national curriculum projects and the apparent decline in physics enrollments would be obtained.

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### *Labs for nonscientists*

I am somewhat at a loss to account for Enos R. Wicher's concern (PHYSICS TODAY, July, page 9) about the "paradox" between the PSNS (Physical Science for Nonscientists) emphasis on experiment in its course *An Approach to Physical Science* and Robert I. Hulsizer's statement (PHYSICS TODAY, March, page 55) about the place of laboratory work in introductory courses. In these days when introductory or general courses are often plagued with large numbers of students, there is a tendency to defer laboratory work to later more specialized courses. The situation is particularly troublesome with courses in general physics and general chemistry. One may question the advisability of the present tendency, but this is not the question here.

The PSNS course is not intended to be an introductory course. It is designed as a terminal course for students who may have a very limited background in secondary-school science, but who may later have the responsibility of introducing young minds to the nature of physical science and to the thinking and working habits of physical scientists. I do not wish to repeat the arguments of the article. It seems to me that the second and third paragraphs of the section of the article which present the philosophy of the project are quite clear in explaining the emphasis on experiment in a course such as ours.


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### *Work for master's candidates*

The March issue of PHYSICS TODAY carries further discussion regarding the purpose of the master's degree in G.W. Brindley's letter (on page 11). Having completed a master's degree in physics and one in mathematics before doing the PhD degree, I have strong feelings that the quality of the master's degree should be upheld. However, it may be that the purpose of the master's-degree research should be changed to conform to the more crowded conditions in graduate school and the growth of physics. Therefore I have the following suggestions for those who would direct master's-degree candidates and who desire to make these candidates contributors to the field of physics while doing respectable theses.

Noting that the first step in PhD research work is a survey of the literature of the field together with a study of the instrumentation needed to do work in the field, I suggest that problems for master's-degree candidates may be profitably assigned if they constitute a review of the literature in a field or a study of instrumentation for research in a given field. As an encouragement to master's-degree candidates to do an outstanding work, it might be good to establish an annual publication containing those reviews that are judged best to meet the needs of the physics community and to be of high quality.

I recognize that this is the reverse of the procedure normally used in obtaining review articles; for the desire to have an expert to do the critical review of an area is, indeed, strong. However, a fresh, unbiased review of the work that has been done in an area of physics could lead to interesting results. Of course, the time limits placed on the supervision of a master's candidate must be considered whatever type problem is chosen.

There is one other area of thesis ma-