

academics stressing the "urgent need to rebuild trust and calm scientific teaching in Polish universities". According to an unofficial *Solidarity Information Bulletin* now circulating in Warsaw, the seven-hour meeting was deadlocked by the persistent demand of the academics for the release of all detainees and for the participation of the university rectors recently elected under the new democratic procedures in any further negotiations.

The presence at the meeting of Dr Aleksander Gięsztor, president of the Academy of Sciences, must have sharpened the discussion of the detainees. He was himself picked up in one of the early round-ups, although released shortly afterwards.

The unofficial lists of detainees now being compiled reflect just how active a role the academic community played in the *Solidarity* movement. They include:

- Lecturers from the unofficial Society of Academic Courses (the "Flying University") Stefan Amsterdamski, Władysław Bartoszewski, Andrzej Celinski, Jerzy Jedlicki and Jan Walc.

- Solidarity advisers from the universities, including Dr Bronisław Geremek, a Warsaw lecturer in economics, who was a member of the *Solidarity* delegation to France last October, and Dr Stefan Kurowski who drew up the project for economic renewal discussed at the *Solidarity* Congress.

- Doctors and medical workers including Grazyna Przybylska-Wendt from the *Solidarity* presidium.

- Academy or university employees who, until now, have never achieved this type of prominence — among whom Dr Stanisław Kozłowski, the new rector of Poznań University, is the most eminent so far.

The military rulers seem willing to make some small concessions to the academics — the constitution of the Polish People's Republic (Art.5.3) enjoins them to maintain the "constant progress of science and technology". Academic detainees from the Warsaw area are housed in a government hotel near Drawsko. Earlier reports that *Solidarity* advisers Jacek Kuron and Adam Michnik had been savagely beaten are unfounded.

The main instigators of the academic turmoil, according to the official statements, were the activists of the Independent Students Union (NZS). These, it is said, had tried to turn NZS into a political organization, rejecting the policy of social accord and "stirring up anti-Soviet sentiments" — a line which suggests that a purge of the student body may be forthcoming.

So far, no mention has been made of the fact that, only a few days before the military take-over, the Conference of University Rectors, meeting in Poznań, had formally endorsed the recent NZS protests as a valuable contribution to the struggle for academic freedom.

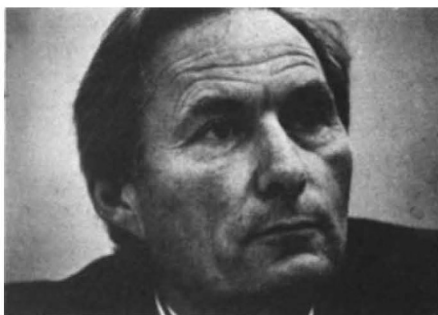
Vera Rich

High-energy physics

All change

With approval for its latest accelerator, LEP, under its belt, the European Centre for Nuclear Physics, CERN near Geneva, seems prepared to experiment — not so much with particles but with its governing body. For alongside the announcement of the CERN budget, and the final approval for LEP (see *Nature* 24/31 December, p.685), comes news of the appointment of two active new characters to the CERN Council. Sir Alec Merrison, currently chairman of the UK Advisory Board for the Research Councils and vice-chancellor of the University of Bristol, is to become president of the council; and Umberto Vattani, a high-ranking Italian civil servant who was involved in a disagreement two years ago between Italy and Germany over the appointment of a German (Professor Herwig Schopper) as director-general of CERN, becomes one of the two vice-presidents.

Sir Alec was himself a high-energy physicist, and in fact in 1959 he was co-author of the first experimental paper to



Merrison: chairman everywhere?

come out of CERN. He was also a director of the now defunct Daresbury electron accelerator, NINA, and has defended the place of "big science" in the highly-constrained UK science budget.

On his appointment — which gives him control of the CERN Council's committee and subcommittee work during the next year, as well as presidency at the council itself — Sir Alec said he was delighted at the decision over LEP. "All the delegates are amazed that CERN has been able to pull this thing off," he said, but at the same time the next few years would see CERN taking "a jolly dangerous path".

This is because LEP is to be built out of the current budget only by making massive savings in the present programme. Closing certain facilities entirely would save something, but most of the savings will have to come from running down the experimental work on the CERN 400-GeV super proton synchrotron, the laboratory's biggest machine. There will therefore be a hiatus in research.

Vattani, on the other hand, now reassured that Schopper has proved an "excellent" director, and that Germany will not try to squeeze CERN in favour of

its own national accelerators, sees looming problems in personnel and pensions

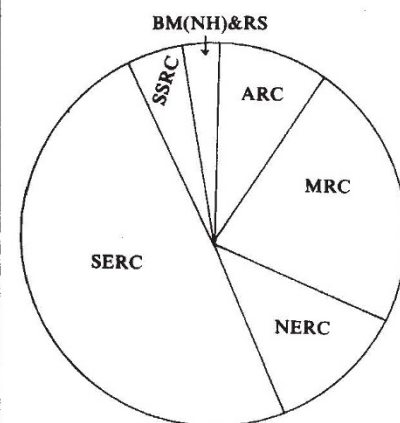
Other questions which will arise for the council in 1982 are late payment (some members have indicated that they may not be able to pay their subscriptions on time) and the management of the LEP project itself. LEP will span two countries, be 27 km in circumference, cost £275 million, and will still face some environmentalist opposition in the region. Professor Schopper will no doubt welcome all the help that the council can give him in this, the largest ever CERN project.

Robert Walgate

Hardly any change

The arguments put forward by the past and present chairmen of the British Science and Engineering Research Council (SERC) that the council should take a larger slice of the science vote have modestly borne fruit. Although the civil science budget for 1982-83, made public a few days before Christmas, has roughly kept its real value, SERC's budget has been increased by about 1 per cent. Most of the council's extra money will be spent on biotechnology, information technology and on helping universities to maintain the quality of research in spite of cuts in their own budgets.

It is equally no surprise that the council to come off worst in this year's division of the science vote is the Social Science Research Council (SSRC), with a real budget for 1982-83 about 4 per cent less than in 1981-82. SSRC has suffered substantial cuts in the real value of its grant for the past three years, reflecting uncertainties about the role of social science research in Britain.



The three other research councils, however, are to receive the same real budget in 1982-83 as in 1981-82. All, however, will be concerned that the government has allowed for only a 4 per cent increase in salaries over the year. If, as last year, the increase in the salary bill is higher, then the amount of research the councils can buy is bound to decrease.

Judy Redfearn