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**INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
FOR MASS COMMUNICATION RESEARCH**

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

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June 1977

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Since I last wrote to you the Programme Committee, which was elected at the General Assembly in Leicester in September to make the necessary arrangements for the 1978 Warsaw Conference, has had its first meeting in Cracow and I am pleased to be able to report that preparations are well under way for what I am sure will be another most successful international gathering.

The conference, which will be held in Warsaw from 4-9 September 1978, will have as its general theme Mass Media and Culture. Following the official opening on Monday, 4th September, there will be four main sessions: two each on Tuesday 5th September, and Wednesday 6th September. The Sections of IAMCR and a number of small groups and workshops will meet on Thursday 7th September (group meetings may also be arranged at other times), and on that day there will also be a programme arranged jointly by our Professional Training Section, the Association of Education in Journalism and the International Organisation of Journalists. There will be additional meetings as well as the meeting of the General Assembly of IAMCR on Friday, 8th September, and our Polish hosts are offering a very interesting social and travel programme for the final day, Saturday, 9th September.

All the main sessions and most of the small group meetings will be held in the Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw and participants will be accommodated in two nearby hotels. The working languages of the conference will be English, French, Russian and Polish, and there will be a simultaneous translation service. The conference fee, which will cover registration and conference documents (papers will be available before the conference), hotel accommodation, meals from Monday evening to Saturday lunch inclusive, and entrance to conference meetings and social events, will be US \$150 per person. There will be a reduction of \$20 (full fee (\$130) for all those who have paid their IAMCR membership subscription for 1977, and there will be a charge of \$100 (covering costs of accommodation, meals and social events, as well as a special social programme) for those accompanying conference participants, but who do not wish to attend working sessions.

Peggy Gray and I have been to Warsaw and can report with confidence that the arrangements for the 1978 conference are in the excellent hands of most enthusiastic and efficient colleagues, and that the facilities are first class. Please take note of the dates now (4-9 September, 1978). Everything augurs well for a most successful occasion.

So much for the basic arrangements. As you will appreciate it was necessary to finalize these as soon as possible so that the various reservations could be made in good time. Details of conference procedure, the themes for the various sessions, presentation of papers etc. will be discussed at the next meeting of the Programme Committee, which will be held in Amsterdam from 9-11 September 1977, and the Programme Committee would be very grateful if members could help them

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

to make these arrangements. We have benefited in the past from members' suggestions and recommendations in planning the organisation, structure and procedure of conferences, and now we ask for your help once more so that the final arrangements for the conference will genuinely reflect what our members really want.

Two different approaches have been discussed by the Programme Committee, and these are outlined below. I would appreciate it very much if you would write to me within the next few weeks (preferably before the end of August) and let me know which approach you prefer, or if you have any other suggestions or recommendations about the 1978 conference. We can then consider your suggestions at the next meeting of the Programme Committee in Amsterdam.

With regard to the general theme of the conference, you may be interested to read what Walery Pisarek, writing on behalf of the Polish Organising Committee (the proposers of the theme) has to say. Under the heading Mass Media and National Culture he writes:

"When we speak about national culture we mean the total of material and spiritual values created, accumulated, strengthened and developed by a given nation in the course of its history; the development of these values is conditioned by economic, social, political and technological circumstances. We should like to concentrate upon culture in a narrower sense, that is upon the forms of spiritual life of the societies, "spiritual culture" rather than the technology "civilization". From this viewpoint the national culture is defined and/or manifested by the level of development and diffusion of education, science, literature, arts, morality, customs etc.

By mass media we mean the communication channels through which the transmitted messages - usually collectively produced - can or actually do reach the potentially unlimited public. Our attention shall focus on press, radio, television and film, and especially on their content, regardless of whether it is formally regarded as educational, artistic, entertaining or advertising. Their social and class orientation should not be disregarded in discussing these matters.

However, it should be emphasized that the proper object of our interest is not "mass media in general" or "national culture in general", but the relationships between these two systems and especially the role of mass media in the diffusion, consolidation and development of cultural contents, values and models of behavior.

Mutual relationships between national culture and the mass media can be studied in different systems and from different points of view. We shouldn't like to overlook any of these. However, we consider the national culture a higher order value which is worthy of protection and support, and the mass media should promote its development and diffusion.

The IAMCR congress in Warsaw should deal with the problem Mass Media and National Culture in a most comprehensive manner within the wider social, political and economic context. Attention should be given to the development tendencies in changing reality, and practical conclusions and recommendations should be stated.

The following problems - in our opinion - should be covered first of all by the papers and discussions:

1. The selection of the cultural contents, values and models reflected in the messages which are nationally and internationally transmitted by the mass media.
2. The social, political, historical, economic etc. conditions and mechanisms of this selection.
3. The social, political etc. consequences, empirically ascertained or predicted, of this selection.

Additionally, one can hardly imagine a scientific conference without discussion on theoretical and methodological topics. It should not be missing at our congress either. The range of topics I would suggest here should cover the ideological principles/different systems of values accepted by different researchers, the evaluation of research strategies as well as a presentation of research techniques which render it possible to obtain objective, true, real and socially relevant results."

These words of Walery Pisarek obviously reflect what the Polish Organising Committee had in mind when proposing the theme for the conference. We would welcome your comments.

It is customary at conferences to deal with the main theme under different sub-headings at different sessions. At its meeting in Cracow the Programme Committee agreed that on the Tuesday and Wednesday there should be four plenary sessions, each with a separate sub-theme. They accepted that there were several ways in which these could be arranged. Two possibilities are outlined below, and we would be pleased to have your preference and other comments.

FIRST POSSIBILITY

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|-----------------|------|--|
| TUESDAY, A.M. | I. | MASS MEDIA AND CULTURE: IDEOLOGIES, THEORIES, METHODOLOGIES. |
| " | P.M. | II. MASS MEDIA AND NATIONAL CULTURE: STRUCTURE, CONTENT, VALUES AND IMPACT. |
| WEDNESDAY, A.M. | III. | CROSS-CULTURAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION: POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL FACTORS. |
| " | P.M. | IV. CROSS-CULTURAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION: CONTENT AND VALUES. |

SECOND POSSIBILITY

TUESDAY, A.M. I. MASS MEDIA AND CULTURE: IDEOLOGIES, THEORIES, METHODOLOGIES.

" P.M. II. MASS MEDIA AND NATIONAL CULTURE: POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL FACTORS.

WEDNESDAY, A.M. III. MASS MEDIA AND NATIONAL CULTURE: CONTENT, VALUES AND IMPACT.

" P.M. IV. CROSS-CULTURAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION: STRUCTURE, CONTENT, VALUES AND IMPACT.

We would like you to choose between these two and indicate your choice on the enclosed questionnaire. Clearly these do not exhaust the possibilities open to us, and we accept that there are many possible permutations. So do not be constrained by the above, and feel free to let us have any opinions on how the subject matter for each session could be arranged.

We would also welcome your ideas on conference procedure, method of invitation and presentation of papers, comments on papers, discussion from the floor, reporting back to plenary sessions, etc. etc. Again there are many possibilities open to us and all of you will have experienced different approaches at different conferences. We would be grateful if you could let us have the benefit of your experience and let us know which of the two procedures (or variations on them) which are outlined below you would prefer for the Warsaw conference.

The first procedure is similar to the one which was used at the Leicester conference. According to this the Programme Committee, with the help of members' comments and suggestions, should:

- a) specify clearly the nature and scope of the four main sessions;
- b) write to all members of IAMCR via the presidential letter asking for their suggestions re. speakers, topics, recent research reports, etc;
- c) approximately one year in advance of the conference invite, through the President, three or four main speakers for each of the four sessions, recommend on the nature of their contributions, and invite, say, two discussants for each session to open the discussion from the floor after the presentation of the main papers;
- d) nominate two chairpersons for each session, preferably not from the Programme Committee, but perhaps from the recently elected International Council. This would allow wider participation;
- e) request the invited speakers to send copies of their papers to the President not later than 1st April 1978. The President would send copies of these papers to other members of the Programme Committee, the Organising Committee and the selected chairpersons. Copies of these papers would be available to all participants before the start of the conference.

At the conference at each of the main sessions there would be:

- a) a very brief introduction by the chairperson;
- b) an introduction to their papers (10/15 minutes each) by the main speakers;
- c) 5/10 minutes each from the two invited discussants;
- d) open debate.

The main ideas behind the above are as follows:

- (i) The main sessions should be based on invited papers strictly limited in number, of high quality, from competent scholars invited by the Programme Committee having due regard to different disciplines, regions and approaches and the advice of members.
- (ii) There should be focussed discussion, efficient chairmanship, and maximum dialogue and participation from the floor.
- (iii) There should be greater emphasis on research results, on what has been done, why, how and to what effect, rather than on "declarations of faith" and unsubstantiated claims and assertions. After all we are an international community of research scholars.
- (iv) Formal and unproductive reporting back sessions to plenaries should be avoided.
- (v) Increased opportunities and facilities should be provided for small groups, workshops etc. some of them quite informal, and in cases arising spontaneously from conference contacts. This is regarded as the most appropriate way to ensure maximum effective participation. Any member would be free to organize an informal group. Papers could be presented to all of these groups, and where necessary official invitations could be sent to facilitate attendance. Incidentally, some IAMCR members would prefer the whole conference to be arranged along these lines, but this would be very difficult for the organizers.

The Second Procedure represents a different approach, and should it be adopted ~~by the~~ the Programme Committee would:

- a) decide on the themes of the main sessions approximately one year before the Warsaw conference;
- b) appoint two speakers for each of the four main sessions;
- c) appoint chairpersons for the main sessions, preferably from the Programme Committee;

- d) invite, through the President, all intending participants at the conference to submit papers addressed to one of the four themes. Each of these should be about 20 pages, and additionally there should be a summary in English or French, about one page long. One copy of the paper should be submitted to the Polish Organisational Committee, and one to the President of IAMCR, before the 31st March 1978. The President would then send copies of the papers to the appointed main speakers. Initially it was proposed that these main speakers would present a kind of synthesis of all the papers they had received, but after some discussion this was changed so that the main speakers, in addressing plenary sessions, would now be absolutely free to choose how they used the material from the submitted papers. They could include the opinions or results contained in the papers in their presentation, or they could omit them. However, they would be under the obligation to read all the papers they received.

Although the authors of the papers would not present them, the supporters of this approach feel that this procedure, whereby all members would be invited to submit papers, would facilitate the widest possible presentation of opinions and research results. Others are opposed to the idea that members who have responded to the invitation to submit papers might not have the material presented at the conference or might have it presented in an unsatisfactory manner. Moreover, controversy arising from this could mean that the time for open discussion from the floor would be much reduced. The main "speakers" would have a very difficult task. Again please let us have your preferences and comments.

I hope you can see from the above that the members of the Programme Committee are taking their task seriously and are doing their utmost to ensure the success of the conference. They would like you to help them by forwarding your preferences, comments and suggestions on the different approaches. I suppose this is an unusual request, for members of international organizations are normally presented with a conference programme on a 'take it or leave it' basis, but as you know IAMCR seeks to encourage increased participation from its members at all levels. We look forward to your co-operation. Help to plan your own conference.

As mentioned earlier one of the most interesting features of the Warsaw conference will be the joint meeting organized by the Professional Training Section of IAMCR, the International Communication Division of the A.E.J. and the I.O.J. The meeting, which will last a full day, will be held in honour of Professor Francesco Fattorello of Rome, Italy, and Professor Raymond B. Nixon of Minnesota, USA, both of whom played an extremely important part in the early development of the IAMCR.

Professors Yassen Zassoursky, Alexei Burmistenko, Richard Cole and Ramona Rush, who recently held a planning meeting in New York, have proposed that there should be two panel meetings - one in the morning and the other in the afternoon - and that these should be organized along the following lines:

1. "New Technology and Journalism"
2. "Precision Journalism: Practising Journalism and Social Research"

The sessions would take the form of panel discussions, and the panel members (six at each session) would be representative of the different media and the contributing organizations. It is proposed that there should be two working papers at each session, and that short presentations should also be made by the panel members. It is also likely that there will be a film and equipment demonstration, with emphasis on technological innovations. Further information about this joint session may be obtained from:

Professor Yassen N. Zassoursky
Dean of the Faculty of Journalism
University of Moscow
Prospect Marxa 20
Moscow K-9
U.S.S.R.

and

Professor Richard Cole
School of Journalism
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Howell Hall 021 A
Chapel Hill
N.C. 27514
U.S.A.

They would welcome your comments and suggestions.

The Social Science Section is also planning a full day's meeting on the Thursday. This will include presentation of papers and discussions, and those interested in contributing should get in touch as soon as possible with the President of the Section:

Professor Alex Edelstein
Director
School of Communications
University of Washington
Seattle
Washington 98195
U.S.A.

N.B. Please remember to let us have your comments by the end of August so that they can be discussed at the September meeting of the Programme Committee.

As you know IAMCR enjoys a close working relationship with UNESCO, and in our capacity as a non-governmental organization we have been asked to advise UNESCO on the planning and execution of its communication research programme over the next few years. A few of us will be meeting members of the UNESCO secretariat in Paris in the week beginning 18 July. Naturally at this meeting we would like to be in a position to reflect as broad and representative a range of opinion as possible, so once more I am asking for your comments and suggestions, this time about the proposed UNESCO programme. You might care to arrange your comments under the following headings which, together with the accompanying details, I have taken direct from a UNESCO document.

Main Objective No.1: Promotion of a free and balanced flow of information and of international exchanges.

Sub-objective: Research on and promotion of the international flow of information based on mutual respect for differing cultural values.

TARGET FOR 1982

A. DESIRED IMPACT

- (i) Greater understanding of the world situation concerning international information flows and formulation of strategies likely to achieve a more equitable two-way flow of information, particularly between developing and developed countries.
- (ii) Establishment of co-operative arrangements for news pooling, regional feature and photo services and further exchange of broadcasting programmes within and among the various regions of the world.
- (iii) Better understanding of the role and impact of transnational communication industries and development of principles relating to their activities.
- (iv) In co-operation with professional organizations, establishment of criteria for widespread international use of media.

B. SUB-PROGRAMME - Principal Stages:

A series of interlinked research projects relating to the free and balanced flow of information will be undertaken throughout the period and the results will be published and form the basis of meetings to consider appropriate action. Among these a regional meeting of news agency experts will be held each biennium, and assistance will be provided to implement its recommendations. Studies on the activities of transnational companies in the communication field will precede an expert meeting to elaborate guidelines on principles and practices. Continuing liaison will be maintained with regional and international professional organizations to facilitate and encourage co-operation and exchanges.

Main Objective No.2: Promotion of a better understanding and appreciation of the process and role of communication in society, and of high professional standards.

TARGET FOR 1982

A. DESIRED IMPACT

- * (i) Improved design of research projects on the role of communication in society, and fuller international co-operation in their implementation.
- (ii) Strengthening of research institutions in the developing countries and provision of adequately trained researchers.
- (iii) Establishment of arrangements for the world-wide interchange of research findings.
- (iv) Greater discrimination in and appreciation of the uses of media and information resources by the general public.
- (v) Improved professional standards of practice.

B. PROGRAMME - Principal Stages:

- (a) Research studies will be undertaken throughout the period, including both comparative studies and in-depth analyses in selected Member States: the results will then be discussed during international symposia.
- (b) Following the regional inter-governmental conferences on communication policies, regional expert meetings will be held to plan co-ordinated research projects.
- (c) Continuous co-operation will be maintained with professional organizations in the improvement of professional standards.

* IAMCR members ought to have a great deal to offer about the nature and design of research projects most likely to meet the demands of this programme.

Main Objective No.3: Promotion of policies, infrastructures and training in the field of communication, and encouragement of a better use of the media for social ends.

TARGET FOR 1982

A. DESIRED IMPACT

- (i) Increased awareness on the part of development planners and policy makers of the contribution of communication to economic and social development, and the formulation of communication policies and integrated plans for this purpose.
- (ii) Application of tested methodologies for communication planning and the development of training institutions and a corps of trained planners in this field.
- (iii) Establishment of modern communication systems and infrastructures and of national and regional communication training institutions.
- (iv) Adoption of new communication technologies and forms, especially at the local and community levels.
- (v) Improved access to media channels and materials and greater participation by the public in their production and management.

B. PROGRAMME - Principal Stages:

- (a) The policy programme will be geared to the inter-governmental conferences in Asia (1978), Africa (1979-1980), and a world conference in 1981-1982, with preparatory studies and expert meetings.
- (b) The development and testing of planning methodologies and facilities for training of planners will be undertaken progressively, both gaining from and contributing to programmes of assistance to Member States in planning integrated communication systems.
- (c) Assistance in the development of communication systems and the training of communication personnel will be provided throughout the period.
- (d) A series of pilot projects on the development of community media will be undertaken in Latin America (1977-1978), Asia (1979-1980) and Africa (1981-1982).

WITHIN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS I WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE FROM AS MANY MEMBERS AS POSSIBLE COMMENTS ON THE THREE MAIN OBJECTIVES, AND ABOVE ALL SUGGESTIONS ON THE RESEARCH STUDIES AND RELATED ACTION THAT OUGHT TO BE CARRIED OUT IF THESE OBJECTIVES ARE TO BE ACHIEVED. COMMENTS ON OTHER RESEARCH PROGRAMMES UNESCO MIGHT PROMOTE OR ENCOURAGE WOULD ALSO BE WELCOME. ADDITIONALLY, I WOULD BE VERY PLEASED TO HEAR OF SPECIFIC PROJECTS OR STUDIES, RECENTLY COMPLETED, ONGOING OR PLANNED, WHICH RELATE TO THE ABOVEMENTIONED OBJECTIVES.

We have also been asked by UNESCO to organize and co-ordinate a comparative study on The Image of Foreign Countries Representing Different Social Situations and Development Stages as Portrayed by the Mass Circulated Press. Preliminary discussions on this project will be held in Paris at the July meeting. Please let me know if you require further information about this proposed study.

I am grateful to all of you who replied to my last letter. You will remember that in that letter I referred to the status, constitution and work of our Sections. As yet I have had no proposals for the formation of new Sections, so the position remains as it was before the Leicester meeting, except that it was agreed there that the Sections on Technology, Satellites, Terminology and Publication should be dissolved. Opportunities will be given for a full discussion of the status and work of all Sections and any possible future developments at the next meetings of the International Council and General Assembly.

Decisions will have to be taken quite soon about the venue for the 1980 Conference and General Assembly. We are still hoping that it will be possible to find a suitable venue in the Third World, but no firm offer has yet been received. Africa and South America were suggested at Leicester. Canada has also been suggested, and the increased interest in the work of the Association in Japan may be accompanied by an offer from that country, if not for 1980, then possibly for 1982. During my visit to Japan earlier this year in connection with the Japan Prize I had the pleasure of once more meeting Professor Uchikawa (a member of our International Council) and a number of his colleagues. It was most interesting to hear of research developments in Japan, and of the wish of researchers and other scholars to become actively involved in the work of IAMCR.

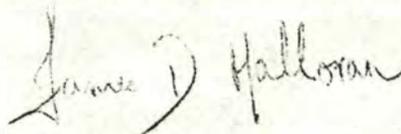
You will be pleased to hear that membership of IAMCR is still increasing. A list is enclosed of those (including a National Council for Denmark) who have applied to join since my last letter. Also enclosed is an invoice for the 1977 subscription, which is now well overdue. Please ignore this if you have already paid, but if you are behind with your payment please deal with the matter immediately. While on the subject of membership, I have to remind you that following the adoption of the new statutes at the 1976 General Assembly "membership expires without notice if a member does not pay his dues for two consecutive years, despite timely reminder". We are bound to implement this rule in future, and therefore ask those who are in default to pay their dues as soon as possible.

I would like to use this opportunity to ask Institutional and National Council members, when paying their annual subscription, to include a list of names of all those covered by the membership. I would also ask those who pay their fee direct to the Swiss Bank to notify this office of the payment in order that we may keep correct membership records.

I am very grateful to all those of you who write, send articles and books and keep me in touch with your work. I include a list of publications, reports etc. received during the past year. We do our best to ensure the accuracy of the enclosed lists, but if you spot any errors please accept our apologies and let us know so that we can amend our records.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



James D Halloran
President - IAMCR

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UNESCO PROGRAMME

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Main Objective No.1.

Main Objective No.2.

Main Objective No.3.

Additional Comments

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

