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## INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR MASS COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

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

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Dear Friends and Colleagues,

You will remember that in my last letter in June I asked you to complete two brief questionnaires, one about the forthcoming Warsaw Conference, and the other about the proposed UNESCO communication research programme. The response in both cases was most encouraging, and I would like to thank all of those who took the trouble to write and provide so many useful comments and suggestions. Your contributions greatly facilitated the work of the Programme Committee and played a vital part in the formulation of our submission to UNESCO.

In July, at a meeting at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, I was able to convey your comments on the UNESCO proposals to a small panel meeting of some of our officers and members of the UNESCO secretariat. These comments were built into our discussions from which eventually a document emerged entitled IAMCR AND THE UNESCO RESEARCH PROGRAMME. I prepared this with the help of Dr Lakshman Rao and Mrs Peggy Gray who acted as rapporteur at the panel meeting. This document was submitted to UNESCO in August and has become the basis for further and continuing exchanges on UNESCO's research programme. I am sure you will all agree that this increased working co-operation with UNESCO is much to be welcomed and augurs well for future developments in this particular field of communication research.

The Paris meeting was made possible because UNESCO was able to provide the necessary financial support for travel, accommodation etc. by inviting panel members in their individual research capacities to other specific project meetings. These "piggy-back" arrangements may not be ideal, but they continue to be necessary, particularly when so many of the members of our not particularly affluent Association show such a reluctance to pay their annual dues. But more about this later - I know you wouldn't expect me to let you get away with this so lightly! However, for the time being let us be grateful to UNESCO for its co-operation, for its assistance and, not least, for its ingenuity.

The document presented to UNESCO about its research programme is not included in this already large (and costly) package, but if those who would like to receive a copy let me know it will be sent immediately.

I mentioned in my last letter that we had also been asked by UNESCO to organize and co-ordinate an international comparative study on The Images of Foreign Countries Representing Different Social Situations and Development Stages as Portrayed by the Mass Circulated Press. Preliminary discussions on this project were held at the July meeting in Paris, when a draft design was prepared. Exchanges have continued both by correspondence and by discussions - the latter with several colleagues who may participate in the study, and whom I had the pleasure to meet at the AEJ Conference in Madison, Wisconsin in August, at the ILET Seminar in Amsterdam in September, and at the Finnish UNESCO Seminar in Helsinki earlier this month.

I repeat the request made in the June letter. Do let me know if you are interested in this project. For representative sampling reasons it is more important that some countries should participate than others, but there is

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

nothing exclusive about this study, so anyone who wishes to take part should get in touch with me immediately. If all those who have signified their willingness to participate play their part by letting me have their comments on the proposed design, then we should be able to work out a final agreed design and commence the work by March 1978. Although UNESCO agreed to provide some financial support for the preliminary meeting, each participating institution in this project will have to finance the project from its own resources.

The Programme Committee has been working steadily, if perhaps a little more slowly than last time, in preparing for the Warsaw Conference. The geographical spread of the committee members (Colombia, California, Poland, DDR, UK) and the vagaries of the international postal service present a few problems in this connection, but as I hope you will agree the ground has been well prepared, and most of the important decisions have now been taken.

The Programme Committee (including colleagues from the Polish Organizing Committee) had its second meeting in September in Amsterdam at the Baschwitz Institut by courtesy of one of our members, Professor Marten Brouwer. On this occasion the Committee was joined by the following members of the Executive Board/International Council (Bunzlova, Fattorello, Golebiowski, Hamelink, Kempers, Loeffler, Pasquali and Rao). All members of the International Council had been invited to join the Programme Committee, but obviously travel problems were too great for most of them. Wolfgang Seeger was also present as an observer from UNESCO. UNESCO is providing a financial subsidy for the Conference.

The meeting was both interesting and fruitful. In a stimulating and wide-ranging discussion many questions were raised which, although going well beyond the specific subject and organisational requirements of the Warsaw Conference, nevertheless touched on matters which are central to the existence and continued development of our Association. So conscious was one of our members of the importance of the matters discussed and of the need to convey at least the gist of these discussions to all IAMCR members, that he suggested I should attempt to do this in my next letter. Unfortunately, this interesting suggestion came at the end of the discussions, and the recording of the proceedings had been geared more to decision-taking with regard to the Conference than to the wider discussion. Still, we probably have enough information to give a reasonably accurate summary of what took place, and as we all felt Professor Loeffler's suggestion was basically a good one and might serve several useful purposes, we agreed to make the attempt.

In what follows we have divided the coverage of the proceedings into General and Specific. In the 'Specific' section we include information about the specific decisions relating to the Warsaw Conference. We hope there is little room for error or dispute here. In the first 'General' section, however, we give our impressions and interpretations of the topics covered, aided by inadequate notes, and filtered by the inevitable selective perception and retention. However, we hope you will find the attempt worthwhile.

In a way some of the general, more basic issues discussed stemmed from organizational points both with regard to the Conference and the Committee itself. The composition of the Committee (albeit democratically elected at the last General Assembly) and the decision of the Committee to select

a small number of speakers and discussants for the main conference sessions, was bound to give rise to questions of representativeness and balance. Now these are not simple questions, although some people do tend to oversimplify and at times to over-personalize as well. The questions are usually discussed under one or more of the following headings - left/right, marxist/non-marxist, socialist countries/capitalist countries, east/west, north/south, first/second/third/fourth world, geographical spread, disciplinary spread and so on. There is much overlapping and the distinctions between some of these headings are not always finely drawn. It is also not always clear whether those who speak about representativeness/balance etc. are referring to the "world at large" or to a reflection of the membership of our Association, which is itself unbalanced both with regard to membership and financial contributions.

As I hope you will appreciate, it would be impossible for me in this letter to do justice to this debate - either generally, or in so far as it was reflected (not always overtly) in the Amsterdam exchanges. Suffice it to say that it is an ongoing debate, and one that is likely to be with us for a long time. In fact it is one that ought to be with us for a long time, granted the nature of our work and our international composition, although one would hope that acrimony and personal issues would have no part to play in the exchange.

As our Association grows it is a healthy sign that members should wish to express their views and concerns about the affairs of the Association and its possible future developments. After all, until recently there was very little to comment on. Apart from the General Assembly held every other year, probably the only opportunity for members to participate is through correspondence. As you know many members do write, and without being too self-congratulatory I can say without equivocation or fear of contradiction that the letters received at headquarters are overwhelmingly supportive and congratulatory about IAMCR's developments and progress in recent years.

Of course, there are one or two exceptions, and most of you will be familiar with these. Moreover, we must not lose sight of the possibility that, as is sometimes claimed, there are one or two who speak and write for many more - the silent majority - who may share their anxieties about the directions they perceive IAMCR to be taking. From widespread correspondence and from meeting members in all parts of the globe I doubt this very much indeed - in fact, personally, I am convinced to the contrary. Nevertheless, I think it is desirable that at the Warsaw meeting we should provide an opportunity (far more time than has usually been the case) for a general discussion on the Association's aims, objectives, policies, trends, future developments etc. I also hope it will be possible for the Executive Board or International Council to meet before the Warsaw General Assembly to prepare the way for this discussion, and I would like all of you who have any thoughts on these matters to let me have your comments and suggestions at your earliest possible convenience.

It may appear that I have wandered too far from my starting point about the Amsterdam meeting. Up to a point this is true, although it will be recognised that many of the questions raised below - some of them perhaps appearing on the surface as little more than simple matters of organization - are frequently both raised and answered with these wider considerations in mind, even if not explicitly stated.

It would be misleading to give the impression that the Amsterdam meeting was characterized by a profound and heated discussion about the Association's policies and strategies. This was not so, yet fundamental issues were raised and these were often reflected in the general discussions on the more specific conference questions referred to below. Again this is how it should be. We would be naive to think that an international conference such as ours can be planned in a social-political vacuum. In making decisions about conference programmes, selection of speakers, etc. scholarly criteria should be paramount, but they will never be the sole criteria. This was perfectly clear from the pointed, but friendly exchanges at the Amsterdam meeting.

The very theme of the Warsaw Conference, Mass Media and National Culture, could keep us active for hours in attempts at definitions and interpretations. Well, we didn't have hours to spare at Amsterdam, but even so the question was thoroughly aired, as were many other related questions both with regard to substance and form.

You will remember that in my June letter I asked you to comment on two proposals with regard to the themes and sub-themes of the Conference. Your comments on these proposals and the reactions of the committee gave us plenty to consider in Amsterdam, and I hope you will be satisfied with the results of our deliberations which are set out below. You were also asked to comment and make suggestions on the organization and structure of the Conference, and again I am grateful to you all for giving us so much food for thought. The questions discussed under these headings are not particularly new ones. In fact they are recurring questions. But nonetheless they are questions that need to be on the agenda at conference planning meetings so that we might avoid the pitfalls of habit and complacency and give ourselves the opportunity to explore new avenues, examine different approaches, and so on.

The questions discussed included the following: Should the main conference theme be divided into sub-themes, and if so how, and on what bases? How should the conference be divided into plenary sessions and smaller group discussions? Is the structure and organization deemed suitable for one theme necessarily suitable for another? Should there be reporting back to plenary sessions from small groups and, if so, what form should that take? Do we need plenary sessions at all? Do we need small groups at all? Couldn't the whole conference be organized on the basis of small groups? Should selected speakers be invited to contribute to the main sessions and, if so, on what basis should they be selected? Is there not a dangerous possibility of elitism here? Should not all members of the Association (or any other scholar for that matter) have equal right regarding the presentation of papers at the Conference? In inviting speakers, selecting contributors, etc. should special consideration be given to members of the Association? Should we not cast our net wider than in the past and attempt to attract scholars from related disciplines such as anthropology, linguistics, philosophy, sociology, etc? On what criteria do we judge papers? Should the Programme Committee be able to reject papers? Should the main emphasis be on the results of research carried out (with due regard to theoretical and methodological considerations) or should there be more scope for "position papers"? Should the emphasis be on the work of the established scholars, or should we be more concerned to provide opportunities for younger researchers and give them a chance to make their name and reach a wider international audience than might otherwise be the case? Should we eliminate formal paper-giving altogether, and concentrate on exchange and dialogue? Other questions about timing, presentation of papers, publication, chairing of sessions, were also discussed.

As inferred earlier, most of you will have had to deal with these questions in the past, and no doubt you will all have heard different answers and viewpoints argued with energy and enthusiasm, if not always with logic and clarity. Suffice it to say that the enthusiasm and energy were certainly present at Amsterdam. You must decide for yourself on the logic and clarity after you have read the Conference outline and related information which stemmed from the discussions and decisions at Amsterdam. These are set out below.

The procedure will follow the Leicester format and the division of sessions will be according to the first possibility presented in the June letter.

### Provisional Timetable

The 11th General Assembly and Scientific Conference will take place from 4th to 9th September 1978 at the Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw, Poland.

Theme: MASS MEDIA AND NATIONAL CULTURE

### Monday, September 4th

Arrival and Registration

6 p.m. Official opening, reception and dinner.

Working sessions and meetings will be held each day as follows:

### Tuesday, September 5th

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|------------|---|
| Session I  | Mass Media and Culture: ideologies, theories and methodologies.   |
| Session II | Mass Media and National Culture: structure, content, values and impact.   |
| Evening:   | Reception by the Rector of the University of Warsaw at the National Museum, including tour of the Art Gallery and a concert of classical music. |

### Wednesday, September 6th

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|-------------|--|
| Session III | Cross Cultural and International Communication: flow, political, economic and technological factors. |
| Session IV  | Cross Cultural and International Communication: content, values and effects.                         |

Thursday, September 7th

Meetings of IAMCR Sections.

Study and discussion groups, seminars, round tables etc.

Special meeting of Professional Training Section jointly with AEJ and IOJ.

Meeting of IAMCR Executive Board and International Council.

Evening: Opera performance in the Great Theatre in Warsaw.

Friday, September 8th

Final Plenary Session of the Conference.

Additional small group meetings where required.

General Assembly of IAMCR.

Evening: Farewell Cocktail Party given by the Mayor of Warsaw.

Saturday, September 9th

Press Conference on Contemporary Poland

Sight-seeing tour of Warsaw

Other social activities such as a piano recital at the birth place of Chopin and post Congress tours will be arranged by our Polish hosts for those who wish to participate. There will be a special programme for persons accompanying participants but not attending conference sessions. This will include visits to a famous Warsaw chocolate factory, the Wilanow Palace and a child health centre.

Conference languages will be English, French, Polish and Russian, and there will be simultaneous translation throughout all plenary sessions.

Conference fees: £150 per person with a £20 reduction for those who have paid their individual or institutional membership fee for 1977.

£100 for persons accompanying participants and not attending conference sessions.

Fees are inclusive of registration, accommodation for 5 nights, all meals from Monday evening to Saturday lunch, conference papers and social events. All participants will be accommodated in one of two hotels, the Hotel Europejski or the Grand Hotel, and all meals will be taken in one restaurant in the Palace of Culture and Science - this is to facilitate maximum opportunity for working and social contacts between members.

Accommodation will normally be in single rooms but a limited number of double rooms will be available. Registration forms will be sent to all members by the organizing secretary in January 1978 and fees will have to be paid at the time of registration which is not later than April 30th 1978.

Visas: Visas will be required by all those attending except for persons from COMECON countries, Austria, Finland and Sweden. Visas are obtainable from Polish Embassies and Consulates, and application has to be accompanied by proof of payment of Conference fees. A receipt will be issued by the Polish Organizing Committee when they receive accompanying payment with the Registration form.

The Programme Committee decided that there will be two main speakers and two discussants for each main session of the Conference. There will also be two chairpersons for each session. The Committee, through the President, will invite speakers to present papers of a stimulating and challenging nature. The selection of speakers and discussants will take into account academic ability and performance and the balance of representation of the various regions of the world and various ideological standpoints. Some speakers may not be communicologists so that interdisciplinary exchanges will be encouraged.

Each main speaker will have 20 minutes to present the paper, followed by 10 minutes for the discussant. Allowing 5 minutes for chairman's introduction and 10 minutes for each main speaker to reply, at the end of the debate there will be 90 minutes for general debate in each of the four plenary sessions. It is intended that abstracts of the main papers will be sent to all participants one month before the Conference, and all papers will be available to everyone immediately prior to the Conference. In order that this can be achieved all papers should reach the President and the Organizing Secretary by April 1st 1978.

If you require any further information about the Conference or any special requests please write to the Organizing Secretary:

Dr Jerzy Oledzki  
 XI Kongres AIERI  
 00-975 Warszawa 22, skr. poczt. 76  
 POLAND

Travel from UK: Peggy Gray will arrange group travel at greatly reduced cost if sufficient people wish to travel from the UK to Warsaw on September 4th and return on September 9th. A minimum of ten people would have to travel together. The approximate inclusive cost - travel and Conference fees - would be in the region of £180. Anyone interested in making use of such group travel arrangements should contact Peggy straight away.

In my last letter I suggested that one of the most interesting features of the Warsaw Conference would be the meeting jointly organized by the Professional Training Section of IAMCR, the International Communication Division of the AEJ and the IOJ. On the occasion of the AEJ Conference in August in Madison, Wisconsin, USA I was able to have a meeting with Professors Cole, Nordenstreng, Rush and Zassoursky, and we were able to make further plans for this meeting which will centre on (a) New Technology and Journalism; and (b) Precision Journalism: Practising Journalism and Social Research. This programme is the joint responsibility of Professors Cole and Zassoursky, and further enquiries about it should be addressed directly to them. Similarly, anyone wishing to contribute to meetings of Sections which may meet in Warsaw should write direct to the relevant Section President.

The Programme Committee also decided that at Warsaw, as at Leicester, full facilities would be made available for any member who wished to have small group meetings, research workshops, luncheon seminars, etc. on specific

issues within the wider field of mass communication research, but which did not deal directly with the main theme of the Conference. It is open to any member to organize such a meeting, but please remember to advise the Organizing Secretary, Jerzy Oledzki, in good time so that the necessary facilities may be made available.

Several members have written suggesting that as we have decided to formally invite only a few selected speakers to address the plenary sessions on the main theme of the Conference, it is difficult for them to persuade university administrators, etc. that they are making a valid contribution to conference proceedings. It is often necessary to do this in order to obtain the necessary support for travel, accommodation, etc. There are many ways, apart from the main sessions, of contributing to the Conference, so should any member require a letter of support to put before his administrators all he need do is let me know. An invitation will be sent immediately.

I write this letter having just returned from a most interesting and useful meeting in Paris with the Board of Directors at the Conseil Français des Études et Recherches sur l'Information et la Communication. French scholars played a very important part in the establishment and early development of our Association, but in recent years they have been less active. My feeling after the Paris meeting however, is that we can look forward to a future in which French scholars will play an increasingly important part in the affairs of the Association. There has been a rebirth of interest in France, and we look forward enthusiastically to increased participation at all levels from our French colleagues.

It seems most likely that a French National Council will be formed in the not too distant future. Some of the Scandinavian countries have also taken steps in this direction. In general I think most of us welcome the idea of the development of National Councils, but as interpreted in some places the whole area presents us with some problems.

Responding to enquiries from several members about the idea of National Councils, I referred the problem of national council membership to the President of our Legal Section, Professor Martin Loeffler. He maintains, and I completely accept his interpretation, that ideally National Councils are made up of scholars, researchers, etc. who are already individual or institutional members. National Council membership (which has some voting privileges, etc.) was never meant as a substitute for individual or institutional membership - it is essentially in addition to it. Perhaps this ought to be made clearer in our Statutes, and this question could well find itself on the agenda of the next General Assembly.

One final plea - you will see that we have compiled a membership list. I was going to write an up-to-date membership list, but I doubt if I would have been fully justified in doing this, for quite a number of those listed have not paid their membership dues for 1977. The list would be far smaller if we included only those who have paid. Admittedly there are still a few weeks to go, so we decided to give these slow-payers the benefit of the doubt. But please, if you are still in arrears, let us have your subscription immediately. Perhaps I should stress, subscriptions for 1977. 1978 is another year, and I hope we shall not have too many letters from those who think a year may be conveniently missed out, and that even if they missed paying in 1977 that they may pay now solely for the forthcoming year, 1978. We are not an affluent Association, and we rely almost entirely on your subscriptions to keep us afloat. If you have not already done so, please do remember to let us have your 1977 subscription immediately, and we shall also welcome early payment of 1978 subscriptions from you all.

Warmest regards for Christmas and the New Year.

Yours sincerely,



James D Halloran  
President - IAMCR