



*The International Science Fiction Association of Professionals*

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WORLD SF Newsletter

No. 2: 1989

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ANNUAL WORLD SF MEETING  
SAN MARINO, 18-19 MAY 1989

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MINUTES

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CALL TO ORDER

President Norman Spinrad opened the meeting with a welcome to delegates. (All told, by the end of the meeting, 19 countries were represented.)

NATIONAL REPORTS

National reports on science fiction and fantasy publishing and other events of relevance to the field were received from Japan (Takumi Shibano), the UK (Brian Aldiss), the USA (Robert Silverberg), Poland (Wiktor Bukato), China (Yang Xiao), Yugoslavia (Darije Djokich), DDR (Heiner Rank), Canada (Judith Merril), Netherlands (Anne-Marie van Ewyck), USSR (Eremai Parnov), Italy (Piergiorgio Nicolazzini), France (Norman Spinrad), Sweden and Denmark (Sam Lundvall), Romania (Ion Hobana) and Finland (Pekka Supinen). Elizabeth Anne Hull gave an academic report on science fiction and fantasy teaching and research.

Some common problems were inflation, recessions, lack of serious criticism and public esteem, and the domination of English language translation SF to the point of eliminating SF in other languages from consideration, although nearly every country seems to have an increasing number of high-quality native-language SF writers. In most countries fantasy and horror are comprising a growing proportion of the SF market, and sequels, series and shared worlds are dominating "new" publication titles. (Individual reports made available to the Newsletter editor will be printed on a space-available basis.)

CENSORSHIP

As a result of the report from England and subsequent discussion of the reaction around the world to publication of Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*, the delegates unanimously passed two resolutions:

1. WORLD SF condemns murder (or any use of physical force) as a form of literary criticism.

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2. WORLD SF regards all political and religious censorship as unhealthy.

### 1991 MEETING PLANS

China, Poland and Yugoslavia all made presentations bidding for the 1991 WORLD SF meeting to be held in their respective countries. Both Poland and Yugoslavia made presentations similar to their Eurocon bids for the WORLD SF meeting. Poland would meet in Krakow, Yugoslavia in Zagreb.

After the Eurocon was awarded to Poland in 1991 and to Yugoslavia in 1992, Yugoslavia withdrew their bid for WORLD SF in 1991 and resubmitted it for 1992.

Because of translation difficulties, there were a number of unsettled questions about the Chinese proposal. Among the items pending are transportation within China, fees or other charges for delegates, various types of hotel or other housing accommodation available, and costs (if any) for meeting facilities. The proposed meeting is to be held the last weekend in May in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, with the sponsorship of the Sichuan Writers Union and the Sichuan Province Association of Science and Technology, and coordinated by Tong Engzhen, professor of history at the University of Sichuan (and one of the contributors to Tales from the Planet Earth). Ye Yonglie and Wang Fengzhen are also part of the organizing committee.

After lengthy debate the vote was 9 for Poland; 15 for China, on a provisional basis, pending clarification of issues about facilities, etc. This was followed by a call for ratification as provided in the Constitution either by the Board of Governors or by mail via the Newsletter. Therefore, the President will clarify the terms of the Chinese offer within six months and confirm or reassess the situation in ample time to allow Poland to prepare if the Chinese plans fall through.

Because there may be other bids for 1992, no decision was taken on the Yugoslavian bid for 1992, which will be determined at the 1990 meeting in The Hague.

### LIBRARY HOLDINGS AVAILABLE TO SCHOLARS

Judith Merrill reminded WORLD SF members to have copies of their work sent to the official Canadian WORLD SF Depository: The Spaced Out Library, Lorna Toolis - Librarian, 40 St George Street, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2E4, Canada. Frederik Pohl added that copies should also be sent to the US WORLD SF Depository: Spencer Library, Alexandra Mason - Librarian, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas 66044, USA.

### COPYRIGHT DISPUTES

President Spinrad raised the issue of potential problems of English language copyright that may arise when the European Common Market enters its next stage of development in 1992. Some discussion ensued but no action was taken.

## BLOCKED CURRENCY

Heiner Rank spoke of organizing WORLD SF in his country. The East Germans could have a group membership under government supervision, but they prefer individual membership because it allows them more autonomy. The trouble is that they have trouble paying their dues individually because of blocked currency. The treasurer advised Rank to organize and collect dues for WORLD SF use within their own country. The president will send an official authorization on letterhead stationery regarding the formation of WORLD SF on this basis.

## NEWSLETTER

Although not present, Jim Goddard, the new editor of WORLD SF Newsletter, will be eagerly soliciting material. If necessary Gianfranco Viviani is willing to continue printing. All agreed that the Newsletter is the most important communication tool of the organization and must be returned to a timely schedule of publication. Gianfranco will supply his mailing lists to Harry Harrison.

## DIRECTORY

Gianfranco Viviani spoke of the difficulties he faced in trying to produce an accurate and useful new Directory. The previous one was published in 1983. Publication of a new WORLD SF Directory will be a goal for the coming year. All national secretaries are urged to send Viviani immediately updated membership lists, at the very least with accurate addresses. If possible, these lists should also include professions and languages of members.

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Harry Harrison reported that he had received monies in the past year from West Germany and from St Martin's Press (for Tales from the Planet Earth). He suggested a reception for all professionals at The Hague, to recruit. The room will be provided by the "worldcon". He will prepare a new membership form to be ready for the occasion. The delegates authorized him to spend up to £300.00 for this purpose.

## ELECTIONS, CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

In order to avoid ambiguous situations such as occurred last year with the elections, the President proposed two amendments to the Constitution regarding elections which were unanimously passed:

1. The term of the officers shall be two years (instead of one as before).
2. The Board of Governors shall secure at least one candidate for each office and present the slate to the annual meeting. Voting shall be by mail within 3 months after the meeting and those elected will take office the following January 1st.

When the new Directory is printed, the Constitution should be revised accordingly.

AWARDS

For the most arduous journey: Yang Xiao from Chengdu, Sichuan, China and Boris Zavgorodny from Volgograd, USSR.

President's Award for Special Efforts in Promoting SF in the World: Roger de Garis, Macmillan Publishers.

President's Award for Independence of Thought: Neil Barron, USA.

Harry Harrison Award for Contributions to Science Fiction: Vladimir Gopman, USSR.

Karels for Excellence in Translation:

1. Erik Simon, DDR, for translations from Bulgarian, Russian, Dutch, Czech, English and Hungarian into German.

2. Helene Collon, France, for translations of Philip K. Dick.

3. Tauno Petolo, Finland, for translation of Brian Aldiss' Heliiconia Trilogy.

4. William Wheeler, USA, publisher of SF International, for translating from French, Dutch, German, Spanish and Italian into English.

A special Karel Award was presented to Lee Wood and Sachiko Shibano for their assistance in interpreting for Yang Xiao.

PLANS FOR NEXT MEETING

The 1990 WORLD SF meeting will take place in The Hague, Netherlands in conjunction with the "worldcon". Organization is in the hands of the President and Treasurer and it will be publicized in future issues of the Newsletter.

There being no further business raised for discussion, the meeting adjourned.

Elizabeth Anne Hull, Recorder pro tem.

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**Editor's Comment:** since the meeting in San Marino most readers will have heard of the disturbing sequence of events that took place in China. Members of WORLD SF must ask themselves whether they wish their organization to proceed, subject to satisfactory arrangements, with the proposed meeting in 1991 in a country that practices repression on such a scale. It would be useful to have the thoughts of our members and the Board of Governors on this matter.

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Attendees at  
1989 WORLD SF Meeting,  
San Marino

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Takumi SHIBANO, Japan  
Sachiko SHIBANO, Japan  
Lee WOOD, France  
Norman SPINRAD, France  
Sam J. LUNDWALL, Sweden  
YANG Xiao, China  
Robert SILVERBERG, USA  
Karen HABER, USA  
Brian ALDISS, UK  
Margaret ALDISS, UK  
Darije DJOKICH, Yugoslavia  
Lucia P. ELPI, Italy  
Julian MAY, USA  
Silvano BARBESTI, Italy  
Gianfranco VIVIANI, Italy  
Lillana VIVIANI, Italy  
John BRUNNER, UK  
Piergiorgio NICOLAZZINI, Italy  
Ion HOBANA, Romania  
Pekka SUPINEN, Finland  
Krzysztof SOKODOWSKI, Poland  
Frederik POHL, USA  
Elizabeth Anne HULL, USA  
Wiktor BUKATO, Poland  
Jacek RODEK, Poland  
Eremai PARNOV, USSR  
Judith MERRIL, Canada  
Davorka TURKAD, Yugoslavia  
Ernesto VEGETTI, Italy  
Marco VIVIANI, Italy  
Karel THOLE, Belgium  
Boris A. ZAVGORODNY, USSR  
Mikhail A. SEMERNIKOV, USSR  
Alvaro DE SOUSA HOHSTEU, Portugal  
Elzbieta NOGTASEH, Poland  
Annemarie VAN EWYCK, Netherlands  
Heiner RANK, DDR  
Harry HARRISON, Ireland  
Patrizia THIELA, Italy  
Adam HOLLANEK, Poland  
Alessandro BANI, Italy  
Pascal DUCOMMUN, Switzerland

Total registered: 42. There were SF professionals from Hungary and West Germany attending Eurocon, but they did not sign in for the WORLD SF meeting. There may have been SF writers, editors, etc. from other countries likewise in San Marino who did not attend the meeting.

LETTERS  
LETTERS

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Neil Barron writes:

At the June 1989 meeting of the SF Research Association annual conference in Ohio, Fred Pohl presented me with the WORLD SF President's Award for "independence of thought in the field of science fiction". I'm sorry I could not attend the San Marino conference to accept it there, but I wish to thank the members of WORLD SF, and the awards committee, for this award.

While the award was given to me, it should serve as a recognition of the efforts of the many contributors to the three editions of my critical guide to SF, *Anatomy of Wonder* (1976, 1981, 1987). One fourth of the 900 pages of the third edition are devoted to SF not translated into English from thirteen languages, published from the 19th century through 1986. The chapters dealing with SF in Hungarian, Czech and Polish did not reach me in time to be included in this edition.

I mention this because work on the fourth edition will begin in early 1991 for publication in mid-1992. Very serious consideration is being given to eliminating coverage of untranslated SF from the 4th edition. This is not because such SF is unimportant. The reasons are principally two: 1) the guide is marketed in North America and the UK, primarily to libraries and to serious readers of SF and to some collectors. Few in the target audience read a foreign (non-English) language. Even if they did, most of the books are long out of print, or would be difficult to obtain. 2) Devoting 225 pages of an already lengthy book, priced at US\$39.95, to SF in languages and editions inaccessible to most of the guide's users is an expensive luxury, when at least some of the pages could be devoted to other, more useful features. A modest reduction in the price of the book might be possible, or at least no increase in the price, with the elimination of foreign language coverage, making it more affordable. The guide is not simply a work of collective scholarship; it is also an economic product aimed at specific audiences.

Complete elimination is not the only option, of course. Existing chapters could be updated by five years and additional chapters/languages added. Or only updates could be included, and additional chapters added. And there are other possibilities (one possibility is not economically practicable: a guide in English only to non-English SF).

A final decision will not be made for some months. I would welcome responses from WORLD SF members regarding the proposed elimination of non-English language coverage (translations would of course be included). If you argue for retention and/or expansion of such coverage, document your argument in detail.

Finally, let me reiterate in the strongest possible terms Jim Goddard's request in the last issue WORLD SF Newsletter, that members contribute regularly to this publication. The issues I've seen suggest a moribund organization, not one with 700 members. I realise

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there are foreign currency restrictions and other problems. Perhaps Mr Lem could be sent dues from eastern European members and in return contribute some of his US dollar royalties to the international WORLD SF organization. He could spend lev in Sofia or Koruna in Praha; or maybe not. If WORLD SF members are as imaginative as I think they are, solving such problems should be child's play.

(Members wishing to write to Neil Barron can do so at: 1149 Lime Place, Vista, Ca. 92083, USA. If you have an opinion at all on the elimination of non-English language coverage from Anatomy of Wonder it's probable that what you have to say will be of interest to other members of WORLD SF, so why not send a copy of your comments for possible publication in this Newsletter?)

Daryl F. Mallet writes:

My name is Daryl F. Mallet, and I am a member of SFWA. I am currently doing research for a book on SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY AWARDS. I have been in touch with quite a few writers and academics in other countries, looking for information about foreign (non American or British) awards. Unfortunately, only from Canada did I receive any real information (The Casper Award).

I have heard about all kinds of awards: The Aelita(USSR); the Gigamesh(Spain); the Prix Apollo(France), etc., but I have no information. I'm sure there are also awards in other countries such as Norway, Sweden, Japan, China, Greece etc. If any WORLD SF member has information that would help would they please send it to me.

The information I need for the book is:

The name of the award and the country it comes from  
A physical description of the award(i.e. plaque, cheque, trophy etc)

Who founded the award and when

Who gives the award(what organization or individual does the award represent)

Who votes on the award

A list of winners(author, title of work, publisher, editor name of fanzine etc)

Any information that WORLD SF members can provide would be most appreciated and welcome.

(Write to Daryl Mallet at U.C. Riverside - Library, Eaton Collection, PO Box 5900, Riverside, CA 92517, USA)

Forrest J. Ackerman writes:

After a 10-year search for a final resting place for the sci-fi and fantasy collection that I have spent since 1926 amassing (40,000 books, "all" the American magazines and considerable quantities of the prozines of other countries, thousands of fanzines since I contributed the first article on the first page of the first one - The Time Traveller - in 1932; 125,000 motion picture stills; etc; etc; etc. In all approximately 300,000 items of an imaginative nature) I believe at last I have achieved success. In the past decade if a vegetarian I could have been well fed by the number of carrots dangled in front of my nose by the Mayor of Los Angeles, representatives of Disney and Universal motion picture studios, the

manager of the *Queen Mary*, individuals and groups from half a dozen cities, and so on. But at last I seem to have found a wealthy philanthropist who plans to create three museums out of my holdings; one on the west coast of America, one on the east and ...one in Europe! Legal papers are being drawn up as of the middle of May. (Forrest Ackerman can be contacted at: 2495 Glendower Avenue, Hollywood, California 90027, USA)

Brian Aldiss writes:

How very pleasant to read the letter of thanks for his WSF President's Award from Neil Barron. As far as I remember, we have never received letters of thanks from any previous recipients. I have received a pleased and modest letter of thanks privately from Vladimir Gopman of Moscow for his Harrison Award.

The awards often afford valuable recognition to someone who has been working in the field of fantasy/SF for a long while without apparently receiving much in the way of kudos. Some years ago we presented an award to Denise Terrel, who organises SF symposia at the University of Nice, where she teaches. I saw her blue acrylic monolith on display when I was in Nice, and realised how much it was esteemed as a tribute to her hard work. A particularly useful award when we have so few French members in WSF.

It was good to see Boris Zavgorodny at San Marino. He had made his way from Volgograd, where he organises the 'Winds of Time' SF society. It was his first sight of the world beyond the Soviet Union, and he had travelled individually - an encouraging sign of glasnost. We hope to see him in Den Haag next year.

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NEWS

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The Chinese chapter of WORLD SF sent an emissary to San Marino, Yang Xiao, from Chengdu, Sichuan. Communication was hampered by the fact that Yang Xiao's interpreter had fallen ill; so she bravely faced delegates alone, with little English and a lot of determination. As mentioned elsewhere in this Newsletter, she was not able to satisfy us on a number of points; although it has been agreed in the past that, to fulfil the promise of our title, a WSF meeting should be held in the East, we were unable to reach any definite decision. Yang Xiao flew back to China, as it happened, at the time of the dramatic events when the army moved into Tiananmen Square in Peking, killing many students and others. There were also reports of buildings burning in Chengdu. We sent messages of sympathy to both Xiao and to Wang Fengzhen in Peking. Wang Fengzhen's genial presence will be recalled from our Zagreb meeting. Both have written back to me. Both hope that a meeting will take place in Chengdu in the near future. (B.W.A.)

Several WORLD SF members have had new books published since the last Newsletter: James Gunn has produced his long awaited *New Encyclopaedia of Science Fiction* (Viking, USA and UK). Illustrated, with some plates in colour, the book brings the story up-to-date,



and is particularly strong on strange minor movies. The first volume of David Wingrove's seven book Chung Kuo sequence, *The Middle Kingdom* (New English Library), has appeared. The story details events at the turn of the 22nd century, when the world has been ruled for two hundred years by the Chinese. The book was launched with a strong publicity programme, and was available in simultaneous hardcover and trade paperback editions. Brian Aldiss' latest offering is *A Romance of the Equator: Best Fantasy Stories* (Gollancz).

Here's an example of the sort of thing that makes a WSF meeting of value to a writer. One of the pleasantest surprises in San Marino was to meet with Mariarosario Iuorio, who is studying my writing at the University of Naples. She drove over from Naples with her husband and we spent some while discussing *Helliconia*. I'm hoping to get to lecture in Naples at some future date.

Margaret and I were back in Italy a month after the San Marino visit, to watch the filming of my novel of 1973, *Frankenstein Unbound*. The film is being made by the Mount Company, and directed by Roger Corman - the first film he has directed for nineteen years. Among the attractive locations used are the old city of Bergamo, which stands in for Geneva of 1816, and Bellagio, where the Villa Melzi stands in for Byron's Villa Diodati. Melzi is glamorously situated on the shores of Lake Como. We saw some of the rushes, which looked very beautiful: sinister things happening in the foreground and, in the background, the lake and magnificent cumulus clouds.

The part of Joe Bodenland (or Buchanan, as he is in the film) is played by John Hurt, with his usual verve, with whom we had some pleasant times. It was strange to meet my embodiment of Mary Shelley, played by Bridget Fonda, niece of Jane Fonda.

The completed film, to be called Roger Corman's *Frankenstein Unbound*, will be shown at Cannes next year, and will be distributed by Twentieth Century Fox in the USA and Warner throughout the rest of the world. We expect to be in Cannes for the opening.

With us in Italy was my partner in Avernus Media, Frank Hatherley, and our Avernus publicity lady, my daughter Wendy. We are hoping to do a further film with Roger Corman - *Dracula Unbound*. I also hope to visit Albania in 1990, with Wendy as photographer. We may see a meeting of WSF in Tirana yet...

Brian Aldiss

WORLD SF member Malcolm Edwards who for many years has been in charge of the impressive and expanding Gollancz SF series of hardcover and paperback books has left Gollancz and now, apparently, works for Grafton Books, part of the Rupert Murdoch empire. Interesting things will doubtless happen.

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### FROM THE PRESIDENT

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At our annual meeting in San Marino in May 1989, two bids for the 1991 WORLD SF meeting were presented, one from Krakow, Poland, and another from Chengdu, Sichuan, China.

While the details of the Polish bid were quite complete, the details of the Chinese bid were somewhat sketchy, owing in part to translation difficulties, and in part to the fact that the Chinese delegate, Yang Xiao, was not the chairman of the bidding committee, was not in possession of full details, and did not have the authority to commit to specifics.

Nevertheless, because WORLD SF has never had a meeting in that part of the world, there was a general consensus, at the time, expressed by a vote at the San Marino meeting, to hold the 1991 meeting in China if it proved feasible. Our members in Krakow graciously agreed to serve as a backup site for 1991 in case China proved impractical, provided they were notified in time to finalize their arrangements.

The Chinese bid received the majority of the votes at the meeting, but as provided by the by-laws as interpreted by the President, since more than one quarter of those voting did not concur, the final decision was deferred to a mail vote or a decision by the board of directors.

This all happened shortly before the unfortunate events in Tianamen Square. Since then, I have received communications from China to the effect that they believe they will hold the 1991 meeting, another result of the severe language problems that pertained in San Marino.

I have written back to the Chinese explaining the situation, setting out a series of practical conditions for any meeting in China in 1991 - reasonable hotel prices, cheap travel from Peking to Chengdu, no expenses to the WORLD SF treasury, and perhaps, as discussed with Wiktor Bukato, the possibility of cheap charter flights to China from a city in Europe, either arranged by the Chinese, or possibly through LOD, the Polish national airline.

As diplomatically and fully as I could without being assured of the total privacy of the communication, I tried to approach the delicate central question. Since this is a political question, and WORLD SF is an apolitical organization, I am now asking the membership for advice on this question:

*If China presents a practical proposal for the 1991 meeting, would it be right or wrong for WORLD SF to hold an annual meeting in China under the present political conditions?*

I have talked to many people about this, and there seem to be two schools of thought.

One is that we cannot hold a meeting in China because, by agreeing to do so, WORLD SF might be putting itself in the position of seeming to endorse the present Chinese government and its actions,

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both in the eyes of the Chinese people and of the world, by holding an official meeting in China even tenuously under its auspices.

The other school of thought is that not holding a meeting in China, because of the actions of the Chinese government, would only serve to further isolate the Chinese intellectual community from the world at large and might be taken as the abandonment of solidarity with our Chinese members in what might very well be an hour of need.

I also outlined to the Chinese certain more or less frankly political requirements for any possible meeting in China - namely that we would require the Chinese government itself, through some agency, to publicly assure WORLD SF total control of the proceedings and the freedom of all WORLD SF members, Chinese or otherwise, to attend the meeting, without any exceptions.

I further stipulated that such assurances must be given prior to any decision, since they would be a key factor determining it.

That is where the situation stands at present. I have not heard back from Sichuan. We must decide on the site of the 1991 meeting at or before the 1990 meeting in September in The Hague. Because they would need over a year lead-time to book space for a meeting in Krakow, our members in Poland would like an earlier decision than that.

The board of directors has the power to decide under the by-laws, but because of the delicate and complex nature of the decision, I would like to make it as a consensus of the membership. Due to the complexities of what has to be decided, the incomplete information, and the timeframe needed by Krakow, a formal mail vote is not feasible.

Instead, what I would like would be for as many members as possible to send me their viewpoints, so that the necessary flexibility of the board of directors can be guided by knowledge of the general views of the membership.

Write me a letter, or just send me a postcard checking off option 1, 2 or 3:

1. Hold the 1991 meeting in Chengdu, China if the conditions outlined by the president are met.
2. Under no condition hold the 1991 meeting in China. Instead, accept the bid to hold the 1991 meeting in Krakow, Poland.
3. Put off the decision of the site of the 1991 meeting till the 1990 meeting in The Hague, bearing in mind that that may make it impossible for our Polish members to host the meeting.

The board of directors will make the final decision among these three options in time to have it published in the next Newsletter, but as President, I pledge that there will be no decision made contrary to the wishes of any general consensus of the membership that might present itself to me via this process.

NORMAN SPINRAD, President-WORLD SF,  
1 rue Maitre Albert, Paris 75005, France.

EDITOR'S  
PLEADINGS

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At the risk of re-pleading some of the pleas I made in the last issue of this newsletter, I want to talk again about membership involvement in this publication.

Those of you who have read sequentially through this Newsletter will have noticed that the WORLD SF meeting in San Marino declared the Newsletter to be the most important communication tool of the organization. In a sense it is the main artery through which the blood of WORLD SF should flow. The lifeblood of the organization consists of the activities of its members, no matter how large or how small these activities are. Members of WORLD SF in other countries can only share in your activities and achievements if you choose to allow them to.

A resolution was passed in San Marino to the effect that the Newsletter must be returned to a timely schedule. I naturally go along with this, but can see little point in sending out a Newsletter full of empty pages. The contents of the issue you are holding in your hands represents all the contributions I have received from members and officers since the last Newsletter early this year.

My plea, once again, is this: involve yourselves in the Newsletter, send me details of your activities, no matter how trivial they may seem to you; send me reports on SF related events in your country, express an opinion about something relevant to our organization. National officers could even appoint someone to act as Newsletter correspondent for their country.

With no great expectations I give below deadline dates for the Newsletter for 1990:

Issue published March 1990: deadline 31st January 1990  
Issue published June 1990: deadline 30th April 1990  
Issue published September 1990: deadline 31st July 1990  
Issue published December 1990: deadline 31st October 1990

All contributions should be in English, and should preferably be typewritten.

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WORLD SF Newsletter is edited by Jim Goddard, Flat 4, 13 Lockwood Street, DRIFFIELD, North Humberside, YO25 7RU, England. It is published by WORLD SF, the international organization of science fiction professionals. The contents of this Newsletter are Copyright (c) 1989 by WORLD SF.

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