

The decision by the West German government to support the construction of the facility in France was taken as part of an agreement under which the French government will, in return, provide funding for a European supersonic wind tunnel near Cologne, a formal announcement on which is expected in the near future.

However, a strong protest about the way this agreement was reached bilaterally was made to the annual assembly of the European Science Foundation by H. H. Anderssen, the chairman of the Danish Natural Research Council. He pointed out that the foundation had originally been responsible for putting forward proposals for a truly European synchrotron facility in the late 1970's, and the technical details were subsequently drawn up under its auspices. Anderssen said it was regrettable that "the only countries that appear to have a chance of receiving the synchrotron are those which are able to make the largest financial contribution." Speaking on behalf of all Scandinavian research councils, he said that they might reconsider their participation in the European Science Foundation if the smaller countries were not given a larger role in future decisions.

Answering these complaints, French research minister Curien said that in principle the siting decision was still open, since all proposals would be considered by a new intergovernmental committee being set up next month to oversee the whole synchrotron development program. As the immediate past president of the foundation, Curien is said to have personally favored the Strasbourg proposal, and he has also spoken frequently of the need to broaden decision-making in European science.

In practice, the most significant point open for negotiation is where this committee will be able to raise the 40 percent of the initial capital costs not covered by France and West Germany. Britain has made it clear that, having recently opened its own synchrotron radiation source in Daresbury, it has no money left over for a European facility, and both Denmark and Italy—two other potential contributors—have suggested that their displeasure over the siting decision may convince their governments not to provide any money for the project.

However, a compromise may still be found by raising support through the research budget of the Commission of the European Economic Community, whose future distribution is to be decided by European research ministers when they meet in Brussels in mid-December.—**DAVID DICKSON**

Mixed Signals on Export Controls

The federal government and some professional societies seem to be moving in opposite directions on the application of export controls to the communication of scientific information. While government agencies are now adopting policies that academic groups generally find acceptable, some professional societies are closing meetings to non-U.S. citizens because they fear that papers would otherwise be withdrawn.

The clearest sign that the federal government was easing up on the control of scientific information came in October, when the Defense Department abandoned a proposal that would have given the Pentagon authority over the publication of unclassified results of research it supports in some potentially sensitive areas (*Science*, 26 October, p. 418). Instead, the department now says it will impose no controls on unclassified fundamental research, which is defined to include virtually all work performed on university campuses.

A similar trend is evident in the Commerce Department's attempts to rewrite its export control regulations. The regulations establish the conditions under which licenses will be granted for the export of technology that has potential military applications. Since technology is defined to include know-how, there has been concern that the regulations would be used to restrict scientific communication. Indeed, early drafts of the revisions drew howls of protest because they would have required researchers in some fields to obtain export licenses before publishing papers, giving lectures, or teaching foreign graduate students. Since July, however, a working group under the chairmanship of Andrew Pettifor of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), has been drafting more palatable regulations in this area (*Science*, 14 September, p. 1131).

The working group's recommendations, which were presented to an OSTP advisory committee on 30 November, are described by one university official who has seen them as "an ingenious piece of bureaucratic writing that will almost certainly solve the problem." In a brief open session of the OSTP committee meeting, Pettifor said that the regulations would exempt from the license requirements information that is publicly available in books, scientific journals, and conference proceedings; fundamental research, which is defined to include virtually all university research; educational materials; and patent applications. One area of uncertainty is research performed at national laboratories and federally funded research and development centers, which will be dealt with on an institution-by-institution basis, said Pettifor.

A third area, the State Department's International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR), is still causing concern. The ITAR rules, which have been under revision for several years, could also potentially be used to restrict publication of scientific data, and academic groups have complained that recent drafts would be unduly restrictive. OSTP Deputy Director John McTague told the advisory committee, however, that the ITAR rules should later be brought into conformity with Commerce's regulations in this area.

In spite of this trend, there has been an increase in the number of scientific meetings that have been closed to non-U.S. citizens. Last October, for example, the American Astronautical Society held a secret session on space warfare at its national conference. In the same month, the Society for the Advancement of Material and Process Engineering held a meeting at which sessions were restricted to U.S. citizens only. And in January 1985 the Society of Manufacturing Engineers is sponsoring a 3-day meeting that will be entirely closed to non-U.S. citizens.

These two trends indicate that, although the argument over scientific communication is being resolved largely in favor of maintaining as much openness as possible in basic research, threats and actions taken by the government over the past few years have had a chilling effect. Rather than risk a confrontation on export controls, some societies are taking a cautious approach by acting on their own volition to restrict attendance at their meetings.—**COLIN NORMAN**