



## A MESSAGE FROM RALPH B. PECK

Most technical professions, and ours is no exception, suffer from a split personality. One side seeks to advance the science, the other gains its satisfaction from creating engineering works. Those with a scientific bent may feel a vague unease that their work may find little application. Those in practice may feel that the researchers have let them down by not pursuing investigations that clearly and promptly address their practical concerns. To the extent that these views prevail, the consequences are

predictable: researchers will take refuge in increasingly esoteric investigations; practitioners will pay little attention to the research results. Reading learned journals will become less interesting and profitable to practitioners, scientifically oriented workers will find themselves writing to each other, and practice will be governed by so-called "practical" matters alone.

You will recognize this to be an exaggerated scenario, but one with enough reality to be disturbing. One reason for this state of affairs is a woeful lack of communication between researchers and practitioners. Practical people - the developer of a skyscraper or shopping center, and his engineer, architect, or constructor - do not realize how valuable some research contributions could be. The researchers do not know what problems they could aid in solving. Here is where a gathering such as the Ninth Asian Regional Conference can play a crucial role. It will be a conference on soil mechanics and foundation engineering. It offers an unparalleled opportunity for practitioners to participate. If practitioners do not feel their problems and practical needs are adequately addressed by the profession, here at the Conference they can make their contributions and needs known. If they do not, they will have missed a real opportunity to encourage better, more practice-oriented research. They will also have lost an opportunity to discover useful research results of which they may have been unaware.

I hope the Conference will not only be attended by developers, designers, architects, and constructors, but that these participants will present papers and discussions. I hope the geotechnical engineers present will demonstrate how they bridge the gap between research and practice. I hope this will lead to an appreciation of what geotechnics and the geotechnical engineer can do to provide safer and more economical foundations.

My best wishes for a successful conference.

*Ralph B. Peck*