

A Blind Spot in Technique

In Japan, located in a most active earthquake zone, the height of buildings has been restricted to below 31 meters for a long time. In 1963, this restriction was removed. And now the Kasumigaseki building, 147 meters high, and many other tall buildings were constructed, one of which can be seen through the window of my office. This is indeed a visible evidence which shows development of knowledge and technology in the field of earthquake resistant structural engineering.

On May 16, 1968, the TOKACHI-OKI earthquake attacked the Tohoku and the Hokkaido district. It made vast damage on many low reinforced concrete buildings and exposed their weakpoints, although such buildings had been believed to be "earthquake resistant".

The endeavor to construct higher and larger buildings makes rapid progress in scientific technique, but at the same time, it easily makes a blind spot there. It is indispensable that we often examine the progress of our technical achievement for any unbalance in our knowledge and application of structural engineering.

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