

28/6/68. Hunts Barn, Mayfield Sussex.

English / Panel

The following are rough notes of the provisional decisions taken at yesterday evening's meeting at the Booker flat at which John, Mike, Tom Maschler, Jill Mortimer and myself were present. None of the long and involved discussions by which these decisions were reached is recorded.

TIMING

- 1) Eligible titles would be published between 1st January and 1st December in the Award Year.
- 2) The public announcement of the award, telly dinner, etc. would take place before Easter in the following year.
- 3) The panel would be expected to have reached their decision some six weeks before the day of the announcement, so that the winning publisher and author can be notified, and the publisher can be sure of having the book in stock on announcement day.
The problem here is going to be discretion and secrecy.
- 4) On this basis the panel would have two months, say, January and February, to reach their final decision, including reading the last published books in the award period. This would still leave a good run-up period during which press speculation about who is the winner could be encouraged.

TITLE

There have been many suggestions but it was generally agreed that Mike Herder's suggestion of
THE BRITANNIA PRIZE
is much the best so far ; quite good enough for Booker's Board on the one hand and the Publisher's Association on the other to consider it seriously as the possible final title.

PANEL

- 1) Should consist of five members, each with an equal vote.
- 2) Should have a Chairman who would be one of the above five.
- 3) Should consist of
 - a) a literary editor.
 - b) a novel reviewer
 - c) a novelist
 - d) a publisher
 - e) a distinguished outsider with literary interests.
- 4) The literary editor should be the Chairman.

English / Panel

NAMES FOR
FIRST PANEL

- 1) It was agreed that either Jack Lambert of the Sunday Times or Bill Webb of the Guardian should be asked to be Chairman.
It should be possible to decide which in the very near future.
- 2) For the reviewer the names of Alvarez, Tanner, Pritchett, Raymond and Kermode were put forward.
- 3) For the novelist the names of William Golding and Graham Greene were put forward.
- 4) For the publisher the names of Robin Denniston, Tom Maschler, Raleigh Trevelyan, and David Farrer were put forward.
- 5) For the outsider the names of Henry Moore, Peggy Ashcroft, Roy Jenkins and Michael Foot were put forward.

CONDITIONS
OF
ENTRY

- 1) Each British Publisher, large or small, who regularly publishes fiction, may submit two separate titles (but no more) published in each award year.
- 2) The award will be for fiction only.
- 3) The author must be a citizen of the British Commonwealth who writes in the English language and ^{whose English work} has been published in England during the dates of the year's award.
- 4) Publishers must send in six copies of each novel they want to submit.
- 5) The panel shall be free to ask to see any novel that is eligible even if the publisher has not submitted it.

U.K.

CITATION

Formally this will be 'The best novel in the opinion of the judges' that falls within the conditions of entry.

It will be suggested to the panel of judges that the idea of the award is that it should be given to a novel 'capable of communicating with an intelligent general audience' - or some similar wording.

Conf. letter / Book

FINANCE

- 1) Bookers will pay the prize of £5,000 to the author at the party when the winner is announced.
- 2) As a maximum Bookers will contribute £2,500 to the expenses (principally remuneration of the judges) but they hope that in practise it will work out considerably less than this.
- 3) Judges will be paid £250 each for the year's judging, total £1,250 out of 2) above.
- 4) The publisher of the prize-winning author will be required :
 - a) To spend not less than £500 on direct advertising of the winning title after the announcement of the award. Bookers might consider supplementing this if there is cash left over from the maximum expense figure in 2) above.
 - b) To guarantee to have at least 3000 copies of the prizewinning title in stock and available on the day of the announcement. He will get sufficient warning for this on the timetable listed above.

PUBLICITY
~~RMM~~

AND

ADMINISTRATION

Jill Mortimer has offered to take on the whole of both of these. She will do this in her usual working time with the Publisher's Association. Booker's will only be asked to pay 'out of pocket expenses' to come out of Finance 2) above. It would seem that this would be postage, telephone, and whatever entertaining and travelling may be necessary on the promotion front.

ANNOUNCEMENT

A sizeable banquet with maximum publicity should be the objective, television etc, if we can get it. This would be financed by sale of tickets for the occasion.