

PALMER PHYSICAL LABORATORY  
Princeton University  
Princeton New Jersey

March 5, 1952

Professor P. Fleury  
Secrétaire General  
Union Internationale de Physique Pure et Appliquée  
3, Boulevard Pasteur  
Paris XV, FRANCE

Dear Professor Fleury:

Thank you for the recent bulletin carrying further details about the forthcoming IUPAP meetings for the summer.

Through my regard for Professor Yukawa and Professor Kotani and the Japanese School of Physics, I have become closely interested in their plans for an international conference on theoretical physics to be held in Kyoto in 1953 or 1954. In this connection, I wrote a letter to the Office of Naval Research and followed it up with several discussions, laying the ground for a request at that time for assistance in sending a number of American physicists to that conference.

In the meantime I have learned from Professor Kotani that the UNESCO-ICNV grant of the order of \$12,000, which had been counted on for 1953 to defray the cost of travel by physicists of other countries, is not likely to be available until 1954. I understand from copies of the letters dealing with this matter that the Japanese are presented with a hard choice between \$5,000 in 1953 and \$12,000 in 1954.

I have just discussed this problem with John Slater, who with myself makes the only pair of vice presidents of IUPAP easily able to confer in this continent. We are both quite disturbed at the possibility of the big Japanese conference being delayed until 1954:

1. The Triennial Assembly of the International Union of Pure and Applied Physics will undoubtedly be held in England in 1954, in line with preliminary discussion with Professor Mott to this end. He and I believe all of us will want to see that assembly made a really big event, comparable to that fine conference held in Cambridge in the fall of 1934. It would be most unfortunate for two big international conferences on physics to be set up for the same summer.

2. The Japanese understandably are eager to give concrete signs of belonging once again to the family of nations. The completion of Yukawa Hall and the starting of an institute for advanced study in Kyoto already

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make this summer a conceivable time for their holding the international conference designed to reaffirm contact with the scientific world. 1953 already represents a postponement and 1954 is really too far away to count as much as I at least -- as an outsider -- would like to see towards the desired ends.

In view of these circumstances it would seem to me most important to encourage the Japanese to go ahead with their now long-standing plans for 1953. I would like to ask you if every possible way could not be explored to increase to \$10,000 the amount which can be contributed by UNESCO to this purpose. It seems to me most appropriate that something be done in this direction:

1. Because \$5,000 is so inadequate compared to the \$12,000 requested, in view of the cost of travel to so great a distance.
2. Because nothing would demonstrate so well as this Kyoto conference, on top of the several years earlier Indian conference, that UPAP is a truly international organization, not merely a setup for the benefit of the NATO group.
3. Because the Japanese, war worn as they are, have had the faith in this enterprise to promise for it themselves an amount exceeding \$20,000.

Whatever you can do will be most appreciated.

I send renewed assurance of my highest consideration.

Sincerely yours,

*John A. Wheeler*  
John A. Wheeler

JAW:MMH

cc: M. Kotani  
J. Slater  
H. Yukawa ✓