GUY VANDERHAEGHE

Head of Training and Education Section
Chairman of CERN Staff Association

The evolution of CERN has brought about many changes, among which have been the adoption by the Organization of a degree of formal teaching responsibility and the rise of a fully representative staff association. Supervising both these aspects of present-day CERN life is Guy Vanderhaeghe.

Born in Belgium, near Brussels, in 1922, he entered the University of Brussels in 1939 to study physics. After his country was overrun during the war the University was eventually closed, and from then on studies were continued 'privately' by a few groups of students, with the secret help of professors and assistants.

Early in 1945 he passed his final examinations, in the reopened University, and was then appointed 'assistant' in the faculty of applied science. A year later he obtained a Fellowship from the 'Fonds National de la Recherche Scientifique', and in 1947 he transferred to the newly founded 'Centre de Physique Nucléaire' in the University.

There he worked under Prof. Max Cosyns and Prof. G. P. S. Occhialini on elementary-particle physics, using the newly developed emulsion technique. This involved him in many international collaborations with groups doing similar work, and gave him opportunities to travel widely in Europe. He obtained his Doctorate in 1952. Afterwards, he was appointed 'chercheur agrégé' of the 'Institut Interuniversitaire des Sciences Nucléaires' of Belgium.

Apart from research, he did some teaching, and was interested in more general educational problems outside the University. He also helped to found a Trade Union branch in the University.

In October 1958 he came to CERN as a research associate, for one year, and left emulsions to join a group carrying out one of the earliest precision experiments at the synchro-cyclotron using electronic-counter systems. When the proton synchrotron began operation just over a year later he was invited by the CERN emulsion group to stay on and take part in the first beam surveys and other experiments. In 1961 he was appointed a staff member. While still at Brussels he had devoted considerable attention to the problems involved in processing nuclear emulsions, and at CERN he took charge of all processing for both the CERN group and visiting teams. He also acted as 'linkman' on several experiments.

When, in the middle of 1962, moves were made to broaden the scope of the lectures and other instruction given to CERN staff, Guy Vanderhaeghe was asked if he would take responsibility for organizing the first technical training courses foreseen for October 1962. His appointment as head of the newly established Training and Education section followed in May 1963. His intention is to carry over the experimental approach to his new job, investigating new methods of teaching and other aids so as to be able to satisfy the rather special needs of the CERN 'students' in the best possible way.

Revising his interest in 'trade union' matters, Guy Vanderhaeghe found himself on the committee of the CERN Staff Association in 1962, and early in June 1963 was elected this year's chairman.

The committee over which he presides consists of 24 other members, and a number of sub-committees look after the different areas of interest of the Association. Although of long standing, the Staff Association in the earlier days of CERN was more in the nature of a social club and it was mainly through the enthusiasm and drive of Mike Pentt, chairman from 1960-1962, that it developed also into a body fully capable of representing the staff on all matters affecting them. At the present time both aspects, 'trade union' and 'social', are widely represented in the Association's work. Its committee keeps under continuous study the questions of salaries and staff rules, working conditions, and welfare, and also looks after 'social and cultural activities'. Last winter a series of evening 'lectures on subjects of general interest' was launched, with great success, and arts and crafts exhibitions are organized from time to time.

The Association's language courses (English, French, Russian, German, Italian and Spanish) are very popular, with a total attendance at the classes last year of about 600. Among the various sports and social clubs (which come under the auspices of the Association but are more or less autonomous), the car club has the largest membership, but it is probably the music club which is best known in Geneva, as a result of its highly appreciated chamber-music concerts in the auditorium, now in their fourth season. The photographic club is also well supported. English and French book clubs cater for more leisurely moments, while the ski, riding, football, table-tennis, basketball, and rifle clubs provide more active recreation for their many members.

It is perhaps characteristic of CERN that relations between the Staff Association and the Administration (in a general sense) are cordial and close, and the views of the Association are sought on all important matters concerning the staff.

The Association also acts in a less formal way. For example, after the earthquake at Skopje this year, it was largely instrumental in raising nearly 13,500 Swiss francs for the Red Cross relief fund, as well as arranging for a Red Cross team to collect blood from donors. More topically, the Christmas children's party, arranged annually in collaboration with the Administration, provides an afternoon's entertainment not only for the children of the CERN staff but also for a roughly equal number of local school-children. In fact this is not the only occasion for the Association to develop contacts with the local Swiss and French communities.

Many things can stand in the way of fostering a strong feeling of 'belonging' in the kind of large organization that CERN is now becoming, but an active Staff Association and the opportunity to gather informally for lectures and colloquia both help to keep the initial team spirit alive. It is well that someone who came to CERN 'because it was the best place to go to in Europe' should this year be responsible for both •