

**GENERAL AGREEMENT ON
TARIFFS AND TRADE**RESTRICTED

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CONTRACTING PARTIES
Sixteenth SessionACCOMMODATION FOR THE SECRETARIATNote by the Executive Secretary

1. The Sub-Group on the accommodation of the secretariat appointed by the CONTRACTING PARTIES at their plenary session on 31 May 1960 and consisting of representatives of Belgium, Canada, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Ghana, Sweden, United Kingdom and United States, met on 1 June 1960 under the chairmanship of the Executive Secretary to examine the secretariat's needs for additional office accommodation.
2. The meeting was attended by Mr. G. Falthey, Deputy Director of the European Office of the United Nations.
3. The Executive Secretary briefly reviewed the problem as outlined in his note of 21 May 1960 (see Annex) and explained that, since it now looked as if in a few years' time when the secretariat would have reached a total strength of 110 staff members the margin allowed by the transformations of the Villa le Bocage as mentioned in his note of 21 May would have dwindled to five, he had reluctantly come to the conclusion that further construction would most probably be inevitable before long. It was therefore against this background that the problem and its financial implications should be examined both as regards the long-term and short-term aspects.
4. The Deputy Director of the European Office explained that in about three years' time when the new WHO building would be ready, approximately 250 rooms would be vacated in the Palais des Nations. 150 of these have already been definitely ear-marked. Of the remaining 100 rooms, some might possibly be allocated to the GATT secretariat if, by that time, it would still be in need of additional accommodation. However, no commitment could be made on that point before another eighteen months.
5. The Deputy Director of the European Office further explained that for a variety of reasons the United Nations would be unable to agree, at this stage, to new permanent construction by GATT in the park surrounding the Villa le Bocage on the east and south sides.

6. As regards the transformations of the chapel and the attic, the Deputy Director of the European Office expressed some reluctance, particularly in the light of the fact that these transformations would not appear to solve the total problem on a long-term basis. He expressed the view that this solution should perhaps be further considered at a later stage when the future expansion, if any, of the secretariat beyond what is at present foreseen, could be more accurately gauged.

7. The possibility of the erection of temporary barracks on the grounds of le Bocage near the exit (north side) was then discussed. This temporary solution, whilst by no means ideal, might from the financial standpoint be more advantageous than the permanent transformations of the chapel and the Villa itself. It would also leave the CONTRACTING PARTIES uncommitted as regards a more permanent solution pending further developments in the Palais des Nations and the building construction presently planned around the Place des Nations. The matter could then be further reviewed at a later date when some of the present uncertainties were resolved.

8. The Sub-Group came to the unanimous conclusion that this temporary expedient should be examined with the United Nations and other parties concerned.

9. The Executive Secretary therefore recommends that the CONTRACTING PARTIES authorize him to examine the possibility of erecting temporary barracks on the grounds of le Bocage together with the financial and other implications and to report back to the Council at an early date.

Point for decision: paragraph 9

ANNEX

ACCOMMODATION FOR THE SECRETARIAT

Note by the Executive Secretary to the Heads of Delegations

1. The CONTRACTING PARTIES will recall that, at the thirteenth session, the Executive Secretary informed the Working Party on the Budget that "whilst, in his view, the existing accommodation at le Bocage would still suffice in 1959, any further increase of the staff would make the provision of additional accommodation essential".
2. The Working Party noted the view expressed by the Executive Secretary that the accommodation problem may become acute before long and that proper arrangements should be made in good time and suggested that the Executive Secretary be invited to submit to the CONTRACTING PARTIES in good time such proposals as he considers necessary together with their financial implications so as to enable governments to give them appropriate consideration (document L/922 of 20 November 1958).
3. Since then, the CONTRACTING PARTIES authorized the Executive Secretary at their fourteenth session to put into effect the original Plan C submitted to the CONTRACTING PARTIES in 1956 and providing for four additional offices in the basement of the Villa le Bocage. The Executive Secretary was authorized to charge the total cost of this transformation to the Building Fund, at the time showing a balance of approximately \$5,000 which has now been exhausted.
4. With this small addition it has been possible during 1960 to house the existing permanent staff (71) and a number of temporary staff. Eight fellows have also been accommodated at le Bocage.
5. However, some over-crowding already exists and any further increases in the establishment, even the smallest, would make it necessary to find additional accommodation.
6. The budget proposals for 1961 will suggest a significant increase in the personnel establishment, probably of some twenty posts, making a total of approximately ninety posts. This tentative figure is based on the anticipated workload in 1961 and on the number of temporary staff it has been necessary to engage so far during 1960 to cope with the current workload. This figure would have to be revised to take into account any changes in the personnel establishment resulting from decisions the CONTRACTING PARTIES may take concerning the re-organization of the secretariat.
7. It follows from the above that additional accommodation must be available by 1 January 1961 and action to acquire it in one form or another must be taken without delay.
8. In this connexion, the Executive Secretary has been examining with the United Nations the possibility of further transformations of the Villa le Bocage and the annex opposite the main entrance. Provisional plans for such transformations have been prepared and costed. They show the following:

- (a) Transformation of the attic would provide nineteen additional one-unit offices at a total cost of approximately Sw.frs.253,000.
- (b) Transformation of the annex (the original Plan A submitted to the CONTRACTING PARTIES in 1956) would provide another thirteen offices at a total cost of approximately Sw.frs.154,550.
- (c) The creation of additional parking space would amount to approximately Sw.frs.12,000.

9. These transformations together would make it possible to house a total of approximately 115 staff members at le Bocage (the number would vary a little depending on the use made of the larger rooms).

10. It will be noted that even with the transformations mentioned in paragraph 8 above, only a relatively small margin for further expansion would be provided. If future expansion were to go beyond this, additional accommodation would have to be found elsewhere since no further possibility would then exist at le Bocage.

11. Therefore, in examining these possibilities, the first question to be considered is that of the total personnel strength in years to come. The investment by the CONTRACTING PARTIES of further funds in transforming the existing premises could be considered justified only if the total establishment is expected to remain within the total figure mentioned (115).

12. Unless this ceiling figure is accepted, covering a period of some ten years, the proposal could not be considered financially sound.

13. In this connexion, contracting parties will also wish to bear in mind the amount of roughly \$60,000 which they have already invested in constructing the new wing to le Bocage.

14. It should be noted that the United Nations' approval for further transformations would be dependent on the secretariat giving a reasonable guarantee that it would continue to occupy le Bocage for another period of at least ten years and preferably longer, the United Nations being of the opinion that further transformations of le Bocage would limit rather than increase the possibility of finding another suitable tenant.

15. Other possibilities are:

- (a) construction of a new building either independently or as an annex to the Palais des Nations;
- (b) renting or buying of other premises elsewhere sufficiently large to accommodate the entire secretariat, including further additions.

These possibilities have not so far been explored nor have their financial implications been examined.