



Photograph by Fabian Bachrach.

Joel. Pauer

JOSEPH C. LAWLER, JR.

1920-1982

BY MARTIN LANG

JOSEPH C. LAWLER, JR., Chairman of the Board of Camp, Dresser and McKee, Inc. (CDM), one of the Nation's major consulting firms in the environmental engineering field, died on November 18, 1982, at his home in North Reading, Massachusetts.

Mr. Lawler was widely recognized for his contributions to the environmental engineering profession, for his dedication to high ethical standards, and for his involvement in furthering the consulting engineering profession.

He received a B.S. in civil engineering, with honors, from Northeastern University in 1943. He served with distinction as a Navy Lieutenant in the Civil Engineering Corps stationed in the Pacific during World War II. He then attended Harvard University and received a master's degree in sanitary engineering in 1947. He was also awarded an honorary Doctor of Engineering degree from Northeastern University in 1972.

Mr. Lawler had been with Camp, Dresser and McKee since its inception in 1947 and played a significant role in guiding the firm to its position as one of the largest consulting firms in the country. He became a Partner in 1952, President of the international subsidiary in 1968, and President and Chairman of the Board when the firm was incorporated in 1970. Thomas R. Camp, the firm's founder, once characterized him as the "backbone of CDM." Under his leadership the firm expanded its national and international markets and became a leading force in the environmental engineering field.

He was recognized as an untiring worker for the international advancement of environmental engineering and for the training of engineering personnel of developing countries.

Some of his many international projects included water treatment works for Sydney, Australia; development of water and sewerage systems for eighty communities in Bangladesh; water supply, sewerage, drainage, and flood protection for metropolitan Bangkok, Thailand; water supply and sewerage projects for Ankara, Turkey; and sewerage and wastewater treatment for metropolitan Taipei, Taiwan.

Major projects in the United States included expansion of Tallman's Island wastewater treatment plant, New York City; sewerage and joint wastewater treatment works for Pittsfield and Dalton, Massachusetts; a waterworks improvement program for Troy, New York; the nineteen-community water pollution abatement report in the Merrimack River Basin; and the study for pollution control works for Lawrence and adjacent towns in Massachusetts.

Joseph Lawler was elected to the National Academy of Engineering (NAE) in April 1973. He was cited for his innovative contributions to water supply and wastewater treatment plant design and to the advancement of the engineering profession. In 1981 he chaired the NAE-sponsored round table on the Clean Water Act.

He was very active in many engineering and professional societies, serving as President of the New England Water Pollution Control Association in 1970 and as President of the Engineering Societies of New England in 1962-1963. He was a Diplomate of the American Academy of Environmental Engineers and a Fellow of both the American Society of Civil Engineers and the American Consulting Engineers Council.

The Engineering Societies of New England cited Mr. Lawler's ability as an administrator, his contributions to the international advancement of environmental engineering, and his dedication to maintaining the ethical standards of his profession when they gave him the New England Award in 1972. In April 1981 he received the Civil Engineering Management Award from the American Society of Civil Engineers and delivered the Parcel-Sverdrup management lecture at the society's national meeting.

Joseph Lawler was an avid big-game hunter and wildlife conservationist. A founder and first President of the New England Chapter of the Safari Club International, he was active in both the club's local and national affairs. He was a Vice-President of the Safari Club's International Conservation Fund, sponsor of a broad range of conservation activities, including the American Wilderness Leadership School, and recipient of the Arthur Sullivan Memorial Award for New England outdoor journalists.

At Northeastern University he served as Director of the Alumni Association from 1958 to 1960 and as Vice-President from 1960 to 1962; in 1964 he was made a Director of its National Council. He was an active member of the university's Board of Trustees at the time of his death. As a graduate of Northeastern's cooperative education program, Mr. Lawler had been recognized for his efforts in promoting cooperative education nationwide. The Cooperative Education Association posthumously awarded him the Charles F. Kettering Award.

Speaking for his associates, Joseph E. Heney, President of Camp, Dresser and McKee, said:

We all share a deep sense of loss at the passing of our Chairman and Chief Executive Officer. Joe was the driving force behind CDM's spectacular growth over the past two decades. He leaves behind a strong organization, a management philosophy, and a set of professional ideals that will serve us well in the years ahead.