

NEWS OF THE INSTITUTE

Strassenburg discusses AIP role in education

Arnold A. Strassenburg, the new director of AIP's education and manpower division (PHYSICS TODAY, July, page 9), recently spoke of his plans for the division with PHYSICS TODAY. Drawing on his experience as physics professor and his service with the Commission on College Physics, Strassenburg said that the single limitation to much better physics education in colleges and high schools is the quality and dedication of the teaching faculty. He indicated that AIP in the future will devote more of its efforts to education at the college level, that collaboration between the institute and CCP would be strengthened and that coöperation would be sought with a number of science teaching centers.

With the revolution in teaching methods, growth of student body and new sources of federal and state support, physics education is today facing a greater challenge and opportunity than at any time in its history. We asked Strassenburg:

● *What is most needed in physics education at this time?*

"At the undergraduate and high-school level, the greatest need is for improvement in teaching conditions, salaries and general attractiveness of physics teaching. If we improve the conditions, we can attract a better kind of teacher. At the same time, we should help those now teaching to become more competent by involving them in a variety of professional activities."

● *What do you conceive as the principal mission of AIP's education and manpower division?*

"To provide assistance to teachers and institutions throughout the country. Now that's a broad statement because it has to be broad. Our form of assistance will vary from time to time and area to area. We have to help teachers identify and solve such problems as can only be solved by outside support.

"For example one of the great hopes

for improving undergraduate physics education is the new college science improvement program (COSIP), recently announced by the National Science Foundation. Through COSIP the smaller colleges will be able to obtain significant financial support for improving undergraduate curricula. We at



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AIP feel that we can help the colleges plan their improvement program and encourage them to coöperate with one another."

● *Will you initiate any new programs or expand existing ones?*

"In the past two years the emphasis at AIP has been on the high-school level with little attention to the colleges. I think this balance must be corrected so that our efforts at both levels are roughly comparable. I am anxious to launch a program of help similar to the precollege project but directed at smaller colleges. Other programs will be expanded and our staff will be built up.

"There is nothing that limits us at AIP except manpower. If we can find physicists who are willing to work on these projects, we can more readily find support. Physicists who specialize in educational projects are already in short supply because of the many educational programs springing up in various areas. I think physics in gen-

eral would benefit if more competent physicists turned their attention to educational problems."

● *Do you intend to revive AIP's apparatus center?*

"We at AIP do not have the staff to keep up with such a rapidly changing area as education apparatus. What I do anticipate is coöperation with one or more science teaching centers over the country. Through our contacts with the physics profession, we can help such centers operate more effectively."

● *Will the institute strive for a closer working relation with the Commission on College Physics?*

"My contacts with CCP are still very strong, and I think our relations with CCP will be greatly improved. Our activities will not compete with them but will complement their own efforts. CCP can provide expert advice on undergraduate curriculum problems and new teaching methods and materials; they are going to expand their consulting services. AIP can advise on such problems as establishing a graduate program in physics, improving the research effort, determining how much money should be spent on apparatus and books and the proper relation between school administrations and physics departments. Thus through our joint efforts, AIP and the commission will be able to encompass a wide spectrum of needs in physics education."

Soviet semiconductor journal

Soviet Physics - Semiconductors, a translation of *Fizika i Tekhnika Poluprovodnikov*, will be added as the twelfth in AIP's translation series of Russian physics journals. The project will begin with the January 1967 issue of the Russian journal and will be produced and distributed by AIP starting in July. The Russian editor is Ya. A. Fedotov and the English advisory editor A. Tybulewicz of London. Individuals and institutions may order the journal (\$70 domestic, \$74 foreign) from AIP. □