

# Science Research Council

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Office of the Chairman:

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8 January 1973

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*My dear Gerry*

I had meant to write to you some time ago to wish you well for 1973, but it has been a hectic Christmas and New Year. Peter got married in London on 30 December to a beautiful American ex-model who is at present, believe it or not, an associate professor of English at Philadelphia specialising in medieval Celtic languages. Mary and I had to cope with all the arrangements and so I didn't write to you!

I think we have gone forward a significant step about nuclear physics now that Council has agreed that Nimrod shall continue in operation and shall have its new injector, whereas Nina must gradually be wound down. No doubt Godfrey has told you that this decision, although expected, has cleared the air. We have also agreed to go ahead with the Nuclear Structure Facility but the siting is not yet final, partly because the Council wants to think about its siting policy in general before making up its mind (which it will do this month) and partly because the Cheshire locals want a public enquiry. We have our fingers crossed that soon all this will be clear.

Godfrey is taking over from me as leader of the UK delegation to CERN although I hope to attend in the summer to say goodbye. I have felt for sometime that there was nothing left for me to do at CERN, but I have been sentimental and anyway I like staying with the Adams!

At last we are seriously making plans for the Northern Hemisphere Observatories although there are difficulties about this too: in astronomy difficult individuals are easy to find it seems! Moreover, the ideal site would be La Palma, off Tenerife, but the Spanish Government won't let us have it because of Gibraltar!

Harry Atkinson is doing fine as the Head of the Astronomy Space and Radio Division. You told me long ago that he would go far, and you were right. When he has learned to talk less until he has thought more he will be first rate.

I'm sure you have been told what a splendid job Henry Walker did negotiating with the French and Germans to get us into the Grenoble Reactor so that we can use their neutron beams. We have been de facto full members since 1 January and the formal legalities will be completed before long. Again it was thanks to you that we involved Leo Hobbs in all this, and he is being a tower of strength.



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You must also know about the way we have reorganised the senior staff in London. We have interchanged the money-spenders with the money-pinchers, but people sometimes forget so that Henry sometimes behaves as if he were Jim Hosie and Jim still imagines he was an astronomer. Did you know we are hoping to move the London Office to Swindon? Jim is in charge and is busying himself around all the local building sites and meeting town officials. I think we are doing the right thing, but since I don't have to go myself my judgment may be impaired.

As for me, I'm just trying to fend off any large-scale crises until my successor is in charge. I'm looking forward to my new job, but not enjoying the idea of giving up SRC which, mostly thanks to my colleagues, has been such a lot of fun.

I'm told you continue to improve all the time. I hope to see you myself before long. In the meantime, every good wish to you and Lal for 1973 and my very affectionate regards.

Yours ever  
Brian

