

letters

It should be clear from this brief outline that the alternating sequence brings to the program a dynamic and versatile balance between basic and applied science. We should mention that one does not have to be an hi-fi expert to teach such a course—for anyone trained as a physicist who takes the time for a little outside reading, the transition is easy to make. The implicit reward for the effort will be the assurance that physics remains in the mainstream of student education. The explicit reward will be overwhelming enrollments!

While providing a stage for the exposition of physics principles, the physics of hi-fi possesses relevancy and excitement that students can carry with them many years after leaving the classroom. Whenever they turn on a radio, play a record or tape, or simply hum a tune, we are hopeful they will remember the experience of physics—its utility and beauty.

A more detailed version of this report as well as the lab manual are available directly from the authors. The lab manual costs \$5.00.

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Repression in Argentina

Since the military coup of 24 March, the Argentine scientific and academic establishment, which had already been hard hit by a big purge of the universities under the regime of Isabel Peron, has been decimated to an unprecedented degree by another purge. According to information published in several issues of the Buenos Aires daily *La Opinión* of March, April and May, and from other sources, in the first two months after the coup more than 2000 lost their jobs at the universities and no fewer than 700 at different research institutes, among them the National Science and Technology Research Council, the Physics and Technology Institute at San Miguel, the Atomic Energy Committee, the National Institute of Industrial Technology, the National Institute of Agricultural and Cattle Breeding Technology and other places. According to an estimate by members of the Asociación Física Argentina, one fourth of the members of this organization have lost their jobs. Also grade-school and high-school teachers have been fired, as have several hundreds of physicians, psychologists and social workers at hospitals and mental-health institutions.

These dismissals have been carried out under two laws passed by the Junta, the so-called "security" law and the *ley de prescindibilidad* (not needed personnel

law). The second law allows any public employee to be fired, with the proviso that he or she cannot be given any job in the public sector for the next five years. The leading positions at the universities, like those of rectors, deans of schools and even directors of courses of study (such as psychology and so on) have been taken over by military officers. They have also taken over the leading positions at all research institutes mentioned.

New repressive regulations have been passed at the universities that cover everything from dressing habits to "immoral" and "potentially subversive" actions carried out by teachers and students even outside their institutions. Some university libraries have been depurated of "subversive" literature and the books of Marx and Freud (called "ideological criminals" by an Air Force officer who is now Secretary General of the Universidad Nacional de Cordoba) publicly burned. Several intellectuals have disappeared and may have been killed by the repressive forces, others have been arrested, some have been tortured and some have had their houses plundered. Among those arrested since March or April and not accused of any specific crime nor being tried are the physicists Antonio Misetich and Máximo Victoria and the sociologist Emilio de Ipola. The constitutional right according to which people arrested under an *état de siege* but not being tried could choose to leave the country has been suspended by the Junta.

We are seriously worried by this situation, which can only cause further damage to the development of scientific and cultural activities in Argentina. We call on our colleagues to demand that our imprisoned fellow scientists be freed and that those dismissed should be given back their jobs, as a first step towards the reestablishment of a climate favorable to the development of science and culture.

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Nuclear waste disposal

In his letter to the editor (January, page 9), Bernard Cohen presents what he calls a numerical estimate of the health hazards of buried nuclear waste. His conclusion is that the upper limit is 1.1 cancer deaths from the waste produced in generating 400 gigawatt-years of electrical energy, and he illustrates this in his figures 1 and 2. If one reads the text carefully, however, one finds the following condition that must be met in order to expect such a low number: The waste would have to be incorporated into the



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