

TECHNICAL EDITOR'S PAGE

For over four years I have had the privilege of being the first Technical Editor and then the first Senior Technical Editor of the JOURNAL OF PRESSURE VESSEL TECHNOLOGY. The initial issue of the Journal, which was published in February 1974, was sponsored by the Pressure Vessels and Piping Division of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, and consisted of sixty-four pages. The current Journal averages about one hundred fifty pages an issue and has the added sponsorship of the Petroleum Division. There are now Special Features such as a Section on Pressure Vessels and Piping Codes, a Section on the Pressure Vessel Research Committee and the publication of Abstracts of ASME Preprints and Special Publication Papers. With this issue I am stepping down as Senior Technical Editor in order to perform another function in the ASME. I would like to take this opportunity to assess the current technical climate and the role of the ASME TRANSACTIONS Journal in the technical and in the broader community.

The JOURNAL OF PRESSURE VESSEL TECHNOLOGY was the first ASME TRANSACTIONS Journal that was directly sponsored and edited by a Division that was not part of the Basic Engineering Department of the ASME. Both the Pressure Vessels and Piping and the Petroleum Divisions are part of the Industry Department. In 1978 the *Journal of Mechanical Design*, which will be sponsored and edited by the Design Division of the General Engineering Department, will make it debut. In addition, the *Journal of Engineering for Power* and the *Journal of Engineering for Industry* are each being structured so that each ASME Division that regularly publishes in one of those Journals will have an Associate Editor of that Journal.

This strengthening and expansion by the ASME of rigorous peer review journals that are related to industrial disciplines is being carried out despite a recent decline of financial support for engineers in industry. In some recent statistics released by the National Science Foundation it is indicated that there were fewer scientists and engineers employed by U. S. private industry in 1975 than in 1970. Of particular concern is the thirteen percent decrease in manufacturing industries employment of scientists and engineers in the 1970-1975 period.

The industrial use of the basic principles of good engineering should be expanded and not reduced. We must base the use of our limited resources on the application of these principles for the good of all. Unfortunately, engineering considerations frequently

have little impact on what is done. As pointed out by Lars G. Soderholm in *Design News*, "Good design is not necessarily the only or sometimes even a primary consideration for marketing success."

It is more important now than ever before that our ASME publications represent with clarity the best work in our profession. These publications should arise from disciplined efforts on the part of each engineer who aspires to publish. An excellent guide to a good engineering approach was given by Maurice A. Biot in his acceptance speech upon being awarded the Timoshenko Medal in 1963. Biot pointed to the Timoshenko tradition of clarity, simplicity, intuitive understanding, unpretentious depth, and a shunning of the irrelevant.

As engineers we should try and meet these criteria. As authors who respect our readers it may be of great value to recall the words of Joseph Conrad: "A work that aspires, however humbly, to the condition of art should carry its justification in every line." As readers, perhaps we must be skeptical about all written material. Dr. Seuss recently expressed this idea in a poem that he read to a graduating class in which he described how his uncle ate popovers. In part it went like this:

"To eat these things, said my uncle,
You must exercise great care.
You may swallow down what's solid,
But . . . you must spit out the air!"

In closing, I thank all of those who have participated in this deeply satisfying and enriching experience. The Journal Committees, the authors, reviewers, review chairmen, discussors, editors, and the various members of the Executive and other Committees of the Pressure Vessels and Piping and the Petroleum Divisions made the Journal a reality. Special thanks go to that excellent ASME Staff whose role is crucial but too often taken for granted. Finally I would like to thank the readers, whose support and increasing interest have permitted the Journal to survive and grow.

For the subsequent issues of the Journal, Dr. Robert E. Nickell will be the Senior Technical Editor. He has done a superb job as the Paper Review Chairman, and then as the Technical Editor, for Pressure Vessels and Piping. I am certain that he will imbue the Journal with new strengths.