

COUNCIL ADOPTS GENERAL STATEMENT ON INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN PHYSICS

At its November meeting the council of The American Physical Society adopted a statement on international cooperation in physics. It is based in part on the statement on US-Soviet scientific cooperation that the society adopted in 1986 (see *PHYSICS TODAY*, February 1987, page 121). Since then, the climate for scientific cooperation with the USSR has improved dramatically, while problems have arisen in other parts of the world, so that a more comprehensive statement was considered necessary. "The new statement is meant to be a policy guideline for APS and its committees," said William F. Brinkman of AT&T Bell Labs, the 1989 chair of the Panel on Public Affairs. POPA received a first draft of the statement from the APS subcommittee on international scientific affairs last spring. The final version was prepared by members of POPA, the international affairs subcommittee and the committee on the international freedom of scientists. The statement reads as follows:

In consideration of the international dimensions of science and the need of scientists of all nations to maintain professional contact with colleagues at home and abroad, The American Physical Society has adopted the following statement on the international nature of physics and international physics cooperation.

Science belongs to all humanity and transcends natural boundaries. As in the past, science can serve as a bridge for mutual understanding across political and ideological divisions and as a vehicle for the enhancement of peace. In particular APS believes that it is important at this time to strive for more open dialogue among scientists to enhance international cooperation.

To achieve its full potential and to benefit all mankind, science requires that governments respect basic human rights, allow open communication and avoid interference with the rights of scientists as they carry out their professional work.

APS expects that any action by any government restricting the freedom of inquiry by physicists or the normal performance of their scholarly work be the result of accepted judicial procedures in which the rights of individuals to defend themselves against accusations are not curtailed.

Consequently:

▷ APS deprecates actions of any government that deprive physicists of their rights as individuals, their rights as professionals or their opportunities to meet openly with colleagues at home or abroad.

▷ APS deprecates the arbitrary closure of universities, research laboratories or conference centers as well as the unjustified physical exclusion of physicists from their place of work.

▷ APS deprecates politically based re-

strictions on the travel of physicists. In particular APS urges all governments to furnish exit visas in a timely fashion to physicists of their countries who have been invited to international scientific conferences or other international scientific activities. It similarly urges that host governments provide entrance visas in a timely fashion to foreign physicists who have been invited to participate in scientific conferences and other scientific enterprises.

▷ APS objects strongly to the substitution of uninvited participants for invited participants at international physics conferences without explicit

approval of conference organizers.

▷ APS notes that actions by governments that are inconsistent with the principles stated above erode seriously the willingness of many US physicists to participate in conferences and other cooperative scientific endeavors that involve the offending country.

APS will continue to take action in support of the human and professional rights of physicists in all countries. It continues to encourage individual physicists and groups of physicists to take conscientious and responsible action to protect those rights and to further international scientific cooperation.

Publications Task Force

A task force on membership and meetings-related publications was established at the 12 November meeting of the APS council. The group will examine problems concerning the publication and distribution of material that currently appears in the *Bulletin of The American Physical Society* and that also was to appear in a proposed APS newsletter (see *PHYSICS TODAY*, July 1989, page 83). Publication of the newsletter, which was to begin in January 1990, has been suspended pending recommendations from the task force.

Neil Ashcroft of Cornell University is the chair of the new task force. Also serving on the task force are Walter Massey of the University of Chicago, the vice president of APS; H. H. Barschall of the University of Wisconsin; Alexander Dalgarno of Harvard College Observatory; John W. Wilkins of Ohio State University; and Stanley Wojcicki of Stanford University.

SURVEY OF APS MEMBERSHIP TO BE MAILED THIS MONTH

For the first time in many years, The American Physical Society is conducting a survey of its members. The survey, which is being coordinated by the APS committee on membership, is intended to determine members' preferences and needs and their present use of APS services, journals and meetings; assess members' awareness of, interest in and opinions about APS outreach programs and the manner in which they are run; and develop an up-to-date profile of APS membership in terms of age, employment and subfield. The results of the survey will be used to plan electronic publishing activities and to restructure meetings, among other things.

The survey questionnaire will be sent this month to approximately 4500 randomly selected APS members, about 11% of the total membership.