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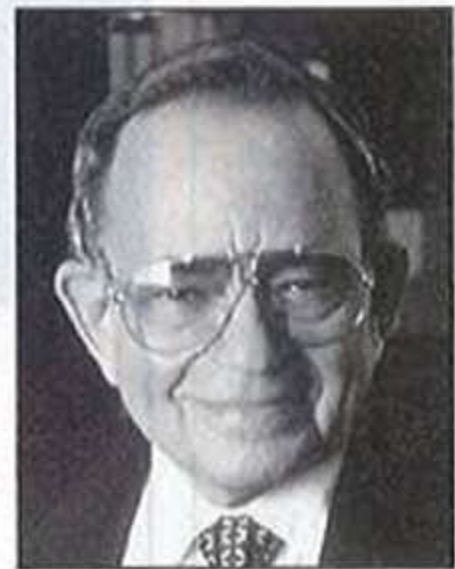
CHICAGO OBSERVER

BY STEVEN R. STRAHLER



They would be what you would call distant cousins

Leo Melamed, the former Chicago Mercantile Exchange chairman who also is a science fiction buff, has written a sequel to his 1987 novel, "The Tenth Planet." He says he shipped off the first 100 pages of "Cousins" to New York literary agent Gail Hochman, whose clients include Scott Turow. Her office confirmed receipt last week. "She has taken it home to read, and I don't think she can make any comments at this point," says an aide. "The Tenth Planet," published here by Bonus Books Inc., tells of an alien civilization encountering Pioneer 10, launched from Cape Canaveral in 1972 as the first spacecraft destined to leave the solar system. "Cousins" picks up the tale and recounts attempts to contact earthlings in response to a plaque on the craft designed to convey where it came from and who sent it. Claims Mr. Melamed: "I'm a much better writer in fiction than I was then."



Leo Melamed