

OPERATION

AN
ANARCHS INTERPLAN PROJECT

ARMAGEDDON

BULLETIN ONE Produced by A. Vincent Clarke, 16 Wendover Way, Welling Kent, England.

" A plan to brighten up the Supermancon...without the co-operation of the Manchester group..." (Newman)

HISTORY The project was first discussed on Coronation night at a party given by Ted Tubb. Later, on his return from the AVCON in Belfast, Vin Clarke announced to certain members of the London Circle that Item 6 on the Business Sessions there had been "In Secret Sessions. Proposals for brightening up the Mancon." Serious and constructive ideas had been forthcoming.

It was then announced that the Woolwich Science Fiction and Vargo Stat-ten Appreciation Society had also discussed the subject, and it was decided to pool talents in an ANARCHS INTERPLAN project to be known as OPERATION ARMAGEDDON. The first meeting was then held (10/9/53), those present being:-

Pete Taylor; Dorothy & Jim Ratigan; Dave Newman; Daphne & Ron Fucknaster; Vin Clarke and several new members of the L.C....Bob Eadie, Justin Cox, Syd Fletcher and Gordon

In their absence, the following were selected for initiation into OP.ARM., and will receive copies of the bulletins:-

Ted Tubb; Ken & Pamela Bulmer; Chuck Harris; Bert Campbell; Ted Carnell.

The following were invited as Neutral* Observers:-

Walt Willis; James White; Bob Shaw. All of Belfast.

Initiation of other members will be considered if it is considered desirable. The question of admitting Tony Thorne and perhaps other members of the Medway Group was discussed and left open to a future date. There was some feeling that professionally, fanpolitically and geographically the Medway Group might be unwilling to co-operate as wholeheartedly as London Inner Circle fans.

Other people will be needed for certain phases, but need not be contacted as yet.

An unexpected visitor at the White Horse, Norman Wansborough, sat in half-way through the first meeting, and may have gained some impression that something was brewing, but a combination of judicious phrases and references to Us Southern Englanders should have been sufficient to prevent leakage. In any case, we can find a use for Norman.

At the first meeting, it was generally agreed that in these early stages frequent meetings are unnecessary as well as injudicial, and news will be circulated via bulletins and perhaps chain letters. Frequent correspondence is desirable. Members are asked to take an interest in all ideas discussed, and to note opportunities for forwarding the projects, i.e. second hand articles that might be useful; spare copies of notices ditto; material for making banners, beards, etc.; joke items, etc etc. Some notice must also be given to the possibility that, although this project is and must be kept in the spirit of good clean fannish fun (or words to that effect), the Mancon Committee's ideas of good clean fannish fun may differ in important respects from ours, and it's not impossible that they might stalk out in a body and high dudgeon after a few hours of OPERATION ARMAGEDDON in action. We must be prepared to carry out some part of a semi-official programme as well as any 'set pieces' by the Circle which will be expected of it and which will be included in the official Supermancon programme and freely discussed with the Mancunians.

Items of news concerning the progress of the Con preparations are needed and will be circulated to all members when available. Latest reports indicate that Dave Cohen has re-appeared in actifandom and on the Committee and that Eric Bentcliffe and possibly one other member have resigned. A letter asking for help was received by Ted Carnell (!). Brian Varley, one of the Mancunian leaders, is expected in London for a prolonged stay in the autumn. He will naturally act as 5th Columnist for the Mancunians, and due care must be taken. (We might learn a little)

The following ideas were discussed at the first meeting. Please refer to number and letter designations when writing, and KEEP THIS BULLETIN!

- (1) Fake programmes. Several ideas were discussed, and the final product will require a good deal of work and probably cash. Initially, possibilities are
 - (a) a parody of the actual programme, if there will be enough time between its publication date and the Con. The parody would have to be a better job of work, which might be difficult in a short time. Tentative only.
 - (b) a fake programme, and the biggest 'prestige' job possible..photolith? engraving?...card-bound?...silver-tasseled?...etc. To be circulated to fandom about zero minus 14 days. Likely to be impressive but expensive.

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- (1) c. a fake programme, messily hektographed (preferably) or duplicated, issued at roughly zero minus 4 weeks, followed approx. two weeks later by a second fake indignantly denouncing the first and offering another and deadly serious programme...with, as we don't want to reduce membership to ourselves and the Supermancon committee, a 'give-away' item on the back, such as "Come to the Mancon, financed by the London Circle", or similar. This second programme would be a well done job.
 1c is definitely fiendish, & altho. not needing more physical work than 1b, calls for extra gags as well as a (serious-sounding) parody.
 ACTION: Please indicate choice, ideas, alternatives, etc.
- (2) a. Printing and engraving. One of our new members has offered to produce wads of futuristic banknotes (engraved), to be flashed around in large quantities at the Con. This is a prestige-value item, and will be psychologically demoralising to Mancunians..."Eee, look what London can do..." etc.
 b. Suggested we have printed or engraved (?) cards to be given to all and sundry at the Con. Visiting cards bearing insulting/fannish messages, such as "I'm a London Circle member, who the hell are you?" and "A.E. Van Vogt, California, USA" and "I like Vargo Statten" etc etc.
 c. Small skull&crossbone stickers for putting on glasses/bottles left unattended.
 d. 'RESERVED' notices for seats.
 e. Notices..."GENTLEMEN", "LADIES", "NO SPITTING EXCEPT AT THE PLATFORM", "VD IS CURABLE", "THE SUPERMANCON COMMITTEE SLEPT HERE" "FACTORY EXCURSIONS ARRANGED BY THE MANCHESTER GROUP--APPLY CHAIRMAN" "MONEY BACK GUARANTEED" "GET YOUR RAIN HERE" etc etc.
 f. Forged entrance tickets, with a 'London Circle' message on the back.
 g. Paper bags printed "IN CASE OF SICKNESS...MANCON COMMITTEE" to be pinned on backs of seats.
 ACTION: Ideas, offers of printing services (no hurry)
- (3) a. Costume. Beards will be worn. 'Committee' badges, if it doesn't mean too much involvement of innocent bystanders (opinions?). Costume hats or dress for the all night party? (This can probably be left to the open preparations) Special London Circle emblems...White Horse emblems in button-holes. Hand-painted s-f ties?
 b. If not too bulky, items emphasising Mancunian weather, to be worn when entering hall...macs, umbrellas, frogmen's flippers, etc. Any war-surplus life-belts, rubber dinghys, etc. available? (Idea..inflatable rubber belts painted and fashioned to look like regulation lifebelts with 'SUPERMANCON '54 lettered on them)
 c. Waterpistols. Is there a gadget for simulating squeaky shoes? Other items...toy trumpets, banners, special costume for Shirley Marriot(?), playing cards, etc etc. will be mentioned under separate headings. Jokes involving the discomfiture of the audience..stink bombs, etc. must be barred. Our object is to brighten things up, not wreck the joint.
- (4) a. Ron Buckmaster will be arriving early, and is delegated to try and put another mike in parallel with the relay system...if they have one. Messages?
- (5) a. Mancunians have an idea that Convention time-keeping is easy. Suggested that 1 minute before advertised starting time, Charlie Duncombe (surrounded by us) yells "Minus 60" and gives the seconds count on "Minus 50, 40" etc. The last 5 seconds chanted by all Londoners, and on "Zero" a starting pistol or similar is fired. (Or a less loud noise...comments?)
 b. On the second day, alarm clocks mark zero hour. Suggested everyone brings one, conceals it on self or in bag, pre-sets it accurately.
- (6) a. A 'Window Smashing Joke' can be bought...a dozen aluminium(?) plates approx 3" x 1 1/2". When dropped in a bunch they make a hell of a clatter, like breaking glass. Suggested sets be bought or made, at intervals a beery voice is heard from the bar singing in a Scottish accent (Hamilton is TT)... "I belong t' Glasga!....CRASH!!!" ACTION: Obtain plates...send for specimen if needed.
- (7) a. Dave Newman will be supplying chemicals for making explosive paste, smoke-producing chemicals, explosive top-hats, etc. Also wanted in this line ...explosive cigarettes, 'snowflake' producing pellets, etc etc. Suggestions wanted. Nothing fatal tho.
- (8) a. A banner reading "You can't tell me Conventions run at a loss"..SPACETIMES Vol 2 No.5.
 b. A banner for the coach, or/ and for mounting over any London exhibit.
 c. A large placard ..."During the last year (2 years?) the London Circle have held X meetings and its members have...edited X magazines, written X stories, been published in -----, -----, -----, produced -----, etc etc etc."
- (9) a. At some dull interval during programme, LC'ers form chairs in circle, start playing cards.
 b. Halfway through sessions, fan at doorway asks in loud stage whisper "Has anything happened yet?" Fan in front row turns, whispers "No, nothing."
 c. A Londoner (Ted Carnell) gets up and pleads for Mancon Committee.."Young, inexperienced, not very sure of themselves....etc etc."
 d. During a selected speech, row of Londoners sit with blown up balloon in one hand and a large pin/needle/bodkin in the other. Not doing anything, but the psychological effect should be tremendous.