

16th July, 1962.

NI/62/7

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH IN NUCLEAR SCIENCE

GOVERNING BOARD

LETTER FROM THE MINISTER FOR SCIENCE CONCERNING

THE ELECTRON LABORATORY

Note by the Secretary

1. The letter from the Minister for Science, dated 13th July, 1962 is copied below:

OFFICE OF THE MINISTER FOR SCIENCE,
2, Richmond Terrace,
Whitehall, London, S.W.1.

13th July, 1962.

My dear Bridges,

I am glad to be able, at last, to give authority to go-ahead with the NIRNS Electron Laboratory, subject to the conditions set out below.

On the basis of the Cockcroft report, I have agreed with the Chief Secretary that we will do our best to limit the rate of growth in CERN to 12% in 1963/64, and to 10% in each of the two following years, and that a rate of growth of 2% per annum from the present level will be applied over the next five years to our support through NIRNS and DSIR grants for currently approved schemes for research in nuclear physics. Expenditure on Atlas is not included for this purpose. I have decided that the limit of not more than 2% per annum shall apply separately to NIRNS and to DSIR grants in this field. My agreement to this is on the understanding that these limits are on the basis of current prices, that it will be permissible to seek additional funds if there is a major new scientific development not foreseen when the programme was planned, and that we leave open the question whether we will be able to afford the new projects for which a sum of £800,000 is allowed in the NIRNS forecast for 1967/68.

The way is therefore clear for NIRNS to go ahead with the Electron Laboratory, provided this is done within the limits of the 2% per annum rate of growth. I understand that this should allow to NIRNS sums within the margin of estimating error of the revised estimates you have already accepted, except for 1967/68, and that the excess over a 2% increase in that year is entirely on account of projects not currently approved.

Yours:

(signed by Lord Hailsham)

The Rt. Hon. Lord Bridges, G.C.B., G.C.V.O., M.C.,
Goodmans Furze,
Headley,
Epsom.

(End of letter)

2. I have been informed by the Minister for Science's office that they summarise the situation as follows (£M):-

	1962/3	1963/4	1964/5	1965/6	1966/7	1967/8
(a) NIRNS 5-year forecast excluding Atlas	6.5	6.67	6.83	6.89	7.23	7.83
(b) 2% increase on 1962/3	6.50	6.63	6.76	6.89	7.03	7.17

3. I have the following comments:-

- (a) The figures in 2(a) are consistent with those in our 5-year forecast NI/62/2.
- (b) The provision for support of university work in reactors should in principle be excluded from the calculations, as not being nuclear physics. This has not been done. The amount in 2(a) is not great (£0.08M p.a.) but an increase might be needed.
- (c) The £800,000 for new projects in 1967/8, mentioned in the Minister's letter corresponds approximately in amount to the following items in our forecast:-
 - (i) Accelerator development
 - (ii) Nimrod improvement
 - (iii) Future major accelerator
 - (iv) High flux research reactor
- (d) (Post script) Since the above was written the correctness of starting the figures in paragraph 2 at 6.5 million in 1962/3 has been questioned. 6.5 is the figure in our 5-year forecasts, but our actual grant for 1962/3 includes an additional "shadow cut" of 0.4 million. The division of this between nuclear physics and Atlas was not stated, but it can be argued that our "present level" on nuclear physics is not £6.5M but £6.3M. This point therefore requires to be cleared. I would only say that £6.5M was the figure used in the Cockcroft Committee's work on which the argument is based.

Rutherford High Energy Laboratory,
Harwell,
Didcot, Berks.