

partment budget that forbids drilling off the coast of northern California. The sponsor of the amendment, Representative Les AuCoin (D-Ore.), claims that the amendment will pass the House without difficulty. Lease sale 53 has become so controversial that the decision on how to proceed is being made at the White House. Watt insisted at the press conference that he has not surrendered any authority in this case, and that it is standard procedure to consult with the White House on major decisions. He would not predict when the Administration would act on lease sale 53, but a department press officer thought it would not be before August.

Meanwhile, spokesmen for some of the oil companies interested in the OCS have been trying to dispel the notion that they do not like the fast-paced leasing plan. Exxon, Atlantic-Richfield, and Sohio, which had expressed doubts about the industry's ability to keep up with Watt's leasing schedule, now claim that they prefer a too fast pace over a too slow one. Exxon's vice president for exploration, J. D. Langston, issued a statement saying that Watt's leasing plan "represents a substantial challenge to industry in both timing and scope," and he said that Exxon "fully supports" the objective.—**Elliot Marshall**

## UC Regents Extend Weapons Lab Agreement

University of California (UC) management of the Livermore and Los Alamos nuclear weapons laboratories has been extended for another 5-year term. Contracts with the Department of Energy (DOE), which owns the laboratories, were approved by the UC Board of Regents on 18 June.

UC management of the weapons laboratories has been the subject of a continuing controversy about university involvement in weapons work (*Science*, 12 December 1980, p. 1280). The motion to extend the contracts passed easily, although disruption of the board meeting by protesters compelled the regents to move to another room for the vote. The vote was 11 to 4 with 2 abstentions.

Observers regarded the outcome as a foregone conclusion, since the

regents last September had voted to proceed with negotiations by a decisive margin, and no major issue arose with DOE during negotiations. Current contracts do not expire until 30 September 1982, and the new term extends to 30 September 1987.

The debate over whether the university should be involved in nuclear weapons design seems to have stimulated proposals to get UC engaged more directly in efforts to prevent the use of such weapons. At an arms control symposium at Livermore on 29 May, UC president David S. Saxon said that he had appointed a faculty committee to plan a conference in 1982 on international security and arms control. The faculty committee will also advise Saxon on ways to organize the talent and knowledge available in the university for a long-term effort on these issues.

California Governor Jerry Brown, an ex officio member of the board of regents, has a more specific proposal with a similar purpose. In June Brown, who opposes UC involvement in weapons work, called for creation of a UC Center for Global Security and Cooperation at one of the UC campuses, with staff of 25 growing to 50 to 100. Brown suggests that the initial budget of \$1.5 to \$2 million a year be paid from the fee for managing the labs that UC receives from DOE.

—**John Walsh**

## Chilean Physicians Released

Two of the three Chilean physicians whose case was taken up by the AAAS have now been released, with all charges against them dismissed. They are Manuel Almeyda and Pedro Castillo. A third physician, Patricio Arroyo, has been released on bail while a court studies a charge of "illicit association" against him.

The reasons for the release are not known, but a letter from House Foreign Affairs Committee chairman Clement Zablocki to the foreign minister of Chile is said to have been helpful. Zablocki sent the letter after having heard the report of a fact-finding mission sponsored by the AAAS and four other organizations (*Science*, 24 July, p. 421).—**Nicholas Wade**

## Science Board Cautiously Supports Social Research

The National Science Board, which oversees the National Science Foundation (NSF), this spring reviewed the foundation's support of social research to see what should be done in response to the Reagan Administration's budgetary attacks on the social and behavioral sciences. The result is a tepid statement issued after the board's June meeting.

Basically, the board expressed approval of NSF's role in supporting the social sciences, noting in particular the need for continuing collection of social data for the national statistical base, and for research to assess the impacts of new technology on society.

The Administration's leery attitude toward social and behavioral research is well known. Board Chairman Lewis Branscomb told *Science* it is important for NSF to be cautious about "more casual kinds of research." An example of this, he said, was opinion research, which is not regarded as crucial for policy-making.

Social and behavioral scientists are not happy with what they perceive to be NSF's half-hearted attempts to defend social and behavioral research. Clarence Martin of the Association for the Advancement of Psychology says that the research community would be able to accept reduced support if decisions were arrived at as they have been in the past, through cooperation among the executive and legislative branches and the scientific community. The administration has "violated this partnership by making unilateral decisions as to how the pie should be divided."—**Constance Holden**

## Iraq to Rebuild Reactor

Following the promise of credit from Saudi Arabia, Iraq has decided to ask France to rebuild the Tamuz nuclear reactor bombed by the Israelis. Iraqi vice-premier Tariq Aziz will visit France soon to negotiate terms, according to *Le Monde* (17 July). What remains to be seen is whether Mitterrand's government will insist on stricter controls than did its predecessor.

—**Nicholas Wade**