

ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF CERN USERS (ACCU)Minutes of the eighth meeting, held on June 2, 1980

- Present : A. Bamberger, F. Binon, W. Blair, J.J. Blaising, K. Böckmann, M. Buhler-Broglin, P. Dalpiaz, A. Filippas, P. Grafström, D. Imrie, E. Lillestøl (Chairman), P. Rancoita, M. Regler, L. Rosselet, D. Schotanus, H. Suter, W. Tejessy, J. Thompson, G. Ullmann.
- Invited : J.P. Diss (Item 7), R.N. Milligan (Items 3a, 4 and 6), J.M. Thomas (Item 3c)
- Apologies for absence : P. Borgeaud, J.D. Hansen, A. Vitale

The Chairman opened the meeting by reporting briefly on his discussion that morning with the Research Director-General. Van Hove was satisfied that ACCU was now established as a forum for interaction between users and CERN, and from now on he did not propose to attend every meeting, communication with the CERN Directorate being ensured by regular contacts with the Chairman, and via Ullmann.

1. Adoption of agenda

With the addition of items on meal tickets (Dalpiaz) and blood tests (Regler), the draft agenda was approved.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting (CERN/ACCU/7)

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on March 3, 1980 were approved.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

a) Lockers

Milligan said that lockers are now available to enable users who commute to CERN to leave personal possessions while returning briefly to the home country. The cost is 2 Swiss francs per week, and the keys are available from the Hostel receptionist. Regler pointed out the problem with luggage for users arriving between 11.00 and 14.00, when the Hostel reception office is closed. Several members added that the reduction in opening hours since the recent move of the reception office was inconvenient for users. Milligan promised to try to extend the opening hours.

b) Car-hiring arrangements

Buhler-Broglin reported that the demand for cars had exceeded expectation, and that CERN had now rented 32 cars for three years, for hiring to institutes for a minimum period of three months. The first year's experience had been satisfactory, and it was hoped to adapt to users' needs by being more flexible on the minimum period. He added that the forthcoming SPS long shutdown would perturb the arrangements.

Imrie said that pressure from users for individual hiring on a short-term basis would continue, since while this could be achieved by an institute hiring the car and then sub-hiring it to individuals on a daily basis, the individuals were then involved in accounting problems with respect to their institute. Buhler-Broglin pointed out that the administration of the 32 cars presently available on long-term hire was a considerable extra load on present staff, and that no CERN staff were available to deal with short-term hiring.

The Chairman suggested that car hiring arrangements be reviewed again after the long shutdown, and this was agreed.

c) CERN Nursery School

Tejessy said that since the previous meeting of ACCU, the Council of the Staff Association had considered the question of fees, and had decided, for purely financial reasons, that the Staff Association could not continue to accept an obligation to subsidise Unpaid Associates. The Nursery School deficit in 1979 was 10,000 Swiss francs, and in 1980 would be 15,000 - 17,000 Swiss francs. Compared to an overall Staff Association budget of 100,000 francs, it was unfair to use Staff Association subscriptions to subsidise the school. The Management Board of the Nursery School had decided to raise the fees to 270 Swiss francs per month to meet part (probably one third) of the deficit, and it was considered that the fees could not be raised further without pricing the school out of the market. The Staff Association could not continue to offer reduced fees for Unpaid Associates, and believed that a solution to the problem should be found other than by using Staff Association subscriptions to cover the deficit.

There followed a long and animated discussion on the CERN Nursery School, on schooling in general, and on the role of the CERN Staff Association. The essential points concerning schooling may be summarised as follows:-

- i) Reimbursement of the fees for the CERN Nursery School is part of the question of the reimbursement of school fees in general.
- ii) While some countries reimburse school fees (even at 100%) for children of their users from the age of 5, no country reimburses nursery school fees in the age range 3-5.
- iii) The fact that the CERN Staff Regulations foresee the reimbursement to those paid by CERN of school fees at 75% up to certain maxima is a general facility for children from age 3, irrespective of which school the child attends, and is intended to replace free schooling in the home country.
- iv) Schooling costs are only part of the overall problem of financial support for Unpaid Associates at CERN.

Ullmann informed the meeting that as part of the five yearly review of the CERN Fellows and Associates Programme, a paper had been prepared, and had been discussed and approved by the Scientific Policy Committee and Finance Committee earlier in 1980, and would be considered by Council later in the month. This paper contained the following explicit reference to the financial problems of Unpaid Associates at CERN:-

"The considerable increase in number of Unpaid Associates in recent years is believed to be due primarily to the increasing complexity and duration of experiments, although there are other factors such as the closure of accelerators in the Member States, the need to register scientists who commute between home institutes and CERN, and even the consequences (e.g. in technical support) of the reduction in numbers of CERN staff. It is known that in some cases Unpaid Associates are in financial difficulty when at CERN, therefore all Member State authorities are requested to ensure an adequate level of financial support for their Unpaid Associates."

The conclusion of the meeting was that the problem of CERN Nursery School fees was part of the general problem of financial support for Associates coming to CERN, which members felt should be solved by the member state authorities for their own nationals. It was agreed to ask the Research Director-General to emphasise this point in his presentation to Council of the Fellows and Associates Programme paper.

There was some discussion of the relationship between the CERN Staff Association and Unpaid Associates, in view of the fact that at the previous meeting of ACCU in March 1980 (see CERN/ACCU/7) it had been stated that all Unpaid Associates were members of the Staff Association, while this was no longer true. Tejessy explained that the new Statutes of the Staff Association which had been approved for one year by the Staff Association Annual General Meeting in April 1980 incorporated a new attitude to Associates. The previous Statutes dated from 1968, and all Unpaid Associates were automatically members. With the growth of CERN, this had led to lists of 1500 or more Unpaid Associates, from whom in five years not a single candidate for election to the Staff Council had come forward; at a recent meeting called by the Staff Association for all Unpaid Associates, 1 had turned up. In the new Statutes it was foreseen that Unpaid Associates could become members of the Staff Association by individual application, and would then have the status of "special member". He explained that this change in policy had nothing to do with the question of nursery school fees.

Böckmann and Binon expressed strong reservations about this change, and it was agreed to include on the agenda of the next ACCU meeting an item on the role of the CERN Staff Association with respect to users, and to invite the Staff Association to present its position.

Tejessy intimated that due to the expiration of his mandate, this was the last ACCU meeting which he would attend as Staff Association representative, and that he would brief his successor on the present discussion. He added that as far as nursery school fees were concerned, the Staff Association had decided not to continue to offer the present reduced fees, but would still consider cases of hardship.

4. Extension of the CERN Hostel

Milligan referred to the memorandum of April 17, 1980, which had been circulated to members before the meeting (see Annex I), and indicated that this proposal had been discussed and approved by the CERN Executive Board, and was due to be discussed by the Finance Committee later in the month. Preparatory discussions on finance and architecture were underway, and it was envisaged to set up a small Planning Committee, including representatives of the users, to advise on practical points related to the construction.

Members then asked Milligan a number of questions on points of detail. A summary of the questions and of Milligan's replies follows:-

- i) When would the new Hostel open? (Lillestøl).
In around 20 months' time.
- ii) Why was the suggested location chosen? (Lillestøl).
Other locations on the Meyrin site had been studied, however the proposed location had many advantages - easy access by public transport, good parking, near the present Hostel and the restaurant, library, etc.
- iii) Why was there no provision for families? (Lillestøl).
Safety regulations (no children on site) were the main factor, and in any case the CERN furnished flats were available for families.
- iv) Would there be cooking facilities? (Böckmann).
No, since the restaurant (with extended opening hours) was near, and persons wishing cooking facilities could use the St. Genis Hostel.
- v) What differences would there be compared to the present CERN Hostel? (Böckmann).
Sound insulation would be better, some rooms would have a higher standard (showers/toilets), and there would be common rooms and leisure facilities, and a concierge.
- vi) Would there be vending machines for food and drinks in the evening? (Suter).
This could be envisaged.

There was a general discussion on the number and standard of rooms, with several members suggesting that more than 150 rooms should be built, and some members questioning the need for rooms with showers etc. There was strong support for construction to start as soon as possible on the proposed site, with as many rooms as possible, to the standard of the present CERN Hostel but with better sound insulation, and common rooms. Some members were in favour of some rooms having showers etc., and others were against. After a brief discussion it was agreed that ACCU should not make a recommendation as to whether or not there should be some rooms of higher standard, leaving this open to the Planning Committee.

Binon and Thompson agreed to represent ACCU on the Planning Committee, and the Chairman asked to be kept informed of developments. Users who wish to comment on any aspect of the construction of the new Hostel are urged to make their views known to these representatives as soon as possible.

5. Secretarial support for users

Buhler-Broglin said that at the meeting of ACCU in November 1979 (see CERN/ACCU/6) it had been alleged that there was a problem of secretarial support for users in the North Area (one secretary for 500 users), and he had agreed to report on the situation following a recent survey of EP Division secretarial services. The total number of personnel in EP Division was now over 2500, which included 1600 - 1700 physicists and engineers, and covered 30,000 m² of office and laboratory space spread over the Meyrin and Preveessin sites. Secretarial services were provided by the divisional secretariat and by eight regional secretariats, the location and staffing of which are given in Annex II. On average there was one secretary per 50 full-time-equivalent scientists in each region, and staffing limitations meant that the number of secretaries could not be increased. The position in the North Area was that there were 400 physicists and engineers registered, equivalent to 250 full-time, and there were five secretaries. Thus the situation for the North Area was not as suggested earlier, and was not significantly different from elsewhere in EP Division.

Grafström pointed out that it was not clear to many users to whom they could go to have letters or short reports typed. Buhler-Broglin said that the details given in Annex II would be circulated to all groups for information.

Imrie asked who was responsible for supervising the day to day work of the regional secretariats. Buhler-Broglin replied that formally this was the Divisional Secretary (S. Dubois) but that in practice the local physics group leader was responsible.

Lillestøl enquired what happened if the regional secretariat was overloaded (e.g. by reports). Buhler-Broglin said that in this case the secretary was supposed to contact the divisional secretary, who would reassign effort if possible, and if not would pass work on to the DD typing pool. He added that it was hoped in the next 1 - 2 years to introduce standardised text-editing systems, which should lead to greater throughput.

Binon asked if there could be a telex repeater station on the Preveessin site. Buhler-Broglin thought that there would be staffing problems, but agreed to investigate.

The Chairman closed the discussion by thanking Buhler-Broglin for his report, which had been a useful clarification of the situation.

6. Meal tickets

Dalpiaz explained that due to a specific Italian problem he wished to propose the introduction of meal tickets in the CERN restaurants. The problem arose from the fact that the regulations for the payment of subsistence to Italian scientists visiting CERN for short periods were based on Italian diplomatic conditions, and thus officially an Italian scientist on mission should be paid a daily allowance of over 250 Swiss francs, which led to funding difficulties. It was however legal to pay half this rate plus a meal ticket, if meal tickets were available.

The Chairman said that the basic problem was a national problem and thus not an ACCU matter, however it would be worth finding out if ACCU members were in favour of the introduction of meal tickets at CERN.

Several members said that from their national point of view there was no interest in the introduction of meal tickets. Figures were given for various national daily subsistence rates, ranging from 70 to 134 Swiss francs.

The conclusion of the meeting was that while there was sympathy with the basic problem, there was no support from ACCU for the introduction of meal tickets at CERN, and it was suggested that the matter be discussed directly between the Italian representatives and CERN.

7. Blood tests

Regler asked for a review of the arrangements for blood tests for Unpaid Associates. He said that many users were registered correctly as radiation workers at CERN, but were not full-time at CERN, and this led to problems in arranging the necessary blood tests. From numbers given earlier in the meeting he reckoned that there could be 1000 people in this situation. Absence from CERN could mean involuntary non-attendance for blood tests (the Associate would not even know that he had been called for a test), and after a few weeks he could return to find himself formally banned from working on his experiment. He accepted that in view of the numbers it was not easy to administer a blood control system, but nevertheless he asked for a transparent scheme for correctly registered Unpaid Associates who are not full-time at CERN.

Diss explained that the blood test was only part of a routine occupational medicine procedure. CERN wished to monitor people known to CERN as radiation workers, however the CERN blood test in itself was not enough and those who commuted could remain the prime responsibility of their national authorities for health in general and for radiation exposure in particular.

Regler remarked that most scientists were liable to exposure only when at CERN, and Diss observed that CERN did not know who was a registered radiation worker also at the home institute.

The Chairman said that there appeared to be two problems, firstly one of communication with CERN users who commute, and the second the problem of who was responsible for the health of an individual if only partial medical records were available.

Concerning communication, Diss explained that all film badge holders are called once per year for a blood test, and that non-attendance leads to a second invitation to come, and then to a third, after which the host Division Leader is informed of the non-attendance and that the person is no longer considered to be an authorised radiation worker. Regler pointed out that if a collaboration is not taking data, there could be no one from the collaboration present at CERN for some months, hence no reaction to the invitations. It was agreed that in future the third invitation should be sent in duplicate also to the individual at his home institute. In answer to a question from Imrie, Diss said that blood tests were carried out every day, and that it was usually possible to fit in a test for an individual who was at CERN for only a few days.

The general question of responsibility was not discussed further, although Diss stressed that users who were registered radiation workers in their home country should announce this on arrival at CERN.

8. Other business

a) Move of fire station and CERN Hostel keys

Thompson asked if it was true that the firemen would move to another building, and how this would affect the present arrangements for obtaining CERN Hostel keys outside working hours. Milligan said that it was planned to relocate the firemen near the present SB building, and undertook to enquire whether the problem could be solved by leaving keys with the gatekeeper at the main entrance.

b) Problem of obtaining visas

Binon said that he had recently experienced difficulty obtaining a visa for the USA via the new procedure involving Wagons-Lits Tourisme. Milligan agreed to investigate.

c) Staff Association elections

Tejessy pointed out that the deadline for the nomination of candidates for election to the Council of the Staff Association was June 4, 1980, and asked members to encourage users to join the Staff Association if they wished to continue to be represented in this way.

9. Items for the agenda of the next meeting

a) Rancoita indicated that he did not wish to pursue the item on workshops which he had mentioned previously, but that he might raise another topic.

b) Grafström suggested an item on access to the CERN electronics pool for visiting groups whose collaboration does not include a CERN group. Imrie remarked that the electronics pool usually had very little equipment available for loan, and that it might be useful to discuss this too. It was agreed to include on the agenda a general item on how the electronics pool operates and how to borrow equipment.

- c) Regler said that accounting information for groups should be made more readable, and pointed out that this was used by administrators in the home institutes who were not specialists in CERN accounting terminology. Blair agreed to take this up with Finance Division.
- d) Böckmann reminded the meeting that as discussed earlier the agenda should include an item on the role of the CERN Staff Association.

10. Next meeting

The next meeting of ACCU will be held on Monday, October 6, 1980 at 14.30 in Salle A + C.

W. Blair

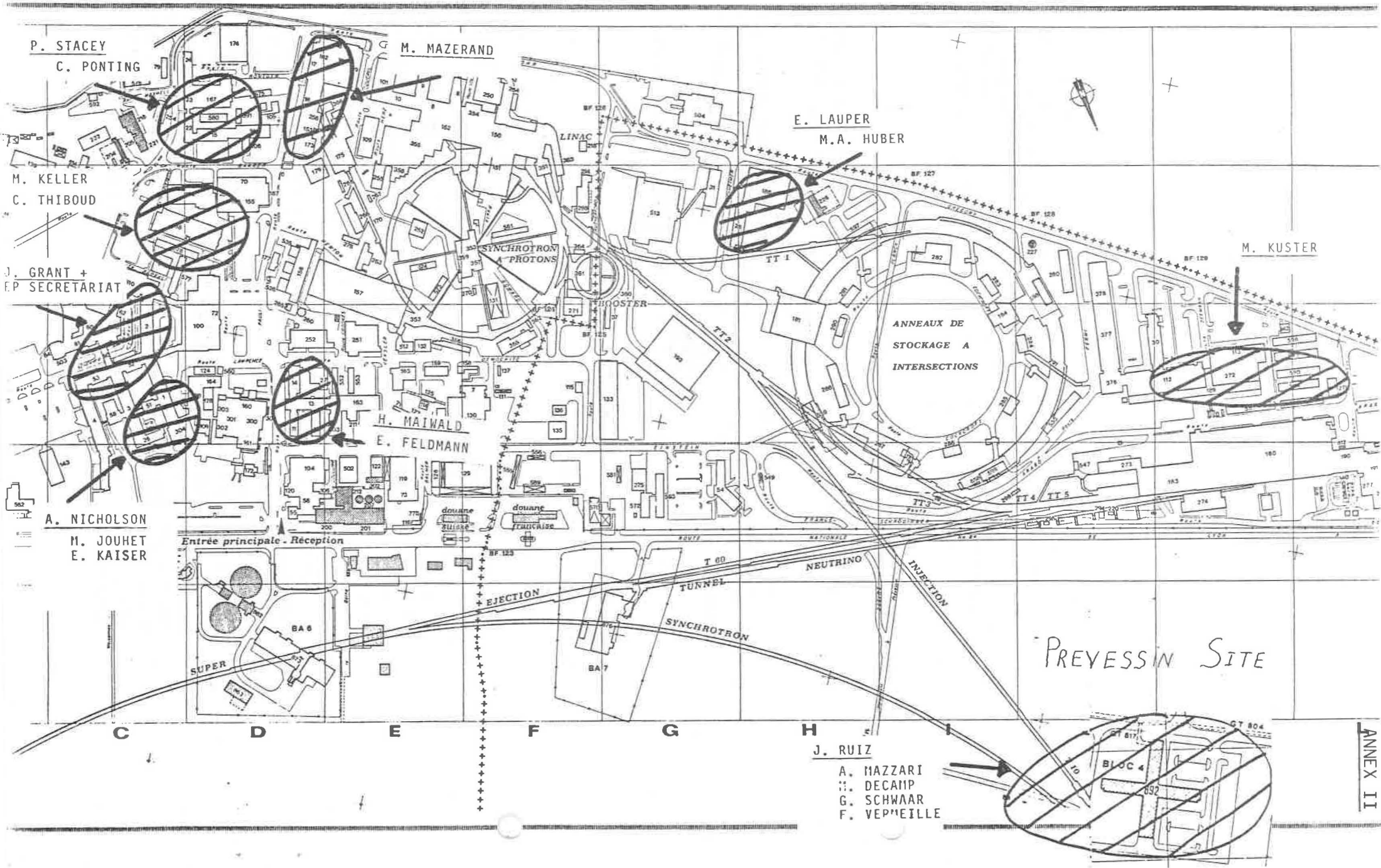
CERN EXECUTIVE BOARD

EXTENSION OF CERN HOSTEL

1. There has recently been increasing pressure for the short-term accommodation facilities made available by CERN to scientists coming from institutes in the Member States and elsewhere to be extended and improved in standard. The number of Associates has steadily increased by 12%-15% per year, to reach 2050 persons registered at present. At least 50% of them are estimated to be on the site at any one time, representing potential clients, whilst the amount of accommodation available has remained static for several years.
2. The accommodation currently available comprises:
 - i) 61 beds in the CERN Hostel (Lab. 5 building), mostly in single rooms, which were made available in 1970 (5th floor) and 1972 (4th floor);
 - ii) 91 beds in the CERN Hostel Annex, in barrack rooms having 1, 2 or 3 beds; these buildings were erected in 1955 and originally used for sleeping accommodation for contractors' employees;
 - iii) 79 single rooms reserved for CERN at the Foyer de St Genis, which was completed in 1976.
3. Present state of available accommodation :
 - i) It is generally considered that the rooms in the CERN Hostel offer an acceptable standard of comfort for scientists coming to CERN.
 - ii) In response to requests made by the clients, the Hostel Annex accommodation (in barracks) has been improved as far as is possible within the constraints of a wooden building of light construction, with inherently poor sound and heat insulation properties. It is not considered feasible to improve the standard of comfort any further.
 - iii) The accommodation reserved for CERN at the Foyer de St Genis was upgraded in 1978 to a standard which is broadly comparable to the CERN Hostel, and its level of occupation shows that it is meeting a genuine need. Many clients find, however, that it is less practicable than accommodation on the CERN site, particularly for those running experiments at night and those wishing to use facilities such as the restaurants and library. The lack of regular transport services between the Foyer, CERN Meyrin and CERN Prévessin is a severe handicap (although the ad hoc service provided by SB Division and the firemen is appreciated).

EP DIVISION REGIONAL SECRETARIATS

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4. The need to improve the facilities has been discussed at meetings of the Advisory Committee of CERN Users, which led to an enquiry amongst Associates working on the CERN site. The enquiry showed that there was a very strong feeling that the accommodation facilities should be improved and extended on the site at Meyrin, and this conclusion was endorsed at the ACCU Meeting on 3 March 1980. ACCU members had had the chance to discuss the result of the enquiry with the Associates whom they represented, and the unanimous conclusion was that the Management should be urged to make available more rooms of better standards of comfort, as quickly as possible.

5. As a result of these considerations, it is planned to provide 150 single rooms, to replace the existing barrack accommodation (91) and provide additional rooms (59) required to satisfy the growing number of clients. Some of the rooms would have showers incorporated, to meet the requests of some clients for better standards of accommodation than at the existing Hostel. Space would be provided for common facilities (such as a television lounge and reading room), and recreational activities provided in conjunction with some of the CERN clubs (such as table tennis, the English and French book clubs, etc.)

6. Discussions have therefore taken place with SB Division to examine the possible locations on the Meyrin site of a new building, offering the required special insulation properties that would enable scientists working on experiments at night to sleep during the day. The solution that is currently preferred would be to construct a new five-storey building adjacent to Building 5, where the existing Hostel is located on the 4th and 5th floors. Adequate parking facilities are available, it is relatively easy of access for clients from outside CERN, and Hostel management would be simplified by proximity to the existing Reception Office.

7. It is envisaged that the construction would be financed by means of a loan of some 4 million Swiss francs raised outside CERN, while the internal furnishings could be purchased from the reserves of the Housing Fund. Finance Committee would have to be asked to guarantee the loan. First calculations prepared in collaboration with Finance Division indicate that the building could be operated viably, including repayment of the loan and amortization of the furniture, at the current levels of occupation and at price levels that are in line with present practice.

R. N. Milligan

