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# Welcome and Opening Remarks

Multiple Authors

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## WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Shamsher Prakash  
Conference Chairman  
Professor of Civil Engineering  
University of Missouri-Rolla

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to this historic city of St. Louis, Missouri, to no less a historic event, the Second International Conference on Case Histories in Geotechnical Engineering.

After the first conference, it was resolved that the second conference be held after about four years.

The call for papers was issued in December 1986 and papers were contributed from 47 countries, making this conference a truly international one. The large number of papers received were reviewed by a panel of international experts.

We received an overwhelming response from all over the world and participants from 23 countries and 250 papers do make an impressive record.

In planning this event, we needed financial and moral support. It has been organized in cooperation with the International Society of Soil Mechanics and Foundation Engineering, International Association of Earthquake Engineering, Earthquake Engineering Research Institute, Association of Engineering Geologists, United States Committee on Large Dams, United States National Committee for Rock Mechanics, Transportation Research Board, American Society of Civil Engineers--Mid-Missouri Section, Association of Soil and Foundation Engineers, Engineering Geology Division of the Geological Society of America, and United States Army Corps of Engineers. This is enough of moral support. U.S. Army Office of Research (USCOE) has co-sponsored and partially funded the conference. We are extremely grateful to all of them.

The delegates have travelled long distances at some discomfort to them to participate in this conference. There are many places to relax around here after the conference meetings in the evening. I strongly recommend you explore some of these places on your own.

The weatherman has assured us that we should look forward to beautiful spring weather during the week and I believe you will take home sweet memories of this city and the conference with you.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the authors who contributed to this conference, the members of the organizing committee who guided me in steering this conference, and my colleagues at UMR, who came to my help whenever I needed it. I am extremely thankful to Dr. Joseph E. Minor, Chairman, Department of Civil Engineering, and Dr. Ron Fannin, Acting Dean, School of Engineering for Academic Affairs, UMR, who consented to be with us this morning and welcome the participants.

## INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

International Conference on Case Histories  
in Geotechnical Engineering

Joseph E. Minor

Thomas Reese Professor and Chairman  
Department of Civil Engineering  
University of Missouri-Rolla

It is an exciting moment for me to stand before this conference and welcome you on behalf of the Department of Civil Engineering at the University of Missouri-Rolla. I have been Chairman of the Department for only two months. The experience of witnessing the major activities being undertaken by our fine faculty is both exciting and rewarding. I have known of Dr. Prakash and his fine work for several years. Now I have the privilege of working with him as he makes significant contributions to the field of Geotechnical Engineering and, through these, to the Department of Civil Engineering.

We have a long and proud tradition in Civil Engineering at the University of Missouri-Rolla. Two of the very first graduates of the Missouri School of Mines in 1874 were Civil Engineers. We have at times been the largest Civil Engineering Department in the United States; currently, we are seventh nationally. There are more than 6000 living alumni of our program. We have maintained a broadly based curriculum by requiring our students to take courses in six specialty areas (structures, hydraulics/hydrology, transportation, geotechnical, environmental, construction) as well as surveying and engineering law and contracts.

Obviously, one of our strengths is Geotechnical Engineering. Shamsher Prakash and Norbert Schmidt are well known authorities in this field. Richard Stephenson, John Heagler, and Rodney Lentz are also important members of our team of Geotechnical Engineers. You will have an opportunity to meet them during our conference.

Finally, I wish to thank you for coming, and will welcome your questions and comments about our program. Should you find the time to visit Rolla, we would be most happy to visit with you in the Department of Civil Engineering.

JEM/6-89

Welcomes the Participants

Ron Fannin  
Acting Dean, University of Missouri  
Rolla, Missouri

Ron Fannin, Acting Dean  
Welcomes the participants.

Bengt B. Broms, President, ISSMFE  
Singapore

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

I bring greetings from the International Society of Soil Mechanics and Foundation Engineering (ISSMFE) with its over 16,000 individual members from 59 member societies. One of the last to join the International Society is Iceland with 28 individual members in a country with only 240,000 people. It is the smallest of the member societies, but the population is also small, only 240,000. There is thus more than one member for every 9,000 inhabitants. The U.S. which a population of 240 million has about 2,400 members, that is, 1 member for every 100,000 inhabitants. If the U.S. had the same proportion of members in the society as Iceland there would be about 24,000 members from USA alone and the size of the ISSMFE would more than double.

I believe that the United States could play an important role in the Society and in the organization of international conferences like this one on Case Histories in Geotechnical Engineering which is a very timely and appropriate conference judging from the large number of participants from all over the world. I would like to congratulate Professor Shamsheer Prakash and the University of Missouri for their initiative to this conference which has the full support of ISSMFE.

Much can be learned from case histories especially those that did not turn out as expected. We engineers are often reluctant to talk about our mistakes or failures. In many cases we are restrained to do so because the case has ended up in court or is subject to arbitration. Much can be learned about failures which often can be traced to inadequate soil investigations partly caused by financial restraints. Soil investigations are increasingly carried out on a competitive basis without defining adequately in advance what should be done, e.g. type of borings, quality of samples, accuracy of readings etc. The contractor with the lowest price usually gets the job without considering the quality of the investigation. The situation, I believe, has deteriorated considerably during the last few years.

Most failures are usually not caused by a single factor. Often two or three serious mistakes or oversights are required such as forgetting the dead load of a building or gross calculation errors. It is very difficult to take these gross errors into account in the selection of partial factors of safety or of load factors.

New materials are increasingly being used with some uncertainty about their long term behavior. I am thinking particularly of geotextiles and geogrids. There are not yet any definite indication that the strength of polyethylen or propylen will deteriorate seriously with time. Still there is the nagging question about their long term behavior. What happens with these new materials after 50, 100 or 200 years, the life of many civil engineering structure.

The strength of concrete and steel in many structures has increased appreciably during the last 20 years. It should be noted, however, that the ductility of these materials decreases with increasing strength. We are also using more brittle materials in our buildings today like glass and ceramic than we have done in the past. Also statically indeterminate structures are used to a much larger extent than before. These structures are very sensitive to e.g. differential settlements compared with structures constructed of simply supported beams. I believe that we have not yet considered sufficiently the problem how much ductility one really requires of the modern structures. I hope that these and other questions will be discussed at this conference. I am looking forward to the different presentations and above all the discussion during the coming three days which I hope many of you will take part in.

G.P. Jayaprakash  
Transportation Research Board  
Washington, D.C.

Good Morning, Ladies and Gentlemen:

On behalf of the Transportation Research Board, one of the cosponsors of this conference, I welcome you. It is a pleasure to be among the professional colleagues from the United States and many foreign countries. For foreign professionals attending this conference, welcome to the United States.

With the permission of the Chairman of the Conference; I would like to say a few words regarding my organization for the benefit of the conference participants, particularly those from foreign countries.

The Transportation Research Board is a unit of the National Research Council which was established in 1916 by the National Academy of Sciences. The Academy is a private and honorary organization. It was created in 1863 by a congressional charter approved by President Abraham Lincoln.

The Transportation Research Board is comprised of an Executive Committee, staff and membership; members are affiliated either by supporting memberships or by membership on committees. The purpose of TRB is to bring scientific and technical information to bear on transportation problems by encouraging research, and disseminating information. TRB concerns itself with the planning, design, construction, operation, maintenance, safety, and utilization of transportation systems and their components as well as the economic, financing, and administration of the systems and their interactions with the physical, economic, legal, and social environment they are designed to serve. The success of TRB undertakings is largely dependent on the capabilities and voluntary efforts of its members who are involved in committees, sections, groups, and other organizational units of TRB.

The TRB is organized into the following four divisions. Division A, the activities of which include committee and task force activities, field visit program, annual meeting, seminars, conferences, and workshops, and work related to publications.

Division B is responsible for studies that aid in the development of transportation policy. Division C is responsible for the administrative activities of TRB and activities related to the publication of TRB reports. Division D administers research programs sponsored by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials and by Urban Mass Transportation Administration.

That gives you a brief insight into TRB.

Again, I am pleased to be among you all at this conference. My compliments to those who have done the work in organizing and preparing for the conference. Best wishes for a successful conference.