

and Human Resources. Bloch's action was described by an NSF official as "a swift surgical procedure. But it was heavy-handed and left bloodstains that will be hard to remove. That's not the way the foundation normally operates."

The reaction was not long in coming. On 6 June, at a previously scheduled hearing on NSF's education program before the House science research subcommittee, Representative Doug Walgren, the Pennsylvania Democrat who has been a devoted friend of the agency, told Bloch, "Your tenure has seen very good things and much of it the result of leadership you have given the agency." As for the Shakhshiri ouster, said Walgren, "I think we will look back on this as a last dismal chapter in the events surrounding science education efforts by NSF." In re-

sponse to additional questions about his decision, Bloch stated: "There's never a good time to make a change. . . . It was my conclusion that this was the time to do it, rather than wait 6 months, 12 months, before the next director is in place. . . . In the last analysis, it has to be a management decision. That's the only way you can administer a complex organization like the NSF."

Bloch has urged Shakhshiri to return to the University of Wisconsin, but for now Shakhshiri is assigned to Bloch's office and talking with allies in Congress about the reorganization plan and about Bloch's "top-down model of management." The Bloch era, the longest since the first NSF director, Alan Waterman, completed a full six years, will close on 30 August.

—IRWIN GOODWIN

A YEAR AFTER TIANANMEN SQUARE, SCIENTISTS PROPOSE CHINA BOYCOTT

The same week that President Bush restored "most favored nation" trade status to China, more than 200 scientists vowed not to take part in normal scientific relations with China or attend scientific conferences there until Fang Lizhi and his family are free to emigrate. The scientists, who include five Nobel laureates, urged the Bush Administration to put more pressure on China to allow the Fangs to leave their sanctuary at the US Embassy in Beijing without threat of reprisal. The announcement of the scientists' statement was made at the National Press Club in Washington on 21 May, in anticipation of the anniversary of the massacre of pro-democracy demonstrators around Tiananmen Square in Beijing on 3-4 June 1989 when thousands of students and workers were either killed or arrested and imprisoned.

The statement signed by the scientists was generated by the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Center for Human Rights, headed by the late senator's daughter Kerry Kennedy. Beside her to discuss the boycott was Yuri Orlov, the former Soviet dissident who spent eight years in gulags for demonstrating against official repression. The petition was sent to China's Prime Minister Li Peng as well as to the Chinese Academy of Science, and Kennedy delivered it by hand to Secretary of State James A. Baker III.

The opening line of the statement says, "We cannot remain silent when our colleagues in the People's Repub-

lic of China are held captive." It calls on the Chinese government to provide information about Chinese scientists and students who have not been seen since last summer. In addition, the petition seeks amnesty for political prisoners and safe passage out of China for Fang Lizhi, China's preeminent astrophysicist and foremost human rights activist, who took refuge on 4 June last year in the US Embassy compound with his wife, Li Shuxian, a physicist, and their youngest son, Fang Zhe. At the news conference, Perry Link, a China expert at Princeton University, noted that Chinese officials have stated the government will not free Fang until he has submitted a written admission of guilt for inciting last year's turmoil.

By official Chinese standards, Fang is an inveterate offender. As far back as 1957 he was jailed and "reeducated" for his allegedly "counterrevolutionary" actions on behalf of human rights and social reform. In January 1989 he wrote an open letter to Deng Xiaoping, China's senior leader, urging release of political prisoners. A month later, he was run off the grounds in front of the US Embassy in Beijing when he attempted to attend, at Bush's invitation, a state dinner in honor of Chinese officials.

Soon after the Tiananmen Square massacre, rumors persisted in the West that Fang would be allowed to leave for Australia or France. The rumors proved untrue. On the anniversary of the event, a Reuters dispatch stated that Fang would be

allowed to go to Italy. This, too, was erroneous.

Orlov described a possible plan of action. For those scientists who must go to China, Orlov proposed adopting the same tactics he and other dissidents in the Soviet Union used during the 1970s—namely, to read aloud the names of Chinese scientists who are political prisoners at the start of their talks and to write letters addressed to them in prison. Scientists also should use formal contacts with China's officials at home and abroad to tell them what a bad idea it is to keep Fang under virtual house arrest. "It was a long, long process, but the Soviet experience shows it is not a hopeless task to change their minds," said Orlov, now at Cornell University. His message: Political pressure works!

The petition was supported by The American Physical Society and the American Astronomical Society, both expressing their opposition to China's actions in violation of human rights and political freedom.

In the repressive aftermath of Tiananmen Square, among the hardest hit, without doubt, were Chinese students and scholars living abroad. Of some 38 000 of these now in the US, about 30 000 hold J-1 visas that require them to go back to China for at least two years after completing their studies before they can apply to return to the US. The requirement was China's attempt to stop its brain drain—or at least slow it down.

Immediately following the crack-down in China, the Bush Administration extended all student visas due to expire within a year (PHYSICS TODAY, August 1989, page 39). During that period, Chinese students would be allowed to continue their studies or to work. The snag in this arrangement was that the rules applied for 12 months only, until 4 June 1990. Few students went back to China. Most stayed on their campuses or took temporary jobs and looked to Congress for help.

President Bush, in vetoing legislation last year that would have protected Chinese students against enforced return, gave assurances of safe haven for them in the US. It turned out, however, that despite his promise the President had not issued an executive order to that end. His neglect was criticized by Congress and civil libertarian groups who were sensitized to the anxieties of the Chinese. In April, he signed an order enabling Chinese students to remain in the US until the White House determines that they are safe to return home.

—IRWIN GOODWIN ■