

TASK FORCE ON GOVERNANCE PREPARES PROPOSALS FOR SUBMISSION TO MEMBERS

For many years the APS council, a governing body composed of divisional representatives, members-at-large, heads of major committees and APS officers, has represented the membership of the society and made decisions on policy, activities and finances.

In the last decade APS has become an increasingly complex organization. The emergence of new research areas has resulted in the proliferation of divisions, specialized meetings and "topical groups." Questions have arisen concerning the procedures, rights and obligations of these groups and their representation on the APS council. Meanwhile, with the explosive growth of journals and activities, APS has incurred substantially greater fiscal responsibilities.

At the request of the APS council, a task force on governance was appointed in 1988 by APS President Val Fitch to examine the present governance structure, assess the extent to which it requires revision and propose solutions. APS President-Elect Eugen Merzbacher of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, has been head of the task force for the past year, but he is now taking on the chairmanship of a new physics planning committee (see *PHYSICS TODAY*, March, page 92). APS Vice President Nicolaas Bloembergen of Harvard University is succeeding him as head of the task force. The group hopes to present a final proposal to the council and the general membership later this year for approval "in principle."

The task force aims to develop a governance structure consistent with the commitment of APS to physics as a unified scientific discipline. At the same time APS must take account of divisional interests and provide for geographical subunits and for "affinity groups" that organize themselves according to shared interests.

The task force proposes to restructure the present council as an assembly of about 40 elected delegates who would bear the responsibility for set-

ting APS policies, and to establish a smaller board (as a successor to the present executive committee) to make most of the decisions imple-

menting general policies.

The assembly would include delegates nominated by and representing the divisions. There also would be a number of delegates nominated by the APS nominating committee.

The task force proposes that affinity groups be eligible for division status and representation on the assembly when they reach a membership threshold, such as 4% of the total APS membership. This means that the larger topical groups now in existence would have the option of becoming divisions.

The task force expects to provide a full description of its proposal in late summer to all APS members and will solicit comments at that time.

Cold fusion tapes

Four hours of videotaped excerpts from the cold fusion sessions held at the APS meeting in Baltimore on 1-2 May are available on half-inch VHS tapes. To order, send \$100 (\$120 outside North America) to Cold Fusion Tapes, American Physical Society, 335 East 45 Street, New York NY 10017. Check or credit card only.

COUNCIL APPROVES PLANS FOR TWO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

At its 30 April meeting in Baltimore the APS council considered and approved planning for two international conferences to take place in the fall of 1990, one in the Mediterranean region and the other in Beijing.

At least half the participants in the Mediterranean conference, which is to be on nuclei and quarks, will be scientists from countries of the Mediterranean and Middle East. The conference will cover front-line developments at the interface of nuclear and particle physics, and it is hoped that new possibilities for scientific collaboration will result. The idea for this conference came from Avivi Yavin (University of Tel Aviv), a former member of the APS subcommittee on international scientific affairs.

The Mediterranean conference is being planned in close collaboration with the European Physical Society and probably will take place in Greece or Italy. APS and EPS representatives met in Zagreb on 17 March and reached agreement on most aspects of the conference.

The APS members of the organizing committee for the Mediterranean conference are Louis Rosen (Los Alamos National Laboratory), Leon Lederman (Fermilab), and Yavin. They are authorized to solicit funds from foundations.

The Beijing conference will mark the conclusion of the Chinese-American cooperative basic research program in atomic, molecular and condensed matter physics, also known as the "Chinese scholars program" (see *PHYSICS TODAY*, June 1988, page 111). The purpose of this program was to provide catch-up education to Chinese physicists whose studies or work was disrupted by the Cultural Revolution between 1966 and 1976. Some 50 scholars participated, and they will be reunited with their American hosts and the organizers of the program at the conference.

An American committee headed by Joseph L. Birman (City College of New York) will work with a Chinese counterpart in scheduling and planning the conference. ■