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press release

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New Judges for 1970 Booker Prize

Four of the Judges who will choose the winner of the 1970 Booker Prize for fiction are new to the task - only Dame Rebecca West will be carrying on from last year. They are David Holloway, Literary Editor of the Daily Telegraph, who is Chairman, Antonia Fraser, Ross Higgins and Professor Richard Hoggart.

Biographical notes on the judges are attached.

The Booker Prize, launched in October 1968, was awarded for the first time in April this year to P.H. Newby for his novel Something to Answer For. Worth £5,000 (tax-free) to its winner, it is Britain's biggest fiction prize, and books by writers from the Commonwealth and the Republics of Ireland and South Africa are also eligible.

Once again, a short-list will be released for publication and speculation when the judges have narrowed their choice to the final six contenders. This device, an innovation for British literary prizes when it was announced last year (the Scottish Arts Council has now followed suit), aroused a modest amount of comment earlier this year but the hysterical atmosphere which precedes the award of, for instance, the Prix Goncourt, was never approached. Perhaps the contrast is due to national characteristics, perhaps to tradition or talk thereof - only time will tell.

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