

## Nuclear-arms resolution evokes international response

The resolution on nuclear-arms limitation passed by the APS Council in January was sent to a number of heads of state and presidents of physical societies and scientific academies both here and abroad. Replies from some of these leaders are now in hand.

Among the responses received was one from Vice President George Bush, speaking on behalf of the US Administration, who wrote, "Verifiable and balanced reductions in nuclear arms are indeed an important means of diminishing the threat that such weapons could be used. Precisely for that reason, the Administration is currently engaged in serious negotiations with the Soviet Union across the spectrum of military capabilities: strategic nuclear forces, intermediate-range nuclear forces, and conventional forces. . . . The Administration is determined to seek significant reductions in all major weapon categories. It is persuaded, however, that unless we see to our own security needs negotiations will be fruitless." An additional US response from the Department of State said, "We share the Society's concern about the risk of nuclear war, and recognize the special contribution scientists can make toward furthering public awareness on these issues. . . . The task of reaching sound and verifiable arms-reductions agreements which can contribute to a stable peace is among the most important issues we face. . . . We welcome the Society's efforts in this area."

The office of the Prime Minister of Great Britain wrote, "The Government shares the widely felt concern about the level of nuclear arms in the world, and is committed to working toward balanced and verifiable measures of arms control and disarmament. . . . the Russians have been dragging their feet, apparently confident that they do not need to negotiate seriously. They have been refusing American offers to discuss crucial issues which would have to be settled before an INF [Intermediate Nuclear Force] agreement of any sort could be made. It still has to be proved

to them that only by negotiating at Geneva, rather than with the public opinion of Western Europe, can nuclear weapons be reduced. . . ."

The German Physical Society (DPG) replied, "The Council of the DPG took a position in response to the APS Council resolution which was adopted at the January 1983 meeting. . . . The members of the Council [DPG] share the concern of their American physics colleagues about current developments, and support their resolution to work in the direction of disarmament. However, German physicists are in a different position where questions of conscience are concerned, because West Germany refrained from developing, building, or possessing nuclear weapons. But German physicists understand and support the warnings of their American colleagues who also represent a large number of physicists who

are not permitted to speak out. The DPG turns to the representatives of the German parliament and government with the urgent request to support the superpowers in working toward an agreement on nuclear disarmament. . . ."

The response from the Chinese Academy of Sciences said, "I trust no peace-loving people will feel completely indifferent about the menace to the world peace of the increasing nuclear arsenals of the two superpowers. It is for this reason that I appreciate very much the announcement reiterated by our government that China will never be the first country to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-armed countries; China's limited development of nuclear weapons is for the sole purpose of defense, of breaking up the two superpowers' nuclear monopoly and of safeguarding the world peace. . . ."

## Washington office follows secrecy issue

The APS Council decided unanimously during its 5 November 1982 meeting to establish an Office of Public Affairs in Washington, D. C., on an experimental basis. The appointment of Robert L. Park of the University of Maryland as Executive Director of the new office for 1983 was reported in these pages in January 1983. Park has been joined by Lander McConkey, and the two of them have been actively securing and reporting to APS Officers and Committee Chairmen information relating to the physics community. *PHYSICS TODAY* appointed a Washington Editor, Irwin Goodwin, in April 1983, and AIP accepted an APS invitation that he share the APS office in the Joseph Henry Building.

On the recommendation of the Panel on Public Affairs APS Council unanimously voted to continue the Washington Office for another year and to empower its Executive Committee to extend it for a period of up to three years beyond December 1984.

An important project on which the

Washington Office has been working is to follow the progress of government efforts to establish Federal regulations and guidelines covering scientific communication and national security. Some of the relevant information has been readily available, but gaining access to much of it has called for the persistent pursuing and questioning of various sources.

Events leading up to and a summary of the National Academy of Sciences Panel study chaired by Dale Corson appeared in an earlier issue of *PHYSICS TODAY* (Dale Corson, "What price security?" *PHYSICS TODAY*, February 1983, page 42; see also November, page 69. The follow-up to this report has been much more difficult to track. Some of it has appeared as a *PHYSICS TODAY* news story in June (page 41).

On 23 December 1982, President Reagan issued a National Security Study Directive instructing his Office of Science and Technology Policy to coordinate an inter-agency review of scientific communication, the objective