

letters

Some successes have been achieved since the November 1976 report. Several Soviet colleagues, among them Mark Azbel and Arkady Tsinober, have been allowed to emigrate. Two Argentinian physicists, Maximo Victoria and Juan Gallardo, have also been freed and been able to resume their scientific activities. Recently the APS Panel on Public Af-

fairs formulated and forwarded to the APS Council a "Statement of Principles for American Physical Society Activities with Regard to Human Rights." The Council has received this and is considering it for adoption. In addition POPA has developed "Proposal by POPA to Council on Activities Appropriate for the APS with Regard to Human Rights of Scientists."

The suggested activities include in-

Soviet boycott by US physicists over Orlov

The following letter, sent to the directors of eight Soviet nuclear research centers, is representative of the positions taken by groups of American physicists canceling or postponing visits to the USSR as a result of Orlov's imprisonment:

"As you have already learned through formal channels of the Joint Coordinating Committee on Research on Fundamental Properties of Matter (JCC-FPM), and the message from Dr. Kane to Professor Chuvilo dated May 22, 1978, we have decided to postpone our visit to your Institute.

We want to tell you why we have made this decision.

Our planned visits under JCC-FPM sponsorship have reflected our very strong belief in the importance of communication throughout the scientific—and particularly the physics—communities, and our belief that the activities already achieved under the JCC-FPM have made major contributions to scientific cooperation between our countries and to better understanding between our peoples. It has been—and is—our hope that such activities can be extended to new areas of science and to greater cooperation in those areas in which programs already exist.

We are sure that you will agree that one of the most important conditions for the advancement of any science—and again physics in particular—is freedom of communication among scientists. The exchange of ideas as well as the sharing of responsibilities is well known to be fruitful while compartmentalization is, in the end, sterile and unproductive.

It is for this reason that we were happy to have the opportunity to plan for our visits to Soviet institutions, such as your own, as a formal part of the JCC-FPM activity and as a counterpart of the productive visit paid to a number of U.S. nuclear research institutions by a Soviet nuclear science group during the past year. We have envisioned that cooperation between our two scientific communities would be mutually very valuable and we have been anxious to assist in its development.

It is, therefore, with the greatest regret that we have postponed the planned visits.

Cooperative ventures, however, as we are certain you will agree, can flourish only in an atmosphere of good will. It is a fact—an unfortunate fact, but nevertheless a fact—that the atmosphere of good will has eroded as a result of events in your country with the consequence that individual American

physicists have progressively become more reluctant to become involved in joint programs involving our two countries.

It must be emphasized that American physicists have a very high regard for Soviet scientists and for Soviet science. It is a fact, however, that American physicists are reacting against a pattern of actions on the part of your government, which they view as repressive, exemplified most recently by the Orlov case. This reaction has now reached an intensity such that we, as individual members of the U.S. nuclear science community, have decided that it would not be possible, at this time, for us to achieve our goal of fostering greater communication and cooperation between our scientists and institutions and yours. It is our judgment that the concern of the American scientists who would be most valuable for participation in joint programs in nuclear science is so strong that little purpose would be served by our visit at this time.

In postponing our visit, it is of course our strong hope that, in future, circumstances will change such that we can again take up and build upon the strong bonds of collaboration and understanding already forged in JCC-FPM activities. Critical to this change is the rebuilding of the necessary open and free atmosphere.

Let us assure you that it is with the deepest regret that we find it necessary to take this action. We had much looked forward to meeting you, to visiting your Institute, and to exploring areas of possible future collaboration. And we look forward to a future time when such activities can be resumed as an important part of the truly international fabric of our science."

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