

From PMS

To JNWH

Date 27 July 1971

Booker Prize 1971

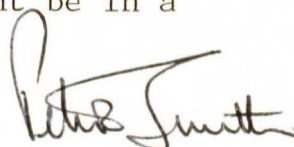
I have agreed the attached press release with Marilyn Edwards and have told her to go ahead and issue it.

While agreeing with the way in which she has expressed the reason for Malcolm Muggeridge's withdrawal from the judging panel as being the best and most reasonable way, it is of course not going to fool the Press. There are going to be follow up telephone calls either to her or me, and we have agreed to take the following line should this occur:

1. I don't know what books have been submitted to the judges
2. I therefore have not read any of them
3. I am therefore not in a position to comment on Mr Muggeridge's feelings on any of the books
4. We regret very much that he has seen fit to resign from the panel of judges at this stage

I have asked Marilyn Edwards to 'phone George Hardinge who is going to agree the press release with Malcolm Muggeridge. If MM agrees with the release, I have suggested that George Hardinge requests that he does not answer any press queries that are directed to him personally along the following lines:

"It would not be right for me to comment on any of the books that I have seen as a judge of the 1971 Booker Prize whilst the judging is still in progress. However, when the prize has been awarded, I might be in a position to discuss the matter then".



Pres

Please do not do anything but ring
Maryn Edwards - 580 6321.

BOOKER PRIZE 1971

Owing to a general lack of sympathy with entries for this year's Booker Prize for Fiction Mr. Malcolm Muggeridge has felt it necessary to withdraw his services as a judge.

Mr. Philip Toynbee (see below for his biographical details) replaces Mr. Muggeridge on the panel of judges, the other judges being Mr. John Gross (Chairman), Lady Antonia Fraser, Mr. Saul Bellow and Mr. John Fowles.

The winner will be announced at the beginning of November.

Lad Hardinge knows about this

Miss Edwards wants to put in

trade press tonight - pl. ring
her
only.