

News From Keston College

The research work of the College has continued with our various publications appearing at regular intervals and a number of book projects nearing completion. Michael Bourdeaux's book *Risen Indeed*, which introduces us to the richness of the spiritual message coming from Russia, is due to appear shortly. Jane Ellis is approaching publishers with the typescript of her own book on the Russian Orthodox Church. The second edition of Trevor Beeson's authoritative and readable *Discretion and Valour*, much updated and expanded in consultation with Keston staff, has just been published.

Earlier this summer we were host to a team making a film for American television on the Soviet Union. Amongst those interviewed were Anatoli Levitin, Alexander Ginzburg and Professor Bennigsen as well as a number of Keston research staff.

The plans we had for a semester for American students from February to May 1983 have had to be cancelled, but we are planning a shorter semester at a more favourable time of year, probably in August 1984; and we are also working towards a week's conference at the College for our friends and supporters around Easter 1983. Full details will be available later in the year.

In the last three months we have lost three staff members and have been able to replace only one of them. This means that our research department is now depleted by two and a correspondingly heavy burden of work has fallen on the shoulders of those who are left. The reason for our being unable to replace these researchers is purely financial. We have been very heartened to receive a grant specifically for the purpose of appointing a researcher on the religious situation in the Caucasus for a three year term; but the depressing fact remains that our research team has now fallen below the absolute minimum necessary for anything like satisfactory coverage of the area in which we are experts.

A great deal of time and effort is expended at Keston on the administration of our mailing list and on responding to the requests and requirements of our supporters. Of course we regard the maintenance of personal contacts with all our supporters as vital for our proper functioning as a College; but at the same time we realise that there are many routine tasks which could be dealt with much more quickly and accurately by a computer, thus saving valuable staff time. We have now decided that the first priority in the purchase of equipment must be a computer, and we have launched an appeal to raise £13,000 for this.

The 1982 Annual General Meeting of the College was held on 9 October. Those who attended were delighted to welcome Michael Bourdeaux back to his accustomed place on the rostrum and were fascinated to hear of his first extensive overseas trip as International Director. He and Lorna spent six weeks this summer in New Zealand, and were also able to pay brief visits to

Australia and Singapore. Michael and Lorna were involved in 105 public and private meetings including press, radio and television interviews. There is huge potential for support for Keston College from our overseas branches, and a great deal of goodwill for the advancement of the work of the College.

We were also delighted to welcome to the AGM the Rev. Bernard Tidball who retired as Deputy Director of Keston College at the end of 1981. One of Bernard's responsibilities had been the supervision of the building work at the College and we were pleased to be able to show him the new library which is now virtually complete with attractive shelving installed. The whole College misses Bernard's presence here, and there is a gap in both the pastoral and the developmental aspects of Keston's life which will never be filled in the same way.

Amongst other guests at the AGM were representatives of the press and in particular of the Romanian and Russian services of the BBC. The latter interviewed Michael Bourdeaux and Philip Walters with a view to producing programmes on Keston College for their respective services. We were also glad to see a number of representatives of our support groups in this country, notably from Edinburgh and Bath, and these members contributed to a preliminary discussion of Keston's future direction and priorities.

This discussion was conducted in the context of the necessity for Keston now to submit its work and aims to detailed examination. We must decide exactly how much new money we need to raise in order adequately to cover the field of research we have set ourselves, and we must also decide in what order we need to recruit new researchers and purchase new equipment. We must also decide what our policy is to be in the event that we shall not be able to raise substantial new sums of money. The fact is that if we have to carry on with our present budget, we shall have to limit our activities and define precisely a number of specific areas on which we must concentrate our efforts. A sub-committee will be meeting shortly to report back to our Council of Management on all these questions, but contributions of our members towards this debate are very welcome, and now is the time to make your views known.

DR PHILIP WALTERS
Executive Director