



Stand Up Tall and Be Counted

by Ir. Choo Kok Beng, FASc

FIEM, P.ENG, FIEAUST, FTAM, C.PENG, HON.ASEAN.ENG., APEC.ENG., INT.PE, ACPE, AAET

"If you stand for nothing, you will fall for anything."

– Unknown

THE quote above is so true, isn't it?

For sometime, I have wished that all our members would rise up and quit being part of the silent majority. Many of us are content with merely being present at IEM meetings and events. Few make the effort to stand up and be counted.

Perhaps some of you are shy about voicing out your opinions but that does not mean you cannot be part of IEM's many voices. You can always e-mail IEM leaders or write to us and share your thoughts with us.

The topics you raise need not be technical ones only; socio-economic issues are closely connected to what we do as engineers. The way we solve these issues would be the prime-mover of national development.

Then there are those who are afraid to voice out what they think, for fear of offending others. I am not asking you to bulldoze your way through the meeting – your opinions should be thoughtful, rational and considered.

As long as your thoughts are not personal or directed at anyone, I do not see why we should not welcome your opinions with open ears.

Don't get me wrong. I am not seeking intelligent, out-of-this-world ideas. At the very least, I hope to see healthy discussion and debates going on. Brainstorming often produces the best kind of results in our planning.

There may also be some who feel they don't have something to say (regularly) – in this case, the quote above comes to mind.

It's hard to imagine that people do not have thoughts and opinions about things they have a passion for. If we are passionate about engineering and how it can develop the community we live in, we will be constantly thinking about how to better it or at least sit down with other people to discuss how we can play our part.

Don't just do nothing as this can create the impression that you do not care. If I am wrong about this, please accept my apologies. I hope that my words will be taken in good spirit.

For far too long, it has been my wish to awaken the passion in every member of IEM – so that everyone will play an active role instead of just a select few. IEM is, after all, about you.

I hope members will take my words to heart. At future meetings, I sincerely hope to see many more stand up and be counted! ■