Proposed college merger collapses

By Michael Shimazu

In the last-minute change in policy, University of Massachusetts at Boston Chancellor John Duff acted last Wednesday, was part of a proposal recommended by Duff and approved by the Board of Regents at a meeting on August 21. Under that proposal, 273 part-time faculty members at UMass-Boston, almost 100 full-time Boston State professors, and administrators on both campuses would have been laid-off as of August 29.

At the August 21 meeting, the Regents voted to merge the schools within three weeks instead of within three years as had previously been approved. A $5 million shortfall in the appropriation for the Boston cluster, which includes Boston State, UMass-Boston, Roxbury Community College, and Bunker Hill Community College, forced acceleration of the merger, said Duff at that time.

A court order issued August 28 by Superior Court Justice Ranolph Pierce, however, prohibited the layoff of the Boston State professors, and UMass-Boston, almost 100 full-time Boston State professors, and administrators on both campuses would have been laid-off as of August 29.

Meanwhile, students, faculty, and some legislators have formed a coalition to seek additional funding to meet the $5 million shortfall in the appropriation for the Boston cluster.

On September 3, Boston State students voted to postpone indefinitely the proposed college merger between that school and Boston State College.

Scientists warn of nuclear war danger

By Jon D. Morrow

Scientists from 40 countries, including the United States and the Soviet Union, meeting at the 31st Pugwash Conference on Thursday in Banff, Alberta, called for a freeze in the current growth of nuclear weapons programs by the two superpowers.

MIT Professor of Physics Bernard T. Feld, who served as chairman of the Pugwash Executive Committee, characterized the mood of the meeting as "one of apprehension." Representatives of nations on both sides of the Iron Curtain called for "an immediate moratorium on new weapons deployment," accompanied by agreements on weapon production and testing, and bans on the production of nuclear weapons. These recommendations comprise the so-called "strategy of suffocation," proposed three years ago by Canada's Prime Minister, Pierre Elliot Trudeau.

"People felt that the drift toward confrontation between the two superpowers is increasing rather than decreasing," commented Feld, "and that the talk of a "limited nuclear war" could be fought and won, which the Pugwash scientists declare to be impossible. They said that the leaders of the nuclear powers should explicitly deny military doctrines which legitimize limited nuclear warfare.

The Reagan Administration's proposed arms buildup in Western Europe caused much apprehension, resulting in a call for "serious negotiations on limiting nuclear weapons in Europe before it is too late to set long limits."

Senator Charles Percy (R.-Illinois), Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, noted that the Soviet presence in Afghanistan made it impossible for the Senate to approve the most recent arms treaties. He did stress, however, that the Reagan Administration was committed to arms control and reduction.

The scientists agreed that "rough parity" existed between the deterrent capabilities of the United States and the Soviet Union, and warned against any actions that would upset this balance.

The first Pugwash Conference was held in 1957 at Pugwash, Nova Scotia. "The next meeting will hopefully be in Warsaw in August, 1982. We hope that it will still be possible to hold an international conference with people from both East and West attending and that Poland will still be relatively open," noted Feld.