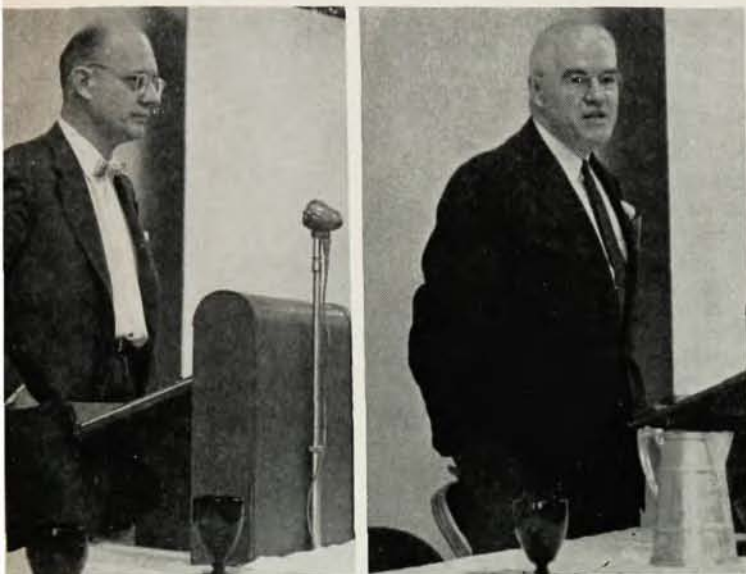




Panel discussion on Industry and the Physicist was a feature of the first annual meeting of the Corporate Associates of the American Institute of Physics on October 28. Panel consisted of scientists in charge of research activities in major US corporations.



Frederick Seitz (left), chairman of the AIP Governing Board, presided at the meeting. The Institute's director, Elmer Hutchisson (right), outlined plans for future AIP activities and other members of the AIP staff gave summaries of the Institute's current programs in archive publication, physics education, and public information.



Panelist Clarence Zener (Westinghouse) and discussion leader C. Guy Suits (General Electric). Dr. Zener spoke on the supporting services that are available to physicists in industry.

The Institute

First Annual Meeting of Corporate Associates

INDUSTRY now employs more than forty percent of the physicists in the United States, at least equaling and probably outranking educational institutions as principal users of the skills and talents of those trained in the science of physics. Industry's growing stake in the future of physics has long been recognized by many of the nation's large corporations, particularly those in which physicists have held high administrative posts. During the mid-thirties, early in the history of the American Institute of Physics, several individual firms voluntarily began contributing to the support of organized physics by affiliating themselves informally with the Institute. Since 1946 the companies involved have had formal membership status in the AIP—being known as Associates (now Corporate Associates) of the Institute. A current list of the Corporate Associates appears on page 37 of this issue.

It has been recommended that meetings of the Corporate Associates be arranged on an annual basis to provide a closer tie between the Institute and its friends in industry, and on October 28, 1958, the first such gathering took place at the Institute's headquarters in New York City. The program, under the chairmanship of Frederick Seitz, consisted of a panel discussion on "Industry and the Physicist", a review of the Institute's major programs by members of the AIP staff, and a luncheon address by Chauncey Starr, vice president of North American Aviation, Inc., who reported briefly on the Second International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy which was held in Geneva last September under United Nations auspices.

C. Guy Suits, vice president and director of research of the General Electric Co., served as leader of the panel discussion. Other members of the panel were William O. Baker, vice president for research of the Bell Telephone Laboratories, E. R. Piore, director of research for the International Business Machines Corp., Cyril J. Staud, vice president in charge of research for Eastman Kodak Co., and Clarence Zener, director of the Westinghouse Electric Corp. Research Laboratories.



In addition to representatives of AIP Corporate Associates, those attending the meeting included members of the Institute's Governing Board and a number of guests representing industrial organizations not formally affiliated with the AIP.



E. R. Piore of IBM (right foreground) discussed the opportunities for doing creative work in physics that are now available in industry.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Suits called attention to the evident need for better understanding, both in industry and in the colleges and universities, of the role of the physicist in industry: i. e., "the opportunity in industry for the physicist, the nature of his work including the fields in which he works, and the professional environment in which he pursues his work".

The panelists dealt with these topics in some detail. Each emphasized the need for stimulating more interaction between physicists in industry and the universities and for penetrating what Dr. Zener termed "the self-imposed iron curtain which many physicists coming out of universities have erected separating them from direct participation in the technical developments of our civilization". A recurrent theme was the desirability of more emphasis on subjects in classical physics in colleges and universities and in the professional societies of physics. It was made clear that industries place a very high valuation on the skills and the ideas of physicists and are dependent upon educational institutions for competently trained physicists capable of dealing with the practical but often complex day-to-day problems of industrial science. It also became evident that any steps taken by the Institute and its founder societies to strengthen the bonds between industrial physicists and other members of the physics community would be applauded.



Panelist William O. Baker of Bell Labs (left) spoke on the professional society affiliations of industrial physicists. Cyril J. Staud of Eastman Kodak discussed the nature of work done by physicists in industry.



Chancey Starr of North American Aviation gave luncheon talk summarizing highlights of the Geneva Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy.



Following luncheon, Chairman Seitz threw meeting open for discussion from floor.