

EDITORIAL

LOYALTY TO THE PROFESSION

Technical education is the main instrument for development and transformation. We can not build a sustainable and prosperous nation without engineers. Accordingly we achieved a significant growth in technical education to the extent of 600% since independence higher than other professional education fields such as agriculture, medicine where the growth achieved is 500%. Engineering and technology educational institutions offering degree and higher degree programmes have grown from 46 in 1947 to 342 in 1990. This has resulted into a cumulative turnover of highly qualified work force of engineers comprising of 6614 doctorates, 71408 holding masters degree and over two lakh bachelors' degree holders (figures upto 1992). However one of the important factor on which industrial and technological advancement of a country depends is not on the number of engineers but more on their density in terms of number per population and here we have still to go a long way. The technical and scientific manpower in India is only about 0.3 per thousand as against about 4 per thousand in the advanced countries. Thus even with the phenomenal increase in the technical institutions, still many more engineering personal would be required not only to sustain the present growth but for the growth of indigenously developed technologies as envisaged in "Technology Vision 2020."

However, the most disturbing factor is the increasing trend that many engineers ultimately end up in professions not relevant to their engineering education.

The comments in the Radhakrishnan Committee' report on university education was never so relevant as is today. The report comments "while professional men in a large degree are in key positions in modern society, professional education has failed in one of its large responsibilities, that of developing principles and philosophy by which professional men should live and work. To the extent that such purpose and philosophy are lacking, the engineer may be at the service of any one who will pay him well regardless of the social worth of his services. The lawyer's skill may be for sale for right or wrong and the physician may seek the place of largest income rather than that of greatest services. While each may have high skill, the

total effect may be great internal stress and social deterioration".

Today engineers are attracted to sales, marketing, finance, administration, real estates, software etc. as these jobs are more lucrative than engineering design, manufacture, production. To add to this, brain drain to Gulf and Western countries continues.

This will have to be controlled to a certain extent by Government intervention but more by developing in the students a sense of loyalty and pride in their profession and this responsibility falls on the teachers.

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P. R. Patankar,

Pune.