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INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
FOR MASS COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE
DES ÉTUDES ET RECHERCHES SUR L'INFORMATION

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JDH/AMH/IAMCR

July 1982

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

This will be a very brief letter mainly because much of the information normally included in a Presidential Letter is provided in the separate papers which are enclosed. This is particularly true with regard to details about the Paris Conference. We can confidently expect an attendance at Paris of over 350, and I think that largely due to the efforts and persistence of our colleague Francois-Xavier Hutin we can look forward to an occasion appropriate to our 25th anniversary.

The official closing date for registration for the Conference, July 31st, will have passed by the time you receive this letter, but although what I am about to write will not endear me to the Organizing Committee, or to my colleague Peggy Gray I think I may say from experience and with some confidence that we are not given to turning people away from our door until every possibility has been explored. So there is still time to register, but please do not leave it until the last minute, particularly if you require conference accommodation which is strictly limited.

Whenever in the past I have written about the financial affairs of the Association I have usually found it necessary to strike a pessimistic, warning or exhortatory note. But now, at least as far as the general financial situation is concerned, I no longer need to adopt such attitudes. Indeed I welcome the opportunity to switch from the exhortatory to the congratulatory and thank all those who reacted so positively to my earlier pleas for regular and prompt payment of subscriptions. As a result I am pleased to report that financially the Association has never been in a healthier position. Naturally, and as you would expect, there are some qualifications. Our state of health is relative to the limited operations of the Association, namely to provide a basic service and remain solvent - we are certainly not in a position to finance a Section programme for example. It could be, however, that we could be in a position to finance such programmes, or at least to take other initiatives to fulfil our remit if all members responded as promptly and positively as some have done over the past year. The choice is really yours, for we still have far too many "members" who pay only every three or four years, and up to a point lapsations tend to counter new membership. Fortunately we continue to attract many new members.

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

Still, as we approach our silver jubilee let us not worry unduly about these matters. Rather let us concentrate on making the Paris Conference a great success and use it as an opportunity to develop mass communication research in the course of international understanding and peace.

I am happy to be able to report (further details in conference information) that UNESCO, as in the past, has agreed to help some people from the Third World to participate in the Paris Conference. This help is very much appreciated. I can also report that thanks to UNESCO's financial assistance the Association has just completed a most successful consultation in Leicester.

As you know from earlier letters IAMCR was asked by UNESCO to consult as many of its members as possible and prepare a review of the Report of the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems (MacBride Report). In the review it was requested that particular attention should be given (a) to issues and problems which had not received sufficient attention from the Commission, and (b) to the follow-up, extension and development of the Commission's work, and how to implement its recommendations for policy and research. A first draft of this review was prepared by Annabelle Sreberny as one of the working papers for the consultation.

Another working paper at the consultation was based on the report prepared by Breda Pavlic and Cees Hamelink on the relationship between the New International Information and Communication Order and the New International Economic Order. Breda, from the Research Centre for Cooperation with Developing Countries at Ljubljana, who heads our International Communication Section, was commissioned by UNESCO to examine this relationship.

Following our discussions with UNESCO it was considered both appropriate and economical to use both of these reports as the base of the Leicester consultation, the main purpose of which was to present to UNESCO recommendations on policy and research in the areas covered by the Reports, and by the other written and verbal contributions to the consultation. A final report should be completed and presented to UNESCO by the end of the year.

The consultation took place on Monday, 19th July to Thursday, 22nd July and was held at Beaumont Hall, a University of Leicester Hall of Residence. The undermentioned, invited in accordance with the usual representative and research criteria following approval by UNESCO, participated in what was a highly productive meeting. Professor Nabil Dajani, American University of Beirut, Lebanon; Professor K. E. Fapen, University of Kerala, India; Dr. Franz-Josef Eilers, Catholic Media Council, Aachen, FRG; Professor Florian Fleck; University of Fribourg, Switzerland, Dr. Zoltan Jakab, Hungarian Radio and Television, Budapest, Hungary; Dr. Meheroo Jussawalla, East-West Communication Institute, Honolulu, Hawaii; Dr. Cees Hamelink, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, Netherlands; Dr. Pierre Henquet, UNESCO, Paris; Professor Hamid Mowlana, The American University, Washington, U.S.A., Dr. Breda Pavlic, Research Centre for Cooperation with Developing Countries, Ljubljana, Yugoslavia; Dr. Lakshman Rao, UNESCO, Paris, Dr. Rafael Roncagliolo, Instituto Latinoamericano de Estudios Transnacionales, Mexico; Ms Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi, London (previously at Iran Communications and Development Institute, Teheran, Iran) and Dr. Robert White, S.J., Centre for the Study of Communication and Culture, London. Professor Alfred Opuor, University of Lagos, Nigeria was unable to attend.

Other research projects in cooperation with UNESCO are under way and still others are being planned and discussed. With regard to one of these - An International Survey of Media Education and its relationship to Communication Research - we would still welcome information and comments, particularly from socialist countries.

We have often stressed the need for UNESCO to cooperate more fully than in the past with its primary NGO, i.e. IAMCR, in the planning and execution of communication research policies and programmes. The Association has been referred to as the research arm of UNESCO. It would appear that the message is beginning to get through, and clearly we should welcome this. But there is no room for complacency and that is why I ask you to use the Paris platform - Paris is the headquarters of UNESCO - to impress UNESCO with our scientific competence, commitment and social responsibility with regard to the major communication issues of our time.

The General Conference of UNESCO at its 21st Session held in Belgrade in 1980 adopted a resolution which called upon "... non-governmental organizations, journalists and other professionals working in the mass media, as well as their professional associations, to contribute actively to the implementation" of the UNESCO Declaration on Fundamental Principles concerning the Contribution of the Mass Media to Strengthening Peace and International Understanding, to the Promotion of Human Rights and to Countering Racialism, Apartheid and Incitement to War.

The Resolution also called upon "non-governmental organizations having cooperative relations with UNESCO to provide the Director-General with any information at their disposal concerning the way in which the principles set forth in the aforesaid Declaration have been put into effect". I have been asked to remind members of this and I invite you to write to UNESCO accordingly. It would be helpful if you could send a copy to Leicester.

UNESCO also plan to have a follow-up to the Symposium on Regional and International Mechanisms for the Dissemination and Exchange of Information which was held in Paris, 27-30 October, 1981. Again we are invited to assist by providing information on the practical steps which participating organizations may have taken since the first Symposium to implement the recommendations which covered the following principal subject areas: assistance by media in industrialized countries, formation of national tariff committees, training, information and programme exchanges, co-production of programmes, reduction in telecommunication tariffs, communication by means of satellite systems, Handy Kandil at UNESCO would welcome information on these subjects as well as on others which may be of interest in preparing for the Second Symposium. One of the main aims is to encourage the establishment of direct relations between media managers in industrialized countries and those in developing countries.

We usually try to be represented at these meetings and symposia and frequently we are invited to send an official observer at the Association's expense. Our normal practice is to ask a member of the International Council who lives near the conference venue or who might be participating in some other capacity to attend and report back. I have recently received a report from Rafael Roncagliolo on the meeting of the Intergovernmental Council of the International Programme for the Development of Communications which was held in Acapulco in January. A full official report is also available from UNESCO as also are IPDC information sheets and progress reports.

Several of our members including Roncagliolo will be attending a conference in Mexico City from the 9th-11th of August to discuss The Situation of the Cultural Industry in Latin America and shortly, following this - 16th-21st August - also in Mexico City, I hope to represent the Association at the meeting of the International Sociological Association which has a special research committee on Communication, Knowledge and Culture.

Quite a number of our members will be at this meeting also. Still others will be present at special communication sessions at the International Political Science Association's Congress which meets in Rio de Janeiro 9th to 14th August. The Association is formally represented at the UNESCO meeting on World Cultural Policies in Mexico City from 26th July to 5th August, and has been invited to send an observer to the U.N. Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, in Vienna 9th-20th August.

This increased international activity and interest in media and communication should augur well for the future, but obviously it is impossible for the Association to be represented at all these meetings. Moreover there are times when one is almost forced to think, if not in terms of unnecessary duplication and dissipation of effort, at least in terms of the need for better planning and coordination.

As you know our own Conference will be held from 6th to 10th September. The International Institute of Communication has its annual conference (The Political Economy of Communication and Information Systems) in Helsinki from September 4th to 7th. From September 3rd to 7th INTERCOM - Sociedade Brasileira de Estudos Interdisciplinares de Comunicacao meets in Sao Paulo and from 1st to 5th September the Arab States Broadcasting Union has organized a colloque in Tunis on Research Methods in Radio-Television Research in the Arab World. All three of these are of interest to some of our members.

However, coordination was certainly not absent in the planning of a meeting of Spanish-speaking researchers from Latin America and Europe at the University of Barcelona immediately before our Paris Conference. Similarly in the case of the conference organized by the Third World News Agency - Inter Press Service - on The New Information Order: Strategies for the 1980's which will be held in Rome on September 13th and 14th immediately after our Conference.

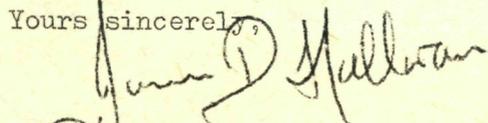
I was most interested to hear of a conference on "Transnational Communication and Culture" which was held at the University of Texas at Austin, June 2nd/5th. This conference provided a forum for exchange between U.S. and Latin American scholars, and was the first in a series of such meetings. It was sponsored by ILET, the Institute of Latin American Studies and the College of Communication at the University of Texas at Austin.

The Union for Democratic Communication in the U.S.A. seems to be making good progress, and planning is now under way for the first UDC Conference and Membership meeting, 12th/14th November in Philadelphia.

Some time before this, September 28th/29th, the Cooperative Internationale de Recherche et D'Action en Matiere de Communication will have its meeting on Satellites: What Programming? in Venice and a week before this 21st/23rd September under the auspices of UNESCO there will be a meeting of experts in Prague on The Cultural Contents of Television Programmes and their Relations with Traditional Artistic and Cultural Activities. I am also informed that AMIC (Mexico) plans a meeting from 8th/10th November, and that the Eleventh Annual Telecommunications Policy Research Conference will be held in Annapolis, Maryland, April 24th/27th 1983.

Despite the length of this list there must be several meetings I have missed, some I do not know about, and I have not referred to the well-known annual meetings of ICA and AEJ which attract many of our members. Obviously one could spend the whole year attending meetings, perhaps some do. However, my main concern, whilst wishing every success to all the meetings is to persuade you to resist temptation and keep a little time, energy and money on one side for Paris - I hope to see you there.

Yours sincerely,



James D. Halloran,
President - IAMCR.