year's notice must be given in advance of withdrawal. The academy was to give formal notification this month, but IIASA offered the waiver.

The withdrawal announcement comes at a time of strained relations between the Soviet Union and the United States. IIASA was also embarrassed last spring when a British magazine reported that a Norwegian double agent had identified a Soviet citizen, Arkady Belozerov, then working

IIASA

Schloss Laxenburg

as an administrator at IIASA, as being involved in Soviet intelligence activities in the North Sea region. No formal action was taken by IIASA or the Austrian government, but Belozerov resigned his IIASA post.

NSF officials discount political considerations, insisting that U.S. withdrawal from IIASA was determined by budgetary factors. They point out that U.S. dues to the institute—$2.3 million to $2.5 million, according to the strength of the dollar—amount to 25 percent of the NSF international budget and that expenditures under bilateral arrangements are viewed as more cost effective.

Chances of continued U.S. participation appear to hinge on revision of the IIASA dues structure. After the initial NSF announcement early this year, the Department of State canvassed federal agencies to determine their interest in funding projects at IIASA. Some agencies did express interest, notably the Department of Agriculture, but the total provisionally offered came only to about $500,000. The NAS governing council felt that this left too large a funding gap for the academy to plan to continue acting for the United States. Since the IIASA offer of a restructuring of the dues, Department of State sources say a wait-and-see attitude has been adopted here. The question is whether other IIASA member countries regard the institute as sufficiently useful to see it recast as more of a consortium of equals in respect to bearing the financial burden.

—John Walsh

Engineers Flee Academia

The big money to be made in industry by holders of engineering degrees has lured away both graduate students who at one time would have gone on to receive a Ph.D. and faculty. Though not well documented, the trend has been decried far and wide. Now, the first survey of reports on the brain drain has been issued by the National Science Foundation in its science "Highlights" series.

The survey notes that 10 percent of all faculty positions at engineering colleges went unfilled in the fall of 1980. The biggest drain was in computer science and engineering, where 16 percent of the positions went vacant. In grappling with the problem, schools have increased teaching loads and dropped courses. The faculty shortage has also forced schools to hire more faculty from other countries. Almost one-quarter of the junior faculty in engineering received their bachelor's degree outside the United States.

At the root of the problem is the considerable difference in salaries offered by academia and industry. In 1981 a baccalaureate engineer in some fields could pull down an offer of $26,500 per year, whereas an assistant professor in engineering received about $22,000 for the academic year. The total number of doctorates that have been awarded has dropped steadily since 1972, the report noted, going from about 3500 to the current figure of 2500.***—William J. Broad***

Aliens on the Campus

The Department of State has upset academics from at least two institutions in the course of what the department regarded as routine attempts to adhere to the Export Control Act.

In particular, officials at the University of Minnesota have publicly expressed resentment at what they see as pressure to monitor the activities of a scholar from the People's Republic of China. The Export Control Act is designed to inhibit the transfer of hardware and information if it is deemed threatening to national security. When scholars from foreign nations, particularly Communist ones, apply to come to the United States, their plans of study are screened by the State Department to be sure their work will not entail access to classified research. This is usually done before visas are issued. But according to State Department spokesman James Menard, Chinese scholars have been allowed to enter the country before their work has been checked in order to facilitate access, in accordance with Chinese-American cultural accords.

Thus, when Qi Yulu arrived at the University of Minnesota to study computer science, the department head, W. R. Franta, received a form letter and questionnaire on Qi's area of research from the State Department. Upon getting no response, the department's exchange officer for China, Keith Powell III, wrote Franta that Qi should "be restricted from any access to unpublished or classified Government-funded work."

Affronted, university president C. Peter Magrath wrote back that "our mission is teaching, research and public service, and neither our faculty nor our administrators were hired to implement government security actions."

According to Menard, the incident boils down to "a failure to communicate." He said the State Department's only function is to remind people of the laws and it is up to the institution to decide what procedures to follow. He also vouchsafed that the wording of the follow-up letter probably was "not too accurate."

The Export Control Act is commonly applied to corporate activity and it may be that the State Department needs to develop more finesse in dealings with academe. A year and a half ago scientists accused the government of clumsy meddling when it revoked the visas of some eastern bloc scientists and got Chinese scientists to sign "letters of assurance" that they wouldn't divulge information gained at a bubble memory meeting in California.***—Constance Holden***