The other day Prof. Parkinson hinted on the reduction of cost of administration on 3 counts. They are decentralisation, development of leadership and limiting the size of the permanent staff. It is doubtful whether the third point could be materialised for the welfare of the people in the socialistic pattern of society. He cited the case of German firm which employed 2000 people at the company's head office when there was full production but same number of staff continued to be working when all the plants of that German Company was bombed out during the war. The top administration brought the figure down to 250.

#### Engineers in Administration :

There is a general feeling among the administrative groups that engineers should not take active part in politics and administration. They should rather devote all their energies and strengths to produce something beneficial to the society and country. Everybody is aware that more than 90 percent of the state budget for capital works are spent through engineers of various agencies like Roads, Irrigation & Waterways, Public Health, Housing, etc. where crucial decisions are now being taken by nontechnical people in administration.

The country has in the past spent billions of rupees for industrial undertakings in the State and in national level, but no appreciable impact on the national economy has yet been made. Problems of unemployment are mounting. A slight rise in per capita income has been eaten up by continuing rise in price structure due to budget effect. Unless crucial decision is taken in proper time by those professionals who are fully conversant with the details of the problem, its impact, its benefit and consequences, administrative muddle will continue and thereby consequential delay and retrogression of progress is sure to take place. It is high time for the politicians and the architects of the nation to take a note of caution. If the present process continues, the cry for economic advancement will be merely in wilderness. It is desirable that the professional personnel should be given their rightful place and should be brought to the forefront. Rather they should

come to the forefront and take the leadership for industrial undertakings and other engineering and technical projects in the State. Talents are not in short supply, individual attempts by the technical personnel on this account to dislodge the vested heritage of the past will not be easily crowned with success. It is necessary for their own benefit and for greater interest of the nation to form Association of the professional engineers in different organisations both in State and private level and to form federation of employed engineers. It will be more akin to those trade unions, or I.A.S. Association or Police Association to find its rightful place for the engineers in the administration. It is through the united effort real success would be achieved and United Front Ministry of West Bengal and other State Ministries should be persuaded to realise the real state of affairs on the present volcanic situation.

*Annual Report For The Year 1969 :*

*Presented by : Hony. Secretary SRI S. K. NEOGI*

Mr. President and Fellow Members,

It is a great pleasure and privilege to present before you the 51st Annual Report of the Association of Engineers covering the calendar year 1969.

### **Membership :**

Additional enrolment of new members during the year was as below :—

*Life Members :*

P. R. Guha

Sudhananda Chatterjee

Sudhanshu Mitra.

*Life Associate Members :*

K. L. Mukherjee

J. B. Ghosh