

early July last year, the consensus was that a single center would not be able to meet the demand for trained applied physicists in developing countries. Furthermore, the cost of equipment and maintenance was considered too high to be borne by a single center.

The current proposal calls for the nodes to be linked by a computer network to speed collection and distribution of information, especially on the availability of equipment. Each node would provide fellowships for applied physicists from developing countries to participate in training courses and research.

The study group recommended the creation of a node in Trieste to act provisionally as the coordinating center for the network. Organizational work is being handled through this year by a task force in which The American Physical Society, the European Physical Society and IUPAP are represented. A select advisory committee consisting of distinguished scientists has been established; those who have accepted invitations to join the committee include Leo Esaki (US), Joseph A. Johnson III (US), Robert E. Marshak (US), Nevill F. Mott (UK), J. Robert Schrieffer (US), Kai M. Siegbahn (Sweden) and Abdus Salam (Pakistan), director of ICTP.

Hundreds of British scientists pledge to boycott SDI research

A pledge to boycott research in Britain funded by the US Strategic Defense Initiative Organization, similar to the pledge drafted by scientists at Cornell University and the University of Illinois in the United States, has been circulating in Great Britain since last May. By early November it had been distributed in at least 30 science departments at 24 universities, according to its promoters, and just over half the scientists in the departments—545 out of 1051—had signed.

The pledge reads, in part:

We... believe that the Star Wars program is technically dubious. An antiballistic missile defense system of sufficient reliability to defend populations against a Soviet first strike is not technically feasible in the foreseeable future. A system of more limited capability will only serve to escalate the arms race.... Accordingly, as working scientists, we will not apply for or accept support from the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization, which funds Star Wars research.

According to reports from the British defense ministry, Britain had received

a total of £25.7 million (about \$35 million) in contracts from SDIO by last fall, of which £8 million went to government laboratories and £6.5 million to the European Architecture Study—a study of whether the various Star Wars technologies could be integrated into a

system suitable for defense of Europe. Visiting London on 8 December, US Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger assigned another \$10 million in work on Star Wars to the British defense ministry.

—WILLIAM SWEET

Education

OSA expands programs for teachers

A full-day special program honoring outstanding primary and secondary school science teachers was a featured event for the second year in a row at the 1986 annual meeting of the Optical Society of America. At a cost of \$40 000, OSA brought 100 teachers from Washington State, Oregon and British Columbia to Seattle on 23 October for a series of lectures, demonstrations and workshops. The previous year OSA spent about \$15 000 to bring teachers from Maryland, Virginia and Washington, DC, to the Washington Hilton for a similar one-day program (PHYSICS TODAY, October 1985, page 104).

In 1985 all the teacher participants drove to Washington and although OSA reimbursed school districts for substitute teachers to replace participants for a day, the reimbursements were limited to \$35. In 1986 OSA covered the full costs of compensating employers for lost staff time, and the society flew more than half of the participants to Seattle at considerable expense. This year, at its meeting in Rochester, OSA will try to reduce its expenses somewhat by selecting teachers who live within driving distance in New York State and Ontario.

The Seattle program included a historical talk, "From klystrons to lasers," by Robert L. Byer of Stanford University; a demonstration-lecture by Robert G. Greenler of the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, called "Blue skies, red sunsets and the green flash"; and a lecture by Davida Y. Teller of the University of Washington about research on vision in infants. The afternoon was devoted mainly to workshops, including one session in which Donald

C. O'Shea of the Georgia Institute of Technology introduced a hands-on optics kit for primary and secondary schools, which O'Shea had designed on behalf of OSA's education committee.

OSA has produced 200 prototypes of the kits, which are currently being tested in classrooms around the country. The kits will be revised in light of reactions from teachers.

As another part of its effort in pre-college education, OSA has awarded nine optics education grants totaling \$10 000 to individuals who proposed innovative development projects. These include several ideas employing holography, a laser demonstration and several hands-on or blackboard kits.

In the coming year John Walkup of Texas Technical University will be chairman of OSA's education committee, which was established in 1985 and renamed the Education Council last October. This year the committee is expected to start deliberating about optics education at the college and graduate levels.

This summer OSA will bring an education fellow to its Washington headquarters to work on a variety of projects, including one chosen by the fellow. This year the fellow will monitor the optics education grants and evaluate the results from the tests of the prototype kits, among other things.

An elementary school, high school or college educator with a strong interest in optics would be a suitable candidate for the education fellowship. The application deadline is 15 February, and requests for information should be addressed to William A. Borrelle, Optical Society of America, 1816 Jefferson Place NW, Washington DC 20036.

Education

AAS involves teachers in meetings

Taking inspiration from the Optical Society of America's new programs for schoolteachers and also from similar activities conducted by the Astronomical Society of the Pacific, the American Astronomical Society is planning to start including high school teachers in

its annual meetings. The first AAS program for teachers will take place in conjunction with the society's January 1988 meeting in Austin, Texas, and a program probably will be scheduled for the June 1988 meeting in Kansas City.

Peter Boyce, the executive officer of