

FOREWORD

There has been a striking progress in the earthquake engineering technique in Japan in last 15 years or so. This progress acquired a great impetus during the late sixties from the remarkable economic growth of our country.

Hundreds of strong-motion accelerographs were installed all over the country, which have furnished invaluable information on the engineering properties of earthquake ground motion. A number of prototype structures including tall buildings, large dams and long-span bridges were field-tested. Japan may be the only country who has such a large amount of experimental results on the dynamic characteristics of real structures. Dynamic computer analysis of large-sized structures is now a commonplace practice among most of the consulting firms.

Thanks to such lively activities in general, the earthquake engineers in Japan have enjoyed gathering a harvest during last several years. Revisions and developments of seismic codes and regulations have been and are being made by a number of competent organizations.

One should realize, however, that such a development was only possible due to the high growth rate of the Japanese economy, and that we are now confronted with the economic recess. Today, we have to ask ourselves "What is the role of earthquake engineering research, especially in universities?" My personal answer is that we have to pay more attention to the problem of seismic disaster mitigation of an urban society. This is not a simple question of constructing an earthquake-resistant building or bridge. We have to seek more cooperation with the people in practice and the researchers in the interdisciplinary fields.



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