

This division of interest is reflected in the withdrawals of two Sematech members, LSI Logic of Milpitas, California, and Micron Technology of Boise, Idaho. A third company, Harris Corporation of Melbourne, Florida, has also given the required two-years' notice to withdraw and would be eligible to do so in January 1993. LSI Logic and Micron, who were the consortium's smallest members, were said to disagree with the general direction of Sematech's work and felt they were not getting a large enough return on their investment. (Members pay annual dues equal to 1% of their revenues.) Larger members such as Hewlett-Packard, IBM and Advanced Micro Devices, on the other hand, are reported to be well

satisfied with the consortium's strategy and accomplishments thus far.

Spencer has said that the departures will not affect the consortium's survival and that Sematech is now negotiating with three other companies that might become new members.

Other activities

In a separate development, Sematech signed an agreement of cooperation last September with JESSI, its European equivalent. The two parties agreed in principle to cooperate on projects involving shared activities, such as standards and quality management, and those involving complementary activities, such as modeling, packaging and materials.

—JEAN KUMAGAI

IRAN RESCUES TRIESTE PHYSICS CENTER FROM FINANCIAL CRISIS

Because of a peculiar legislative glitch in Italy, which provides about 90% of the budget for the International Centre for Theoretical Physics in Trieste, ICTP found itself facing a severe financial crisis as 1991 drew to a close. While the Italian government was preparing legislation to put funding for ICTP onto a longer-term basis, the center found itself without cash to cover a transitional period of about six months. As a result, by the end of October letters of dismissal were prepared for its 140 staff members, and the center issued urgent appeals to the Italian government and the world at large.

Those appeals were answered in mid-November with an offer from the minister of culture and higher education of Iran, Mostafa Moin, who offered to provide an interest-free loan of \$3 million, to be repaid as soon as funds from Italy once again became available. A message accompanying the loan offer said it was made "in appreciation of all the services Professor Abdus Salam [the founder and director of ICTP] has done for science, and in light of his commitment to the advancement of science in developing countries."

Concurrently with the Iranian offer, the Italian Foreign Ministry provided about \$2.5 million as an extraordinary contribution, and a regional government announced its willingness to guarantee a bank loan of about \$3.5 million. Meeting in early December, the board of governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna, which is responsible for management of ICTP, approved the loan offer from Iran.

ICTP currently supports about 80 foreign scientists working at Italian universities and in Italian laboratories, as well as 50 postdocs at the center itself. It sponsors 40 workshops and conferences each year, involving about 4000 participants from all over the world. In the years since its founding in 1964, according to the center, more than 45 000 scientists from virtually every country in the world have worked and studied at ICTP. Roughly 60% of the visitors come from developing countries, and they spend on average about a month and a half at the center.

While the main emphasis at the center has always been physical and mathematical theory, it also sponsors some experimental programs, including the program for training and research in Italian universities, which is geared mainly to experimenters. The center operates three laboratories: a Microprocessor Laboratory, with the Italian National Institute for Nuclear Physics and the United Nations University, Tokyo; and, with the International Centre for Science and High Technology in Trieste, a High-Temperature Superconductivity Experimental Laboratory and a Laboratory of Lasers and Optical Fibers.

Italy's Ministry of Foreign Affairs traditionally has provided ICTP with about \$17 million per year, budgeted in four-year cycles; the IAEA has provided a little more than \$1 million a year and UNESCO about \$0.4 million. A new plan adopted by Italy's Parliament just before Christmas guarantees funding through to 1998, at the same level of \$17 million per year.

MOUNT GRAHAM OBSERVATORY WINS LEGAL ROUND

In mid-December a US court of appeals in San Francisco ruled that the University of Arizona may proceed with construction of the Mount Graham Observatory, despite concerns voiced by environmentalists over the fate of the red squirrel, an endangered species. The court found unanimously that legislation adopted by Congress in 1988 exempts the first phase of the project, in which three telescopes are to be installed, from further environmental review.

The appeals court remanded two points still in dispute back to a district court, which in the meantime also has found in the university's favor. While those points may be appealed again, university officials are beginning to sound confident that they will prevail and that construction will proceed without further hitches.

The University of Arizona still is seeking a new cosponsor or cosponsors for the Columbus Telescope Project, one of the three telescopes slated for Mount Graham. While it has received expressions of interest from several institutions, a firm commitment has yet to materialize.

Before Ohio State's withdrawal from the Columbus project, the plan was to start work on the Columbus mirror soon after a 6.5-meter mirror is cast this winter for the conversion of the Multiple Mirror Telescope to a single-mirror telescope. The MMT, located on Mount Hopkins in Arizona, is run by the Smithsonian Institution and the University of Arizona.

KAON FACTORY WINS FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL FUNDING IN CANADA

Canada's KAON project, a large K-meson factory that is to be built at the Tri-University Meson Facility near Vancouver, has made a big stride toward obtaining full funding, but it still is some way from being altogether out of the woods.

The plan for KAON is to upgrade the existing 500-MeV TRIUMF cyclotron to deliver a 100-microamp beam of 30-GeV protons, which in turn would yield intense secondary beams of K mesons, antiprotons, other hadrons and neutrinos (see PHYSICS TODAY, May 1989, page 17). Hence the acronym KAON.

Last fall TRIUMF received a commitment of \$236 million (in Canadian