

On behalf of the Executive Committee
(*Dr Thomas Gardner, Dr Rick Ciocci, Mr Timo Marquez, and Dr Kathryn Jablow*),
greetings, fellow members of the T&S Division:

October has always been my favorite month.

48 years ago today (October 4th), Soviet military scientists launched a beeping satellite into orbit around the Earth utilizing a first-generation ICBM, thus setting off the Space Race, and leading to consequences which neither the USSR nor the USA fully imagined at the time. For just one thing, the flight of Sputnik established the right of free passage through space, analogous to the Law of the Sea; this was no sure thing at the time.

Firmly cementing this principle in international law while heading off an uncontrollable arms race in space was a major, though un-avowed, policy goal of the Eisenhower Administration. It is one of the paradoxes of history that this political victory was enabled by the USA's principal adversary.

Soviet Chief Designer Korolyov understood that a rocket which could throw a 5-tonne H-bomb a quarter way around the world could loft a 184-kilogram battery-powered radio into stable low Earth orbit. Not only did he understand this, but scholarship in the Soviet archives since the end of the Cold War makes it abundantly clear that this was Korolyov's own principal, though unavowed, goal: to build a viable space launcher, but disguised as a strategic weapon to satisfy his military backers. Hence the R-7 /Semyorka/, better known today as the "Soyuz". Another paradox of history, or wheels within wheels...

The Cold War is 16 years gone, without the intervention of a global hot war, thank goodness. But the venerable Soyuz rocket continues to throw payloads into space to this day; launching a billionaire tourist to the International Space Station just last week. And space is full of machines, either with a overtly peaceful purpose, or to keep the peace via surveillance, observation, and communication. No overt weapons so far.

The Machine Age has abundant examples of technologies which lead to results which their proponents, even, in fact *usually* their engineer-inventors, did not foresee. (Alexander Graham Bell imagined the primary use of the telephone would be for what we today recognize as cable radio.) And so ASME in its wisdom founded the Technology & Society Division (or perhaps we should call it The Division of Unintended Consequences). Climate change, extreme weather, resource wars, not to mention other crises facing humanity, make it abundantly clear that the study of the inter-relationship between technology and society is more relevant today than ever.

In connection with this, our program committees are doing fine work. I'll tell you about a few of them just now:

The Intellectual Property Committee has sessions at the upcoming Congress, and at National Manufacturing Week next March. In addition, the IP committee, under the leadership of Frank Spanitz Esq., has recruited two former Congressional Fellows - my

fellow Fellows Lil Ciric (from ASME, 1993) and Paul Crilly (from IEEE, 1994-5). The new Energy & Economics Committee, under the leadership of Hitoshi Sakamoto, has been invited to put together a panel session on energy and economics at the next annual meeting in February of the very prestigious American Association for the Advancement of Science. This is in addition to the E&E sessions at Congress. Hurricane Katrina has made it perfectly obvious to the entire world that the human race must look beyond petroleum; so the subject matter of this committee couldn't be more salient. The efforts of the Sustainable Engineering Committee, under the leadership of Timo Marquez-Arreaza (double-hatted as ExComm member and SE chair) dovetails perfectly with E&E's programs.

And all of ASME is watching our most capable webmaster, Leonard Greer, as the T&S Division leads the way among all divisions in ownership, empowerment, and content creation.

You can look forward to more.

We (the ExComm and I) envisioned messages to the whole division at perhaps quarterly frequency in our original communications for this operating year. But in this month before the Congress, I shall be writing on a weekly basis, to tell you about the great sessions we have laid on for Congress, about the exciting progress our other committees are making, and the plans we have made for the future. Especially, I did not want this particular day to pass un-remarked. It is almost over, so I shall hit the SEND key now, and close with, regards to you all.

Robert G Kennedy III, PE
Chair, T&S Division
October, 2005