

THE TRANSATLANTIC FAN FUND

On the second day of the Coroncon I convened an informal Committee of all the available leaders of British fandom to discuss the offer by Don Ford and the Cincinnati group to help a British fan attend the Philcon. The Committee consisted of myself, Ken Slater, Vinç Clarke, Chuck Harris, James White, Fred Robinson, Fred Brown, and representatives of the Liverpool and Manchester groups. It was decided:-

1. That there was not enough time to send a suitable representative to the Philcon.
2. That a permanent Two-Way Transatlantic Fan Fund be set up to help both British and American fans to attend each other's Conventions.
3. That the immediate objective be to send a British fan to the American Convention of 1954, as suggested by Ford and his group.
4. That the fan to go should be nominated by British fandom.

Accordingly nominations from British fandom are hereby invited for a British fan to represent us at the San Francisco World Convention and Westercon in early September, 1954. Nominations must be sent to me before the 15th October. They may be accompanied by a 'speech' of not more than 100 words in support of the nomination. I will find out which of the people nominated will be able to go and their names will be published in the next issue of HYPHEN, together with their proposers' 'campaign speeches'. (If it does nothing else, all this will at least produce some egoboo.) The voting will then take place.

The following nominations have already been made.

Vinç Clarke (by George Charters)
Derek Pickles (by A. Clark)
Ken Slater (by Walt Willis)
Tony Thorne (by Fred Robinson)
James White (by Chuck Harris)

(Chuck Harris, Bob Shaw and myself have declined to be nominated.) The above proposers are asked to let me have their 'campaign speeches'. The nominees are asked to let me know whether they are available to go. They should remember that the trip will take at least 3 weeks by the slowest (and cheapest) means of transportation, and that they may have to meet part of the cost themselves.

I was delegated the job of arranging the voting procedure but I'd like to get at least the tacit consent of British fandom to what I propose. So I'm publishing my suggestions now in time for you to register any objections you might have. If none has been received by the 15th October I'll assume the following proposals are agreed to.

1. The ballot to be secret, but each fan must vote personally and sign his ballot paper. No proxy votes or block votes from clubs.
2. Each voter to be allowed a first and second choice. It's possible that the person chosen may prove unable to go after all and this will make it easier to decide on who the second choice of fandom is.
3. There should be qualifications for voters, to prevent such an eventuality as, say, the entire population of Trowbridge, Wilts, voting for Norman Wansborough. They must be (a) active already in fandom to the extent of having subscribed or contributed to at least one fanzine or joined a fan club or organisation; and (b) show their interest in the project by making a certain minimum contribution to the Fund. Say 2/6?
4. It's my own opinion that American fans should be allowed a voice in choosing among the candidates nominated by British fandom, because the whole success or failure of the project is likely to depend on whether they want to meet the fan that's going. The Americans have left it up to us to select our representative any way we like but I think it would be good sense as well as good manners to let them vote too, on the same terms as British fans. The qualifying contribution in their case might be 50¢. Comments?
Bacover quotes filched from writings and conversation of Elsberry, Willis, Shaw, Clarke (Vinç), Campbell (Bert), Mahaffey, Harris, Taylor, Enever, Ryan, Bloch, Brown, Bulmer, Ford, White, Roles, and others.