Subject: SWEcc pullout
 Date: Sun, 09 Jul 2000 13:05:03 -0500
 From: "Dennis J. Frailey" <d-frailey@raytheon.com>
Organization: Raytheon Company
  To: "Simons, Barbara" <Simons@acm.org>

Barbara, I received your voice mail.
I am not surprised at Council's action, but I
am very disappointed at the process by
which this happened. Specifically, I am disappointed
at the secretive and relatively exclusionary method
that was used. Instead of working with me and the
other SWEcc representatives to forge a solution to
the problems Council perceived, you took independent
action and kept us largely in the dark. You severed
a relationship that took several years to develop
and discarded a lot of good will as well.

As late as April I asked Joe
Turner if there was anything going on here and
offered the assistance of a number of individuals who
have contacted me expressing concern over Council's
actions and offered to appear before Council to give
their views (all different) on this matter.
Joe indicated that he knew of nothing
"big" that was about to happen. He later called
me just before the Council meeting and indicated that
something was on the agenda, but by then it was too late
for me to do much of anything. Tony Wasserman, a
Council candidate and opponent of SWEBOK (and founder
of SIGSOFT) was able to make the Council meeting, but
later informed me that he was not invited to participate
in the deliberations on this issue other than to make
a statement before Council went into executive session.
He probably knows more about software engineering
than anyone else who was present.

My perception is that
Council did not want to hear anything from me or from
those who might disagree with the authors of the reports that
Council solicited.
At the very least you could have asked me to resign
instead of simply pulling the rug from under me without
even telling me why or what was going on. The
clear message I received is that I am perceived as
part of the problem. My guess is that you and Council

know very little about what I have been doing on your behalf.

In my view, based solely on grapevine information, the Council decision was based on incomplete and in some cases on erroneous information. For example, I heard tales of SWEcc "concentrating on licensing" that can be readily refuted. However very little has been communicated to me about the content of the reports or the deliberations, and thus I am not able to state much of anything with certainty.

I want to say more about the fact that ACM's two SWEcc representatives and the ACM leads of the four SWEcc projects were not consulted in this process and our offers of help were not responded to. We are supposedly your representatives here and we have learned things that might have been of value. While our personal opinions may not agree with those of Council on all matters, we have worked on this for many years and we have insights on subtleties that were probably not apparent to those doing the evaluations. For example, NCEES politics.

I am also disappointed for the hundreds of volunteers who have worked on our projects and are now in a state of dumbfounded uncertainty. I recruited and encouraged many of these volunteers over the years and I cannot even give them the reasons for ACM's actions! My guess is that we will lose many of these volunteers, even if some of the projects are continued under a new organization.

Here are some things I think may come of this action:
- This Fall, NCEES and the state licensing boards will agree to institute software engineering examinations, probably as a subset of computer engineering, with IEEE sponsorship. ACM will have little or no influence on this decision or on the content of the examinations.
- ACM's attempts to address issues such as safety critical software will languish for lack of volunteers. In the meantime, IEEE-CS will begin certifying people for safety critical software expertise.

- ABET will begin accrediting software engineering
  programs and due to lack of a SWEcc to turn to,
  CSAB will rely on other sources to define the
  criteria for accreditation. (It is possible that the
  education project might influence this but other
  groups are also defining software engineering academic
  curricula and there is no longer a coordinating
  function among them).

I consider this a sad time for software engineering
as a profession. I also consider it a sad time for
ACM and fear that ACM membership from the software
engineering practitioner community is in jeopardy.

Regards, Dennis J. Frailey