

Japan science program. These striking differences complicate the issue of mutual access because they make it hard to find equivalent Japanese labs in which to place American scientists; they raise special problems of proprietary secrets; and they tend to impair strictly government-government talks as a means of addressing the issue.

Although Graham's desire to petition the Japanese for a commitment to additional spending on basic research would obviously ease one of these difficulties, it was seen by many other U.S. science officials as an unwarranted intrusion into Japanese domestic affairs. An official at the Commerce Department, for example, asks: "Can you imagine how we would feel if Japan made the same demand of us? For a country that's knocking our socks off, it's insulting."

Similar criticism greeted Graham's proposal to force the Japanese to pay for language training of U.S. scientists and translate Japanese journals into English. Says one NSF official, "I'd like to see the U.S. spend an equivalent amount that the Japanese spend to learn English. I see nothing intrinsically wrong with the Japanese translating into English. But, in the end, we're the ones that can do better translations. I'd rather see us do more of it."

Everyone agrees that ignorance of the language is a major obstacle to learning important news from Japanese scientific conferences. Hiroshi Inose, a former dean of engineering at Tokyo University who now directs the country's National Center for Science Information Systems, says it is also a barrier to working in Japanese labs. "Companies don't want to treat foreign researchers as guests," he said in a telephone interview from Tokyo. "They want them to be members of the group."

But many U.S. experts see this as a problem of American origin, which demands an American solution. Mitchell Wallerstein, acting director of the new Office of Japanese Affairs at the National Academy of Sciences, says, "The language barrier is really our problem. We don't pay for translation of journals in English into Japanese."

Graham's additional proposal to force the Japanese government to subsidize new positions for American scientists in Japanese laboratories attracted more mixed reviews. Again, everyone agrees that Japanese regulations have been a barrier to access. Until 1983, the Diet prohibited foreigners from holding permanent faculty positions. For years, the Ministry of Education barred industry from endowing faculty positions at national universities to prevent improper influence on professors. Under Inose's initiative, this rule was overturned last year, which paved the way for four private Japa-

nese companies to endow the new chairs for foreigners at Tokyo University.

But White House science office officials are particularly upset at the disparity between modest progress in Japan, and the fact that more than 300 Japanese researchers a year conduct research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). These researchers are inappropriately being subsidized at the American taxpayers' expense, in the view of the science office.

A senior official in NIH's office of intra-

mural affairs disagrees, pointing out that the foreign participants in the international program at NIH are selected on the basis of merit and that the program has no quota system. "The Japanese are contributing here. They publish. NIH scientists find them diligent," the official said. "If the Japanese weren't here, it would be someone else."

But the picture is complicated by the fact that the Japanese receive proportionately more support from NIH than scientists from other countries. According to NIH

## Stumbling on Superconductors

A decision by William Graham, the President's science adviser, to exclude non-citizens from a mass meeting on superconductivity on 28 July upset some of the sponsors and offended foreign diplomats who wanted to attend.

The program, aimed at interesting U.S. corporations in superconductivity, was sponsored by the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, four federal agencies, the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), and the National Academy of Engineering (NAE). Frank Press, president of the NAS, and Robert White, president of the NAE, urged Graham to open the door to foreigners.

Roger Meyer, a spokesman for the chief coordinating agency, the Department of Energy (DOE), says: "The conference was organized for U.S. commercial interests, so we did not invite foreign commercial interests."

Science counselors at the British, French, Japanese, and West German embassies say that the cold-shoulder treatment went beyond omitting an invitation. When they called DOE for permission to attend, they were told first that there was no room for them, and second that this was a "domestic" meeting at which they were not welcome.

Kaname Ikeda, Japan's science counselor, was "very disappointed" with the rejection. However, Margot Bellman of the British embassy's science information office, who was rejected at first, received a call a few days before the meeting to inform her she might attend. "I don't understand the policy," she said. "Apparently the foreign press is not excluded." Heinz Seipel, West Germany's science counselor, said, "I don't understand why it's important to have the foreign press but not the science representatives of foreign governments."

Indeed, DOE and the White House papered the town with press releases announcing that "President Reagan will keynote" the event. Cabinet members, members of Congress, and scientific leaders were on the speakers list.

"This was a terribly unfortunate decision," says one leader of a scientific society. "We are trying to interest our allies in participating in the space station and the supercollider and other would-be international projects. To do this at this time is incredible." The motivation apparently was to deny information to America's competitors in trade. Another official involved in scientific exchanges is concerned that the Japanese and Europeans may retaliate by closing some of their meetings.

A House science subcommittee staff member said that the decision to block foreigners from the meeting was embarrassing, given that top Japanese researchers in superconductivity recently invited Americans to attend a meeting they sponsored in Japan last month. "There's no logic to what [the science office] is proposing," the staff aide said.

Graham could not be reached for comment. However, Frederick Leavitt of Graham's staff said he was aware of concern about foreign attendance and felt that it was exaggerated. "This is one meeting," he said. "There will be many others in the passing of time."

Solomon Buchsbaum, chairman of the White House science council and executive vice president of AT&T Bell Laboratories, says, "There have been lots of conferences on superconductivity that are international in nature and scope." He mentioned one scheduled for September at which Russian scientists will speak. "To single this one out and make a cause célèbre isn't justified." ■ E.M. AND M.S.