

one proposal is to give up this independence." ESA was also irked by NASA's decision in July to send an orbiter to Mercury, because it means that ESA will have to rethink its own plans for visiting that planet. "It would have been more efficient to properly cooperate on a joint program," says Bonnet. "We need to make sure we do not duplicate, and that we have communication and cooperation." Bignami agrees: "Communication is more and more important. So far, contact is between the two executives—[NASA's head of space sciences Edward] Weiler and Bonnet—and by people knowing each other. But this is not enough. I would dare to propose a truly joint transatlantic advisory committee."

But if it sounds like ESA is following in the footsteps of "faster, better, cheaper," the motto set by NASA administrator Dan Goldin, it's not, insist European space scientists. "The success of NASA is not that convincing. There have been several failures," says Bonnet. Still, admits Cavallo, "We have to do it cheaper. To do that, it must be faster. And no one wants to do it worse."

TONI FEDER

Wagner Takes DESY Reins

On 8 July, Albrecht Wagner became the head of the German Electron-Synchrotron (DESY) facility, succeeding Björn Wiik, who died last February. (See Wagner's obituary of Wiik, PHYSICS TODAY, July, page 69.)

Wagner earned a PhD in physics in 1971 from the University of Heidelberg, where he later joined the faculty. Since 1991, he has been a member of the University of Hamburg's physics department as well as DESY's director of research. His research focuses on electroweak interactions, and on the development of gaseous and solid-state detectors.



WAGNER

Wagner plans to keep DESY on its present course. In particular, he says, "we will continue, in a very strong way, research with HERA," the Hadron-Electron Ring Accelerator facility, located at the lab's main site in Hamburg. Wagner's other top priority is moving TESLA toward approval. TESLA, the TeV Energy Superconducting Linear Accelerator, is a planned 500 GeV electron-positron collider with an integrated x-ray free electron laser. Of three such colliders

in the works worldwide, it's the only one designed to have superconducting cavities. That means luminosities four to five times higher than a comparable, room-temperature machine, explains Wagner. "Thanks to superconductivity, we can store the radiofrequency power for a millisecond in the cavities and therefore can accelerate and collide a lot of particles."

Electron-positron colliders are meant to complement higher-energy facilities such as the Large Hadron Collider being built at CERN, says Wagner. "The LHC will be able to detect the Higgs—one of the key questions because it is the key to our understanding of mass." But with a hadron collider, "there is a whole bag of reactions. The electron-positron collision is a much simpler system, so it's better for precision measurements such as determining the Higgs branching ratios and the Yukawa coupling of the Higgs to the top quark, essential for understanding the mechanism of mass generation."

Equally important, continues Wagner, is that an electron beam from TESLA "would be used to drive a free electron laser in the x-ray domain. We plan to build a big user facility." So far, a small test facility is in operation, with lasing at ultraviolet frequencies set to begin early this fall, and to be opened to users in 2003. The technical design and cost estimate for the full TESLA is scheduled to be submitted to the German government and to the project's international partners in the spring of 2001.

Other current projects at DESY include lattice gauge computations and neutrino astrophysics, both of which are carried out primarily at the lab's Zeuthen site, southeast of Berlin.

TONI FEDER

Physicist Tapped to Head EC Research

Philippe Busquin, a physicist and the leader of Belgium's francophone Socialist Party, has been nominated to direct the research activities of the European Commission, pending approval by the European Parliament. He would succeed France's Edith Cresson, who was accused of putting her dentist on the commission's payroll and was at the center of other allegations of mismanagement, fraud, and nepotism that led to the previous commission's mass resignation on 15 March.

The parliament is scheduled to vote this month on whether to confirm EC president-designate Romano Prodi and his commission nominees, including Busquin, for five-year terms. "You can't

assume it's a shoo-in," says a Prodi aide. "But Prodi's argument is that he's chosen the right people" to make a clean start.

Busquin's chief responsibilities would be to oversee the Joint Research Centre, which consists of seven research labs across Europe; to implement the EC's current five-year, \$15.8 million research budget, or Fifth Framework Programme; and to plan the successor program, which is slated to start in 2002. Prodi is proposing to add agricultural research to Busquin's responsibilities, and to move education out of the research portfolio and combine it with culture.

Busquin holds a 1962 bachelor's degree in physics from the Free University of Brussels, where he also pursued graduate studies in philosophy and the environment. He taught physics for 15 years, and then from 1978 to 1980 chaired the board of directors of Belgium's National Institute of Radioelements. Busquin has been involved in regional and national politics since 1977, and in June was elected to the European Parliament, although he will resign if he becomes commissioner for research.

TONI FEDER



BUSQUIN

AUDIOVISUAL LIBRARY, EC

AIP Agrees to Lesser Role in Russian Journals

The American Institute of Physics will continue to have a hand in the publication of English-language versions of Russian physics journals. On 23 June, after nearly two years of haggling, the Russian Academy of Sciences, AIP, and MAIK Nauka, a Moscow-based publishing house, signed a five-year, three-way agreement that takes effect in January.

Under the agreement, MAIK Nauka, which is 51% owned by the Russian Academy of Sciences, will be responsible for translating and publishing English-language versions of 14 journals, and AIP will market and distribute them, as well as publish them on-line. Eight of the journals are already being handled this way (minus the on-line part), but the other six are currently translated and published in English by AIP—an arrangement the journals' editors and AIP favored renewing.

The new agreement was clinched just a week before AIP's deadline for next year's library and subscription catalogs, and for a long time had looked