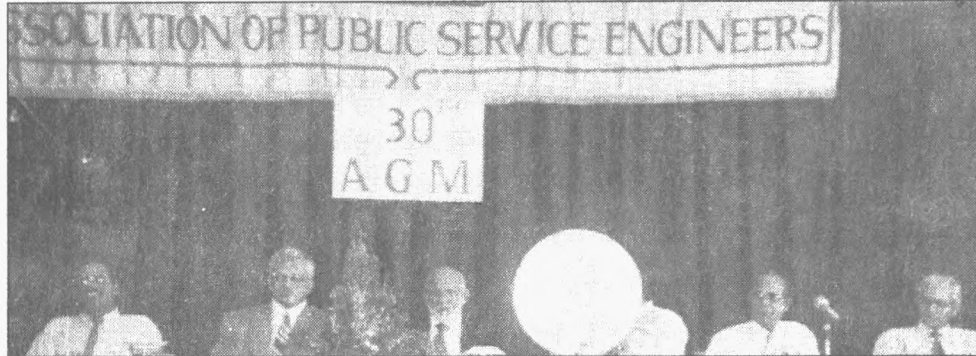


Engineers hold 30th AGM

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The 30th Annual General Meeting of the Association of Public Service Engineers was held on November 30 at the auditorium of the Department of Irrigation. Chief Guest at the occasion was Minister of Transport and Highways A. H. M. Fowzie and Guest of Honour was Member of Parliament Keseralal Gunasekera.

Minister Fowzie said:

"My association with the Engineering fraternity dates back several years. It was as Mayor of Colombo that I had my first close liaison with members of your profession. Within a short time of my assuming office I developed a genuine and profound respect for the engineering profession, their views, attributes and insights".

"My present Ministry has embarked on many ambitious projects in modernization and expansion of the country's transportation and transit systems. Planned, designed and executed by engineers, they are an invaluable contribution on your part to the fulfilment of the aspirations of the people of our land at the present time," he said.

"Established in 1964 with the membership drawn from Govt. Ministries and Departments, your members, I know, number over 850, made up of the varied disciplines embodying the engineering professions of 22 member institutions. It is in fact the Parent Union of the sister unions of these member institutions. The 22 member institutions comprise, Irrigation Department, Buildings Department, Railway Department, Municipal Council, Provincial Councils, Coast Conservation Department, Agrarian Services Department, Agricultural Department, etc.," the Minister said.

"Though a Trade Union, you have always acted with the country's interests at heart, placing the country uppermost in situations of conflict. I am fully aware that your members have acted with responsibility, dignity, and have preferred negotiated settlement of issues rather than resorting to direct Trade Union action. You have demonstrated the highest degree of professionalism in your work and conduct," he said.

"Your engineers have been moulded and conditioned by the dictates and traditions long honoured and upheld in the Public Service. Besides, you have been guided by your professional ethics. With the training and experience you have gained in the Public Service, you can fit in anywhere be in the private sector, defense establishments or in any other statutory institution. You are embodied with the ability and capability to face and cope with many a chal-

lenging situation. Society has always regarded the Engineer, whether in the Public or Private sector, as a creator and one who provides the basic needs of life. Society expects the Engineer to foresee the constraints ahead, the dwindling world resources, population growth, and environmental problems and accept the challenge of alleviating the problems of poverty. They have to live up to these expectations," said Mr. Fowzie.

"You will some times perturbed that your achievements, contributions and sacrifices have been underestimated and your lapses and shortcoming accentuated. Let not these dishearten you. Be guided by your own conscience. I will assure you my whole hearted support to overcome the problem you are faced with today. This country can boast of the engineering achievements of its forefathers. They are comparable in their fineness and sophistication with any feats of Engineering in contemporary times. This century saw such brilliant men like Wimalasurendra & Rampala who not only were eminent Engineers but notable managers as well. They bear testimony to the invaluable contribution & service that Public Service Engineers have rendered to this country. It is my fervent hope that from among you there will be more such men produced during the next Millennium," the Minister said.

President Eng. K. W. Perera in his welcome speech said engineers were confronted with numerous grievances and hence the country is unable to get their best services for development.

Guest of Honour, Keseralal Gunasekera in his address said he was convinced that there were reasonable grievances faced by engineers. For that he advised they should get united and approach the correct people and agitate till their problems were solved. He said he would always be available to support their reasonable demands.

Eng. A. D. S. Gunawardene in his vote of thanks said only politicians could take action to recognize the technocrats and give them due place for the betterment of the people.

Following office bearers were elected for 1999/2000:

President: Eng. K. W. Perera, Vice Presidents: Eng. N. S. Jayasundara, Eng. D. C. A. S. Pathmathilaka, Secretary: Eng. S. Sivaloganathan, Addl. Secretary: Eng. N. N. Kamaladasa, Asst. Secretary: Eng. (Ms.) I. M. Wickramanayake, Treasurer: Eng. P. Thangamail, Asst. Treasurer: Eng. D. H. Jayasooriya.

A 20 member executive committee was elected.