

News from Keston College

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of Keston College, held on 14 January 1978, was attended by a record number of supporters – approximately 120. A full programme included a talk by Mr Peter Reddaway on the abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union, and a dialogue between Mrs Stella Alexander and Mr Christopher Cviic on the Church in Yugoslavia, which demonstrated how different the situation for religious believers is there from that in the Soviet Union. Keston College supporters were also encouraged by an optimistic report from the Director, the Rev. Michael Bourdeaux.

Mr Bourdeaux forecast a modest expansion of the work in 1978: there would be an increased output of information during the year. Less than 10 per cent of the information received by Keston College is able to be circulated, and this figure should at least be doubled. During 1977 support for Keston College had increased. The income for the year had just kept ahead of considerably increased costs, but Keston would be opening a major appeal in 1978 in order to raise money for rebuilding. Mr Bourdeaux stated that the staff had gallantly struggled on for years in cold and overcrowded surroundings. The basic structure of the premises was sound, but the Council had decided that an improvement to every part of the building was essential. With rising costs and the need to provide additional residential accommodation, the total cost would not be less than £100,000.

The scope of Keston's research during 1977 had increased to cover (at least in outline) Poland, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, and more work had also been done on Czechoslovakia and Romania as well as on the Soviet Union. Mr Bourdeaux hoped that Ukraine would begin to receive regular coverage during 1978.

Staff Changes

Mrs A. Kozhevnikova has been appointed as archivist, to succeed Moira Blacklaws, who is leaving to be married to Michael Harris on 1 April. Keston supporters will join in wishing Moira all the best and are delighted

that she will be able to rejoin the staff part-time later in the year. Miss Barbara Willems joined the administrative staff in January, seconded and paid for by the Mennonite Central Committee (Akron, Pa., USA) who have been such excellent supporters in the past.

Student Courses

Last year we planned to organize more student courses during 1978. Because of the re-building programme, however, these courses will now be postponed until 1979.

New Zealand Society

Since the visit of Mr Peter Reddaway (a member of Keston College's Council of Management) to New Zealand in April 1976, a small committee in Wellington have been working to establish a New Zealand branch of the CSRC (Keston College). As a result of this work, the New Zealand Society for the Study of Religion and Communism was officially incorporated on 3 August 1977. The Society is under the Chairmanship of the Very Rev. Prof. Ian Breward, Professor of Church History at Knox College, the Theological Hall of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand. The Secretary is the Rev. Robert Yule, Ecumenical Chaplain at Victoria University of Wellington and Wellington Teachers College.

A feature of the New Zealand Society is the outstanding group of people who have agreed to be its patrons. They are: Sir John Marshall, a former Prime Minister of New Zealand; Reginald Cardinal Delargey, Metropolitan of the Roman Catholic Church in New Zealand; the Very Rev. Dr Ian Fraser, a former Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand; Dr Barry Gustafson, Senior Lecturer in Political Science at the University of Auckland; the Most Rev. A. H. Johnston, Anglican Archbishop of New Zealand; the Rev. Angus MacLeod, General Secretary of the National Council of Churches; and Archbishop Dionysios Psiachas, Metropolitan of the Greek Orthodox Church in New Zealand.

BERNARD TIDBALL