COMMENTS

We are pleased to have this special issue on Burning Plasma Experiment (BPX) physics in *Fusion Technology* (*FT*). In many respects, this issue will be an exceedingly important archival presentation. Shortly after work on this issue had begun, it appeared that the U.S. Department of Energy made the decision not to go forward with the BPX Project. That decision makes the publication of this special issue perhaps even more important than if the project had continued. The point is that extensive studies by leading experts went into the BPX physics study. It would be a shame not to have this extremely valuable information available for use by future workers in the fusion field. Consequently, rather than being downhearted by the very unfortunate decision to cancel BPX, workers on the special issue redoubled their efforts.

The decision not to go ahead with the BPX Project, it should be stressed, is in no way a reflection of the physics basis. Rather, the decision was based on limited funding and the cost of such a device. There are many, including this editor, who believe that a burning plasma experiment is an essential next step before going on to larger experimental reactor studies such as the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER). At minimum, this cancellation forces those working on the ITER project to re-evaluate the development plan relative to studies needed during the physics phase (compared with the subsequent nuclear engineering phase) and also relative to the accuracy ascribed to plasma scaling laws employed to design ITER for burning experiments.

The *FT* staff wishes to acknowledge the splendid cooperation given by Dr. Robert Goldston and his staff in the preparation of this special issue. Special thanks are due to Dr. Glenn Bateman, who coordinated the articles. He also took the lead in developing a computerized version of the papers. Without his many hours of dedicated effort, this issue would simply not have been possible.

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