MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

ON THE GROUP'S PETITION FOR A CHANGE TO SOCIETY STATUS

On August 23, 1970 the IEEE Board of Directors met at Carmel, California to consider petitions for Society status submitted by the Computer and Power Groups. At the conclusion of their meeting, they issued the following statement:

"The IEEE Board accepts in principle the petition for Society status of the Computer and Power Groups. They are hereby authorized to operate on the basis of the provisional constitution and bylaws they submitted with their petition, effective January 1, 1971. Final approval of their constitution and bylaws shall rest with the IEEE Board.

"The IEEE Executive Committee has been requested to prepare amendments to the IEEE Bylaws by the time of the November 1970 Board meeting. These amendments permit existence of one or more IEEE Societies as well as Groups in accordance with earlier IEEE Board action taken when IEEE Divisions and Division Directors were established. Included in these amendments to the IEEE Bylaws shall be the requirements that appropriate officers of the Society shall be IEEE members of Member grade or higher and that the Constitution and Bylaws of the IEEE shall take precedence over those of any IEEE Society.""

The full text of the provisional constitution and bylaws for the Computer Society appear on page 33.

The substantive changes in the Constitution concern mainly nomenclature—that of the organization and its officers—and the requirements for membership. Historically the present Computer Group evolved from two committee activities of the A.I.E.E. and the I.R.E. These were the Computing Devices Committee and the Professional Group on Electronic Computers, respectively. The membership of these two organizations consisted essentially of professionals educated as electrical engineers who happened to be working on computers or to be interested in them. The committee type of organization was appropriate for these engineers and worked reasonably well. By maintaining its position within the IEEE, the IEEE Computer Society will be able to continue to serve these "electrical engineers specializing in computers."

The changes which we hope to implement are aimed at increasing our ability to serve a different type of member. Specifically the innovations should be most significant for that newer type of professional who regards himself as a computer engineer or scientist rather than an electrical engineer. An increasing number of such individuals are being educated in computer science or engineering curricula. Also many people who received their formal educations in diverse disciplines now work as full-time computer engineers. By providing such individuals the opportunity to become full members of the Computer Society without requiring them to join the IEE, it is hoped that we will be able to provide a better organization for them while maintaining our service to our more traditional type of member. With this broader type of membership, the committee type of organization no longer seems appropriate and it is for this reason that the changes in structure and names are being made.

I would like to extend an enthusiastic invitation to all who consider themselves computer scientists or engineers to join the IEEE Computer Society. Specific details on applying for membership can be obtained by mailing in the card that appears in the back of this issue. Since almost all of the readers of this article are already Computer Group members, I must rely on you to pass on my invitation to those acquaintances for whom it would be appropriate.

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