

## How the CDC was born

After the unification of the IRE (Institute of Radio Engineers) and the AIEE (American Institute of Electrical Engineers) to form the IEEE, the only control conference was the JACC (Joint Automatic Control Conference). The JACC was organized and controlled by several societies with interest in control, namely the IEEE, ISA, ASME, AICHE and, perhaps, a couple more. Each society would organize the summer JACC, select the location etc.

Typically, for several years the conference was held at universities in the summertime, after classes and exams were over. The attendees would sleep in student dorms, often two in a room without private toilets and showers, and the presentations were held in classrooms. The paper review quality was highly variable and it was not unusual to see a lot of junk papers in the proceedings. Moreover, there were a multitude of political intersociety disagreements.

As you may imagine in the 1960s there was no air conditioning in most universities and, quite often, the attendees would complain about the hot days and nights.

In the late 1960s the president of the IEEE Control Systems Society (CSS) was the (late) Prof. John Zaborszky and I was the CSS Vice President. I do not remember exactly when the discussion took place, but (being snow birds) we arrived at the conclusion that

1. The CSS was large enough to hold its own conference, CDC, and keep the excess funds from the registration fees
2. That the CDC should always be held in the second week of December in WARM locations and that the sessions be held in a high class HOTEL, where most of the attendees would stay, although there should be cheaper hotels nearby
3. That the paper review would be exclusively done by the CSS to insure high quality papers

The name *Conference on Decision and Control* was chosen because we believed that modern control theory (still in its infancy) would eventually have widespread applications in nontraditional control applications and we wanted to encourage researchers from different disciplines to attend and submit papers to the CDC. Clearly, history shows that John and I were correct in this respect.

The CDC is, and will continue to be, the best conference in our field.

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