

IN CONFIDENCE

Dr. T. G. Pickavance,
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(From Dr. Clarke
dated 26.11.64)

Science Research Council

1. I am to see Lord Bridges at 3.45 p.m. tomorrow and have arranged to call on Mr. Thompson at 2.45 p.m. I am seeing Mr. Thompson in order to collect his note of our meeting with Sir Frank Turnbull and to clarify any points that may be necessary; also to clarify anything necessary for my meeting with the Staff Side next Tuesday.
2. Meanwhile I am setting out below an outline of the discussion at the meeting with Sir Frank Turnbull as it may help in clearing our minds tomorrow morning before I go to London.
3. The general proposal was that there should be one Committee for nuclear physics dealing with what is at present the function of N.I.R.N.S. with the U.K. interests in C.E.R.N. and with grants to universities for nuclear physics research. This Committee would correspond to one Division of the S.R.C.
4. In all there would be about five Divisions in the S.R.C. of which one would be a finance and establishments division. The accounting officer might be the chairman or secretary of the S.R.C. and there would probably also be a principal finance and establishments officer (Walker).
5. The Department of Education and Science would assume most of the "Treasury" type functions apart from specialised advice. This should improve the coordination between getting scientific value from the programmes on the one hand and financial and administrative ways and means on the other.
6. The nuclear physics Committee referred to in paragraph 3. above would exercise policy control over (i) direction of the former N.I.R.N.S. Laboratories, (ii) grants, (iii) relations with C.E.R.N.
7. On (i) Sir Frank Turnbull saw disadvantages in merging policy and executive functions in one committee. On the other hand a two-tier committee structure would be too cumbersome and would be opposed to the reported views of Lord Bridges. After discussion it was thought that given the existing management of the N.I.R.N.S. Laboratories the combination of policy and executive management would probably not present undue difficulty and that the committee could be constituted so as to handle this. There would be merit in inviting Mr. Drake to serve on the committee and it was believed that he might accept such an invitation.
8. We thought it important that there should be a finance member for the nuclear physics committee (or division) who could enable the division to operate directly within the delegations or approvals of the S.R.C. accounting officer. It was suggested to us that there could be a finance and establishments official on the committee^{who} although he might be a member of the staff of the finance and establishments division of the S.R.C., would be able to authorise financial and executive decisions within delegated powers.
9. The administration of Atlas might appropriately be separated from the nuclear physics division but if this were done care would be needed to avoid upsetting the present good working relationships with universities and the "house keeping" advantages of the geographical location of the Atlas Laboratory near to Rutherford and Harwell.
10. The management and staff of N.I.R.N.S. would be told in due course

/of the conditions ...

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what conditions (e.g. for superannuation) would apply to recruits after the transfer date. There was little prospect of conditions sensibly different from those of the Civil Service*. This seemed to us to be a worsening of terms of offer such that for example recruitment from the A.E.A. would no longer be possible except with an offer of promotion.

11. Mitigating suggestions by Sir Frank Turnbull were:

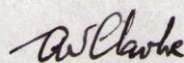
The option of F.S.S.U. in appropriate cases*

S.R.C. merit promotions

One or two S.R.C. prizes for outstandingly meritorious research

12. There was some discussion of the possibility of preserving some flexibility of salary structure in the higher grades but this appeared inconclusive.

* One of the points to be clarified is whether the proposal for Civil Service type superannuation would be by analogy with superannuation Acts or whether people could in fact be covered by the Acts (which I think unlikely). People on F.S.S.U. would have a deduction from their salary, the present rate of which is 5%. N.I.R.N.S. staff in post before the transfer date would be able to stay in the Authority's superannuation scheme. It is uncertain however whether this is regarded as a transitional or a longer term arrangement. In either case they would presumably retain the additional 7% of their salary on a personal basis but if the arrangement for continuing in the Authority superannuation scheme were regarded as transitional, I would see difficulty in negotiating an alternative arrangement that was not still out of step with Civil Service conditions.



A. C. W. V. Clarke

26th November, 1964.

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N.I.R.N.S.

Copy to: Professor A. W. Merrison (In Strict Confidence)