

Great activity reigned in the lobby of the largest hotel in Split as numerous delegates converged on it, some to participate in a conference on European historical cities and others to join the EPS Council Session on 19 and 20 October 1971. 'History' and 'Physics' were safely separated and channelled into their respective conference rooms. The meetings proceeded smoothly and agreeably thanks to much preparatory work done by Professor N. Cindro, EPS Vice-Secretary, and his aids. Not only did he take good care of the organization but he also acted as host at a pleasant *al fresco* lunch under palms at his family home outside Split where Venetians and Turks once faced each other across their common frontier.

At the opening session the EPS Council was greeted by Mr. V. Mesko representing the Minister of Science of the Republic of Croatia, who emphasized the important role of the EPS in furthering international relations between physicists in Europe, and the tasks it could perform in helping students in smaller countries and the younger scientists. In thanking him the President confirmed that these were important aims of the Society.

Following the President's review of the activities of the Advisory Committees, W. Martienssen gave an account of the preparations and programme arrangements for the Wiesbaden General Conference. A number of programme modifications were suggested and an appeal was made that

## At the Council Session in Split, Yugoslavia

young people should be helped to attend the Conference which, notwithstanding some financial restraints, promises to be an outstanding event in next year's calendar of scientific gatherings.

Financial aspects came again to the fore in the subsequent lively discussion of a report by the Special Administration Study Committee. The operation of the Central Office had been examined so that procedural changes could be suggested which would lead to a reduction in administrative costs. The growth in membership and in the manifold activities of the Society inevitably exerts a mounting pressure on the Main Secretariat. One of the problems is to decide on the priorities regarding the tasks to be performed there within the limits set by the present financial situation. Savings could result from a simplification of the rules for individual membership and in asking the National Societies to take over a larger share of the responsibilities for admission of Individual Ordinary Members, fee collection and distribution of papers. The operation of the Advisory Committees may also

### W. S. Newman

have to be reviewed. Council decided that the President and K. E. Ganzhorn should study these matters so that some changes on these lines can be put into effect in the near future.

The Committee also felt it was necessary to adapt the administration to the changing needs of the developing Society. After some further discussion Council adopted the following motion:

"This meeting of Council feels that the growth of the European Physical Society has now reached a point where there is an urgent need for an officer who should function as a Secretary-General. This person should be a physicist of standing who, in conjunction with the Executive Committee, should prepare and implement the general strategy of future development of the Society. Council asks the President to initiate consultations within the Society with a view to finding a person of suitable qualities who would be able and willing to fill such a post. In accordance with the Constitution, the above post could be filled when the term of office of the present Secretary expires."

At present the post of Secretary is honorary and in accordance with the Constitution he is elected for one year and can be re-elected for five consecutive terms.

The opportunity for a closer examination of the financial situation came with the presentation of the Auditors' report on the year 1970 and the presentation by the Treasurer of the budgets for 1971 and 1972. After two years in the "red" it was good to find income exceeding expenditure: in effect, for 1971, the provisional positive balance of Sw. Frs 53 051 slightly exceeds the figure forecast. Various items of expenditure were discussed in detail and the wish was expressed to increase the contributions to the Divisions. In the budget adopted by Council for 1972 a positive balance of Sw. Frs 22 613 is forecast. It remains to be seen whether the target figures for membership and donations can be achieved and what financial consequences will result from the proposed reorganization measures.

After so much discussion of weighty administrative and financial problems it was with some relief that Delegates



turned their attention towards the more congenial aspects of physics exemplified by the activities of the Specialized Divisions. Clearly some very useful work is being done there as indicated by the various divisional reports presented to Council.

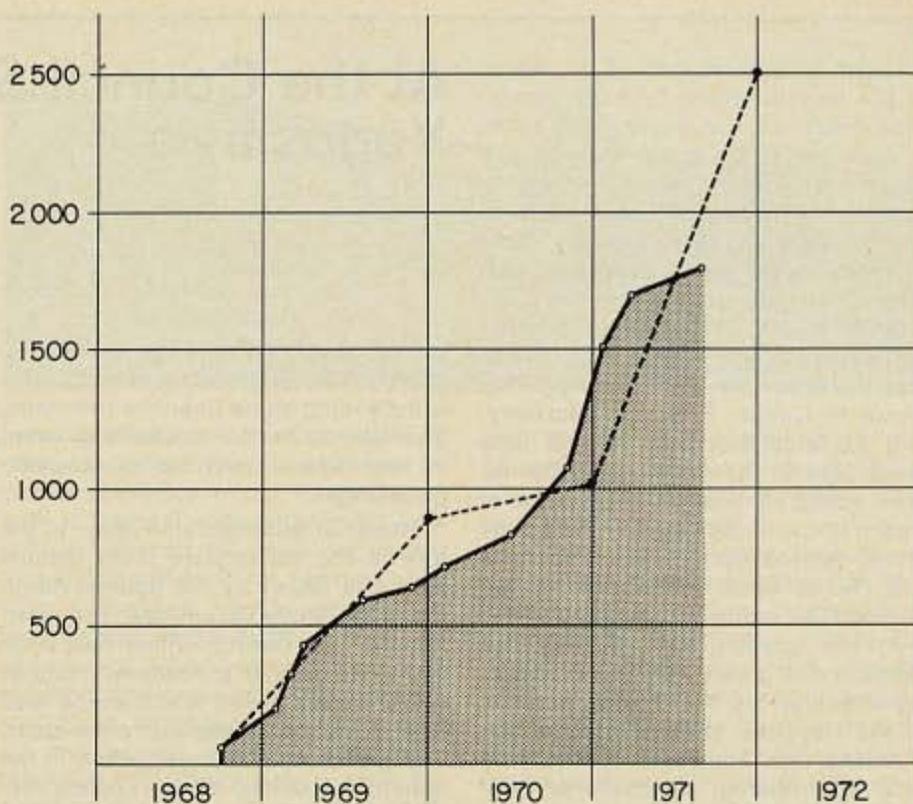
It was with great pleasure that Council accepted the application of the Polish Physical Society to join as from 1 January 1972. There are now very few countries in Europe where one or more national groups of physicists are not members of the EPS, and the Executive Committee will be investigating the possibilities the missing national societies have of joining the EPS. With the recent batch of applications for Individual Ordinary Membership accepted by Council the total now stands at 1901 individual members. Allowing for applications in the pipeline the figure should be close to the 2000 mark at the end of the year and with a determined effort the 1971 budget target of 2500 (see graph) could well be reached by the time Council meets in Oslo on 14 and 15 March 1972.

Council business over, delegates assembled once more, this time not in a conference room but in the heart of the old town to be expertly guided by Professor Cindro through its floodlit squares and dark alleys. The interests of 'History' and 'Physics' had merged in the end.

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## Society News

### Member Societies

E. Spring, Helsinki, has been elected President of the **Finnish Physical Society** in succession to J. Kantele, Jyväskylä.

In the **Physical Section of the Union of Czechoslovak Mathematicians and Physicists** the new Chairman of the Czech Section is F. Lukes, Brno, in succession to L. Paty, Prague, and the new Chairman of the Slovak Section is J. Madar, Bratislava, in succession to L. Hrivnak, Zilina.

### Divisions

The third Annual Meeting of the **Quantum Electronics Division** was held in Hull from 6-8 September, 1971. The topic was Laser-Plasma Interaction and the papers covered the whole range of the subject from high-power laser design to laser scattering.

The dominant theme of the session on recent advances in laser technology was CO<sub>2</sub> lasers, with reports on developments in T.E.A., gas dynamic and c.w. laser systems and estimates of the performance of electron beam high-pressure devices. A description and some preliminary results of the 1000J Nd : glass laser built at the Lebedev Institute, Moscow, were given by N. G. Basov, and a survey of the

C.G.E. chemical laser systems completed the session.

Several groups reported the observation of neutrons associated with fusion reactions from deuterium and deuterated polythene targets irradiated by high power Nd : glass lasers. It was found that the neutron emission was correlated with a high target reflectivity and anomalous hard X-ray flux. These results were ascribed to plasma instabilities driven by the radiation which together with various studies of X-ray emission from laser-produced plasmas aroused much interest in the sessions on solid target interactions. The observation of anti-Stokes Raman scattering from solid hydrogen targets raised the question as to whether this process could be the origin of the initial ionization in solid-target interactions. Studies of the interaction of laser-produced plasmas with both magnetic fields and low density plasmas illustrated their use as a laboratory tool in plasma physics.

Gas breakdown studies emphasized two topics : self-focusing and CO<sub>2</sub> laser gas breakdown. Despite a large amount of experimental data no conclusions were reached as to the origin of the self-focusing phenomena in gas breakdown. Studies of CO<sub>2</sub> breakdown are still in a preliminary state and observations of both breakdown and expansion were presented. One of the major fields of future study in laser-plasma interactions will probably be the heating of plasma by CO<sub>2</sub> lasers. Aspects of the heating of pellets and O-pinch were discussed and some