

Vol. 5, No. 1  
February, 1971

C. Martin Duke  
Ad hoc Editor

Professor C. Martin Duke, President of the Earthquake Engineering Research Institute, has appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Donald F. Moran, Los Angeles consulting structural engineer, to execute and coordinate a comprehensive investigation of the Los Angeles earthquake of February 9, 1971. Other members of the general committee appointed to date are J. F. Meehan, C. W. Pinkham, W. A. Brugger, Clarence Allen, C. M. Duke, G. W. Housner, H. J. Degenkolb and LeRoy Crandall.

EERI members and other engineers and scientists started field investigations within minutes of the earthquake, assessing the significance of the damage incurred. We have concluded that this earthquake is of major engineering importance and warrants a major investigation and report and have so recommended to NOAA, which has authorized activation of our contract with them.

Completion of an extensive study of the damage and a comprehensive report sponsored by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is anticipated within about one year. All sections of the Structural Engineers Association of California will play a major role in this study.

Some 200 accelerograms and 200 seismoscope records of the quake are available, making it the most instrumentally important earthquake in history. Preliminary indications are that there were some exceptionally high ground accelerations. A preliminary estimate of economic loss as high as a half billion dollars further justifies this major effort.

Numerous public and governmental agencies, educational institutions, professional engineering and scientific societies, and industries are being asked to cooperate with the EERI in studies of seismology, geology and soils, buildings, water supply systems and dams, and transportation systems, including bridges, energy and communication systems, as well as sociological aspects.

There are some 15 major failures which will be comprehensively analyzed and an additional estimated 50 selected cases will receive failure studies. Analysis will be made of instrumented buildings. Other studies will cover ground vibration and fracture, detailed geologic and geodetic studies of the area, soil characteristics and aftershock analysis.

Attached to this newsletter is a copy of President Duke's and Vice President Donald F. Moran's Report, of February 22, 1971, "Preliminary Engineering Findings From Los Angeles Earthquake of February 9, 1971," to Leonard M. Murphy, NOAA's representative on the Joint Earthquake Investigation project. Our preliminary report outline and investigation plans are attached thereto.

The full cooperation of all EERI members is urgently sought relative to both the technical and the organizational aspects. Members are urged to communicate with

Don Moran or myself on what their organizations or they individually may have done or plan to do to investigate the earthquake.

EERI hopes to serve as the central coordinating agency and will incorporate findings of all other agencies and firms in its report. While other organizations naturally will be preparing reports of their own on various aspects, we hope and expect that they will recognize our central role and that no other organization or agency will become competitive with us in this respect.

We would particularly like to know what buildings or structures you feel are worthy of analysis and who might be associated with a study or report on them. Any individual damage reports and photographs would be very valuable.

Some of the information that would be helpful on individual buildings are locations, architect, and engineer, owner, type and size, damage and where plans could be obtained. It is anticipated that EERI will contract with individual firms for analysis of worthy buildings and structures.

Please contact:

D. F. Moran  
7462 North Figueroa Street  
Los Angeles, California 90041  
Phone: 213 - 256-2101  
213 - 254-3770 - Home

This newsletter was assembled by me in the absence of Editor David Leeds who is in Korea.

C. Martin Duke