

## SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE N.S.W. HUMANIST SOCIETY.

28th July, 1966.

Once again it is possible to report a year of growth for the Society, both in increasing membership, (now 590, 150 since January 1st), and expanding activities. This year has also seen the formation of the Council of Australian Humanist Societies, which should provide useful liaison with Societies in other States, as well as making possible such joint ventures as national advertizing and the publication of an Australian Humanist magazine.

The Council held its First Annual Convention in Sydney during the Easter weekend, and as hosts for the Convention members of this Society can look back with some satisfaction at the success of the public meetings and the dinner. On the Saturday afternoon almost 250 people filled the A.M.P. theatre to hear the guest speakers: Dr. D.F. Martyn on "The Outlook for Man", and Mr. Ronald Strahan on "Life Without Magic"; while on the Sunday at Federation House an almost embarrassingly large audience arrived for the afternoon session. They heard Mr. J. Chandler of University of Adelaide speak on Humanism and Ethics; Mr. P. Bryant of this Society on Humanism and Politics; and a question and answer symposium with Mr. Chandler, Mr. J. Taylor, Mr. A. Carey and Mrs. Mrs. B. Gilling.

The monthly Public Meetings of the Society have continued to be one of our main activities, and have been attracting audiences of about 200. Two meetings concerned with the differences between Humanists and Christians: in August, Mr. Francis James spoke on "The Future of Christianity", while at our May meeting Prof. L. C. Birch and Mr. A. Carey spoke on "Humanism and Liberal Christianity". Current events overseas were considered at four meetings: In September, "Living With Asia", the speaker being Mr. Donald Horne; in November Prof. Christiansen on "The World as Seen by Chinese Scientists"; in February Dr. Alan Roberts on "Illusions in Foreign Policy"; and in June Dr. John Hirshman on "A Humanist Looks at Asia". Dr. Hirshman, until recently Chairman of this Society, was on leave from his position with the World Health Organisation in Manila. He also gave an informal talk to members at a meeting at our rooms at 194 Crown St., on "Problems of Population Control". In October, Prof. Neville, of the School of Economics at University of N.S.W., spoke on "Moral Problems of an Affluent Society". A generous donation from a member made it possible in March to hold a more widely advertised meeting in a larger hall on the question of "State Aid", and to bring one of the speakers from Melbourne. The speakers were Mr. J. Dunn, President of the Australian Council of State School Organisations; Mr. S. P. Lewis, President of the N.S.W. Teachers Federation; and Rev. E. Mortley, of the Association for the Preservation of Public School Education.

The alterations at 194 Crown St. were completed in time for the Easter Convention, and our rooms there are now a credit to the Society. We are greatly indebted to Mr. Mick Inder for undertaking the structural alterations, and to Mr. Bill Weeks and his team of voluntary workers who spent many hours repairing, cleaning and painting the premises.

The Society has received a fair amount of favourable publicity throughout the year: there was some reference in the press to the Convention at Easter, and to Mr. Alex Carey's talk on "The Future of Sex" at A.N.U. Orientation Week. We have been represented several times on radio discussion programmes, and the Society made its television debut in November on the A.B.C.'s Forum programme, in which we contended with Rev. Alan Walker; while in March the roles were reversed when Mr. Alex Carey very ably put the Humanist position to an audience of Methodists. There has been an increasing number of requests from various groups for speakers from this society, and the Committee would be pleased to hear of members who could undertake any of this work.

Following discussion at last year's Annual General Meeting, statements of policy will be made occasionally on matters of importance, when the Committee believes there is a reasonable consensus of opinion within the Society. Such a statement was issued concerning the Vietnam war, and published in Viewpoints in October 1965. We later contributed a statement to an advertisement opposing conscription for Vietnam, which was organised by A.I.C.D. A Press Statement was issued (but not published) concerning State Aid.

### Groups & Sub-committees.

The Youth Groups are now in three age-groups: 8-10 yrs., 11-14 yrs., and 15-17 yrs., and are still being conducted by the Education Sub-committee. They are so successful that there is a continuing need for both new members on the Sub-committee

and for occasional help from other adult members of the society. Would anyone who might be able to help please contact Mr. Beauchamp (42.5577).

A Young Adults Group (18-35 yrs. approx.) has been active throughout the year with a mailing list of 70, and an average attendance of 20-30. Each month their activities have included a Discussion Evening, a Film Evening, a party, and a picnic or outing, as well as smaller Study Groups. They hope soon to conduct at 194 Crown St. regular Coffee Evenings with Folk Singers.

This year has seen the formation of a Group at Wollongong, meeting monthly, and which this month held its first Public Meeting, with an audience of 78. A new Sub-urban Group has formed in the Sutherland Shire, and other active Suburban Groups have been those at Chatswood-Kirribilli, St. Ives-Turramurra, Ryde-Parramatta and Hurstville-Strathfield. These Groups have operated mainly on a discussion-group and social basis, often with guest speakers.

The Medical Group formed last year continues to meet from time to time and would welcome new members.

A number of Subcommittees continue to meet regularly, including those on Ethics, Sex Marriage and Divorce, and Sex Education. These are all engaged on projects which are expected to take another year or so, and do not need new members at present. However, the recently-formed Counselling Sub-committee is in need of interested new members and contact should be made with the Secretary (50.7675).

Finally I must thank all those members who have contributed of their time, money or skill to the success of the Society this year. Once again Mrs. Weeks particularly deserves the thanks of all of us for her work as Secretary, and Mr. Bill Weeks also for all the many tasks he so cheerfully undertakes; Dr. Jim Woolnough for his editorship of Viewpoints; Mr. Alex Carey, Mr. Jack Taylor and Mr. Peter Bryant for so frequently representing the Society as speakers; and Mrs. Gilling, who has also spoken for us several times. Our thanks are due also to our Treasurer, Mrs. England, to our Honorary Auditor, Mr. R. S. Taylor, and to Mr. W. Meldrum for our monthly posters advertising meetings.

Although I am unable to name them all, I must thank those who have worked on the various Sub-committees, and those who have attended conferences as our delegates; those who have made donations or loans, or actively helped with the renovations at 194 Crown St.; and finally the hard-working members of the Committee, three of whom are resigning: Mrs. Berenice Buckley, who will be going abroad; Miss Veronica Ashley, who has our best wishes for her forthcoming marriage, and who will be leaving Sydney; and Mr. John Powles who faces the exigencies of final-year Medicine.

I. S. EDWARDS (Chairman).

Inquiries to

The Secretary, Mrs. W. G. Weeks, B.A., Dip. Ed. (S.U.),  
72 Tooronga Terrace, Beverly Hills (50.7675).

NEW SOUTH WALES HUMANIST SOCIETY

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR

ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1966

<u>RECEIPTS</u>		<u>PAYMENTS</u>	
Funds on hand 1st July 1965	\$1739	Advertising	\$322
Bank interest received	56	Cost of carpets for Humanist House	197
Contributions towards Convention dinner and fees	443	Convention dinner	277
Donations -		Donations and affiliation fees	70
Bihar project	\$208	Electricity and gas	55
Building fund	390	Hire of halls and cost of suppers	500
Sundry	<u>778</u>	Insurance	18
Members' subscriptions	1263	Literature	59
Rent received	180	Petty cash disbursements	57
Sale of literature	153	Postages	33
		Printing and stationery	462
		Purchase of chairs and radiator	85
		Rates	56
		Repairs and renovations to Humanist House	695
		Repayment of loans including \$1160 to Dr. J. Hirshman	1260
		Telephone	22
		Travelling expenses incurred by committee members to Melbourne	143
		Typing fees	93
		Youth group	<u>50</u>
		Total payments	\$4454
		Funds on hand 30th June, 1966	<u>756</u>
	<u>\$5210</u>		<u>\$5210</u>

HONORARY AUDITOR'S REPORT

I have examined the records of the New South Wales Humanist Society for the year ended 30th June, 1966, and in my opinion the above statement shows a true and fair summary of the cash receipts and payments of the Society for that year.

R. S. TAYLOR  
Chartered Accountant.  
Registered under the Public  
Accountants' Registration  
Act, 1945, as amended.

26th July, 1966.