



Council in Como

at the invitation of the Italian Physical Society

While much of Europe was being buffeted by violent winds and even the more southerly parts of our Continent were suffering from the cold and the snow, Como was the temperate host to EPS. Meetings of the Advisory Committees on Education, Physics and Society, and Publications, the Board of the Quantum Electronics Division, the Editorial Board of the *European Journal of Physics*, and the Executive Committee were followed by a day-long Seminar on Physics and Culture, leading on to the main event, the meeting of the EPS Council with a near-record attendance. All these meetings were held in the magnificent Villa Olmo, a centre for scientific culture dedicated to Como's most illustrious scientist, Alessandro Volta. An 18th Century palace built in the neo-classic style beside the lake, the building is a splendid combination of Italian applied science and art. Despite the full programme, time was also found for a visit to the cathedral of Milan and the Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare outside Milan where a superconducting heavy ion cyclotron is being built that will subsequently be coupled to the tandem accelerator in Catania. Together they are designed to produce continuously ion beams of up to 100 MeV/nucleon for light elements and over 20 MeV/nucleon for uranium.

The only sad note to be struck was when the President recalled the recent deaths of former members of the Executive Committee, Jan Went and Alexander Milojevic. He emphasized the debt we owed to both of them, to Went in his work as Secretary (see *Europhys. News*, Feb. 1987) and to Milojevic in the less visible role of the physicists' diplomat. Milojevic was vigorous in genera-

ting understanding between the physicists in Yugoslavia, furthering the interests of EPS in his country and smoothing relations between eastern and western countries so that EPS could become fully representative of Europe's physicists.

In his introductory address, the President painted the picture of a Society, bubbling with enthusiasm, active across the whole front of physics and mindful of its responsibilities. From his summary of the work of the Advisory Committees we have picked out just a few of the points made:

Advisory Committees

ACAPPI under the new chairman, J.A. Goedkoop is pursuing the programme of specialist workshops on new topics of industrial importance. The second will be in November on Magneto-optical Recording and a third in the Spring 1988 on SQUID Arrays. Plans are in hand also for a meeting in November with the Associate Members when a business and scientific meeting will be combined.

Conferences runs smoothly. J. Heijn of Petten has just taken over the Chair from S. Methfessel.

Education has recently held a most successful two week Study Conference on the application of microcomputers to teaching difficult fields of physics. The first week was devoted to a brainstorming of experts and the second, with wider participation, to practical exercises and group studies.

Physics and Society have held two very successful meetings that are the result of long preparation — one on "Nuclear Winters" and the other on "The Employment of Physicists in Europe". The reports will be sent to national societies,

discussions will be held at the General Conference in Helsinki (omitted from the Second Conference Bulletin by error) and a summary will appear next month in *Europhys. News*. New projects concern a study on public information on physics, and an examination of risk assessment.

General Conference

All preparations for the General Conference from 10-14 August, 1987 seem to be well in hand and an exciting programme has been prepared. Motivating the organisers has been the need to present new developments of general interest, to think of the younger physicists in the choice and presentation of topics and also in the organisation of the related social programme, to profit from the "border" state of Finland and seize on areas of E-W cooperation such as high energy physics and space research. Disappointment was expressed at there being no plenary lecture on nuclear physics but the pressure from all sides was considerable and only about half of the

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original proposals could be retained. Finally the choice was unanimous, but still adjustments are being made to accommodate new events — the latest being the supernova explosion that has so animated the astronomical world.

Divisions

Although astronomy is tending more and more towards astrophysics, not all astronomers regard themselves as physicists and there is far from unanimity in their attitude towards establishing a European astronomical society. National societies are strong and many have long traditions and although there is a fairly broad consensus in favour of a European society which might then become a group member 4b) of EPS, no one is keen to contribute financially. In the meantime consultations continue and, in any case, the **Astronomy and Astrophysics Division** with its Solar Section will continue with its programme of conferences.

EPS itself (like so many national societies) is only too familiar with the problem of scientists appreciating the benefits of a coordinating society, but not being prepared to contribute themselves. The number of Individual Ordinary Members who fail to pay their membership fee is disappointing and alarming. Whether it be from carelessness, idleness or to put the matter squarely, dishonesty it is all one to EPS: its finances suffer accordingly and the present situation is far from comfortable. However, the period during which non-paying Members can remain on the books and receive all the benefits (in particular *Europhys. News*)

Let's Get It Right

So obsessed were we by the preparations for all the meetings that were to be held in Como in March that in the February issue we announced the General Meeting of Members on 12 August 1987 for the same place.

Our apologies: the **General Meeting** will be held on 12 August 1987 in **Helsinki**

And while we are making excuses, let us add that despite our best intentions we still print from time to time old versions of the end "pavé". So let us be quite clear: The price to institutions for Volumes 3 and 4 (1987) of *Europhysics Letters* is Sw.Fr. 595.— (for the pair) despite the double thickness of the first six issues. The price to IOMs is Sw.Fr. 60.— plus Sw.Fr. 10.— contribution to postal charges.

is now being drastically reduced and printing of the Information Booklet (in the German Democratic Republic) has been put off until after June when a major cleaning operation will have been completed. From now on "members of EPS" is to mean paying members.

At the same time it must be recognised that non-members of the Society profit from many of the Society's activities as much as the members. Conference rationalisation, collaboration between societies as well as individuals, publications, education are examples. It is disturbing that quite so many physicists in Europe are content to parasite on their colleagues.

Returning to the Divisions, nearly all (as well as their Sections) have their conference programmes well established but the scene is not static, e.g. an innovation of the **High Energy and Particle Physics Division** is to establish in Europe a biennial accelerator conference covering accelerators of all energies and designed to interest the whole spectrum of users. A big effort is also being made to convince IUPAP to reconsider its conference on photon and lepton interactions which despite the generous efforts of the Division to arrive at an understanding will this year be essentially a repeat of Uppsala one month later in Hamburg.

The **Condensed Matter Division** is planning to increase from two to three the number of courses held annually by the International School of Materials Science and Technology organised by M. Balkanski at Erice. Readers will recall that forms were distributed last October seeking information for a *Condensed Matter Who's Who*. The data are now being assembled, but additional entries can still be accepted. If you forgot to fill in the form do it now.

Still in a state of flux is the structuring of the optics community in Europe which makes the task of the **Optics Division** very difficult, although real progress has been made over the past year. A principle objective has been to limit to one the number of all-embracing conferences held in Europe each year. According to the understanding now reached, such a conference plus exhibition will be mounted jointly by EPS, SPIE (the International Society for Optical Engineering) and Europtica, the European association of optical societies (currently being formed). The first will be in Hamburg in 1988. Otherwise the separate parties are free to organise small meetings — topical conferences, workshops for example provided the others are fully informed. There is still though a lot of work to do. The **Quantum Electronics Divi-**

Executive Committee

Following the elections in Council, the Executive Committee of the EPS for the year 1987/1988 comprises:

President:	W. Buckel, Karlsruhe
Vice-President:	R.A. Ricci, Padova
Secretary:	W.J. Merz, Zurich
Vice-Secretary:	N. Kroo, Budapest
Treasurer:	E.W.A. Lingeman, Amsterdam
Vice-Treasurer:	J.M. Gilles, Namur
Members:	L. Cohen, London M. Jacob, Geneva J. Pozhela, Vilnius H. Ryde, Lund E. Skrzypczak, Warsaw

sion is in something of a quandary over the decision of the Americans to make their main meeting (for which the Division has acted as European "broker") annual instead of biennial. There is a strong suspicion that the huge and growing commercial activity in the field is distorting the situation, leading to more meetings of higher cost and lower quality which are squeezing out the universities — in the first place, of course, the students.

The two newest Interdivisional Groups are now finding their feet. Thirteen laboratories are already participating in the **Group on Experimental Physics Control Systems** which has not restricted its ambit to Europe. The laboratories are represented by "link men" and the Group is currently run by a provisional Board of nine members. The first conference of the Group will be in Sept./Oct. this year. Work has started on establishing standards for control methodologies initially concentrating on power converters — a major component in accelerator control particularly. A catalogue is also being compiled of accelerator control systems world-wide, the information being collated at SIN, Switzerland.

The **Group on Physics for Development** has been trying to follow up the recommendations made at the Conference in Istanbul in 1981, on helping less favoured nations to raise their physics levels. The problem is both enormous and difficult and although results have not been spectacular some things are moving. Reference was made to the efforts to set up a francophone network in Africa based on a Belgium/French/Canadian initiative and the Spanish/Portuguese/S.America (plus a few from Africa) School on Cooperative Phenomena in Condensed Matter. The ICPD has