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December 1988

IN MEMORIAM

Aleksandar B. Milojević (1912—1986)

We remember with regret the death of professor A. B. Milojević who died two years ago. Professor Milojević was an outstanding Yugoslav physicist, professor of the Belgrade university, pioneer of the Boris Kidrič Institute, founder and director of the Institute of Physics in Belgrade.

A. Milojević graduated in mathematics and physics at the University of Strasbourg and spent several years as assistant at the University of Göttingen investigating inelastic scattering of electrons with atoms and molecules. Before completing his Ph. D. thesis he had to leave Germany because of the emerging threat of nazism, political oppression and the war in sight. In Belgrade he joined the Philosophical Faculty as assistant of the Chair of physics in which capacity he spent a short but very prolific time under the guidance of professor Sreten Šljivić, the founder of the Belgrade luminescence school. In 1941 A. Milojević was imprisoned as officer of the Yugoslav army. He spent four years in war camps in Germany, where he played an outstanding role in the organization of antifascist movement not only among Yugoslav war prisoners. Several years after the war he was a member of the Yugoslav War Mission in Germany and of the State Commission for war crimes. Finally, in 1948 he was invited by professor Pavle Savić to join him in establishing the Boris Kidrič Institute in Vinča.

The contribution of professor A. Milojević to the development of our first great scientific institute is invaluable. His experience, the outstanding talents for organization and great working capacity he completely devoted to the development of the institute, specially its physics laboratory. Starting from the notion that physics is based first of all upon accurate measurements he engaged himself in the development physical measurement methods and equipment. As a result, many measurement devices were realized at that time: Wilson and diffusion chamber, Geiger-Müller and BF_3 proportional counters, gaseous scintillators, their quality being equal to that of the devices from abroad which at the time could not be furnished from the developed countries.

In parallel with this, the methods for absolute measurements of radioactivity and ionization radiation were developed, and first experiment in nuclear physics set up. During this time A. Milojević completed his Ph. D. thesis which was the first thesis in the field of experimental nuclear physics in our country. As scientific secretary of the First International Conference on peaceful uses of nuclear energy (Geneva, 1956) he took active part in its organization.

By the end of fifties A. Milojević joined the Chair of physics of the Faculty of natural and mathematical sciences in Belgrade, where he was elected a docent and later an associate and full professor. From then on, the chair started to change its feature: intense scientific activities, preparation of teaching staff, publishing of textbooks are only some of the activities characteristic for that period. Supported by other prominent professors of physics at the university, his idea of the foundation of the Institute of physics became reality. To this he devoted all his experience, outstanding talent for organization and great working capacity. Under his long-year leadership, the Institute became a great center of physicists in our country, an institution of great popularity both in our country and abroad.

Professor Milojević initiated studies in new fields of physics at the Institute: atomic collision processes, physics of ionized gases and plasma physics, laser physics of condensed matter and new materials, and modern theoretical physics. He himself contributed to many of them by his papers. Under his guidance the first ruby lasers in Yugoslavia was constructed in 1962, only two years after the quantum generator of light has been discovered.

Prof. A. Milojević has about 50 original scientific papers published mostly in the international scientific journals and presented on international scientific meetings, a number of monographs and textbooks, popular papers, translations, editorials. His scientific papers are characterized by the choice of modern topics and high level of experimental procedures in which new measurement and experimental methods were used. Of no less importance was his engagement in the education of young scientific staff. Under his guidance 32 Ph. D. and more than 50 M. Sc. theses were completed. Many young physicists addressed professor Milojević for help in solving the problems they might have met both in their work and in private life. They were always friendly accepted and enjoyed his full attention. Great number of young physicists has been abroad for specialization thanks to professor Milojević whose popularity kept the doors of well-known scientific centres open to him.

A. Milojević was awarded the Medal of 7th July for his scientific achievements, Medal of merit with golden star, Republic medal with golden wreath, World War II certificate of service, and others. He was the president of the National Committee for Physics, member of several commissions for the foundation of new Yugoslav universities, member of the editorial boards of journals and encyclopedias, invited professor, honorary member of the Union of biophysical societies of Yugoslavia. A. Milojević was a well-known name abroad, too, and received the recognition of the international scientific community. He was a member of the Council and Executive Committee of EPS, full professor of the Paris University, UNESCO expert in physics, European Council expert in nuclear energy, expert in metrology of ionization radiation

of the French commissariat l'énergie nucléaire, the member of the Institute of Physics in London, American Nuclear Society, World Federation of Scientific Workers, honorary citizen of Strasbourg.

Throughout his fruitful life, professor A. Milojević has been a devoted communist and marxist who, until the end, persisted on the way chosen in his youth. He will be remembered with pride by all that knew him, and his name has an honourable place among outstanding contributors to the Yugoslav science.

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