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IMPROVEMENT IN PUBLICATION OF SOVIET SCIENTIFIC PAPERS

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In the total volume of periodical scientific publications, a prominent place is occupied by the publications ("Trudy" and "Uchenyye Zapiski") of higher educational institutions and scientific research institutes. Several hundreds of them are being published, a considerably greater number than of standard journals. However, there are serious drawbacks connected with this type of publication.

First of all, not all higher educational institutions publish their own work in this form: out of 800 only 250 publish their "Trudy." The publication of papers by authors in institutions that do not do their own publishing is extremely difficult.

The same issue of a journal published by a higher educational institution often contains papers from the most diverse fields of science and technology; this type of publication frequently lacks any degree of specialization whatever. This makes it difficult to bring a published paper to the notice of the reader, because no scientific worker can possibly look through hundreds of publications of higher educational institutions to make sure that he does not miss a paper in his narrow, specialized field.

A bibliographical description of papers appearing in collections of published work of higher educational institutions is often not given in bibliographical journals. If it is given, the bibliographical item appears much later than it would in the case of a contribution to a regular journal. This delay often amounts to a year or more. Thus, the papers reach the reader much later than those published in standard journals.

In view of the fact that the editors of publications issued by higher educational institutions must consider contributions from the most diverse fields of science, they often cannot evaluate properly a paper dealing with

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some specialized problem on which only one or two associates carry on work at the institution in question. This leads to a lower quality of publications than in standard journals.

Publication of scientific research in a collection of works of a higher educational institution often does not protect the priority of Soviet science to a sufficient degree. While bourgeois publications frequently hesitate to pass up in silence papers published in serious scientific journals, they often disregard articles appearing in collected works of higher educational institutions.

The fact that publication in collections of work of higher educational institutions does not insure either dissemination of the information or protection of the priority of Soviet Science is brought out additionally by the circumstance that the circulation of publications of the collected works type is very low; it amounts to only 300-500 copies. Often the publications of a higher educational institution are not available at a similar institution located in a neighboring city.

Publications of this type have a low periodicity: they appear at irregular intervals once or twice per year. Preparation for publication takes two-three times longer than in the case of standard journals. This delays still further the transmission of results of completed scientific work to the reader.

This dispersion of scientific data in little-read periodicals with low circulation and long delay in publication is contrary to the interests of the state and impedes the advance of science.

It is necessary to bring some order into the business of publishing this category of periodicals. One should discontinue the publication of collections of articles that, in single issues, cover highly diversified branches of science, eliminate periodicals that are published too rarely or are too meager in content, and expand certain other periodicals.

The Ministry of Public Education USSR could publish the most valuable contributions centrally. Then publication would be handled by qualified boards of editors who could properly evaluate the scientific work. Associates of scientific institutions that do not publish at present would be given the opportunity to do so. The delay in publication would be reduced and matters connected with state security safeguarded in a more efficient manner. Standards could be raised, both for the scientific level of articles and the quality of their reproduction in print.

There can be little doubt that publications available to all scientific and industrial institutions that can make use of them will contribute much more to the industrial application of scientific results, and that fuller use will then be made of results originating in remote scientific institutions. Whereas periodicals published by higher educational institutions are not received by all affiliated organizations, a smaller number of more highly specialized publications would be available to every scientific organization.

Naturally, publication of periodicals by higher educational institutions possessing a great scientific reputation should be continued. However, it is indispensable that the periodicals be on the same level as standard specialized scientific journals.

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