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letters

cists, who unfortunately are dumb enough (politically) not to recognize the root of the problem. We instead elect to compete with each other for the few vacancies available by all means, including the improper or illegal. Our present predicament could only be improved by bargaining with the governments and institutions not as individuals but as a well organized group of physicists.

I ask those who agree with my opinion, please send me a short note.

Siu-Kay Luke
Department of Physics
University of Windsor
Ontario, Canada

THE AUTHOR COMMENTS: Siu-Kay Luke has conveniently numbered his points, and I will comment on them by number. (1) Influential recommendations are indeed important for research-oriented positions, but I have not found them to be so for the teaching-oriented positions with which my letter was concerned. Most search committees are interested in letters of recommendation only for those applicants who have already been rated highly on the basis of the letter of application and *curriculum vitae*. (2) My letter did not say that I spent two years doing nothing but looking for jobs. Such a course would have resulted in my dismissal from my present position, and I would not advise such a course for anyone else. (3) The illustrations I gave of things that will "catch someone's eye" were all based on solid accomplishments, not mere postures or false claims. In my experience, any claim that cannot be backed up by evidence of real accomplishment is ignored by search committees. That is why I said that an applications procedure must begin three or four years in advance. (4) It is quite true that I did not attempt to solve the general employment problem for physicists, but rather to show the individual physicist how he might find a high position as his abilities and accomplishments merit. An organization similar to the one that Luke seems to contemplate forming already exists—the American Physicists's Association. I am sure that members from other countries would be welcomed.

DAVID BOWEN
Northeastern University
Boston, Mass.

Free abstracts

Although I believe the subscription to the newsprint abstracts from the *Physical Review* should continue to be free for APS members, I would prefer not

to receive them. I suspect there are other APS members with a similar desire, and suggest that an item be placed on the next annual dues billing form to give us this option. I am sure that the Society has useful purposes for the savings that would accrue from printing and mailing fewer abstracts.

J. S. HUEBNER
University of North Florida
Jacksonville, Florida

COMMENT BY THE APS: J. S. Huebner suggests that the American Physical Society give the option to members to receive or not receive *Physical Review Abstracts*. *Physical Review Abstracts* is sent to all members free to keep them informed of new publications in physics. Production and distribution costs are kept to a minimum by using the full membership list. If we were to give the members the option of not receiving *Physical Review Abstracts*, we would have to establish and maintain a separate list of subscribers for this purpose, which would involve a significant extra cost.

W. W. HAVENS, JR
Executive Secretary
American Physical Society

International physics

I want to report on the results of a questionnaire on science in less developed countries (LDC's) sent to the chairmen of about 170 physics departments in the United States that have an advanced program in physics. A total of 41 questionnaires were returned, representing a reasonably accurate cross-section of the total number of physics departments. The results of the poll are as follows:

Around 90% of the respondents feel that it is important to build indigenous science in the LDC's; 56% feel that the US physics community is not doing enough at present to help in this development; 34% had no opinion or were undecided, and only 10% thought the community did enough.

► 80% feel that AIP should undertake a program to foster collaboration between US physics and physics in the LDC's.

► 46% are in favor of increasing APS dues by an average figure of about \$2 a year to generate funds for this new activity.

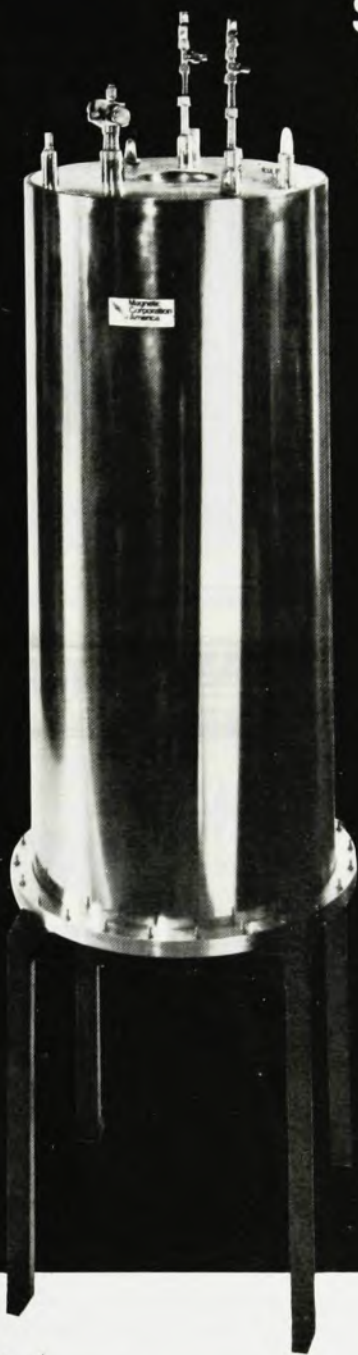
► Opinion was indecisive on whether the US foreign-assistance program sufficiently emphasizes building capability in the LDC's, with 46% feeling it did not and the bulk of the remainder undecided or failing to answer.

► There is a huge, now-latent body of past experience among US physicists having first-hand knowledge of at least some LDC's; 60% of the respondents

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