versity of Crete, Greece's first gateway into the European Academic and Research Network (EARN), providing access to both BITNET and ARPANET. But technology cannot completely overcome the feeling, that coming to Crete is, as one scientist puts it, "often seen as a form of exile."

There have been political problems too. Part of the government's motivation in setting up a new research center in Crete is said to have been a desire to avoid the academic in-fighting that might have resulted from trying to start these projects within existing institutions. But its decision has generated opposition from those who claim, for example, that the money could have been more effectively used if the research center had been established in Athens.

Several political groups have also criticized the research agenda for being explicitly oriented to the long-term interests of private-sector enterprises (which in practice tends to mean foreign-owned transnational corporations), and implicitly to the political goals of NATO.

Kafatos acknowledges that there have been "some political difficulties" in setting up the center. But he is philosophical. "Anytime you do something radical and new, you have to accept that; you just have to acquire a thick skin, and adopt a long-term view."

More pragmatic is the continuing concern that the salaries offered to publicly funded scientists in Greece—low even compared with those in other parts of Europe—remain a major handicap in attracting top candidates working in the United States and elsewhere. This concern has prompted the proposal that EEC research grants, at present confined to project expenses, should include funds to raise scientists' salaries to a European-wide minimum.

That the RCC and its institutes have quickly managed to establish a growing scientific reputation is evidence of a determination to succeed (and, some would add, a certain single-minded independence in the Cretan character). The center's main task now, according to those responsible for setting it up, is to ensure continued growth and, as Economou puts it, "to replace the initial enthusiasm with something more tangible."

"Even though we have made the transition from a dream to a reasonably well-known research center, we still do not have the critical mass that you really need," says Kafatos. The scientific staff currently numbers 46 resident and 20 visiting researchers. "What we have going for us is an excellent group of young and active scientists. What we have to do is hold on to them and try our best to recruit more people and find the funds to support them."

■ DAVID DICKSON

Britain Reveals Astronomy Plan

London

British astronomers have announced that they are on the lookout for an international partner—or partners—prepared to split the estimated $55-million construction costs of a new 8-meter telescope optimized to work in both optical and infrared ranges.

They are also offering to collaborate with foreign astronomers on two other major projects: a new radar facility to be based on the Arctic island of Spitzbergen intended to study the dynamics of the upper atmosphere within the Polar Cap and a set of gravitational radiation detectors designed to gather information on neutron stars, black holes, and supernovae.

The three projects, along with a fourth purely British one, have been recommended for government funding by the Astronomy and Planetary Science Board of the Science and Engineering Research Council. The fourth, already approved, would create a new 32-meter radio telescope at Cambridge as an extension to the MERLIN radio interferometry network based at Jodrell Bank.

In a report published in London last week, the board describes these as "key projects" in a long-term strategy which would "take the UK forward in the forefront of astronomy and planetary science research into the next century."

If suitable international partners can be found, the board says that the four projects could be financed within an overall budget that is kept constant at current levels of capital investment in ground-based astronomy. To do this would require cutting back on some experimental programs.

It will also require finding other countries willing to contribute up to 50% of the costs of the 8-meter telescope, up to 75% of the $26 million for a gravitational radiation observatory, and about 75% of the $14-million price tag of the Polar Cap radar.

"The establishment of international partnerships will be essential to the success of the key projects," says the board in its report, adding that "the scientific benefits of working internationally are as important as the financial necessity."

The board also expresses concern about job prospects for British astronomers. It points out that, although a wave of retirements can be expected in 5 to 15 years, "academic career prospects for existing and immediate future students and postdoctoral workers are very poor indeed."

■ DAVID DICKSON

Chauvinism in Nobel Nominations

American chemists tend to be "chauvinistic" when it comes to making nominations for the Nobel Prize in chemistry. They also do not seem to understand the need for confidentiality in making nominations, says Bo G. Malmstrom, who recently resigned after 10 years as chairman of the chemistry section of the Nobel Prize Committee.

Malmstrom, who is about to return to Sweden after a semester at the California Institute of Technology, told *Science* that members of the committee have been unhappy for some years about the fact that Americans always seem to nominate other Americans even though they are supposed to be nominating "the most important chemists in the world."

Each year, professors of chemistry in 10 of a pool of about 50 American research universities are invited to make nominations. Malmstrom says that in the great majority of cases, Americans nominate chemists from their own departments. For example, he says, the three Germans who won the 1988 prize (for work on photosynthesis) received nominations from ten countries. But none of them received a nomination from an American chemist. This, he says, was "definitely against both the spirit of the prize and what we are after. We are dependent on getting good nominations from the outside."

Malmstrom believes that Americans are not deficient in their knowledge of work by foreigners but are just "more chauvinistic in this regard." He says the problem is particularly evident at big universities like Harvard and the University of California at Berkeley.

Malmstrom says that the committee about 5 years ago wrote a letter to American universities explaining the Nobel policy in detail, including the need for confidentiality. "We thought when we wrote this detailed letter that would improve the situation but it really hasn't." He says it is obvious from the pattern of nominations that Americans discuss them among each other. "We take confidentiality very seriously . . . apparently this is not in the American tradition."

Malmstrom's willingness to talk publicly about the committee's problems is an indication of how seriously concerned some members are over American behavior.

■ CONSTANCE HOLDEN