

PROF. JAMES D. HALLORAN, Director  
Centre for Mass Communication Research  
University of Leicester  
104 Regent Road, Leicester

Secretary:  
PROF. DR. EMIL DUSISKA  
Direktor, Sektion Journalistik  
Karl-Marx-Universität  
Karl-Marx-Platz 9  
701 Leipzig

## INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR MASS COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

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

*Administrative Office:*

*Centre for Mass Communication Research, University of Leicester  
104 Regent Road, Leicester LE1 7LT, England. Tel. Leicester (0533) 555557*

December 1982

Dear Friends and Colleagues

### PARIS CONFERENCE

Since I last wrote to you in the middle of the year, the most important event in the IAMCR calendar has undoubtedly been the Paris Conference and General Assembly in September which marked, in no small way, the 25th anniversary of our Association. The Conference, which was opened by M. Georges Fillioud, the Minister of Communication in the French Government, and was later addressed by M. Gerard Bolla, Assistant Director-General Responsible for the Communication Sector from UNESCO, was attended by some three hundred and seventy members from all parts of the world. To write simply that the occasion was a great success would be an understatement, and would also reflect an underestimation of the value of the efforts and ingenuity of Francois-Xavier Hutin and his French colleagues who, despite many adverse circumstances in the preparatory stages, did so much to ensure that our anniversary was appropriately celebrated. They deserve our gratitude and appreciation.

Adopting a new procedure, I enclose a report on the Conference written by Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi, who acted as a roving reporter in Paris. This was written in a relatively journalistic way, at the request of our French hosts, for their own internal purposes. All of us, including Annabelle, recognize that the report is no adequate substitute for participation in the Conference, or even for reading all the conference papers.\* Nevertheless, we thought it might give a flavour of the atmosphere and proceedings for those members who were unfortunate enough not to be able to join us in Paris. I would welcome your advice as to whether or not you feel that this type of report might become a regular feature of our provision.

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\* A list of papers given at the Conference is enclosed (yellow). Main session papers are available at a price of £3 per set in the UK, and £6 per set overseas, including postage. Section/workshop/group papers are also available, priced individually, excluding postage. These can be obtained upon request to Mrs Peggy Gray, IAMCR, 104 Regent Road, Leicester LE1 7LT, England.

### CONFERENCE PROCEDURES, ETC.

I would welcome your advice and comments on another enclosed paper, namely the one which stemmed initially from the Ad Hoc Committee on Conference Planning and Procedures. The contents of this paper, prepared by G.J. Robinson reflect, quite helpfully in my opinion, a wider interpretation of the Committee's remit than might be implied by the title. They provide a very sound base for future discussions about several topics vital to the successful development of the Association.

Both the International Council and the General Assembly, whilst recognizing that some of the points in the Report had already been met and that others could only be met by increased expenditure, were pleased to accept the Report in principle, and agreed to work for its implementation within a realistic financial framework. I repeat that your comments on this Report would be very much appreciated. I am also pleased to include the reports from Sections and other groups which were presented in Paris.

It was also decided in Paris that the Monograph, as conceived in the past, would be discontinued. In its place, at least for 1983, there would be a report/brochure to mark both the 25th anniversary of the Association and the salient features of the Paris Conference.

### PROGRAMME COMMITTEE 1984

The International Council and General Assembly also accepted that the working title for the theme of the 1984 Conference in Prague should be SOCIAL COMMUNICATION AND GLOBAL PROBLEMS. It should be stressed, however, that this is essentially a working title which will have to be further specified and elaborated at the first meeting of the newly-elected Programme Committee, which will be held in Prague on 19th and 20th January 1983. The members of the Programme Committee (ANZOLA, FLECK, HAMELINK, LINNE, DAJANI, ZASSOURSKY, ROBINSON and HALLORAN, plus two members from the host country, BUNZLOVA and MARKO) would be delighted to have your suggestions about any matters (theme, content, procedures, meetings, papers, organization, etc. etc.) which you consider relevant to conference planning. There is nothing sacrosanct about what has happened in the past. The Committee is wide open to suggestions for reform and change at any level.

As you will remember in the case of the Paris Conference last year, there was confusion and inconvenient delay with regard to the dates. Not so for 1984 in Prague. The dates have already been agreed, namely the 19th or 20th August to 24th or 25th August 1984. You can start to make your arrangements now, and we would certainly like your suggestions as soon as possible.

### INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL

Following discussions with International Council member Tamas Szecsko, another date has also been fixed - that is the date for the next meeting of the International Council, which will be held at Lake Balaton, Hungary, from 24th to 27th September 1983.

This meeting should be a very important one. First, it has to ratify the decisions of the Programme Committee for the 1984 Conference and, secondly, it has to prepare the way for the 1984 General Assembly. At the General Assembly in Prague in 1984 all officers and Council members will have to be re-elected, and one of the main tasks of the International Council meeting in September 1983 will be to prepare for this. A good attendance is essential for wide discussion and adequate preparation. It is also very important that those unable to attend, and all other members of the Association, should participate as fully as possible by making their views and proposals known beforehand. So please let us have your views, opinions, firm proposals, lists or slates of candidates, or whatever you think is appropriate in the Association's interests. Again, we are wide open to suggestions for reform and change at this important stage in the development of our Association. On the specific question of ballot procedures, seen to be rather cumbersome in the past, Martin Loeffler and Tomo Martelanc have agreed to help me to sort this out and simplify the situation. All three of us would welcome your advice.

#### FINANCE - MEMBERSHIP

I mentioned above that we were open to change at all levels - well, perhaps that is overstating the case a little. In spirit I would like to think that it was true for most of us - as long as it wasn't simply advocating change for the sake of change - but in practice some of the changes that have been proposed over the years would have had us bankrupt within a very short time. As I pointed out in my last letter, financially we are now reasonably healthy - healthy, that is, within the very limited parameters of our modest operations, and on the assumption that we continue to benefit from the hidden subsidies which I have frequently mentioned in the past. At the Paris Assembly I was able to report a balance of over Sw.Fr. 70,000 compared with some Sw.Fr. 43,000 two years earlier. But I also had to remind members that the costs of maintaining our limited programme were also escalating, and the decision to go ahead with publications, irrespective of UNESCO financial support (which had been considerably reduced in real money terms over the years) would rapidly cut into that apparently healthy balance.

However, an encouraging feature of our affairs was that income from members' subscriptions showed a marked improvement (please keep up the prompt payments), and was seen by many to justify both the increase in dues agreed in Caracas in 1980, and the tougher measures with regard to lapsation proposed at Sigtuna in 1981. Quite frankly, the cost of postage and distribution of material on an international scale is now so high that we just cannot afford to send material to those who have not paid their dues - and there are still many on our "membership" list who have not paid their dues for some years. As always, some come in and some go out.

A new membership book is now in the process of being prepared and should be ready for distribution with the next presidential letter in February/March 1983. In compiling this new membership book we have been instructed by the International Council to rigorously apply the lapsation clause in accordance with our Statutes. In practical terms, this means that those "members" who have not paid their dues for 1981 and 1982 by 28th February 1983 will no longer be regarded as members, and their names will not be included

in the new membership book, nor shall they be entitled to receive any further material. All these people will have received personal notification on at least two previous occasions and, regrettably, I must state that for these "members" this presidential letter should be regarded as a final notice of lapsation. I am sorry, but there is no choice. Of course, for all our "good colleagues" it will soon be 1983, so I would be failing in my duty if I did not remind them of this, and enclose the necessary invoice and reminder. We need your continued cooperation. Thank you.

#### MEMBERSHIP IN FRANCE

I thought you would like to know that, in early November, 40 members and intending members of the Association responded to my invitation to meet them in Paris on the occasion of one of my visits to UNESCO. The meeting, which stemmed from our recent Conference in Paris and from the efforts of Francois-Xavier Hutin and his colleagues was most successful, reflecting the greater involvement in, and increased enthusiasm for, mass communication research in France. It augurs well for more active French participation in the affairs of our Association.

#### RELATIONSHIPS WITH UNESCO

At the Paris Conference, M. Gerard Bolla, Assistant Director-General Responsible for the Communication Sector, welcomed the continued development of a cooperative working relationship between IAMCR and UNESCO. In the past this has not always been as close and effective as some of us would have wished, but meetings with UNESCO colleagues over the last few months have been quite encouraging. I think we may look forward with some optimism to more involvement and more participation in both the planning and execution of UNESCO's communication research programme over the next few years.

At a more specific level, Vice-President Herbert Schiller, who has been living in Paris for some months, was the Association's observer at the Fourth Extraordinary Session of the General Conference at UNESCO headquarters from 23rd November to 3rd December, and he will act in a similar capacity at the IPDC meeting at the same place from 13th to 20th December. I am always pleased to hear from members who are near to the sites of conferences relevant to our interests, and who would be willing to act as the Association's observers - unpaid of course - and let us have short reports afterwards.

Following the meeting reported earlier, which was held in Leicester last July, we are now preparing a report for UNESCO as a follow-up to the MacBride Report which will include, inter alia, recommendations for research and study over the next five years. It is still not too late to let me have your suggestions and proposals for inclusion in this report. But please hurry. We have also been asked by the Director-General of UNESCO to assist him in his task of "preparing a comprehensive report of the world situation in the fields covered by the 1978 General Conference Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice". Those who feel that they would like to assist should write direct to UNESCO, mentioning IAMCR membership, and send a copy to Leicester please. We are also looking forward to participating, together with other NGOs, in the research programme on The Media, Disarmament, Peace and Security, and in connection with this I attended a conference in Paris last month. Again, those interested in this field should get

in touch with me if they require further information, or if they would like to contribute or participate in what might become a comparative research exercise.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY SECTION

I would be most grateful if you would assist Walery Pisarek in his work as President of our Bibliography Section by completing the enclosed questionnaire and returning it to him at Press Research Centre, Rynek Glowny nr 23, 31-008 Krakow, Poland.

I am also informed that the Austrian Documentation Centre for Media and Communication Research (ADMAC) has just published a volume entitled "BIBLIOGRAPHY OF AUSTRIAN MASS COMMUNICATION LITERATURE 1981". This is a comprehensive and systematic compilation of Austrian publications in the field of public communication. There are some 1100 entries with bilingual (German and English) annotations. For further information write to Dr Benno Signitzer, ADMAC, Sigmund-Haffner-Gasse 18/III, A-5020 Salzburg, Austria/Europe.

#### UNION OF DEMOCRATIC COMMUNICATIONS

This newly-formed Union, which was well represented in Paris, continues to develop and flourish, and we look forward to hearing further about its November conference.

#### SECRETARY GENERAL

It was with regret that we heard at the Paris Assembly of the resignation from the post of Secretary General of Professor Dr Emil Dusiska. Professor Dusiska had served the Association well for many years, particularly since he was elected Secretary in 1972. The International Council and General Assembly were unanimous in expressing their appreciation and gratitude for his services, and wishing him well in his retirement. The Deputy Secretary General, Professor G J Robinson, has kindly agreed to fill the breach for the remainder of this electoral period.

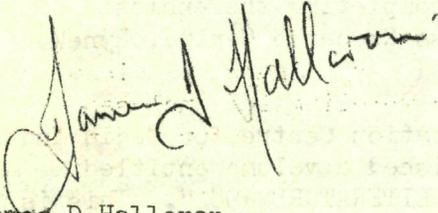
#### FUTURE CONFERENCES AND ASSEMBLIES

It is never too early to start preparations for these. After Prague in 1984, we have already received a formal invitation for Barcelona in 1986 or 1988, and this is most encouraging. If we abide by convention - although there is nothing sacred about this - we should be in the Third World again in 1986, and our colleagues in India are making enquiries. It has also been suggested that, despite our large North American and Scandinavian membership, we have yet to have a Conference and General Assembly in those parts of the world. As indicated, we have some conventions on this score, but no rules and, as always, suggestions and proposals are welcome.

The vagaries of the international post are such that I cannot be sure that you will receive this before Christmas. Still, let me wish you all the best for Christmas, and allow me to join you all in looking forward to a happy and, above all, peaceful New Year.

Warmest regards,

Yours sincerely,



James D Halloran  
President - IAMCR