

APS seeks comments on proposed science-education statement

The overall policies and activities of The American Physical Society concerning physics education were major topics for discussion at the June meeting of the APS Executive Committee. The Committee on Education, the POPA Steering Committee and the Executive Committee all recommended that a general statement on science education along the following lines be submitted for Council approval in November, when more specific details about APS policies and activities in education will also be presented for Council consideration.

A strong educational program in Science and Mathematics is crucial for our national well-being. The graduates of our educational system contribute to the nation's economic vitality through the technical innovations and increased productivity which result from research and development. Science literacy for all citizens is necessary to ensure full participation in the society of the future. For example, societal issues, ranging from the environment to arms control, hinge on a proper appreciation of technical questions.

The change to high technology in our industries requires extensive technical preparation for a wider range of initial career options and a greater flexibility of individuals throughout their working lifetimes. In light of these considerations, we are concerned at the decline in student preparation and proficiency in science and mathematics. We are particularly distressed at the loss of primary and secondary teachers of science and mathematics to other, more economically attractive professions.

In response to these concerns, we recognize the need for more extensive science and mathematics requirements for all students at the primary and secondary level, coupled with higher college admissions standards in these areas. We

support programs for recruiting highly qualified science and mathematics teachers and keeping them in the classroom. We support curriculum improvements which make the courses more interesting to students and establish the connections between science and technology. We welcome emphasis on education in the federal, state and local budgets and advocate continuing stable support in the future. We offer our assistance in the definition and execution of federal, state and local programs. We intend to collaborate with other technical and educational societies in addressing these problems.

We encourage local involvement in the educational process by individual American Physical Society members and will continue our efforts to facilitate such activities.

Comments and suggestions concerning this statement are welcome, and may be addressed to Professor Judy Franz, Chair, APS Committee on Education, Dept. of Physics, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405; or to Dr. B. G. Silbernagel, Exxon Research & Engineering Co., P.O. Box 45, Linden, NJ 07036.



FRANZ

Cable urges Soviet Academy to intervene

In response to the deep-seated concern of American physicists over the present status of Andrei Sakharov and Yuri Orlov, APS President Robert Marshak sent a cable to A. P. Alexandrov, president of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, on 14 June. Marshak pointed out that the harsh treatment of leading Soviet scientists cannot help but impede the efforts of scientists on both sides to improve scientific cooperation and to work towards a curb to the nuclear-arms race. The cable's text is given below:

Members of American Physical Society deeply shocked by newspa-

per reports of sharp deterioration in health of Andrei Sakharov and Yuri Orlov STOP Strongly urge Soviet Academy to intervene immediately to prevent calamitous outcome for two Soviet colleagues whose scientific achievements are greatly respected by American physicists STOP It should be clear that such harsh treatment of leading scientists by Soviet authorities cannot help but interfere with efforts on both sides to improve scientific cooperation between our two countries and to curb the nuclear arms race. □