total of $100 million is donated annually by America through scholarships and financial support, which far exceeds the amount [the] Chinese government spends and is more than the amount all other countries put together [provide to Chinese students], it seems to us that China will suffer irreparably by drastically cutting the number of students sent to the United States."

The letter requests, among other things, that restrictions on seeking foreign financial support for study be lifted, that limits on the time students are permitted to stay abroad be abolished, and that limits on participation in postdoctoral programs be abolished. It has been widely reported that Chinese students going abroad are now being required by the PRC to sign contracts promising to return within specified intervals, and that penalties such as fines will be imposed on the families of those who fail to comply.

The official response to the student petition has been mixed, according to a student who has been following the situation closely and prefers not to be identified. The public reaction has been a hard-line statement to the effect that "Chinese citizens have a sacred duty to the motherland and that the government has the sovereign right to regulate student travel." More quietly and without public announcement, the student says, the PRC is being more liberal with passports, though it is issuing them for shorter intervals.

Leo Orleans, a scholar currently working on a study of Chinese students for the National Academy of Sciences, thinks that the students are grossly overreacting to the new regulations. "There always is a big gap between policies formulated in Beijing and their actual implementation," he says, and "local conditions always are to be used as a guide." Orleans says that more US visas are being issued for Chinese students than ever, and he does not believe there is going to be a drastic drop in the number of students coming to the United States. He does agree, however, that there will be a shift in favor of students working in the more applied sciences.

Love–hate problem

It often is noted that Americans in general and China specialists in particular have had a cyclical love–hate relationship with China that long predates the establishment of the People's Republic. The problem appears in fact not to be limited to the United States. Critical comments in recent months on *The Last Emperor*, the Bernardo Bertolucci film that swept the Academy Awards this year, have complained that Bertolucci tended to follow the Chinese Communist Party's line—that the film soft-pedaled the terror that gripped people during the reeducation campaigns that followed the revolution and, by a curious symmetry, also presented the last emperor as a stronger and less degenerate person than he really was.

Commenting on the attitude of China specialists toward the PRC's recent policies, Fox Butterfield of *The New York Times* told PHYSICS TODAY that we currently are still in the full heat of love and that those who put their responsibility to the immediate truth ahead of their friendship for China can sometimes be given a hard time by colleagues in journalism or academia. Butterfield, a China specialist trained at Harvard, was the first *Times* reporter to be stationed in China following the rapprochement between the US and PRC.

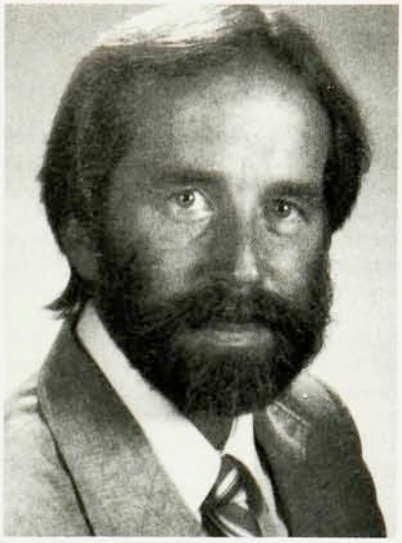
With liberty, personal freedoms and the future of scientific inquiry at stake, nobody wants to risk letting a pessimistic assessment of China's situation turn into a self-confirming and self-fulfilling prophecy. But some realities must be faced, among them the prospect that the golden age of Chinese physicists studying in the United States is coming to an end.

—WILLIAM SWEET

GREENE IS PRESIDENT-ELECT OF AMERICAN VACUUM SOCIETY

Joseph E. Greene, a professor of materials science at the University of Illinois, Urbana–Champaign, is the new president-elect of the American Vacuum Society. Greene will become president in 1989, succeeding John W. Coburn, manager of the plasma– and laser–surface interactions group at the IBM Almaden Research Center in San Jose, California.

Greene earned his bachelor's and master's degrees and his PhD in materials science at the University of Southern California in 1967, 1968 and 1971, respectively. He joined the faculty at the University of Illinois in 1971 and became a full professor in 1979. He is the associate director of



Joseph E. Greene

the NASA Space Vacuum Epitaxy Center in Houston, and he is the editor in chief of *CRC Critical Reviews in Solid State and Materials Sciences*.

Greene's main research interests are crystal growth by sputter deposition and molecular-beam epitaxy, the role of low-energy ion–surface interactions and photoinduced reactions during film growth, metastable semiconducting alloys and transition metal nitrides.

In other AVS election results, William D. Westwood, manager for materials research and gallium arsenide devices at Bell–Northern Research in Ottawa, Canada, was reelected clerk; and N. Rey Whetten, staff physicist in the VLSI Technology Laboratory of the General Electric Research and Development Center in Schenectady, New York, was reelected treasurer.

Three new directors were elected to serve two-year terms: Christopher R. Brundle, a member of the research staff and manager of the micro-, surface and analytical science department at IBM Almaden; Lawrence L. Kazmerski, principal scientist and branch manager for photovoltaics measurements and performance at the Solar Energy Research Institute in Golden, Colorado; and Cedric J. Powell, chief of the surface science division at the National Bureau of Standards in Gaithersburg, Maryland.

The two new trustees are Thomas M. Mayer, an associate professor of chemistry at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; and Russell Messier, an associate professor of engineering science and mechanics and a staff member of the Materials Research Laboratory at Pennsylvania State University.