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**INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
FOR MASS COMMUNICATION RESEARCH**

**ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE
DES ÉTUDES ET RECHERCHES SUR L'INFORMATION**

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July 1981

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

First, let me apologise for not writing earlier. The explanation is a simple but unfortunate one. I had initially intended to keep to the pattern established over the years and send out a Presidential Letter some time in the Spring. This year I had expected that by April/May I would have been in a position to give full information about the date and location of our 1982 General Assembly and Conference. We know that members like to have these details as early as possible so that they can make the necessary preparations, apply for funds, plan vacations, and so on.

The Programme Committee for the 1982 Conference (F. Balle, A. Edelstein, F. Fleck, J. Halloran, C. Hamelink, F. Hutin, H. Schmucler and A. Suffert) met in Paris in January and made excellent progress in preparing the content and structure of the programme, and we hope to be in a position to put the finishing touches to this at the time of the International Council meeting in Sigtuna, Sweden, in late August.

Unfortunately, at the time of the January meeting, the French members of the Programme Committee, and their colleagues on the French Organising Committee, had not been able to make a decision about the time and place of the 1982 Conference. We left Paris hoping that a decision could be taken within a month or so, but these hopes were not fulfilled, and I regret to say that, even now, we still do not have the necessary information and recommendations on time and place from our French colleagues.

We are all sorry about this - we know the inconvenience it may cause - but we also understand and sympathise with the position of our French members who, because of the uncertainties associated with a presidential election period, have as yet been unable to make the necessary arrangements with regard to sponsorship, financial support, etc.

My latest information is that we should know quite soon and, of course, as soon as I hear I shall pass the details on to all members. But I thought, particularly in view of the holiday season and even taking into consideration the cost of extra mailing (the mailing of a four page letter to all members costs in the region of US \$800, and a typical Presidential Letter and enclosures approximately US \$4,000) that I could wait no longer before writing. So here goes.

Perhaps I should say that it is by no means certain that the Conference will be held in Paris - Strasbourg and Lyon are two of the other places that have been mentioned. Dates have been suggested in both July and August (we try to avoid September because of the clash with the start of the university year in some countries), but dates and venue are obviously interlinked and I must emphasise that, as yet, there is nothing definite.

At its Paris meeting the Programme Committee agreed that, within the framework of the Conference theme COMMUNICATION AND DEMOCRACY: DIRECTIONS IN RESEARCH, the following "slots" had to be filled in the main sessions on the first day:

From the Office of the President:
Professor James D. Halloran

Morning session - first part

1 Moderator (President of IAMCR) and 4 people who would speak to papers previously produced and circulated on what might loosely be referred to as the historical, theoretical, "purer" research aspects of the theme. One of these should be a French speaker, preferably from France.

Morning session - second part

Moderator to be proposed by French colleagues and again 4 people who would speak as above, this time on the more substantive aspects of the theme - application of research, relation to policy, and so on.

In the afternoon (which would be given to the discussion of the morning papers) there would be four groups, two dealing with the first part of the morning's work, and two dealing with the second part of the morning's work, in each case one English and one French speaking group. Therefore, it would be necessary to invite two discussants to contribute by setting the ball rolling, so to speak, to each of the four groups. Many names have already been proposed for all these "slots".

It was also agreed that in selecting contributors we should have in mind proven scholarly ability and that the emphasis should be on achievement in scholarship and research rather than on polemics.

I would welcome the reactions to the above from all members, but do please let me have them, here at Leicester, not later than 20th August, so that they may be discussed at Sigtuna.

Sections are responsible for arranging their own programmes at the General Conference, but I would like to hear from all Section heads, as soon as possible, with details of their proposals for the 1982 Conference. Those who would like to arrange workshops, discussion groups, round tables, etc., should also get in touch with me immediately so that the necessary arrangements may be made.

The Association continues to flourish in several ways and at different levels. The increase in membership is always welcome (particularly when accompanied by payment of dues!!), but it is also very pleasing to see sections, other ad hoc groups, and individuals taking initiatives and developing their own programmes and activities. I am informed by Breda Pavlic that, immediately after the Sigtuna meeting of the International Council, the International Communication Section will meet in what can only be termed unusual, if potentially very pleasant, circumstances. Following an introductory get-together, a session will be held on board ship between Stockholm and Helsinki, a second session in Helsinki, and a third on the return journey to Stockholm. This venture has been made possible by a grant from a Finnish foundation. It has been suggested that the meeting might be given the title International Communication at Sea but, as you will appreciate, this could be interpreted in more than one way.

Breda Pavlic would also like to hear from anyone in the Association and elsewhere who is interested in, or is currently carrying out, research under the general heading of International Communication. It would be much appreciated if a brief description of programmes, plans, etc., could be sent to Breda at:

Research Centre for Cooperation with Developing Countries
Titova 104, P.O.Box 97,
61113 Ljubljana, Yugoslavia.

She would also like to hear about any proposed meetings in this field with a view to possible cooperation and the avoidance of overlap and unnecessary duplication. In fact, on a wider plain covering the whole range of mass communication research, I too would welcome information about future meetings in our own and related fields.

Members may be interested to know, in connection with the dates of our 1982 Conference (see above) that the next meeting of the International Political Science Association will be held in Rio de Janeiro from 9th to 14th August 1982, and the next meeting of the International Sociological Association is in Mexico from 15th to 20th August 1982.

In the more immediate future the Association for Education in Journalism meets in East Lansing, Michigan, from 8th to 11th August, and the International Institute of Communications in Strasbourg from 7th to 10th Sept; the World Federation of United Nations Associations on the "New World Information and Communication Order" in Geneva from 12th to 17th October 1981; the International Organisation of Journalists in Moscow from 19th to 22nd October 1981; and a Congress on the New International Order of Information by FELATRAP (Latin American Confederation of Press Workers), in association with other bodies, in San Antonio de los Altos, Venezuela, from 26th to 31st October 1981.

Returning to the various initiatives, formal and informal, of our members and groups, those interested in joining a working group on Informatics should contact Dr Cees Hamelink, Institute for Social Studies, P.O. Box 90733, 2509 LS The Hague, Netherlands.

Dr George Schnitman, Centre for Latin American Studies at Stanford University, and colleagues, are interested in organising a round table on Transnational Flow of Cultural Products during the 1982 Conference, and are currently discussing this and related matters with the International Communication Section. All those interested should contact Dr Schnitman. Another possible workshop or group for the 1982 Conference might focus on a critical view of the conventional research approaches which have predominated in the Mass Media Child Socialisation field. Those interested should contact Dr Olga Linne at Danmarks Radio, who is head of our Social Psychology Section, or Professor Ellen Wartella and/or Professor Byron Reeves at the Institute of Communications Research at the University of Illinois.

I have also recently heard from Dr Janet Wasko (School of Communications and Theater at Temple University, Philadelphia) of the formation in the USA of the Union for Democratic Communications. We are currently exploring the possibility of developing some form of affiliation or cooperative relationship between the Union (most of whose members are already members of IAMCR) and the International Association for Mass Communication Research. Janet would be pleased to hear from anyone interested, as would Dr John Murray, Boys Town Center, Boys Town, Nebraska 68010 from those members, in any part of the world, who are interested in his bibliographical work on Television and Children. Another of our members, Dr Benno Signitzer, ADMAC, Sigmund-Haffner-Gasse 18/111, A-5020 Salzburg, Austria, informs me of the establishment of an Austrian Documentation Centre for Media and Communication Research, and I am glad to hear regularly from our members in NORDICOM, CIESPAL, AMIC and Cracow about their work in this same area.

I am also pleased to note renewed interest in our work from Spain, particularly from Dr Manuel Pares I Maicas and his colleagues from Barcelona, who eagerly look forward to participation in the 1982 Conference.

I have heard from Fernando Reyes Matta and Rafael Roncagliolo at the Instituto Latinoamericano de Estudios Transnacionales, México, and they have informed me that they are considering the possibility of a special ILET contribution to the Conference.

Several of our members are working on a UNESCO-sponsored project, coordinated by Dr Breda Pavlic, which focusses on a study of the interdependence between the NIEO and the NIICO. I am not yet in possession of full details, but colleagues in the Netherlands, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Mexico and Austria could be involved.

Mention of this UNESCO-sponsored study brings me to the important question of IAMCR/UNESCO relationships, with particular reference to our participation in the UNESCO communication programme at all levels, from planning to execution and dissemination.

You will remember from earlier letters that our several representations to UNESCO about future cooperation drew a positive response from Mr Makagiansar, Assistant Director-General, and his colleagues, and I received an assurance that the Association would be involved in the planning and execution of both the immediate and long-term programmes. Since I last wrote I have had several meetings in Paris to discuss details of the nature and form of our cooperation over the next few years, and I am pleased to be able to report that things are progressing reasonably satisfactorily.

The most important development was undoubtedly that we were asked to organise a Symposium on the implementation of UNESCO's communication programme for 1981/3. This was held in Paris, at UNESCO headquarters, on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 19/20/21 February.

I prepared a brief working paper before the meeting, following consultation with UNESCO. The agenda included such items as The Right to Communicate, International Flow of Information, The Follow-Up to the MacBride Report, Advertising, Relationship Between the New Economic Order and the New Information Order, Products of Communication Materials, The Media and Questions of International Significance, and so on.

Obviously I wanted the Association to be well represented at this consultation (other NGOs and Communication Institutions were also invited) and I wrote to the International Council with this in mind. Unfortunately, as usual, most members had to accept responsibility for their own travel, accommodation and subsistence expenses. We had a grant from UNESCO for the consultation, but it only enabled us to subsidise the travel of a few of our colleagues from the Third World. This, together with the short notice, meant that there was a "chance factor" influencing our representation, but I am very grateful indeed to all those who made the effort and contributed so effectively.

For your information, I enclose a paper which I prepared immediately after the Paris Symposium which, in general, I have used as a guideline in my recent dealings with UNESCO. Let me emphasise what I wrote in the paper at the time, namely that although I hope it provides an adequate picture of what took place, it should not be regarded as a final report, or as a definitive statement of our position. I have not yet received the official conference transcripts from the UNESCO rapporteur, but when I do I shall prepare another document for discussion in which I would also like to be able to include your own proposals, suggestions and comments. So please let me hear from you over the next few weeks.

Since the Symposium, and at a more concrete and specific level, I am pleased to report that we are likely to receive a contribution from UNESCO towards the cost of publishing a Monograph based on the Caracas Conference, and that there is a strong possibility that UNESCO will offer financial support in connection with a special workshop on the occasion of the 1982 Conference, that would focus on a theme which might have the working title Democratisation and the New Technology With Particular Reference to Developing Countries.

I also have the strong impression that the Social Implications of (a) New Technology and (b) Advertising are both issues in which research developments are likely to be encouraged, and again I would be grateful to have your comments and suggestions.

Undoubtedly the most important item for immediate attention on our "UNESCO Agenda" has to do with the two "actions" listed below, which may be seen as an indication of UNESCO priorities. These read:

Action I: Study of international structures and machinery for cooperation and exchange of news and programmes: interdependence of information flows

1. Begin, on a selective basis, summarizing and analyzing studies done on the international flow of information for the purpose of publication in loose-leaf form, to allow for constant up-dating. These summaries will be periodically disseminated to interested institutions and organizations. Studies done in developing countries which normally have inadequate channels for such dissemination will merit priority.

Action II: Identification and reduction of obstacles to freedom of information and to its flow

1. Begin, on a selective basis, collecting, summarising and analysing studies done on legal, administrative and economic obstacles to the free exchange of messages and programmes, for the purpose of publication in loose-leaf form. These summaries will be periodically disseminated to interested institutions and organizations. The studies will address themselves to problems at the national, regional and international levels.

It is considered possible that under Action I around 30 "files" of 10 pages each might be prepared, and under Action II about 15 files or papers of similar size.

There is nothing sacrosanct about the number, but IAMCR will be asked to attend to the specification of the "files" or selected papers (topics, issues to be covered, etc.); to recommend institutions/individuals who might prepare them, and to coordinate and integrate the various aspects of both "actions". This question will figure prominently on the Sigtuna agenda of the International Council in August, but I would like all members of the Association to have an opportunity to forward their comments and suggestions. Please write so that I may receive your letters in Leicester not later than 20th August 1981.

The Foreign Images study is now with the UNESCO Publication Section, and should be out by the end of the year. The Developmental News study is complete, and a draft report has been prepared by Annabelle Sreberny. This, too, should be published by UNESCO in due course. I also understand that the long awaited Community and Communication publication is also ready for distribution. All in all, a reasonable record, I think, but let's keep it up.

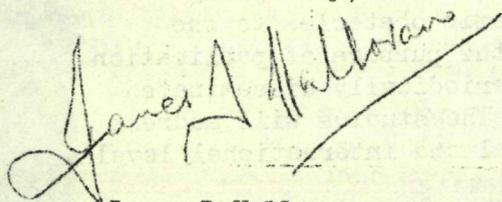
I have just referred to one very important item on the Sigtuna agenda, but there is another which really is of central importance to our Association. It is one which was very enthusiastically, at times heatedly, discussed at Caracas, when many members promised to write to me at length after discussions with colleagues, etc., but unfortunately it is one on which I have heard very little so far - three relatively brief statements, I believe - although Statutes were distributed to all members in order to facilitate their contributions. I refer to what appears in our records as the appropriateness of the structure, organisation and procedures of the Association. Put crudely, the problem is what was deemed appropriate over 20 years ago, and what may have served us well in the past, need no longer adequately serve an Association which has changed so much over the last decade. There are numerous issues, such as election procedures, functions of officers, membership categories, nature of assemblies, etc. etc. which we ought to discuss. But adequate discussion depends on the contributions from many more members than have so far written. Could I please ask for a speedy remedy?

I am sure members would be disappointed if I failed to close on the usual note with my appeal for the regular, annual payments of dues. There is still much room for improvement in this connection - so please do your best to preserve our solvency in these inflationary times.

Incidentally, should anyone be sufficiently optimistic about the future to contemplate paying for the next five, or even ten years, it would be a gesture guaranteed to receive a most positive welcome!

I hope to be writing to you again quite soon with firm details about the 1982 Conference. That mailing should also include lists of publications received, details of members' activities, etc., and information about the International Council.

Yours sincerely,



James D Halloran
President - IAMCR

P.S. I would be grateful if those members of the International Council who have not already done so would let me have, at the earliest possible opportunity, a brief (one page) Curriculum Vitae for distribution to all members, as agreed at the Caracas Assembly.