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Introduction

The present issue of the *Reviews of Modern Physics* contains the papers and the pertinent discussions presented at the Washington Conference on Magnetism which was held at the University of Maryland on September 2-6, 1952. The conference, first of its kind in this country, was sponsored by the U. S. Office of Naval Research through its Advisory Committee on Magnetism in keeping with the increasing interest shown in recent years by the ONR in supporting and in promoting fundamental magnetic research. The purpose of the conference was not only to bring together most of the American scientists and a representative group of foreign scientists who are interested in magnetism, but also to review the present status of the many important and active problems in this field. Although the Washington conference was held only two years after the international conference on magnetism in Grenoble, the amount of new experimental and theoretical developments fully justified its scope and size.

It is interesting to note that papers and discussions stemming from academic, industrial, and governmental institutions were fairly evenly divided among the various branches of experimental and theoretical magnetism: Industrial and governmental institutions contributed each about a fifth of the total.

It is a great pleasure to express in the name of the Advisory Committee on Magnetism our appreciation to the Office of Naval Research and in particular to Messrs. L. M. McKenzie and J. A. Osborn of its Physics Branch for their generous and efficient support of the conference. Our thanks are also due President Harry C. Byrd for making available the excellent facilities of the University of Maryland. Finally, the undersigned wishes to express his appreciation to his colleagues on the Advisory Committee on Magnetism: Drs. F. Bitter, R. M. Bozorth, W. F. Brown, Jr., J. E. Goldman, C. Kittel, E. Montroll, G. T. Rado, J. H. Van Vleck, and V. C. Wilson for their unsparing efforts and cooperation.

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