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Solid state technology pauses, albeit briefly, about this season for an annual, formal stocktaking. It's called the International Solid State Circuits Conference, and, with so many of the world's foremost workers in the field in attendance, it's something like closing the store once a year to check the inventory.

Indeed, says our solid state editor, Larry Altman: "No other meeting is as important in determining what's coming along in the solid state area. It's no longer just a design forum, but with heavy participation by marketing managers, distributors, and equipment manufacturers and other users, it has become an international exchange point for product information." You'll find our detailed round-up of developments that came out of this year's ISSCC on page 100, as well as an in-depth look, gleaned from ISSCC participants, at what can only be called "The New LSI" on page 57.

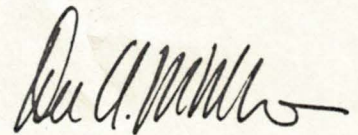
Actually, the whole solid state field is just about the hottest subject that we are covering. Last issue, for example, we printed a preview of the trends that would surface there and some of the individual developments that merited a closer look, as well as breaking stories on Intel's 80-nanosecond 4,096-bit RAM and speedy Schottky-clamped I<sup>2</sup>L circuits from IBM in West Germany.

And, in previous issues, we have brought you the stories of a number of important international developments that were not publicly described until their developers presented papers at ISSCC. Among these were. Motorola's C<sup>3</sup>L technique, Siemens' Polysil ECL process,

TRW's EFL approach, National Semiconductor's 16-bit microprocessor, Analog Devices' 12-bit digital-to-analog IC, and an 8-picojoule/2-gigahertz logic family and a high-speed enhancement-depletion MOS logic development from Japan's Nippon Telegraph and Telephone.

Every year, a few weeks before the Paris Components Show, *Electronics* sends its correspondents out to catch the mood of the marketplace. And this year, they report some unsettling news: the cupboards are far from bare. Thus, until equipment makers work down their excess supply of parts, it will be the pages in the component suppliers' order books that have the bare look.

Yet, all is not bleak. Some market sectors, such as telecommunications and military electronics, continue to show a lot of strength. Our story on page 60 gives you the details on what the team found in France, Italy, the United Kingdom, and West Germany, which account for nearly 85% of the estimated \$5.5 billion components market in Western Europe. Headed by Art Erikson, our Paris-based Managing Editor, International, the team included Bill Arnold in London, John Gosch in Frankfurt, and McGraw-Hill World News correspondent Andrew Heath in Milan.



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