

For free, this comes from Dave Van
Arnam of 1730 Harrison Ave, Bronx,
NY (Apt 353) 10453.

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I get letters from time to time; I
really do. It astonishes me, but it
is incontrovertable. Here is one
that came in response to my brief
discussion of the hypothetical Con-
tinental Convention that might be
held in this country in such year as
the Worldcon is held in Germany (or anywhere else Overseas, for that
matter).

No room, no room...

Richard Labonte, 971 Walkley Rd, Ottawa 8, Ontario, Canada - Nov 4, '67

Dear Dave,

Ever since one of our members came back from NYCon burbling
with delight, our local university group -- about 20 people -- has been
interested in cons. At our last meeting, talk got around to a Canadian
convention, separate from U.S. and Worldcons. The British and Germans,
at least, do this, so we've decided to try, aiming at 1969 as the year
of the first one.

What we have to do, of course, is get other clubs in Canada, as well as
the better-known fans like Art Hayes and Leland Sapiro, interested.

We have no experience yet, just a lot of ideas...and willingness. We
need other Canadian support. But that's for us to worry about.

If we did get our plans into the air, and did manage to have a Cancon I
in 1969, which was a success, wouldn't that put us in a good position
to hold a Concon in 1970?

The reasoning behind this rather giant step from a first con to something
near a Worldcon is as follows:

We will have had a small bit of experience; a CanCon would be close
enough to the U.S. for American fans to attend -- probably in Toronto;
a CanCon would, because it was outside the U.S., remove problems of
rotation within the U.S.; and it would satisfy the need you feel will
exist for a convention in 1970. (I feel it might exist; some feel
more strongly, some care not a bit. -- dgvt)

To answer some of your questions and doubts: a Cancon ConCon wouldn't
be entirely without tradition -- we'd have one previous Con backing us
up. We wouldn't even come near to calling ourselves a Worldcon, but we
wouldn't be a NonCon either. So people could attend, free from the
worry of detracting from the Heidelberg Worldcon, sure of not wasting
time by attending a NonCon, and enthralled by the idea of attending a
CanCon.

Anyway, there's the idea tossed into the ring. Hopefully, we'll be
having a Canadian convention in 1969, 1970, 1971, and so on. And if
there is an open-bid session at St. Louis or Columbus for a ConCon bid,
we'll bid.

The whole thing hinges on the support our small club gets from other
Canadian fans. There are others, I'm sure, with more experience and

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((RICHARD LABONTE, continued)):

more know-how than us, if only we can find them. Maybe mention in FIRST DRAFT will help.

Anyway, full of starry-eyed optimism, we've organized a CanCon ConCon ConCom, with myself as Publicity, another lad as Treasurer, acting, and a third, Earl Schultz, as investigator -- looking into possible sites. All this is unofficial, and subject to change as soon as we get more people interested.

Well, there are the facts, and our fancys. Would you, by the way, be interested in backing us?

Best, Richard

□□□□ In relation to the Continental Convention, having it in Canada wd indeed seem to be a rather neat solution to several of the objections that can be raised to such a project. I am, however, by no means sure that a ConCon is necessary (or desirable), especially since there are a plethora of regionals around to remove or assuage fannish grief at being unable to attend a Worldcon.

In that context, too, I'd like to repeat the obvious, that there are a lot of regional conventions, or conferences, these days, averaging something like one a month. Because of this, I suspect there is going to come a levelling-off point at which new regionals will find really tough sledding (wretchedly mixed metaphor, that) in trying to get established.

The question is whether this point has been reached yet -- or whether it will be reached before your proposed CanCon. If not, you shd be able to put on a successful regional financially (which is quite important, I might stress, unless a few hundred dollars is as nothing to you or your group).

And if the levelling-off point has been reached, this may, I believe, paradoxically make for an even better conference. One regrettable fact of regionals these days is that they are too damned crowded, most of them. I don't know how many times I've been told by people like Ted White and Dick Lupoff that the old Disclaves were the greatest, because you cd fit everybody comfortably into a fairly small room and set them loose to groove. With the revived Disclaves topping a hundred, like, where does all this jolly intimacy go? Away, that's where. Maybe to the Deepsouthcon.

Maybe if you made a pitch for relaxed but intriguing programming during one afternoon, the rest of the weekend to be devoted to relaxing and getting together with people without a lot of hectic pressure, you might have quite a successful get-together. The more you center on program items, the more intriguing they'll have to be, I think, especially to draw people "all the way up to Canada" -- and, yes, Canada isn't that far away, or rather Toronto isn't, and lots of fans dig Canada, but it seems far away. Lots of fans and tight programming, or fewer fans but more relaxed (poolcon-type), if you make a success of it you'll find a lot of people will listen to your talk of a ConCon. Perhaps you shd get in touch with Chuck Crayne, whose Not-A-Westercon looks like it may make it. □□□ Finally, I'd like to go to a con in Canada, and lots of others probably wd too. So make your pitch! And good luck (and I'm sorry I can't give you more than argumentative moral support)! □□□ Hoping you are the sane...
-- dgv