CTSS BULLETIN #96

SUBJECT: New Version of the RUNCOM Command

1.   A new version of RUNCOM is presently available, and may be
      used as a private command, through the following procedure:

          COPY P RUNCOM SAVED

          RESUME RUNCOM ... arguments

2.   The restrictions of the preliminary version of RUNCOM have been
      eliminated, so that the new command conforms to the specifications
      stated in the CC Memo No. 238. Namely:

          - The $ feature is available.

          - The (NIL) argument is available.

          - Core image saving and common file switching are
            handled automatically by RUNCOM, and the user
            may request the execution of any sequence of
            commands. Some restrictions remain, however,
            and are listed below.

3.   The following additions, not described in CC Memo 238, are
      also available:

          - (END) argument.

            When the value of an argument, after substitution, is
            '(END)' it is replaced by a fence of all 7's. Any
            additional arguments will be ignored by commands in
            which this substitution is performed. If (END) is
            substituted as a command name, the chain is
            terminated at this point, just as though an end
            of file had been reached.

          - RUNCOM may yield a core image, which can be used by
            the next command, if this is relevant. For example, the
            the sequence:

                    RUNCOM   ALFA

                    START

            will work properly if the last command executed in
            ALFA is a LOAD command.

4.   Restrictions

        - RUNCOM or RUSUM command may switch to various file
          directories by the use of CONFIL. However, they
          must restore the initial switching before being
          terminated.

        - Temporary files do not stay in common files when the
          switching is restored to the user's files.
          Consequently, when a chain of commands runs through
          common files, temporary files will be lost whenever
          RUNCOM switches back to the user's directory to set
          up another sub-chain in the supervisor buffers.
          However, they may be used over a maximum of 5 commands
          if one makes sure that these commands are all
          contained in a single sub-chain. An easy way to
          ensure such a condition is the $ feature. Indeed,
          the first command following a $ headed line starts
          a new sub-chain.

5.   This version of RUNCOM will replace the previous command
      as soon as it is considered reasonably checked out by
      users.

6.   Further additions are planned in a later step, namely
      branching and repetition facilities. Proposals for
      this implementation will be published later on.