

From E.C.Tubb - "some constructive suggestions for T.A.F.F":-

3-11-54

"Also;

If there were more than wanted in the kitty at the end of the voting, why not send two or more reps? Winner gets full fare. What's left goes to second winner and, if still more, down to third.

Which brings up a new principle;

I take it that all nominees are both able and willing to go if elected. It seems to be a waste of time running a list of candidates who are only there for the fun of it and with no real intention of going. So; why not ask for a bond? A fiver say, as proof of good intent, money to be returned if nominee is genuinely prevented from fulfilling his bargain, death, illness etc, but forfeit for any other reason."

1-12-54

From W.A.Willis to Candidates only: relevant extract:-

"Some members of the London Circle have proposed that each candidate should be required to post a £5 bond to guarantee that they are serious about accepting nomination. One doesn't like this sort of thing among friends, but I can see their point of view..that anyone prepared to make sacrifices in September to go to the States should be willing to make some now. However it's possible that some of you might not be able for some reason to send in £5 just at the moment and I shouldn't like to refuse your nomination on that account --especially since I haven't really got any mandate from fandom for such an action. So I propose merely to ask you to send in the fiver. I will state on the ballot form the names of the candidates who have done so and leave it to the voters to draw their own conclusions..... I enclose £5 which I understand will be forfeited if I am elected and do not go, for any other reason than physical incapacity. (Note: the £5 will of course be refunded to all unsuccessful candidates.)

COPIES OF CERTAIN LETTERS

CONCERNING T.A.F.F.

2-12-54

From Ken Slater's Ompazine:

"Quite apart from the objection I have to the general idea of this "bond" business, there is also the clause that nominees are called upon to sign. It reads:- "

(Here KFS quotes the underlined portion as above.)

"A most unhappy set of conditions, that. I can imagine several quite good reasons why, apart from personal physical inability, someone might not be able to go at the last moment. Apart from the possibility that he has been shoved into jug for failing to pay the fine levied upon him when he has ignored the warning of the Keeper of the Printed Books, what happens if his wife, child, parent, etc., are seriously ill? Suppose he is on a jury, or a witness? Suppose, like me, he has to have authority to leave the UK, which authority can be revoked at any time - one of the snags about being on the reserve, I have to say "Pretty please" to the WO. - up to the actual time of departure? Oh no, there are many other "just causes" which might prevent the winning candidate from taking advantage of the chance, apart from physical incapacity.

The ideal answer here is to have the runner-up standing by, as close to the time as possible. Even that is not a good solution, but to hold a throat over the candidate's head..hell, London fandom will be charging their water pistols with sulphuric acid next!

Contd.

SLATER OPAZINE CONTINUED.

"I DECLINE!

Dear Walt, and other addressees,

In view of the unfansmanlike position adopted by 'some members of the London Circle', who have suggested that candidates nominated by the Trans Fan Fund Trip should be called upon to post a bond, I feel regretfully compelled to decline the nomination which Peter Campbell has so kindly made for me.

I cannot recall, when Walt and I, with a number of others, discussed the setting up of the Fund, that anyone suggested after I'd nominated Walt to run the Fund - that he should post a bond as security for the money he would collect. Nor can I recall in the fandom I used to know any proposals of a similar nature being made in similar circumstances. My conclusion is therefore that the proposal comes from a newer - and if this is their attitude - undesirable section of fandom. My desire to be associated with such is non-existent.

Please note that this is a personal protest against this suggestion, and that I am still in favour of the fund and what it represents - or should represent - which is to say the good fellowship and spirit of cooperation which exists in true fandom. My support for the fund will continue - and I think I can claim that I have already contributed a sum in excess of the amount of the bond to the fund.

In conclusion, should any other nominee be in the unfortunate position of not being able to raise a sum of £5 to place as his bond, I am prepared to place that bond for him. This will then avoid that unfortunate suggestion made by Walt that it will be publicly disclosed that a nominee has not placed his bond. With the exception that I will not, knowingly, extend the offer to any member of the London Circle who has supported the infamous suggestion which is the subject of my disgust. I trust that Walt will offer me guidance on this point." Yours fantastically

From Eric Bentcliffe;

" I DO NOT DECLINE

3-12-54

Dear Walt

Thanks for your circular letter, enclosed you will find one signed copy of this, and also a money order for £5-0-0 which can be cashed at the Newtownards Rd Post Office. I hope that this is fairly close to home.

I received a letter, subject TAFF from Ken Slater this morning, and I must say that I agree with most of his comments, appertaining to this £5 bond. However, I am not declining because of this, for I can not rule out the possibility that this idea stemmed from the warped mind of a certain infamous member of the London Circle (I think you will know who I mean without a naming of names), and that the intention of this gambit is that of reducing the "opposition". In one or two ways, (1) The Trufans are expected to get excited (sic) about the bond and decline in protest (2) the family men amongst the candidates who are always rather hard pressed for cash at this time of, are expected to be unable to post a bond and thus lose some votes. I may be completely off-beam with these statements, but if a factor cannot be eliminated, it must be taken into account. And it should also be expressed.

Another reason why you have my Bond is that : I certainly do want to go to America, and meet all the nice people with whom I have been corresponding with for so long. I consider this matter of the bond rather "unfortunate", I do not believe that there is any fan (with the usual one exception) who would accept a nomination, and then purposely go awol. And it is an insult to any trufan to imply that he would do so, and this is what the bond implies. From a 'business' viewpoint, the bond is a good idea, and the spirit of it legitimate, but since when has fandom been run on business lines.

I am very sorry that Ken has decided to decline nomination because of this bond biz, for even though I want to go to USA very much, I must admit that Ken has done far more for fandom than I, and even though he does not truly represent current fandom (who does!) his good works must surely make him one of the most eligible candidates. I repeat, this thing is 'unfortunate', and I am afraid that it may cause a hell of a storm in the fanish tea-cup. Best wishes

Copies to: Torry Jeeves and Ken Slater....I haven't Ted's current address and I don't feel inclined to treat Mackenzie to a stamp. In any case, the typer will not do

more than five copies. P.S. Since we are to be business like, would you be as good as to let me have a receipt for the Fiver...it's not that I don't trust you...! Your reaction to this P.S. will be the same as the tru-fans to the bond idea.

From W.A. Willis:-

THE TRANSFANFUND 1955

6-12-54

"Dear Eric, Terry, Stu, Ken and Tod,
OK boys, relax. Somebody has to make a decision here before this develops into a full scale row, and it'll have to be me. I cannot have Ken Slater withdrawing from the election in protest against a principle which hasn't been approved by representative fandom, so I have decided to cancel the bondposting proposal. Will you all please strike out the relevant portion of that circular and return it to me signed? Thanks.

From my own personal point of view I'd like to say that in the position I'm in, responsible for some £100 of other people's money, I don't see how I could on my own responsibility have turned down the proposal once it was made to me. I wholeheartedly agree that there is no doubt as to the integrity of the present candidates, but I felt I had to envisage the possibility that other candidates might be nominated who might not be so reputable... If not this year, then some later year. It was a question of setting a precedent which might possibly have turned out very handy at some time in the future. However in view of the attitude of Ken Slater, and his standing in fandom particularly in regard to the Transfanfund, I feel I must drop this bond-posting question and let the proposers put it before fandom. I hope by then somebody else will be in charge of this fund...

Also personally, I'd like to say in my opinion this proposal was not a Machiavellian intrigue by some Svengali type in the London Circle, as has been suggested, and that no reflection was intended on the integrity of any of the candidates, by the originators of the proposal. This was one of the many suggestions made to me after discussion by some members of the London Circle. I myself only accepted it because it might set a useful precedent in case we do ever have a native Dogler type, not because I had anything but the highest opinion of the sincerity of the candidates. Best,

P.S. No mention will of course be made of this affair in the election literature, and I hope everyone will treat this correspondence as confidential."

From Ken Slater:-

7-12-54

"Dear Walt, Torry, Stu, Eric, and Tod,

Much as I appreciate the action you are taking, Walt, I feel the die is cast, the check slapped, the gauntlet on the ground (pick it up and shove it back on, bit cold out today).

The kicker comes in your P.S., of course, is what I'm getting at. In my OMEGA PM2 "I DECLINE" has been included and it has also gone to a number of other erstwhile foremost fans, so any attempt at secrecy is out, I fear. And, with all due respects to everyone, a withdrawal now, the upcoming of Slater on the ballotsheet, would rather look like a put-up job, wouldn't it?

And of course, would also allow anyone who felt like it to stand on their soapbox and scream "Slater dictates to Willis! Fascism is ripe and rampant in the ranks!" Whilst I do not share the views of your (Walt's) other correspondent in that this was part of a Machiavellian plot, the fact cannot be overlooked that now if the action suggested by you is taken, the way is open for some delightful intrigue - complete with a good salting of back-biting and outright rudery. Plus that, I know at least one nominee has already paid in his fiver. So forth and so on.

I honestly feel that the best thing to do at the moment is to let things stand - I have declined, the battle royal between Terry, Stu, Eric and Tod is to be waged, with side-line fight on the question of how the fund is to be administered, etc. The question of someone else to take over the fund - and as I mentioned in my other private letter to Walt I feel he is in a most invidious position in charge of the fund - is one we can sort out at the same time.

(Here follow various suggestions put forward by Ken. The letter continues:-)

"Needless to say, I'm sorry that my rather rapid action on issuing "I DECLINE" has heaved a whole mass of sand into the works - I guess Walt is so used to the slow moving Slater, weighted down by (b) army duties, that this swift response rather shook him." (Here follow personal remarks) "So there it is, folks. I declined, full well knowing the position it placed me in, and I don't want any change to be made because of that I am therefore not returning the agreement form, Walt. Sorry if this causes a further revision of your plans, but as I was the chap who made the thing public, it becomes obviously necessary that I'm the guy who was to jolly well lump it!"

From Ted Tubb:- copies to E.B. and WAW:-

7-12-54

Dear Ken,

I've read your open letter in the OMPA post mailing and there's something I think you should know before allowing yourself to go shooting off at the mouth without any real idea of whom you are insulting, and why.

I was the one who proposed the five pound bond.

I sent that suggestion, repeat; suggestion, to Walt with a raft of others because at the time I had the obviously mistaken idea that I should take an active interest in the fund. Apparently I was wrong. I didn't know then, and I'm not too sure now, that TAFF was a closed shop. I must remind you, however, that Walt was at perfect liberty to forget the idea or use it at his discretion. There was not, nor could there be, the slightest hint of pressure, force, do this - or else, business about it, and frankly, I am a little sick at the naked juvenility of the reaction as publicly displayed in your open letter.

If you meant to make a personal protest - then why not keep it that way? Why wash dirty linen in public - and why go out of your way to insult me? I'm not going to boast about how much I've contributed to TAFF - that is irrelevant, I assume that we each give what we can without any other motive than merely to help a good cause. I will give you credit for pure motivation in your protest - I'd hardly like to think that you would be guilty of a calculated bid for popularity, but don't you think that a little finding out of facts would have helped first?

To you, I know, fandom is a Great Thing and I admire you for what you have put into it. But really, Ken, don't you think that your resignation was, as well as being childish, a little unfair to all those who want to vote for you? We may not always agree on every point, but at least we should agree that little things should not be aggravated to major issues. Maybe we should forget the whole thing or, maybe, as you've spread the assumption that certain new-comers to the London Circle are to blame, you should publicise this letter as widely as your protest. Fairness is something we can't have too much of.

In closing, Ken, I regret that you no longer wish to associate with me, but I can hardly call myself a new-comer to fandom or the London Circle.

However, I'm old fashioned enough to still have a pathetic belief in free speech. We don't live beneath a dictator - yet!

In closing though, Ken, I would like to point out that Stu Mackenzie had nothing whatever to do with the bond suggestion and, in effect, the only thing I'm guilty of is in taking too great an interest in TAFF.

As for the reaction - to hell with it! I'm sick of the whole business. As ever."

From Ted Tubb, copies to KFS & WAW:-

7-12-54

"Dear Eric,

Walt sent me the copy of your letter re: the £5 deposit on the TAFF thing, and I feel that it is up to me to clarify the situation a bit before anyone goes off full-cocked on some wild assumption.

First, I was the one who suggested that the deposit would be a good thing. Me, all on my lonely own, unhelped, uninfluenced, unaided by any famous or infamous member of the London Circle. It was my very own brain-child and if any one is to be shot at then that person is me.

"I sent the suggestion to Walt along with a raft of others. I repeat; suggestion, apparently I was dumb enough to think that I should take an active interest in TAFF. I also sent him the reasons why I thought it would be a Good Thing, some of which he has put in his own circular letter, and apparently Walt thought it had some merit. Neither of us could guess at the reactions it has apparently aroused and, to be frank, I can't for the life of me see just what all the screaming is about. Let us forget the crocodile tears at the hard-hit family man. I am a family man and I know this, if I hadn't got a spare fiver now, I'm damn certain that I won't have a spare fifty or so when the time comes to go. TAFF doesn't pay for everything, you know, just the fare. And anyway, is anyone losing anything? The cash is merely a token of good faith as to intention and will be returned in full. Look on it as a form of saving against the Great Day. As for the bilge about 'trufon getting all excited and declining to go because they have been asked for a few quid' well, if that's the way they feel then to hell with them. I don't want no whining Bum representing me;

The whole matter may have been 'unfortunate', I'm not the slightest bit interested in defending the suggestion, it can be forgotten and I won't shed no tears. What I am startled about is your instinctive assumption that the whole thing originated with Stu Mackenzie. Why, Eric? What has Stu done that you should hate him so much? Let's be fair about this, no one denies you your right to dislike the man, but, in fairness to yourself, you are too nice a chap to keep on flogging a dead horse. Why not take a rest, eh?

I was amused at your calm assumption that 'trufon' shouldn't be 'insulted.' Yet, at the same time, you admit the bond is a good idea. TAFF, like it or not, is, or should be, run on business lines. Money has been collected for a purpose and any purpose which deals with money must, by definition, be run businesslike. Or do you think that there is a great big Santa Claus only too willing to pay out for everything connected with fandom? If there is, let me know, I'd like to meet him. Personally I think that you've missed the entire idea behind the bond, in your instinctive scream against Stu. There is no authority for saying that people will refuse to be nominated if they can't go. There is no grounds for believing that fens will not use the TAFF nomination scheme as a sort of popularity poll. Anyone will agree to be nominated, providing he has the comforting knowledge that, no matter what, he can always refuse. The bond was merely designed to bring the seriousness of the undertaking because people will hesitate when it comes to paying out if they are not serious. After all, you paid, didn't you?

In closing, Eric, I hope you won't still continue to believe that this whole thing was a subtle scheme leveled against the 'Trufon'. It wasn't. It was only because I thought it might be a good idea and, as the whole thing has been dropped, there needn't be any aftermath. I assure you that no insult was intended because, at the time I made my suggestion, the list of nominees hadn't been posted. I don't like fouding, but I do like fairness and, as you've expressed yourself - as you have a perfect right to do - you can now rest with the knowledge that everything is as before. I'm certainly not going to insist that it be carried out and, I must point out, that I still think I had the right to make a suggestion or suggestions without worrying about being torn apart by outraged fens.

Incidentally, may I wish you full success in the elections? "

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From WAW to the candidates:

"Dear Ken,

I'll refrain from making any comments on your actions in this affair and just say that your present attitude seems to me extremely odd. There seems to me absolutely no reason why you shouldn't now run in the election if you want to and certainly it would not involve any embarrassment to me or anyone else. The position is simply that a proposal was made, that it was put to the candidates, that a protest was made, and that the proposal was withdrawn. Any slight confusion caused by your Ompace comments will be corrected by a statement from me (which will now have to be issued in any case) and the whole matter will be forgotten immediately. On the other hand your present attitude if continued with is bound to make a mountain out of this quite

8-12-54

From WAW (Cont'd.):

trivial molehill and may even leave some people with the of course quite erroneous impression that you never wanted to run, used the bondposting proposal as a pretext to withdraw, and had your bluff called.

The position remains as set out in my last letter. The bondposting proposal has been shelved and the position is as it was before it was made. Candidates who have already sent in the money have had it returned to them. Others are asked to send in the undertakings with the bondposting part struck out. The same applies to you, Ken. I hope you will decide to run and let me have your undertaking before the weekend*, but since I've never had any intimation from you that you were willing to go I can't put your name on the ballot form without it.

As for your suggestions about the Fund, if you will let me have them in the form you want them published I will distribute them. The same applies to anyone else. As for the question of the Administrator of the Fund I would be happy to be rid of this thankless task and only took it out of a sense of duty and because I was the only fan not likely to be a candidate myself, and therefore the only person eligible. I looked forward to handing over the job to whoever goes to the States next year but if you feel this is a matter best dealt with by election perhaps you would make that proposal.

Would you please let me have a list of the non-OMPA members to whom your statement was sent? Best,

* or in any case before the 15th, when nominations close, but it would be a big help if you would let me know one way or the other before that."

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From KFS to ECT:

"Dear Ted,

8-12-54

First, please note that there are no copies of this to anyone, 'cept my file and you.

Second, I am surprised and somewhat dismayed to learn that the suggestion of the bond came from you.

Third, you should have received a copy of my letter on the 4th, as it was written, stencilled and mailed to the main people concerned within half an hour of my receiving Walt's circular. However I had not at that time read the OMPA mailing, and did not know of your address change. Hence the letter went - as I noted in my letter of yesterday others have - to Maida Vale.

Now for the meat of the matter. If the expression of an honest opinion, made without any coldly calculated consideration of the effects to or on me or others, is juvenile I am happy to plead guilty. I think I can claim that my opinions are usually honest, and usually offered immediately.

Everything so far connected with TAEF has been a matter of public discussion and a referendum (of sorts, admittedly, but still a referendum which has drawn the opinions of those interested) before any decision was taken. In this case it was not - why, I do not know. I can quite appreciate that your suggestion was made in all good faith, and I can quite see your point - although I deplore that view of fandom. As you will note from my comments, I disliked the suggestion to start with. I further disliked - and was really dismayed - at the suggestion that the names of those who had, and hadn't, placed a bond should be noted accordingly. That is really loading the dice. And I further disliked the clause "for any other reason than physical incapacity", which can hardly be the only just cause for failing to fulfil the contract.

As for finding out the facts, the facts were presumably those given in Walt's circular: "Some members of the London Circle have proposed.." If that was not the case, then Walt should, I feel, have said so. I would then have been able to write my letter to you instead of the larger part of active fandom. As for making a bid for popularity, I can assure you that idea did not enter my head - if any thing, I am currently expecting to lose what little popularity I have left. Not in connection with this, of course, tho it may have an effect at that, but in some other matters.

KFS to EGT (Cont'd.)

So far as a dictatorial attitude goes - that was one of my reasons for taking the action I did. It seemed - on the face of it - that Walt's decision had been taken rather on the basis of the expressed opinion of a small section of fandom, without any reference to the majority, which I feel is rather more "dictatorial" than my own reaction. You will note that in my letter of yesterday I have still refused nomination on that very ground - that if I accepted now, it would place me in the position of being "dictatorial".

Like you, I believe in free speech - but there was little freedom in the presentation of the "bond" suggestion as a fait accompli, with the threat that if one didn't pay, one would be publicly noted as such.

With regard to publicising your letter, I am only too pleased to do so, and will have it under way as soon as possible. I would, however, like your permission to edit out the last but one paragraph. "In closing Ken, I would like...Stu Mackenzie had nothing whatever..." etc. I did not connect him with it, myself. I did not connect anyone I know with the idea - I was frankly unable to think of anyone I considered likely to make the suggestion, either as a group or an individual. Hence my reference to a newer section of fandom - one I know nothing about. The personal differences of Stu Mackenzie and Eric Benteliff are something I know nothing about, and I must admit that Eric's letter came as even more of a shock to me than the "bond" suggestion had been. I therefore carefully refrained from mentioning either Eric's or Stu's name in my letter of yesterday - referring to Eric as "your other correspondent". I see no point in raising that here in the debate on the "bond" - it is entirely irrelevant to a difference of opinion between you and I on the need for posting a bond.

If you would give your agreement to the deletion of that para, I will get the rest out pronto.

I appreciate (going back a bit) that you are not a newcomer to either fandom or the London Circle; at the same time your suggestion is hardly one I'd have expected from you. However, rather than sever our relationship I am quite willing to offer a public apology for any personal affront you may consider I have put on you - although I would appreciate your permission to withhold the public part of the apology until the question of the "bond" has been decided.

On one point I will agree; the reference to any contribution I may have made to the Fund was stupid. I realised that after I'd sent it out. However, as I stated in the beginning, the entire thing was an immediate reaction and expressed an honest opinion; it could perhaps have been better expressed in parts, but it is an opinion that I still adhere to, and will continue to adhere to, although naturally should the scheme obtain the approval of fandom-in-general, my objections will be withdrawn. I shall not tear up my flag-cards and resign from fandom.

With best wishes for your success in the elections,"

H. Ken Bulmer to WAW:-

"Dear Walter,

There was quite a discussion at the Globe last night about the unwarranted abuse of the London Circle by Ken Slater in his declamation "I Decline!"

The London crowd have become very used to being the whipping post of British fandom. The fact that, when the Northern Con, after years of cribbing, eventually held a convention that, but for the good humour of the attendees would have been the fiasco of fan-legend, no derogatory remarks came from London has been conveniently ignored. It was felt that the latest instalment of the mud-bath had, perhaps, been too much. To recapitulate:

Ted Tubb, in all good faith, sent you a suggestion, with other suggestions, about the handling of T.I.F.F.

This particular suggestion you felt to be sound and so, as you had every right to do as manager of T.I.F.F., you incorporated it in your administration.

Ken Slater objected to the suggestion. He immediately wrote and circulated through

10-12-54

HKB to WAW (Cont'd.)

Fandom - to what extent is not yet clear - a malicious attack upon London Fandom. The fact that this manifesto was also a small-boy reaction to being left out of something does not materially affect the issue.

You reacted by deleting the offending suggestion, on the valid grounds that childish difference of opinion like this should not be allowed to stop Ken Slater from standing for TAFF. You exercised your authority as manager of TAFF in order to keep the Fund in being and functioning as it was intended.

Right - now everything would have been all right except that it was not known that Ted Tubb had made this suggestion. Blame had been apportioned to Stuart Mackenzie. There was also a regrettable letter from Eric Bonteliffe which incorrectly attributed the suggestion to Stuart Mackenzie. Accordingly: Ted Tubb wrote Ken Slater, informing him that Stuart Mackenzie was not the instigator; but that Ted himself was. He also asked Ken Slater to publish a retraction in the same manner as he had his declamation.

Ken Slater replied that he was dismayed that Ted Tubb had made the suggestion. He agreed that he would publish Ted Tubb's letter, except for the paragraph which proclaimed Stuart Mackenzie's innocence. Ken Slater also now threw blame on your shoulders by saying that you should have asked for a referendum from Fandom before proceeding with this suggestion. That this is not consistent with the previous proceedings of the fund is conclusively proved by the suggestion of a 10% retainer put forward by Ken Slater being incorporated into the administration without general vote.

There is now the position that the London Circle has been blackened by Ken Slater in Fandom and the London Circle feel that it is time these attacks ceased. When Ken Slater refers to a 'newer and undesirable section of fandom one can only assume that he is referring to Stuart Mackenzie, as, of the London Circle participants, all have been in Fandom for a considerably longer period than has Ken Slater. There has apparently been a 'foud' in being between Eric Bonteliffe and Stuart Mackenzie. As far as I know, Stuart Mackenzie has not sought to carry this 'foud' further in recent months, he has published his desire to forget it and he has refrained from publishing letters in his possession which would show the blame to fall squarely upon Eric Bonteliffe for this bad-feeling.

Therefore, in order to clarify the whole position, and bearing in mind your request for privacy has been shattered by Ken Slater's publication, the London Circle intend to publish without comment the whole of this unhappy correspondence. I was authorised to speak for the London Circle for involved. The information I quote above is true to my knowledge and belief at this time.

Will you therefore please let us have a copy of Ted Tubb's letter to you containing his suggestion of a £5 Bond.

We are not, at this juncture, concerned with the merits or otherwise of this suggestion. We feel that we have been cat-called long enough and wish to present to Fandom a reasoned case for our innocence. This will best be achieved by publication of these letters without comment of any kind from us.

The trouble stems from the lack of organisation in TAFF - and this means, merely, that there should be some constitution or set of rules. There is absolutely no slur whatsoever upon your name. You have acted in good faith throughout and the London Circle have been happy to abide by your decisions in these matters. We have merely made suggestions and have not published inflammatory declamations. This ties in with my previous letter to you on the subject.

A telegram is being sent to you today by Joy Goodwin (I asked her to send a 'Greetings' gram) asking you to be ready to talk to us over the telephone on Saturday night, the 11th, on the hour commencing at 7pm. This is, I understand, the successful system adopted between you and Vincent Clarke. I trust that this does not interfere with any plans you have; but we would like to obtain the original suggestion at this time so that we may go ahead with publication.

I can say that the London Circle feel that Ken Slater should have his chance to stand and be elected for TAFF in view of his past services to Fandom. I will refrain from any personal remarks about his present attitude and his bilious cynicism about

HKB to WAW (Sent'd)

OMPA.

Finally - we will discuss this matter with you on Saturday evening; but I wish to make it quite clear that the London Circle are determined that their name shall be cleared of the unjust and sneering attacks so recently and ruthlessly made, that individuals' personal quarrels should not be extended to cover in their bad humours all the members of an organisation which does not concern itself with such quarrels, that the London Circle can, on occasion, rise together to protect its own fair name and that of any of its members and that the time is long overdue when our side of the controversy should receive its just due.

We feel that TAFF is a scheme of great vision. It should not be allowed to fall into disrepute because of the irresponsible actions of individuals who appear blind to the true nature of Fandom. We do not like the idea of London and London's nominees being smeared before the TAFF campaign officially opens.

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From WAW to HKB.

Dear Ken,

Sorry, I didn't understand from the phone conversation that you wanted me to send the original of Ted's letter, just that you wanted my agreement to publish the correspondence. That's OK by me, though I feel it might be wiser to wait a bit, and hence Ted's letter. I hope you'll print the part of my handwritten letter pointing out that I didn't consider myself the dictator of TAFF.* The way I look at this is that of course questions of principle should be decided by the contributors but even after all this fuss I can't see that the bondposting question is a matter of principle or policy--it is essentially an administrative question and one to be decided by whoever is responsible for handing out the money. In the present case that is me. I'll get the blame if anything goes wrong and I should be able to take whatever action seems right to make sure that it doesn't. No one else could have made that decision without knowing what candidates were nearly proposed, and I couldn't release that information.

In any case whom could I have consulted about the bondposting question? Not the candidates, because they are interested parties. Not the contributors or fandom at large, because half of them are in America and there wouldn't be time. This fund is not entirely a British affair, as some people seem to think.

As for what you say about the need for securing the agreement of fandom (or rather the contributors) to a set of Rules, it seems to me I have already done this. All the details about nomination, election, qualifications for voters etc. have already been put to the contributors and voted on. I went to the trouble of working out everything in advance so I would have the approval of the contributors to everything I did. The bondposting question is the only one I've decided on my own responsibility and I only did that because there was no alternative. Even KFS's proposal was notified to the contributors so that they could object if they wanted. There was of course no time to do that with the bondposting proposal, and in any case as I said it was a question that could only be decided by the person in possession of all the facts.

On this question of Rules, most of the other suggestions put forward by Ted--plural voting, more than one representative per year--were completely new and outside the original principles of the Fund. As I told Ted, it's open to him to formulate them for submission to the contributors if he wants to. The Fund as it stands at present is properly organised and has a set of Rules. The only outstanding item is the question of appointing a successor to me, and I had intended to put forward proposals for that when the time came. It would be as well at that time, it seems, to make it clear that he will have discretion about questions of security from the candidates and the custody of the money.

Excuse this hurried and incoherent note. I haven't said anything about the rest of your letter but I think you know that I agree with you about the LC having got a dirty deal out of this. It's a pity I had to mention at all that the suggestion came from London.

* This handwritten letter from WAW to Ted Tubb pointed out that WAW did not think he was a dictator. Unfortunately Ted burnt this letter. Please take note of Walter's attitude in this matter.

13-12-54

Fitcher Postcard from WAW to HKB. (Similar PC to ECT)

74-12-54

Dear Ken,

KFS is going to stand and this affair has blown over. I will issue a statement on Friday to OMPA and others clearing the LC & suggest you people hold your hand until you see it.

A. Vincent Clarke to WAW

76-12-54

Dear Walter,

Members of the London Circle are not very satisfied with your postcards received here yesterday asking us to withhold action on Ken Slater's remarks in his OMPA post-mailing pending a statement by yourself.

We don't mind a little feuding in fun, but we are, individually and collectively, getting a little tired of thoughtless and sometimes malicious attacks, especially in the matter of condemning the whole group because one individual does something someone doesn't like. It's getting to the point where any excuse is good enough to raise a sneer at the London Circle or members of it, and in this latest affair we're not at all sure that an apology or explanation by you on behalf of Slater will be sufficient to remove the mud splashed, not only at the Circle as fans, but at those members of it who are standing as candidates for the TAFF.

As far as we can see, the only adequate treatment is to publish the correspondence relating to this matter in full, and if you wish to do so you have our full consent. We feel that anything less issued by you will be merely regarded--honestly or dishonestly--as your own personal views, and might appear to put you in a position of being somewhat less than neutral.

We would be glad, therefore, if you do publish something of your own, that you make it clear that we wish recipients of the Slater mailing to judge any rightness or wrongness in a dispassionate manner and entirely on the merits of the original letters and the reactions they caused, and we are taking steps to ensure that they do so in the near future. For and on behalf of actifan members of the London Circle. P.S. See I can write an official letter too - yours till the next blood bath.

79-12-54

After having read the previous letters, the reasons for their publication should be obvious. We are not interested in either attacking or defending the question of the £5 bond at the moment, but only in clearing the name of the London Circle actifans. The London Circle have been maligned without really strong protests in the past and, whenever any slight protest has been offered, it has merely served as fresh fuel to add to the bitter attacks.

As Vincent says above, we do not mind a "little feuding in fun" but we are getting a little tired of serious accusations. Our humorous protests are invariably misconstrued (i.e. the Hyphen Con-report, et seq.) and are met with further smears. It has now got to the pitch where we are publishing the letters in this episode in the hope that those who have "shot off their mouths" will see just what grounds London Circle have for their protests. This is a typical example of what we are complaining about, and we hope that it will never again be necessary to take this more serious line of refutation.

The letters have been collated by H. Ken Bulmer, Pamela Bulmer and Joy K. Goodwin, with permission from either the recipients or the writers. Stencils have been cut by these three with the assistance of A. Vincent Clarke who also duplicated it at 16, Wendover Way, Welling, Kent. It is being sent to all OMPA members and some other well-known fans in the hope that it will reach those who have an incomplete knowledge of the affair. It is published on behalf of the actifans of the London Circle. Comments should be sent to the Editor - Joy K. Goodwin, 204, Wellmeadow Road, Catford, London S.E.6.
