

letters

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people will assume (perhaps wrongly) that they favor such improper actions as the present boycott. Even favoring ERA as I do, I resent the council's decision, and would like to vote against councilors who favored the boycott. I wish I knew who they were.

I do, incidentally, recognize the council's duty sometimes to make decisions on which they do not know members' opinions—but this happens seldom when the issues are directly relevant to the advancement of physics, for the advancement of physics is the reason for the APS's existence and all the members know that. But even on these issues the council sometimes polls the members, unless the decision has to be made on very short notice. I do not think the boycott is either so urgent or so clearly essential to the advancement of physics as to qualify for such nonconsultative decision-making.

So I urge the council to rescind its ill-advised action, or at least to explain to APS members why the action was taken.

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12/8/78

COMMENT BY PRESIDENT OF APS: The November 1978 resolution of the APS council was passed by a vote of 13 to 10 with two abstentions. It includes a statement of support for equality of opportunity for women in light of their under-representation in physics and a further statement of the council's decision not to schedule any additional divisional or general meetings of the Society in "non-ERA" states during the three-year extension by Congress of the time for ratification by states. The resolution does express support for ERA as it relates to opportunities in science; it does not restrict the locations of topical conferences or sectional meetings. It does not "boycott" ERA states, in the sense that locations for our general meetings through 1984 are already determined. The annual meeting in 1980 will be in Chicago, for example. I urge those who wish to debate the matter further to be sure they read the resolution as actually passed, and not rely on the POPA summary arguments (see above), which refer to a simpler and somewhat more restrictive proposal.

At the Washington meeting of the council (March 1979), a motion was made on behalf of the executive committee of the Division of Electron and Atomic Physics that the resolution be amended by deleting divisional meetings from the resolution's strictures. This would have put the decision back to the division executive committees, permitting different

policies for each division. This motion was debated and failed by a vote of 13 to 7 with one abstention.

The constitution of the Society unambiguously vests in the council the responsibility to make decisions on matters such as location of meetings and other matters of general policy. The councilors are identified on the inside cover of the *APS Bulletin*. Every communication received by officers of the Society from members on this topic prior to the last meeting was distributed to each attending councilor. We will continue to do this in the future.

Many of these letters, on each side of the issue, express deeply felt and carefully argued views. APS members who feel the matter should be considered further by council may wish to express their views to the executive committee of their division(s), and urge the division to instruct its council representative accordingly or write members of the council directly, sending a copy to the Executive Secretary of the APS, 335 East 45th St., New York, N.Y. 10017.

LEWIS M. BRANSCOMB

President
The American Physical Society

At Work

Filtered,
in between thoughts
of pi-mesons,
come conversations
of people and living
that escapes the mesh
thrown up by charged spin
states
of mind or other barriers
that one investigates

People seem always to intrude
tunneling their way past barriers
set up
with no potential for anything
but keeping away

life

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Chinese honor for Einstein

I, a young scientific literature translator in Shanghai, have with great joy read the news on "Einstein Statue Commemorates Centennial" (January, page 119). Personally I believe Albert Einstein was not only the greatest man of science in the world, but also the greatest philosopher and thinker with a sense of social justice. Whenever I think of his modesty, honesty and ardour for science, it always gives me great encouragement. The enclosed stamps (see figure) were printed by the People's Republic of China to commemorate Einstein's birth.

Albert Einstein was a friend of the Chinese people. According to the historical record of Shanghai, Einstein twice arrived in Shanghai by sea in 1922. The Shanghai people gave him a warm welcome. He visited the Yu Garden on 13 November, the day he was notified of his Nobel Prize award.

I am very interested in science and technology and want to study Einstein's philosophic and scientific thought. I would welcome hearing from prospective pen pals.

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4/3/79

The People's Republic of China

Author's ploy

Agnes M. Herzberg's excellent essay on the game of publishing scientific papers (April, page 9) omitted what may well be the most important ploy used by authors to influence editors. It is the footnote that reads, "The author is grateful to [here insert the name of every authority in the field dealt with in the paper] for their helpful comments and review of the manuscript."

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4/17/79

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Ship hydrodynamics

The article by Pierre Lafrance on "Ship hydrodynamics" (June 1978, page 34) was interesting, not so much for what it included on the subject, but for what it omitted. Apart from a brief sentence and a qualitative diagram (figure 2), the article seems to have carefully avoided the subject of the planing hull, which if only in terms of sheer numbers, undoubtedly represents the most important manifestation of ship hydrodynamics (as distinct from hydrostatics) in the current world inventory of air-water interface vehicles. If pleasure craft do not constitute an important enough class to be included in an overview of this type, certainly patrol boats and fast naval vessels, which derive much of their support from Bernoulli rather than Archimedes, deserve at least the same attention given the military or commercial hovercraft and hydrofoil vehicles.

Perhaps the obvious omission of planing-hull hydrodynamics reflects the current level of physical understanding in this branch of naval architecture. If one consults standard available texts on the subject, this suspicion is reinforced. In Saunders's otherwise extremely thorough compendium *Hydrodynamics in Ship Design*,¹ for example, out of a total of 99 chapters only three brief chapters are devoted to planing phenomena. Two are