

1995 CDC Heads to New Orleans

CSM: What have you got planned for the 1995 Conference on Decision and Control?

Antsaklis: The 1995 IEEE Conference on Decision and Control (CDC), which is the 34th CDC, will be held December 13-15, 1995, at the New Orleans Hilton Riverside and Towers, in New Orleans, Louisiana. As is customary, tutorial workshops will be held Monday, December 11, and Tuesday, December 12, preceding the conference. As you know, the IEEE CDC is the annual meeting of the IEEE Control Systems Society, conducted in cooperation with the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM) and the Operations Research Society of America (ORSA).

CSM: How was New Orleans selected as the site?

Antsaklis: The General Chair of the CDC selects the site and the hotel following some general geographical guidelines suggested by the Executive Committee of the CSS. The city and the hotel selections must receive approval from the CSS Board of Governors. I decided on New Orleans because I thought it would be a great place to have a conference. In fact, in the survey we ran last December, New Orleans was the favorite among future CDC sites; it seems that many agree with this assessment. New Orleans has a number of hotels that not only can accommodate the CDC, but are within walking distance of the French Quarter.

CSM: Tell us a little bit about the city and the conference hotel.

Antsaklis: The conference hotel is the New Orleans Hilton Riverside and Towers, located on the Mississippi River immediately west of Canal Street. The conference rate is \$110 per night, single or double. A short walk through a landscaped riverwalk brings one to the French Quarter, scene of New Orleans nightlife and musical history. One also may choose to ride the electric tram that stops just outside the hotel or, if the river calls to you, large

Mississippi riverboats begin their journeys just outside the hotel. Also, a very



Panos Antsaklis, General Chairman for the 34th CDC.

attractive shop-filled mall is connected to the hotel. This setting has plenty of space for technical sessions, a number of good restaurants, and so many things to do that nobody will be bored, including the kids. The French Quarter, of course, is the place to visit and revisit with its jazz music, creole cuisine and street musicians. For those who put good food and entertainment high on their agenda, New Orleans is the place.

CSM: With the infamous French Quarter nightlife, do you have any special social events planned?

Antsaklis: We definitely cannot compete with the excitement of the French Quarter! We will have our banquet, of course, but no special events are planned. The conference hotel has people who can give information and help plan and make reservations for the many interesting things to do in New Orleans and in the surrounding area.

CSM: What do you expect for the technical program?

Antsaklis: A strong technical program has always been the trademark of the CDC, and we plan to continue this tradition. Edward Kamen, of the Georgia Institute of Technology, is the Program Chair and will make sure the quality of papers presented will be as high as ever. Our control field is changing since the problems we are called upon to solve require methodologies that are more interdisciplinary than ever before. Conferences should be and are sensitive to changing needs, and the papers submitted and accepted to the CDC will reflect the current control research interests. We will encourage high-quality papers in new areas via the invited sessions. The tutorial workshops will also emphasize new methodologies that address existing and novel problems.

CSM: On a related subject, what will you do in 1995 as Vice President for Conference Activities?

Antsaklis: We are working on formalizing the organizational structure for the Conference Editorial Board. In fact, we recently had an article in *Control Systems Magazine* about CEB. CEB is chaired by the Editor for Conference Papers, and it is responsible for the review of the regular length papers submitted to the CDC and to the ACC (via the IEEE). The short and invited papers for these conferences and all the papers of our other conferences are handled by the program committees. It is important to have a strong CEB in place to have high-quality and timely reviews of papers in years to come. This is my highest priority because, as I said before, the strength of the technical program of the CDC will guarantee that our main conference will continue to be the most prestigious conference in the control area.

Our conferences are run by volunteers who work long hours many times behind the scenes to make sure that everything, from the reviews of the papers to registra-

tion to the breakfasts for authors, runs smoothly. Most often, the only satisfaction these volunteers receive is from knowing theirs was a job well done. It requires a lot of hard work and, as the VP for Conference Activities, I am working on lifting their burden a little by streamlining the operations, using appropriate software, establishing memory into the system so the hard acquired know-how is passed down smoothly. In that, my experience as the Program Chair for the 1991 CDC in England and as the General Chair for the 1993 International Symposium for Intelligent Control in Chicago have been really useful.

The society also runs other smaller conferences. They are the CCA, in Scotland this year, the ISIC in Columbus, and the CASCAD this year in Tucson. Currently, we are looking into ways to schedule future conferences to better serve society members. CSS also is the technical co-sponsor of additional conferences all around the world, from the U.S. to Singapore, Greece, Italy and the Czech Republic. We are a global organization, which is exciting but also brings additional responsibilities. I plan to continue encouraging CSS-sponsored high-quality technical conferences in different regions of the

world since this is a perfect way to serve members outside the U.S. and to disseminate our technical knowledge.

CSM: What lies ahead for future CDCs?

Antsaklis: We are currently looking into ways to introduce improvements in the way we run the CDC. I do not expect, however, any drastic changes to be incorporated in the near future. As you may know, the CDC is going to Japan in 1996, and we are all very excited about it. The 1997 CDC will probably be on the West Coast of the U.S., possibly in San Diego.

CSM: Any closing messages?

Antsaklis: Yes, I have two. First, I cannot overstate the importance of the work our volunteers do in running the CSS conferences and, in fact, the society. I can safely say that without them the CDC and all other CSS conferences would be very different indeed. It is impossible to pay for and substitute the personal interest and touch of a volunteer in the ways we review papers, negotiate for hotel room rates, or make sure sessions are run smoothly. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the 1995 CDC organizing committee who are helping put it

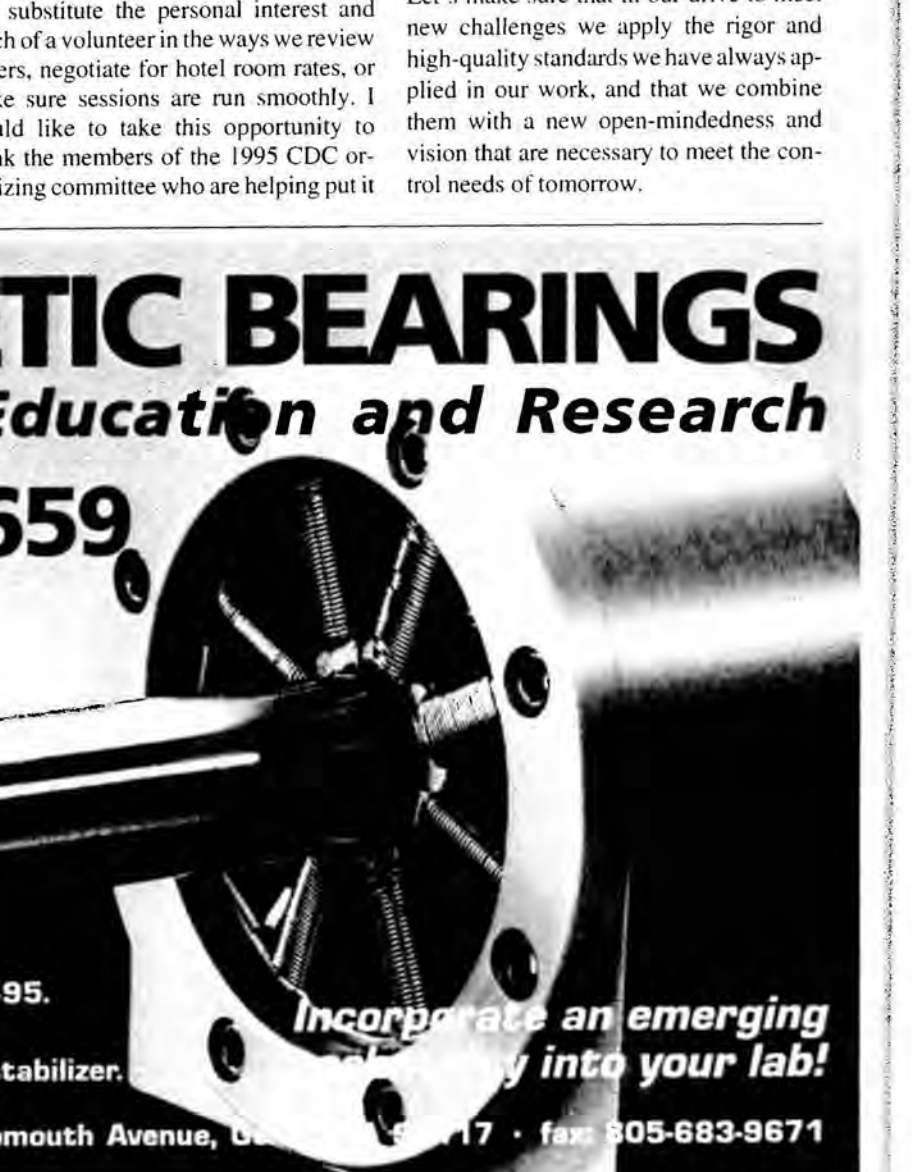
all together. They are Edward W. Kamen, Program Chair; Jay A. Farrell, Finance Chair; Frank L. Lewis, Publicity Chair; Cheryl Bunnett Schrader, Registration Chair; T.E. Djaferis, Publications Chair; George D. Ianculescu, Workshops Chair; Enrique Barbieri, Exhibits Chair; and Kimon P. Valavanis, Local Arrangements Chair.

Second, I would like to say these are exciting times in control. With my involvement in the CSS conferences and symposia, I am witnessing firsthand the excitement, especially of young people who look at the future and see great opportunities coupled with new challenges in both theory and control practice. I believe we are in a period which may well turn out to be more exciting and fruitful, with strong interdisciplinary research addressing complex problems, than the '60s, when many of our foundations were set. Let's make sure that in our drive to meet new challenges we apply the rigor and high-quality standards we have always applied in our work, and that we combine them with a new open-mindedness and vision that are necessary to meet the control needs of tomorrow.

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