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Dr. Victor F. Weisskopf, professor of physics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, takes office today as director-general of CERN, the 14-nation European Organization for Nuclear Research.

A leading theoretical physicist, Professor Weisskopf will serve in his new post for a period of two years and will be on leave of absence from M.I.T. during that time. He succeeds Dr. John B. Adams, of England, who has held the office since April, 1960.

Professor Weisskopf was named director-general last December at the 18th semi-annual meeting of the 14-nation council which acts as a steering committee to the research center, located at Myrin, near Geneva, Switzerland.

With the new appointment, Professor Weisskopf assumes a dual role in the five-member CERN directorate. In addition to his administrative duties, he will continue to act as a scientific director under an appointment made by the council last November. In both instances, the selection of Professor Weisskopf is considered extraordinary in that he is an American citizen and that the United States is not a member of CERN.

Well-known for his theoretical work on the structure of the atomic nucleus, Professor Weisskopf will head a research establishment that operates the world's second most powerful "atom smasher" and has a 1961 budget equivalent to

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nearly \$16 million. The CERN proton synchrotron has accelerated nuclear particles to an energy of 28 billion electron volts (Bev), exceeded only by the 30 Bev accelerator at Brookhaven National Laboratory, Long Island.

Dr. Weisskopf was born in Vienna, Austria, in 1908. He received his doctorate in 1931 at the University of Goettingen and during the next five years worked successively with the great physicists Werner Heisenberg, Erwin Schroedinger and Wolfgang Pauli and at the Niels Bohr Institute in Copenhagen, Denmark. In 1937 he came to the United States and joined the faculty of the University of Rochester, where he remained for six years. He was associated with the Manhattan Project at Los Alamos, New Mexico, from 1943 to 1946, when he came to M.I.T. as professor of physics.

Professor Weisskopf was president last year of the American Physical Society, and is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, the French Academy of Sciences and the Federation of American Scientists. In 1956 he was awarded the Max Planck medal of the German Physical Society in recognition of his work in theoretical physics.