



SUPPORT THE PROFESSION

BY ROGER WELSMAN

AS A teacher of surveying at a Community College, I am constantly faced with a dilemma. The Surveying industry is facing a critical shortage of trained survey personnel and yet the number of high school students entering Survey courses continues to decline.

One reason for this decline is that Mathematics has become optional in the high schools. If a student is good at Math he is usually groomed for a Math-related University program, not a College one.

Another reason is that high school students have the idea that Surveying is (a) seasonal, (b) low paying and (c) low tech.

We have to get the message across to students that surveying is no longer seasonal and that employers keep experienced staff on a permanent basis.

The Graduate Placement Report for the year 1982-83, prepared by the Ontario Colleges Information System, reports that the median salary for Survey Technicians at that time was between 19,000 and 20,000 dollars per year or \$9.35 to \$9.85 per hour based on a 40 hour week. That was 4 years ago! But stories about Minimum Charlies abound and are not countered by enough good reports.

We definitely are not Low-Tech. When I walk into a high school with my total station in its bright orange case, the

whole school is interested and curious. When I show a class what it can do, the most surprised people are usually the teachers who had no idea surveying deals with electronics, computers and plotters!

College programs need a boost in a hurry. Not one College has enough students and administrations are cancelling or threatening to cancel Survey programs every year.

Take the time to attend your local high school's Careers Day and show off some of your High-Tech equipment and expertise. If only one student from each high school was attracted to surveying the whole manpower problem would be solved. ●