Meetings

AIP Committee on Publishing Problems

CLEARLY the science of physics faces a serious problem in providing periodicals for the prompt publication of an ever increasing number of valuable research reports. The problem is partly how to divide up the subject of physics efficiently between existing and contemplated journals and partly how to pay the publishing costs without setting impossibly high subscription prices.

These matters have been under continuous study by responsible officers of the Member Societies and the American Institute of Physics. For nearly a year a Committee of the American Physical Society has been making a special study of them. It became clear in 1956, if not before, that some practical actions must be taken rather quickly in the best interests of physics and physicists. To consider and recommend just what actions were needed the Institute recently appointed a Committee on Publishing Problems consisting of E. U. Condon, Chairman, F. N. Frenkiel, F. V. Hunt, J. E. Mayer, and K. G. McKay.

The Committee met on December 1, 1956, and again on January 5, 1957, with certain officers of the APS and the AIP attending as advisers. Its work is far from finished, but it is now possible to report the direction of some of its discussions and recommendations. As this is written, the recommendations have not yet been finally considered by the Institute's Executive Committee or Governing Board.

The Committee first considered just where, in the federation of autonomous societies that the AIP is, the responsibility lies for initiative in the establishment of new journals. The Committee's answer is that "the inclusion of journals reporting original research among the Institute owned and operated journals shall not be considered anomalous". Parenthetically, somewhat the opposite view has heretofore prevailed, and the AIP has accordingly endeavored to transfer *The Journal of Chemical Physics* to the American Physical Society.

When this new view was presented to the AIP Executive Committee, it was moved after discussion that, "in the implementation of the Institute's purpose of undertaking the publication of scientific journals, it is its policy whenever it appears desirable for the advancement of physics:

"1. To assist Member Societies in the publication of their journals,

2. To assume full responsibility for such physics journals as the Member Societies request the Institute to sponsor,
3. To initiate new physics journals which the individual Member Societies do not undertake."

Since it was recognized that the above is a major policy statement, it was agreed that it should be presented for review at the next full meeting of the Governing Board.

The first *specific* problem considered by the Committee on Publishing Problems was the large and growing backlog of papers accepted for, but not yet published in, *The Journal of Chemical Physics*. This amounts to some 1800 pages or nearly two-thirds of a year's output at the 1956 rate of publication. It was reported to the Committee that a rise in subscription price January 1, 1957, and improved collections of per-page publication charges had made possible an increase of 400 pages in the budget for 1957. This is in line with the AIP policy of running *JCP* with a balanced budget. This increase is about enough to prevent further growth of the backlog.

The Committee recommended, and the Executive Committee later agreed, that funds raised by the AIP in its present campaign or otherwise may wisely be used to work off the backlog, and that an effort should be made to accomplish this by the end of 1958.

The Committee then considered suggestions for the establishment of new journals under AIP auspices, of which several have been made. Particularly impressive was a suggestion for a journal in the field of fluid physics, very broadly defined. Dr. Frenkiel presented a survey of the views of several physicists including the members of the Executive Committee of the APS Division of Fluid Dynamics which the Committee accepted as adequate evidence of the need for such a journal. A particular point was made of the desirability of publishing the journal under the sponsorship of the physicists' own organization for reasons of prestige as well as the possibility of providing the journal at a lower subscription price per word than is commercially feasible.

The Committee accordingly "recommended to the Governing Board of the AIP that a new journal be established by the AIP devoted to the physics of fluids covering kinetic theory, statistical mechanics, structure and general physics of gases, liquids, and other fluids".

The Committee will continue meeting to evaluate the need for new journals and, with the aid of other study groups, to inquire into the best development or alteration of existing journals. With regard to these, particularly the journals owned by the Member Societies, the Committee can, of course, have no more than a suggestive role.

Radiation Effects

UNCLASSIFIED review papers on the general subject of radiation effects on materials are to be presented at a colloquium to be held March 27–29 on the campus of The Johns Hopkins University (Shriver Hall). Sponsored by the Office of Naval Research and the