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STAFF ASSOCIATION

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PENSIONS - THE POSITION SO FAR

CERN's work is such that it requires highly qualified personnel at all levels.

The most recent example of this is the completion in record time of the unique antiproton accumulator ring (AA).

CERN must be attractive enough in comparison to national employers in the Member States for personnel to be willing to leave their social, professional and cultural environment and come here.

In the sixties that was the case !

But the situation has seriously deteriorated in the last few years.

The application of the index for salaries and allowances has often been refused, with the result that purchasing power has dropped in some cases by as much as 11%, plus a further reduction for the senior grades of up to 10%.

The indemnity for the suppression of post, which is seen by the personnel as its only financial guarantee if the Laboratory were to close either completely or partially, has been severely cut (for new recruits).

A reduction of the non-resident allowance is being discussed even before the problem of permits for residence and work for CERN staff and their families has been resolved.

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1. Pensions are a very important part of our working and social conditions and, as such, they were included in the RESCO review.

The RESCO Subgroup on Pensions compared the level of pensions in the Coordinated Organizations (CO), the European Communities (EC) and at CERN.

As RESCO completed its work in December 1979, the Subgroup has not had time to work out a solution to the problem of CERN pensions which are substantially lower than the others considered.

2. All the conditions reviewed by RESCO are considered by CERN personnel to be a single package which must be dealt with as a whole.

Some of our demands on working conditions have been rejected and the new salary scale is below that requested by the Staff Association and the CERN Management. To offset the Council's rejection of these items in December 1979, we now expect fair pensions.

3. A working group (consisting of Burger, DEKKERS*, DUFOUR, MAURIN*, RAYSON, ROCHE, RUFER, ULLMANN and ZILVERSCHOON [chairman]) was set up in February 1980 to draw up recommendations on improved pension rights.

The Association considers that a satisfactory and lasting solution must be found for the following points :

- a) the level of pensions
- b) the payment of family allowances to pensioners
- c) the guarantee of payments (in the event of some or all Member States withdrawing from CERN)
- d) indexation
- e) health insurance for pensioners at reasonable premiums
- f) reimbursement to pensioners of education fees for dependent children

The Working Group has submitted its recommendations on items a) b) and f) (cf the Official News in this edition of the Bulletin).

Items d) and e) are, to varying degrees, satisfactorily settled but still without guarantee.

These items therefore still need further study, as does items c).

* Staff Association representatives

4. In drawing up its recommendation on pension levels, the Working Group compared the income of pensioners of the Services Industriels in Geneva (SIG, which is the official reference for salaries of grades 2 to 8) the CO, EC and CERN. The Group took into account pensioners' total income, including, therefore, where appropriate, the AVS (the first "pillar" of Swiss pensions) as well as the family and dependent children's allowances.

The result is given in Tables I to IV available from your Staff Council member.

The recommendations are based on the following simple criteria :

- a) net income for CERN pensioners to be the same as that received by the reference groups;
 - b) contribution by the CERN personnel to the pension scheme to be the same as that paid by the reference groups ;
 - c) the funding of the scheme should not jeopardize the efficiency of the CERN Staff Insurance Scheme nor should it place an excessive burden on the Organization's annual budgets.
5. The Executive Committee considers that the unanimous recommendations of the Working Group on Pensions are fair and within the means of all concerned. They are as follows :
- the net income of CERN pensioners (both present and future) to be brought into line with that of the reference groups ;
 - the personnel to be asked to make the same contribution as the reference groups (8,2% of salary to bring contributions into line with SIG and CO) for a 40% increase in pensions ;
 - pensioners' extra income to be financed from CERN's annual budgets and the increased contributions.

The Executive Committee will make every effort to see that these recommendations are applied from 1 January 1981.

The Executive Committee would like to emphasize that, under the Agreements with the Host States, the Organization has the obligation to assure CERN personnel of social protection at least equivalent to that provided in the Host State where the Organization has its Headquarters, i.e. in Switzerland*, and that, in the event of the dissolution of the Organization, the Member States have the obligation to guarantee the payment of pensions until the cessation of entitlement of the last beneficiary.

JOIN FORCES AND FIGHT TOGETHER ON THIS VITAL ISSUE !

* Article 21 of the Agreements of 11 June 1955 and 30 December 1970.