



The State of the Union

"I have not become the King's First Minister in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire."

With these words in November of 1942, Winston Churchill attempted to reject growing international pressure to see the dissolution of the British Empire. Despite his unrivalled command of the English language within 10 years of the end of the Second World War, the empire would find itself largely confined to history books.

You may ask yourself what does this have to do with our sedate little geophysical society. It serves two purposes firstly, to hopefully grab your attention but more importantly reference the evolution we are seeing with the CSEG. In Britain's case whether Churchill was aware of it or not the demise of the colonial era was at the doorstep. In spite of growing cooperation with our sister society the Canadian Society of Petroleum Geologists (CSPG) we are not witnessing the demise of our society's independence. Granted over the last couple of years we have seen increased collaboration in many areas. Collaboration does not translate into any lessening of independence.

Our highest profile event, the Joint Conference now allows both societies to boast of attendance in the 4,500 neighborhood. This certainly attracts attention not only at the local level but also at the international level. These numbers provide compelling justification for both world class exhibitors and technical speakers to put our convention on their calendar. In order to provide a longer term assurance that the two bodies will sustain joint conferences both the CSEG and the CSPG are putting in place an agreement that will commit both societies to see this collaboration continue. It will no longer be an ad hoc annual decision. It makes good business sense and more importantly recognizes that our disciplines repeatedly cross paths. As part of this process the CSEG is moving in the direction of achieving participant parity within the all important Conventions Committee. This committee will be charged with appointing volunteers, managing full time convention staff, as well as oversee all logistical issues pertaining to future conferences. The new committee will equally look after the best interests of both societies.

Cooperation with our sister society makes sense as was seen in the case of office space. Wherever possible we will seek to work together for our mutual benefit. There certainly seems to be no shortage of opportunities. What we will not do is qualify our independence for any temporary benefit. With that being said it is perhaps more important to look at our enduring strength that will allow us to maintain that unique identity.

In no small way the CSEG now has a continuing education program that is the envy of many. Our course load is maximized in terms of available venue space. More importantly the first week of November has come to be known, within the Industry as DoodleTrain week. For a technical society one of the core strengths must be the importance placed on disseminating information and knowledge. In this arena we have been exceptionally successful.

On the fellowship side of our mandate we see the Ski Spree overwhelmed with members lining up to attend. The event itself provides a very economically priced opportunity for families to take a mid-winter break. The Doodlespiel, our society's annual curling event is now one of the largest bonspiels in Alberta. It has taken the ingenuity of the organizers to continually accommodate the 90 plus teams that enter every year. The third wing of our fellowship program involves the prestigious Doodlebug golf tournament. For any member that has attended it is a truly memorable function.

The CSEG Foundation is a reality. Along with the Foundation's directors the CSEG Executive is committed to seeing the corpus grow in order to benefit future generations of geophysicists. The RECORDER is healthy with interesting stories coupled with a very supportive group of advertisers. Our monthly technical luncheon program continues to host quality speakers and great membership support in terms of attendance. Not to be overlooked is our Lunchbox Geophysics which continues to grow.

All of the above is available for those who are CSEG members. An even better part is that we have been able to keep membership fees at a very affordable level. With a healthy balance sheet, from successive surplus budgets the state of our society is financially healthy and with a volunteer base eager to keep it that way! Indeed the state of our society is in great shape. In maintaining the financial health however, we need to stay current and competitive. That may involve change, something our demographics profile will tell us, many do not embrace.

Now back to our history lesson. After the war a series of British cabinets refused to supplant the emotional economic ties held by the British Commonwealth with the ever more relevant advantages European Common market membership held. In spite of set backs in 1963 and again in 1967 Britain indeed joined in 1973. The geographical advantages held by her neighbors outweighed the advantages of a historical relationship. Great Britain still identifies herself with the Commonwealth as we will with our parent organization, the SEG but for pure business advantages the CSEG will collaborate with our neighbors at home. In traveling to Britain we still find the Pound and other Royal institutions. As for the CSEG we will continue to maintain the best educated golfers, curlers and skiers. **R**

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