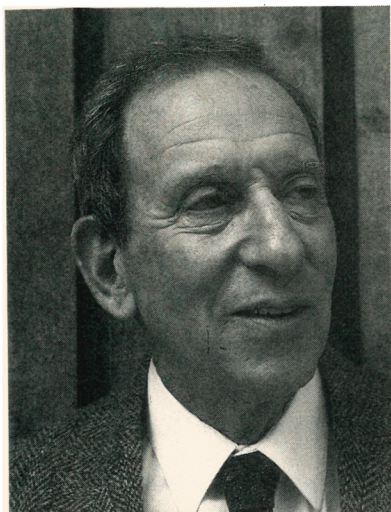




Eugen Merzbacher

the Physics Planning Committee considered a number of recent reports concerning the current status of the individual investigator. Among other things, committee members looked at the 1990 Survey of Young Physics Faculty (see *PHYSICS TODAY*, February, page 37), and a preliminary report on a soon-to-be-completed study of NSF funding for physics research. They also heard from Leon Lederman, president-elect of the AAAS and a PPC member, on the results of his informal poll of physics, biology and chemistry department heads at top research institutions (see *PHYSICS TODAY*, February, page 75). The Panel on Public Affairs also helped formulate the statement.

Merzbacher points out that the space station statement, which was initiated by the APS Panel on Public Affairs, was formulated with the assistance of representatives of the APS division of astrophysics, who polled leaders in their field for their opinions. The Physics Planning Committee also heard from the chief scientist of the space station, William L. Taylor, who agreed that purely scientific objectives are not the primary justification for the project.

The APS council is not the first body to cast doubt on the scientific justification for a manned space station. NASA's own advisory committee on the space station recently issued a report that states: "We do not believe that Space Station Freedom, as we now know it, can be justified solely on the basis of the (nonbiological) science it can perform, much of which can be conducted on Earth or by robotic spacecraft at lower cost." Previous statements by the American Geophysical Union and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers also questioned

NASA's overall priorities and its plans for a balanced space program.

The statement on anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union, drafted by the APS Committee on the International Freedom of Scientists, condemns the rise of anti-Semitism in the USSR and calls on the Soviet Academy of Sciences and other Soviet scientific soci-

eties to join in reversing this trend. A previous report in *PHYSICS TODAY* (March 1990, page 52) details the unleashing of anti-Semitic forces in the wake of President Mikhail Gorbachev's program of *perestroika*—a situation in which Jewish scientists and intellectuals have been especially threatened.

SPECIAL EVENTS SCHEDULED FOR APRIL MEETING IN WASHINGTON

Two special events are planned for the APS meeting on 21–25 April in Washington, DC: "Unity in Physics" Day and APS's first ever Congressional Day.

In light of the tremendous success of the program last year, APS will once again offer a "Unity in Physics" Day, which will feature speakers from various fields of physics, providing attendees with the opportunity to keep up with developments in areas other than their own.

The session, scheduled for 23 April, will include the following lectures:

- ▷ "A Physical System in Evolution: The American Physical Society," the retiring presidential address by Eugen Merzbacher (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill)
- ▷ "Mapping the Universe" by Margaret Geller (Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics)
- ▷ "Quantum Chaos: An Experimental View" by Daniel Kleppner (MIT)
- ▷ "Bizarre Two-Dimensional Quantum Fluids in High Magnetic Fields" by Horst L. Stormer (AT&T Bell Laboratories).

During Congressional Day, scheduled for 25 April, a hundred or so working physicists will pay visits to several hundred members of Congress and staff. Sponsored by the APS Physics Planning Committee, the event is intended to raise government awareness of the current state of science in the US. As an announcement of the event prepared by the APS office of public affairs states: "The vital economic and security interests of the US will be jeopardized if strong Federal action is not taken soon to remedy the precipitous decline in effective support for basic scientific research and graduate education."

In preparation for Congressional Day, the APS office of public affairs is organizing volunteer physicists into regional teams, which will be appropriately balanced by scientific discipline. The office will schedule each team to attend a series of meetings

with members of Congress who represent the team's region, as well as with members on House or Senate committees that have jurisdiction over science policy and funding. Each team will be given statistical material and briefing documents, and team members will be encouraged to describe their own experiences in science research and education in language that can be understood by nonphysicists.

The schedule for Congressional Day also includes a briefing with an address by Senator Albert Gore Jr on 23 April, and it concludes with a reception sponsored by Representative George Brown Jr—the new chairman of the House's Committee on Science, Space and Technology—on 25 April. Physicists who wish to receive additional information about Congressional Day or who wish to participate in the event should contact Tina Kaarsberg, APS Office of Public Affairs, telephone 202-232-0189; fax 202-328-3729. ■

Alabama Workshop

The APS–AAPT Local Physics Alliance Program, which is supported by the National Science Foundation, will hold a workshop at the State Park Resort Hotel in Gulf Shores, Alabama, on 3–4 May. The workshop is intended to assist high school and college physics instructors who wish to form local support networks to discuss new ideas in physics education. Participants from Alabama, southern Georgia, Mississippi, northwestern Florida and southeastern Louisiana are expected to attend.

Applications to attend the workshop are available from APS and must be returned by 29 March to Local Physics Alliance Network, APS, 335 East 45th Street, New York NY 10017; telephone 212-682-7341.