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# press release

EMBARGOED UNTIL 7 p.m., TUESDAY 21 APRIL 1970

We would be grateful if all journalists attending the Stationers' Hall reception would make this a verbal embargo until the announcement is made officially, when the Rt. Hon. Miss Jennie Lee will present the prize, so that the surprise element will be as great as possible.

## BOOKER PRIZE

The winner of the second £5,000 Booker Prize for fiction is Bernice Rubens for her novel The Elected Member. This announcement was made by David Holloway on the evening of 21 April in the Stationers' Hall at a reception to celebrate the event at which the Rt. Hon. Miss Jennie Lee presented Miss Rubens with a trophy and a cheque for £5,000.

60 books were considered by the judges, David Holloway (Chairman), Lady Antonia Fraser, Dame Rebecca West, Ross Higgins and Professor Richard Hoggart, who released a short-list of six contenders a month ago: A.L. Barker (John Brown's Body), Elizabeth Bowen (Eva Trout), Iris Murdoch (Bruno's Dream), Bernice Rubens (The Elected Member), William Trevor (Mrs. Eckdorf in O'Neills Hotel) and Terence Wheeler (The Conjunction).

David Holloway said on behalf of the judges:

"It was not the reputation of the writer, but the quality of the book that mattered. For this reason we have passed over a first novel of great promise by Terence Wheeler, and books by three women writers of accomplishment in their very different ways, whose work has been widely acclaimed over many years - A.L. Barker, Elizabeth Bowen and Iris Murdoch. This left us with a winner and a clear runner-up. In many years, I am sure, William Trevor's Mrs. Eckdorf in O'Neill's Hotel would have run away with the prize. It is a work of great quality - tremendously funny and deeply understanding of the ways of the Irish. But this year the judges unanimously decided that the prize should go to The Elected Member by Bernice Rubens.

"Here was a book that clamoured to be given the prize. It took hold of the judges' imaginations and quite simply would not be denied. Although the author has given it a very exact and much-detailed background of life in the Jewish community of the East End of London, the problem that it is discussing so brilliantly is universal.

"This is obviously not the place to review this book but merely to record our admiration for a great achievement, very much in the best tradition of the English novel and we are convinced a very worthy winner of this important and valuable prize."

Bernice Rubens, who at the present time writes and directs documentary films on welfare subjects and recently won an award for her film Stress, is the author of three previous novels. She is married to novelist, poet and wine merchant Rudolph Nassauer and has two daughters.

For any further information please telephone Marilyn Edwards 01-580 6321