Well folks, we're nearing the final design cutoff time! We want
to congratulate the many project coordinators and designers out
there who have managed to keep up with the demanding
schedules and deadlines of MPC79. So far we have about 70
designs likely to make it into MPC79.

The available space is fully allocated. A number of projects
previously in ACK status with Space Allocation have since
increased in size. These will lose their firm Space Allocation,
but will remain on the Project Pending Queue, awaiting
allocation (most of these will likely make it). We can't be sure
how it will finally turn out, since a lot depends on the packing
density effectiveness of our planning software, as run on this
specific set of projects.

Since there are a number of projects awaiting allocation, it
would be a great help if project lab coordinators would notify us
ASAP if there are any projects in ACK status that they know will
not be finished in time. Such projects should be DELETEd so
that others will have a chance to be included. Even if there are
no other designs pending from your school, such DELETions may
make space available to someone from another school.

We will attempt to group projects together by school onto the
different die types. This will make the later distribution of
chips, and the distribution of chip-photos, etc., more efficient.
One thing for instructors and lab coordinators to consider: If a
bunch of your projects are in a visibly unfinished state, they
will greatly detract from the effectiveness of your school's
chip-photos, etc. We are not looking at plots of all projects to
see if they appear completely finished. We guarantee only that
the design files will successfully pass through our processing
software. (Even if we could plot all the projects, which we can't
due to the plotting time involved, there would be difficult
questions of interpretation). So, we ask you coordinators to
please pass a final filter over your school's designs (perhaps ask
to look at a plot of any designs that are late in nearing
completion), and Request a DELETE of any that are unfinished.

[A suggestion: It would be a good idea for coordinators to get a
list of the names, addresses, and phone numbers of the
participating designers, so that you can contact them (probably
in early January) when the chips are ready. We will prepare
various reports, make up some chips photos, etc., which you or
we could also distribute to the participants, if we have all the
names and addresses.]

Remember, the deadline is Tuesday, 4 December, at 5:00pm PST.
At that time we will stop processing Requests, and will run the
Planning, Packing, Merging, and MEBES Conversion software
against the collection of projects in ACK status, pulling in as
many projects pending allocation as possible.

We would appreciate it if at least one coordinator or instructor
from each school would remain available for last-minute questions
or decisions. We will be doing quite a bit of plotting once we
have merged groups of projects into starting frames. We might,
for example, spot what appears to be a fatal flaw in a design at

that point. If we can reach you for information, you can help us make a decision on whether to dump the project or not.

Since these interactions will be few, but must be quite interactive, we suggest that you message us the name and phone number of the coordinator or instructor for your school who could be reached by phone between the hours of 5:00pm and 8:00pm PST (8:00pm and 11:00pm EST) tomorrow. By 8:00pm PST all the hard decisions will have been made.

We will send out a message later this week, summarizing the final status of the MPC79 merging, indicating which designs actually made it into the chip set, etc.

Lynn Conway, Alan Bell, Martin Newell