

on the BEPC II as a natural step toward China's playing a significant role in the ILC. "We have joined the discussion," says Chen. "But I can't see any serious commitment to host the linear collider."

It will take time. But certainly the Chinese particle-physics community is interested in the linear collider, and we will actively join the collaboration."

Toni Feder

Marburger says communications directive unnecessary

In the wake of a May memorandum in which the National Science Board (NSB) called for the Bush administration to issue a "government-wide directive" to encourage the "open exchange of data and results of research conducted by [government] scientists," a spokesman for presidential science adviser John Marburger said no evidence exists "that the situation requires the development of a mandatory one-size-fits-all government-wide policy."

Benjamin Fallon, Marburger's legislative affairs assistant at the Office of Science and Technology Policy, said that after a January incident in which a NASA official tried to prevent agency scientist James Hansen from publicly discussing climate change research, Marburger "took a hard look at the question of the communication of scientific information." Marburger, director of OSTP, was pleased by the new scientific communication guidelines NASA developed in response to the Hansen incident, Fallon said, "and he issued a letter to every chief scientist government-wide recommending the [NASA] guidelines as a best-practice that they may want to consider." (See *PHYSICS TODAY*, May 2006, page 27.)

In the letter, which included a copy of the NASA policy, Marburger described the space agency's new approach as "exemplary" and urged the chief scientists to "compare your own current policies with it and strengthen or clarify them if necessary."

The science board memorandum, issued in response to a request in February by Senator John McCain (R-AZ), concluded that "there exists no consistent Federal policy regarding the dissemination of research results by Federal employees. An overarching set of principles for the communication of scientific information by Government scientists, policy makers, and managers should be developed and issued by the Administration to serve as the umbrella under which each agency would develop its specific policies and procedures."

The science board, an independent panel that oversees NSF and advises both Congress and the president on scientific issues, surveyed the communi-

cations policies at nine federal agencies and asked NSF's inspector general to poll counterparts at those agencies for any related information. The memorandum, signed by NSB chairman Warren Washington, said, "The American public must have confidence that scientific information they receive from the Federal Government has not been suppressed or distorted."

The Bush administration has repeatedly been accused by members of Congress and some science organizations of suppressing and altering scientific findings that conflict with the administration's policy goals (see *PHYSICS TODAY*, April 2004, page 30). Marburger, a physicist and the head of Brookhaven National Laboratory before becoming Bush's science adviser, has said in response to those claims that although mistakes have been made, the administration does not manipulate science for political ends.

The science board made four recommendations that the administration should carry out to ensure there is no "loss of confidence by the American public and broader research community regarding the quality and credibil-

ity of Government sponsored scientific research results."

► A government-wide directive should be issued that "clearly articulates the requirement for all agencies to develop unambiguous policies . . . to encourage open exchange of data and results" of government research. The policies should also prevent the "intentional or unintentional suppression or distortion of research findings."

► A clear distinction should be made between communicating professional research results and data versus the interpretation of data that reflect the personal views of the researchers. (The new NASA policy does not prevent scientists from expressing their personal views as long as those views are identified as such.) The policies should also be widely communicated to all agency employees and to the public so everyone is aware of them.

► An objective dispute-resolution mechanism for disagreements involving the public dissemination of research findings should be developed.

► A government-wide review of the implementation of the NSB recommendations should be established.

Although Marburger isn't issuing the directive recommended by the NSB or directly responding to the other recommendations, Fallon said the OSTP director "monitors this issue closely, and we look long and hard at reported cases. Where there are problems, it's usually where somebody didn't go through the proper public affairs process," he said, not an attempt to suppress science.

Jim Dawson

World regions in stalemate over particle accelerator conferences

For years, the main particle accelerator conferences have alternated between North America, in odd years, and Europe, in even years. Beginning in 2011, to make room for Asia's PAC to join the rotation, Europe will switch from a two-year to a three-year cycle, but the organizers and sponsors of the North American PAC are resisting such a switch.

In April, Michigan State University's Stanley Schriber, who chairs the NA PAC steering committee, broke a tied vote in the committee, coming down against switching the conference to a three-year cycle.

Arguments for switching include keeping the total number of conferences in the field down and treating North America, Europe, and Asia as

equal partners in the field's increasingly global endeavors. Arguments against switching center on the nature of the NA PAC, which includes more engineers and technicians than the other PACs; on the rotation around North America, which gives graduate students and others an opportunity to attend without extensive travel; on the smaller size of the Asian PAC (APAC); and on worries that restrictions by the US Department of Energy (DOE) would limit the number of attendees at foreign conferences.

Albrecht Wagner, chair of the International Committee for Future Accelerators and director of the German Electron Synchrotron (DESY) laboratory in Hamburg, says he is "very disappointed" that the NA PAC is sticking