

EIR Science & Technology

Cold fusion: one year old, alive, and kicking

One year after the March 23 press conference announcing cold fusion, steady research is continuing, despite attempts at press blackout. Marjorie Mazel Hecht reports.

When the National Cold Fusion Institute holds its first big research conference March 28-31 at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City, the scientific establishment and the general public will be in for a surprise. More than 50 scientists who have carried out cold fusion experiments will gather to discuss their work, and at least one researcher is rumored to be using the occasion to make a "spectacular" announcement about his work.

The meeting will take place just after the first anniversary of the March 23 announcement by scientists Martin Fleischmann and Stanley Pons that their experiments with a palladium cathode and platinum anode in a simple electrolytic cell sitting in heavy water produced excess heat at room temperature. Since then, researchers from laboratories around the world have replicated these results and discovered other anomalous effects. Excess heat, neutrons, tritium have been observed, in some cases for weeks and months. The experimental results have leapt ahead of the theories that could explain them.

Most of these positive developments are not known to the general public because of the wall of censorship created by the scientific establishment around cold fusion. This establishment has proclaimed that the laws of physics will not allow any of the anomalies being observed and, therefore, such effects could not possibly be occurring. Very few media outlets have bothered to look over this wall for a view of what is actually going on. The very mention of cold fusion, in fact, produces snickers and insulting remarks on the order of "They are not reading the measurements correctly," or "They stuck the thermometer in the wrong place." Two establishment scientists writing in the *New York Times Magazine* even went so far as to invent a new disease, "pathological

science," with which they described the "delusions" of cold fusion research. One so-called scientific organization "voted" that cold fusion had no merit!

This control from on high made it almost impossible for the public to find any accurate coverage of the ongoing research in cold fusion, except through reporters for this weekly.

One of the first cracks in this censorship came in the *Wall Street Journal* March 2, where staff reporter Jerry E. Bishop reviewed the progress that has been made, albeit cautiously. "The mystery of 'cold fusion' hasn't been solved, but a growing number of experiments suggest that the phenomenon can't be written off as a scientific error," Bishop said in his lead sentence. He then discusses many of the working experiments, including those at the Los Alamos National Laboratory where cold fusion cells have produced tritium.

Fortunately, most of the cold fusion pioneers are excited by what they are finding and don't care about the negative emanations coming from the establishment. From India to Bulgaria to Taiwan, innovative work is producing interesting results. In Japan, where teams of researchers are working on various approaches to cold fusion, it is reported that one project is scaling up an experiment from a laboratory beaker to "room size"!

Two researchers from U.S. laboratories that have pursued cold fusion since the March 23 announcement talked about their work in interviews with *21st Century Science & Technology* magazine published in the March-April 1990 issue: Prof. Robert Huggins from Stanford University and researcher Nigel Packham from Texas A&M. Excerpts from their wide-ranging interviews follow.