

grams and have begun the effort to find ways, if the United States breaks up with UNESCO, to pick up the pieces.—**JOHN WALSH**

## Richter to Head SLAC

Stanford University physicist Burton Richter, 52, corecipient of the 1976 Nobel Prize for the discovery of the J/Psi particle, has been appointed director of the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (SLAC) effective 1 September 1984. He will succeed Wolfgang Panofsky, 65, who has headed the center since its founding in 1961.



**Burton Richter**

"There is a universal conviction that Burt Richter is exactly the right person for the job," says Stanford President Donald Kennedy. Richter will now be administering the construction of the Stanford Linear Collider at SLAC, a machine he conceived and designed.—**M. MITCHELL WALDROP**

## Massachusetts Forbids Use of Impounded Pets in Labs

A law, signed late in 1983, gives Massachusetts the distinction of having the broadest and most stringent state controls on the use of animals in research. The law, which starts to take effect in October, will prevent researchers from obtaining animals—primarily dogs and cats—from pounds either within or outside Massachusetts. These restrictions are expected to increase about fivefold the cost of using dogs for experiments.

The new law was reluctantly supported by members of the biomedical research community in Massachusetts to head off more restrictive controls. It was a compromise between them and a strong coalition of animal welfare groups, called Protect Our Pets. The ProPet group had gathered enough signatures to place a referendum on the ballot in November that, if approved, would have required researchers to keep elaborate records for all animals used in research and to allow inspections of animal care facilities by the New England Antivivisection Society (NEAS).

"This is our first victory," says Aaron Medlock, director of NEAS. "We are very pleased with the new law. [This] may influence other states to clean up their own acts, and it has shown that the research community is willing to live without impounded animals." He notes that California is the only other state now considering similar legislation.

Other measures to restrict the use of animals in research have been submitted to the Massachusetts legislature, according to Medlock. These include proposals to eliminate the use of nonhuman primates in research, to stop racetrack greyhounds from ending up in laboratories, and to curb "unnecessary experimentation." This last proposal would make it "illegal to subject animals to experimentation if an alternative is available, if the experiments are repetitive, if data are available elsewhere, or if the experiment is solely for demonstrative purposes," he says. "It's up to the scientific community to find alternatives that don't infringe on the rights of these animals."

Although the recently enacted Massachusetts law does not prevent researchers from using animals bred for experimental purposes, Medlock also would like to see that practice eliminated. He says that it is "much preferred" that lost and abandoned pets be destroyed rather than be used in research. This preference is often not understood by researchers who note that more than 250,000 unclaimed pets are destroyed each year in Massachusetts.

Meanwhile a committee from several academic and research institutions, led by Ronald Hunt who directs the Animal Resources Center of the Harvard Medical School and also the New

England Regional Primate Center, is considering starting a dog-breeding center to make up for the more than 6000 such animals used annually for research in Massachusetts.

—**JEFFREY L. FOX**

## Regulators Agree on Grain Dust Standards

After months of negotiation with the White House, the Labor Department's safety branch, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), has backed away from a strong position on grain dust hazards. Instead it has softened a proposed rule that is meant to prevent dust explosions. Over 100 people have been killed in grain elevator blasts in the last 6 years.

Seven months ago, OSHA submitted what it considered a final proposal to the White House for review. To bring an end to disputes over what does and does not constitute a safe working environment, OSHA said that grain elevator owners should remove dust in buildings regularly, never allowing more than 1/8 of an inch to accumulate. This standard was a weakened version of a level recommended by a National Academy of Sciences report, which suggested that the maximum dust level be set at 1/64 of an inch (*Science*, 4 November 1983, p. 485).

The grain handling industry objected strongly, and for months the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) held the rule in a technical review. Now OSHA has agreed to make several changes in the proposal. One OSHA official explains, "If we hadn't done it, OMB would never have let it out." As an alternative to meeting the 1/8-inch standard, elevator owners will be allowed to sweep once a shift or install pneumatic dust control systems. "Sweeping doesn't necessarily mean you control the dust," says an OSHA staffer, for inspectors have seen inches of dust accumulate in a single shift. OSHA was willing to make the changes because it was eager to spring the proposal loose from the White House and put it out for public comment. Hearings will probably begin in May.

—**ELIOT MARSHALL**