27. Let f be the fraction of the incident beam intensity that is reflected. The fraction absorbed is $1 - f$. The reflected portion exerts a radiation pressure of

$$p_r = \frac{2fI_0}{c}$$

and the absorbed portion exerts a radiation pressure of

$$p_a = \frac{(1-f)I_0}{c} \, ,$$

where I_0 is the incident intensity. The factor 2 enters the first expression because the momentum of the reflected portion is reversed. The total radiation pressure is the sum of the two contributions:

$$p_{\text{total}} = p_r + p_a = \frac{2fI_0 + (1-f)I_0}{c} = \frac{(1+f)I_0}{c} \, .$$

To relate the intensity and energy density, we consider a tube with length ℓ and cross-sectional area A, lying with its axis along the propagation direction of an electromagnetic wave. The electromagnetic energy inside is $U = uA\ell$, where u is the energy density. All this energy passes through the end in time $t = \ell/c$, so the intensity is

$$I = \frac{U}{At} = \frac{uA\ell c}{A\ell} = uc \, .$$

Thus $u = I/c$. The intensity and energy density are positive, regardless of the propagation direction. For the partially reflected and partially absorbed wave, the intensity just outside the surface is $I = I_0 + fI_0 = (1+f)I_0$, where the first term is associated with the incident beam and the second is associated with the reflected beam. Consequently, the energy density is

$$u = \frac{I}{c} = \frac{(1+f)I_0}{c} \, ,$$

the same as radiation pressure.