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ORGANISATION EUROPÉENNE POUR LA RECHERCHE NUCLÉAIRE
CERN EUROPEAN ORGANIZATION FOR NUCLEAR RESEARCH

THIRTEENTH SESSION OF COUNCIL

Geneva - 26 May, 1959

REPORT OF THE CERN STUDY GROUP ON FUSION PROBLEMS

The Report of the CERN Study Group on Fusion Problems has been circulated to the Council as document CERN/304.

Attached, you will find the Director-General's comments on this Report.

REPORT OF THE CERN STUDY GROUP ON FUSION PROBLEMS

(Comments by the Director-General)

1. The report of the Study Group on fusion problems has been circulated to the Council as CERN/304. It contains a very useful review of the present state and scale of work in European laboratories on controlled thermo-nuclear research and compares them with what is known of the work in the United States. It discusses, in Part III.4, the possibility of setting up in Western Europe an international laboratory for research into fusion problems, but makes no recommendation, and the Council will presumably wish to take no position on this part of the report. The report does, however, recommend the continuation of certain necessary tasks in the coordination of the work which is already going on in this field in Western Europe, and eventually suggests three possible methods by which this could be done:

- "1) That CERN be asked to continue its sponsorship and support of the Study Group;
- 2) That a new Society be set up to continue the work of the Study Group;
- 3) That the European Atomic Energy Society be asked to expand its aims and interests to cover fusion research."

2. It is suggested that it would be most unwise for CERN to commit itself indefinitely to the task of coordination, however important it may be that the work should continue. CERN has certainly performed a very useful function in bringing the Study Group together and in producing the present report, and it might have been difficult for this task to be undertaken by anybody else, but now that the interested people have been brought together and have learned something of each other's interests there seems to be no reason why they should not eventually organize themselves for the purposes set out in the last few paragraphs of the report. The justification for CERN continuing to maintain an interest in a field of development which might not be, on the strictest interpretation, within the ambit of the Convention has now disappeared. On the other hand, the danger of CERN being drawn into closer responsibility for work which has a definitely commercial and strategic importance would be increased if CERN remained permanently responsible for its coordination.

It is therefore recommended that if CERN is prepared to continue to bear the responsibility of alternative 1 above, this should only be for a limited time and until it has been possible for the group concerned for instance to set up the new society suggested in alternative 2.

The Council may therefore care to consider the resolution on the lines of the attached draft.

Draft Resolution

THE COUNCIL

- a) approves for publication the Report of the CERN Study Group on Fusion Problems;
- b) considers that to accept indefinite responsibility for the work of the Study Group would not fall within the initial programme of CERN as defined in the Convention, and cannot therefore accept the first course suggested in Part V of the Report. The Council does, however, accept that in general it is important that the work of co-ordination should continue, and is prepared for CERN to continue its sponsorship and support of the Study Group for a limited period while alternative arrangements are made. This period is for the moment set at the end of the present year after which the decision may be reviewed again.
