

permits professors to take public positions on public issues also permits them to work on research projects of their choice, provided that the projects carry no contractual restrictions on publication or on access, and are appropriate projects for the university. . . . We must make it clear that our acceptance of research under the SDI program is based on our tradition of faculty-initiated projects and in no way constitutes an institutional position on the SDI program." Five days later came Gray's sterner statement on MIT's position.

Student led. At Cornell, meanwhile, faculty and students have voiced similar concerns. What began last May as a campaign against accepting SDI

grants, led by a postdoc, David Wright, and a grad student, Lisbeth Gronlund, has spread to the faculty and administration. As a consequence, Cornell has decided that researchers submitting white papers or proposals to SDI must include a written statement that classified research is not permitted at the university and that Cornell's name cannot be used in publicity or promotion by sponsors.

"What bothers many of us about the claim that SDI is simply one more source of money for research," says Cornell's David Mermin, "is its unprecedented political dimensions. No set of disclaimers can neutralize the implicit scientific endorsement of Reagan's dan-

gerous fantasy that every application for funding will convey to Congress at this critical stage. Even without that concern, SDI's funding promises to be a significant perturbation on academic sponsored research and the openness of the scientific enterprise." In keeping with this attitude, Wright and Gronlund began circulating among faculty in mid-June a petition that says: "The SDI program and its political acceptance depend crucially on the participation of individual scientists and engineers at all levels of research. As one step towards halting this dangerous program, we pledge neither to solicit nor accept SDI funds and urge others to join us in this refusal." —IG

Science Board and OSTP want to dump academic pork barrel

To bring the nation's university research facilities and equipment up to acceptable modern standards will require between \$5 billion and \$20 billion in the next five years, the Science Policy Task Force of the House Committee on Science and Technology Policy was told on 21 May. While similar estimates have been heard before by Congress (PHYSICS TODAY, August, page 65), the latest was surprising because it was voiced not by a university president appealing for a unique program or costly laboratory, but by the deputy director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, Bernadine Healy, a Johns Hopkins University physician who came to Washington last year. Her diagnosis was worrisome: "Present conditions do not make us especially comfortable about the prospects that our university system will be able to meet our nation's needs in coming years."

In two days of hearings on "government and the research infrastructure," the task force heard a variety of prescriptions for treating the inadequacies of state-of-the-art scientific equipment and facilities at universities. In Healy's view, both government and universities must take their share of the blame for the accumulated deficit and decay of research apparatus. For their part, universities, she said, often behaved like dependencies of the government, "abdicated their responsibility for infrastructure and biding their time until Federal facilities and programs were resumed." At the same time, said Healy, the government has "attempted not to invest in the research enterprise, but to procure packets of research results at the lowest possible prices."

The Science Policy Task Force, a bipartisan group of 18 members of the House committee, has been taking testimony from witnesses in government and academic circles since mid-

April (PHYSICS TODAY, October, page 57). It hopes to complete a preliminary report by next May and a final version the following October, just in time for the 1986 election.

Camp grounds. Witnesses so far have been in two clearly defined camps on the issue of the research infrastructure at universities: those who claim the present system for providing research facilities is working well and those who fear that catastrophe is imminent. The position of the latter group is that the dimensions of the problem are so large and intractable that neither the Federal government, the states, the universities or the private sector acting on their own could deal with it adequately. The Association of American Universities found the situation not much different in 1981 after a nationwide survey. The AAU called for nothing less than a national investment strategy led by the Federal government in some sort of partnership with states, industry, universities and private donors and philanthropies. It also called on the National Science Foundation to take the lead in such a strategy because, as AAU President Robert M. Rosenzweig wrote NSF Director Erich Bloch last December, the Foundation is "the central agency charged with concern and responsibility for the health of fundamental research."

In the late 1950s and during the 1960s, NSF often responded to cries of help for university research equipment. But opposition on campuses to the Vietnam War and passage of the Mansfield Amendment to the Defense Department's 1972 budget authorization led to an end to Federal funding of such items. Even so, budget increases of as much as 15% for academic research in the 1970s and early 1980s cushioned many of the largest universities against the shortage of investments in buildings and large items of

equipment.

Some universities felt left out, however. So they took political measures to obtain funds for research buildings and facilities. After examining the situation, a committee of the National Science Board, the policy-making body for NSF, reported last March that in the last three fiscal years (1983-85) Congress, with bipartisan backing in both the House and Senate, appropriated about \$130 million for scientific research and teaching facilities at 15 universities without the customary competition or traditional review procedures. In all cases, the universities engaged in political pork-barrel tactics that the states have used historically to obtain water projects and military bases.

To make matters worse, in some cases, Congress, when pressed by the special-interest universities, diverted funds budgeted by Federal agencies for other scientific projects.

Dishonor roll. Among those on the Science Board's dishonor roll: Catholic University's Vitreous State Laboratory received \$13.9 million from a Department of Energy request for the National Center for Advanced Materials at the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory; Columbia University, in tandem with Catholic's lobbying strategy, got \$8 million for a chemistry research lab; University of New Hampshire got \$15 million for a Space and Marine Science Building from the Department of Education; Northwestern University won \$16 million for a Basic Industry Research Institute, charged to DOE.

The Science Board's recommendation for a conference to develop "politically feasible solutions" to the dilemma has won approval. Such a conference, sponsored by OSTP, NSF, and the National Academies of Sciences and Engineering, will take place 22-23 July at the Academy. —IG