

SEVENTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON EARTHQUAKE ENGINEERING
September 8-13, 1980
Istanbul, Turkey
R.I. Skinner

The Conference was formally opened by Government Ministers on Monday morning. A heavy load of presented papers was to be covered during 4 parallel sessions from Monday afternoon through Saturday afternoon, with Wednesday afternoon free. Panel sessions to present and discuss various aspects of earthquake engineering were to be held during the first hour of 14 of the morning sessions and at the end of the last technical session on Saturday. The planned programme was adhered to very successfully except for the cancellation of all technical and business sessions on Friday as the result of a 24-hour curfew imposed during the military takeover. (All non-military people were confined to their homes and hotels during this period).

The organization of all aspects of the Conference, technical and business sessions, accommodation and social activities, was generally very good. The Conference was given strong Government and Ministerial Support. This was symbolized well by the issue of commemorative postal stamps which were made available as first day covers.

A number of minor factors which had caused considerable trouble at earlier Conferences were eliminated, helped in large measure by the continuity provided by the IAEE president Dr Jai Krishna. The Third Circular and the Information Programme provided at the registration desk taken together were an effective guide to Conference activities. The Conference organizers coped surprisingly well with the total loss of time on Friday. The proposed evening meeting of the General Assembly of Delegates and the Executive Committee was carried over to Saturday afternoon, and even a few of the Friday paper presentations were fitted into the Saturday programme. Four Panel Sessions were lost.

The Conference Proceedings in their final form were available at the registration desk, except for a wrap-up volume to cover material generated during the Conference. The Proceedings contained 8000 pages in 9 volumes and weighed 7 kilograms!

As at the previous Conference in India the Panel Sessions were quite effective as summaries of the State-of-the-Art in various fields and as a stimulus to useful discussions. The papers were generally effective despite the limited time for presentation. The more sophisticated papers gave a picture of recent progress in earthquake engineering. Factors influencing the content

of these papers included the availability of more powerful computer systems and an increased number of strong-motion earthquake records, the results of extensive structures laboratory tests, and the increased use of statistical methods in the assessment of seismicity and in the selection of design parameters.

There was a large contribution from younger engineers, many of them from developing countries. Many of their papers gave a picture of the problems faced and the progress being made in such countries. The problems in developing countries were also tackled in a draft publication on the Earthquake Resistant Design of Non-Engineered Structures, tabled at an Executive Meeting of IAEE by one of their Committees.

Three New Zealand engineers attended the Conference; Professor Bob Park, Mr Otto Glogau the New Zealand national delegate to IAEE, and the writer. The national delegates elected Professor Don Hudson of the California Institute of Technology, Los Angeles, to replace the retiring president of IAEE, Dr Jai Krishna. The writer was re-elected as a director of the Association.

The venue for 8WCEE was selected as the U.S.A. The unsuccessful contenders were the Philippines and the U.S.S.R. It is expected that the Conference will be held in San Francisco in late 1984.

The writer found the people of Istanbul hospitable and charming. The city is really beautiful with its impressive mosques and castles, its diversity of buildings and its waterways. People, monuments and buildings show strong cultural links with both the West and the East. An evening trip on the Bosphorus as a guest of the Minister of Reconstruction was a highlight for the Conference participants.