

mally one of the largest IUPAP meetings, would be noticeably smaller than usual, so that the PRC government would get a clear signal.

In fact, IUPAP officers in the US have the impression that the conference will come off without a hitch and that participation will not be too different from usual. Still, at least three invited speakers are known to have declined, at least partly for political and moral reasons. And a number of eminent European solid-state physicists, such as Manuel Cardona and Minko Balkanski, also will not be going.

Balkanski, a native of Bulgaria who heads the Institute for Solid-State Physics at Paris VI, told PHYSICS TODAY that he "cannot go and support a country in which students are still in prison and still in danger" and that he "would sign any boycott document." Balkanski noted that he normally does go to the conference, and when it took place in France on two occasions, he was its organizer. Cardona, a director of the Max Planck Institute for Solid-State Physics in Stuttgart, said that his reasons for not going were more complex and only partly political. He said he was 99% certain nobody would be in danger at the conference, but he also was 99% certain that participation in the conference will be used by the PRC government for political purposes.

Herman Winick of the Stanford Synchrotron Radiation Laboratory, the current chair of CIFS, concedes that scientists invited to the Beijing conference face a difficult moral choice. In Winick's opinion, if such people attend, then they should raise human rights concerns with their Chinese interlocutors, and if they choose not to attend, they should publicly state their reasons. CIFS has published a brochure, which is available from APS in New York, on how to raise human rights concerns at meetings.

It bears noting that CIFS currently includes as members both Yuri Orlov, the former Soviet dissident now at Cornell, and Fang Li Zhi, the Chinese astrophysicist now at the University of Arizona. Both Orlov and Fang also are members of the newly formed Committee to End the Chinese Gulag, which is based in New York at Human Rights Watch. According to an admittedly incomplete list assembled by the committee, there currently are at least 1100 political prisoners in the PRC, at least 15 of them physicists. The committee is especially concerned about physicist Liu Gang, who is in punitive solitary confinement.

—WILLIAM SWEET

APS AND AAS LAUNCH AID PROGRAMS FOR FSU PHYSICISTS

The American Physical Society and the American Astronomical Society have established programs to aid physicists and astronomers in the states of the former Soviet Union, and both societies are urgently soliciting contributions from members.

The AAS program, which will support small grants and journal donations, was announced in the March AAS *Newsletter* and in an electronic message sent to members. The electronic appeal said that the situation in the FSU states has deteriorated "to the point that very good scientists, including an entire generation of young astronomers, face grave difficulties remaining in the field. Problems are particularly acute for astronomers at observatories, theorists and young people—those in the space program and at universities being only slightly better off."

AAS has set up an advisory committee to help coordinate its aid program. Initially a minimum of 100 small grants of approximately \$100–\$200 have been made, and a second round of grants is following this month. In addition, AAS will finance subscriptions to the *Astrophysical Journal* and the *Astronomical Journal*. The air-freight shipping costs are being borne by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in an arrangement with United Parcel Service.

The APS program, which was partly inspired by the AAS initiative, also is intended to provide journals and grants to FSU scientists. The program is the first major activity recommended by a special task force on aiding FSU scientists that was established earlier this year by APS president Ernest Henley of the University of Washington.

In a letter to APS fellows, department chairs and leaders of APS divisions and subunits, Henley asked physicists to contribute \$50 or more to support a special fund for FSU scientists. "The task force intends to draw on that fund to provide journals to appropriate FSU institutions, in addition to those that the APS intends to provide from its existing resources," the letter said. "It is also considering the feasibility of a small grants program that would provide various types of support to assist physicists of proven ability to pursue their research. In order to implement these ideas, the task force hopes to establish ad hoc counterpart committees in the westernmost FSU republics, particu-

larly Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and the Baltic states."

Henley said the task force also is investigating the feasibility of directly shipping small pieces of donated equipment and computers, and individuals interested in making such contributions should specify what they have in mind in their communications to APS headquarters.

Looking further ahead, Henley said he had asked the task force to draft a proposal to the National Science Foundation for an interagency Federal program, by means of which APS could "provide assistance to FSU physicists remaining at their home institutions, in addition to brokering some exchange of physicists between US and FSU institutions." Henley said such a program should address the needs of "outstanding established physicists and younger physicists of proven ability, with the objective of preserving the next generation of physicists."

Donations to the APS program should be made payable to The American Physical Society and should be sent to the Task Force on the Crisis in the FSU, Office of International Scientific Affairs, APS, 335 East 45th Street, New York NY 10017. Donations to the AAS program should be made payable to the AAS FSU Astronomy Program and should be mailed to the AAS Executive Office, Attention FSU Astronomy Program, 2000 Florida Avenue NW, Suite 300, Washington DC 20009. The AAS and APS donations are tax-deductible.

ELECTRONIC ADDRESSES SOUGHT FOR FSU PHYSICISTS

The American Institute of Physics has started an electronic directory of scientists and institutions in the former Soviet Union, which is available on PINET, AIP's electronic communications and database service. Given the current unreliability of telephone links and regular mail service to the states of the former USSR, the new electronic directory could be quite valuable to physicists around the world.

Electronic addresses—e-mail, fax and telex—are sought for FSU scientists and institutions. Individuals with relevant information are asked to contact Mitchell Dinowitz, AIP's administrator of PINET, through Internet at admin@pinet.aip.org or through Bitnet at admin@aip.bitnet.