

AAAS NEWS & NOTES

edited by DIANA PARSELL

Meeting Spotlights Persecuted Scientists

Several formerly persecuted scientists whose cases have attracted widespread attention offered dramatic testimony at a AAAS conference last month that focused on the intersection of science and human rights.

Harry Wu, a geologist and naturalized American citizen who spent 19 years in Chinese prisons for political activity, told the participants: "It is not enough to free the world's dissidents. We have to condemn the system—see the machine destroyed."



Wung Juntao

Wu, who was detained in China and charged with espionage last June when he attempted to enter the country, called for wide condemnation of *laogais* (re-education work camps) operated by the Chinese government as a source of forced labor. He also urged protest against what he described as a major industry in China of nonconsensual selling of executed prisoners' organs.

A 1995 U.S. State Department Country Report on Human Rights Practices said Chinese officials had confirmed that executed prisoners are a primary source for organ transplants but they asserted consent is required from prisoners or their families. The assertion could not be verified, the report noted, adding

that China lacks national legislation governing organ donations.

A panel highlighted the use of scientific methods and technologies to oppose repression. Karen Burns of the University of Georgia, who has trained members of AAAS-sponsored forensic anthropology teams, used slides showing bullet-shattered skulls and other skeletal human remains analyzed as part of human rights investigations in Iraqi Kurdistan, Haiti, and Guatemala. Forensic analysis offers evidence about the physical traits and cause and manner of alleged



Harry Wu

death of alleged victims of human rights abuses, which may corroborate accounts by relatives and witnesses.

Other persecuted scientists who addressed the meeting, sponsored by the AAAS Science and Human Rights Program, were Wung Juntao, a nuclear physicist and leader in China's democracy movement; Tsehai Selassie, an Ethiopian political scientist who was among 42 professors summarily dismissed from Addis Ababa University; and Dr. Nguyen Dan Que (represented by his brother), a medical doctor imprisoned by the Vietnamese government for most of the past two decades. AAAS will publish a report on the 22 March meeting.

For information, contact Elisa Munoz by phone at 202-326-6797 or by e-mail at emunoz@aaas.org.

Board Names History Committee

With the Association's 150th anniversary looming in 1998, the Board has named a AAAS History Committee to guide the implementation of activities commemorating the event.

Keith Benson, executive secretary of the History of Science Society, heads the committee, whose members are leading scholars in American science. Its tasks include overseeing his-

torical research related to anniversary projects, promoting involvement by historical societies, and identifying pertinent sources of funding for historical activities.

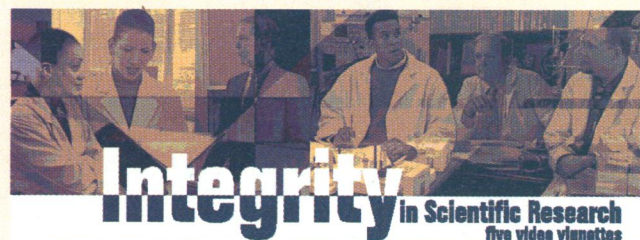
The members were selected to reflect diversity in gender, race, geographical region, and areas of specialty. They are:

- Bruce Hevly of the History Department at the University of Washington in Seattle;
- Daniel Kevles, Humanities and Social Sciences Division, Califor-

- nia Institute of Technology;
- Jane Maienschein, Philosophy Department, Arizona State University;
- Kenneth Manning, Science, Technology, and Society Program, Massachusetts Institute of Technology;
- Gregg Mitman, Department of History and interdisciplinary program in environmental studies, University of Oklahoma;
- Naomi Oreskes, Earth Sciences Department, Dartmouth College;

- Phillip Pauly, History Department, Rutgers University;
- Nate Reingold, emeritus historian, Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution;
- Jeffrey Sturchio, historian and executive director for public affairs at Merck & Co.

The staff liaison is AAAS News and Information Director Nan Broadbent. For more information, contact her by phone at 202-326-6440 or by e-mail at nbroadbe@aaas.org.



A set of five videos designed as a training tool to promote responsible conduct in scientific research is available from AAAS. The videos dramatize "gray areas" in which people may differ over the proper course of action, triggering discussion about options for responding to the situations.

Ethical issues addressed include sharing of data, allocation of credit, reporting suspicions of misconduct, and disclosure of privileged information. A *Discussion and Resource Guide* offers tips on using the videos, which are suitable for a variety of settings.

Past efforts to impart ethical training in research relied heavily on informal means, but growing concerns about misconduct have prompted calls for more systematic approaches. Funding for the video project came from the National Institutes of Health, the Office of Research Integrity, and the Agricultural Research Service.

The price is \$79.75 (\$63.96 for AAAS members), plus \$6.50 for postage and handling. For an order form, contact the Directorate for Science and Policy Programs. Phone: 202-326-6600. Fax: 202-289-4950. E-mail: science_policy@aaas.org.

Lubchenco Honored

AAAS President Jane Lubchenco was one of two women scientists honored 2 April by a National Research Council (NRC) staff group that promotes the participation and visibility of women in science and engineering.

Lubchenco and Lynn Goldman, assistant administrator for prevention, pesticides, and toxic substances at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, were recognized by NRC's Women in Science and Engineering (WISE). Both stressed the need for the next generation of scientists to tackle critical environmental problems.

"We are entering the 'Age of

the Environment,' " Lubchenco said, quoting biologist E. O. Wilson. "Human activities are changing the planet more than ever before, ... disrupting ecological systems in ways we have yet to appreciate." The impact is "unprecedented," she said, because of faster rates of change, larger scales of change, and new kinds of changes.

Photographs of Lubchenco and Goldman were added to a permanent NRC exhibit of distinguished women in science and engineering. Also featured is Mildred Dresselhaus, a materials scientist at MIT who recently became AAAS president-elect. She was last year's WISE honoree.



Jane Lubchenco