

1985. It does not yet, however, appear to have been given the status of party orthodoxy. An article which appeared earlier in 1985 in *Guangming Ribao* (the daily paper in Guangming) emphasises the view of the so-called "leftists", representing the other end of the Chinese political spectrum:

In the socialist society, although certain changes have taken place in the form and content of religion, its nature as a drug for the people has not changed. The main evidence for this is that the traditional ideas of religion (such as "Heaven", "Hell", and "Samsara" [transmigration of souls —

*Ed.*) have remained unchanged. Without these religion cannot be called religion . . . . . This is entirely different from the communist world outlook . . . . .

It is necessary to unite with the broad masses of religious believers, so that they can make concerted efforts with us to accelerate the construction of the four modernisations . . . . . A society without God will surely come.

There are, however, clear signs that Zhao's views are gaining ground at the expense of the "leftists".

ARVAN GORDON

## Bibles and New Testaments Printed in China

During 1986 more than 250,000 Chinese New Testaments and half a million complete Chinese Bibles will have been printed in the People's Republic of China on paper supplied by the United Bible Societies. Hymnbooks and other literature will also be printed.

The actual work of printing and distribution is in the hands of the Amity Foundation (a non-government and non-church organisation devoted to various aspects of social service). The general secretary of the Amity Foundation, Mr Han Wenzao (a prominent Protestant leader) writes:

The aims of the foundation are to contribute to China's social development and efforts towards modernisation, to make Christian involvement and participation more widely known to the Chinese people, and to serve as a channel for the international sharing of resources and people-to-people relationships.

The venture involves an agreement between the Amity Foundation and Nanjing Normal University; the latter will provide

the premises for the new printing press on which the work is to be carried out. It is hoped that the new supply of Scriptures will go some way towards satisfying the immense need among Christians in the People's Republic. An appeal for 6.7 million US dollars has been launched by the United Bible Societies to finance the necessary equipment.

During 1985 more than 60,000 Chinese New Testaments and 100,000 Chinese Bibles were printed on paper supplied by the United Bible Societies. The one hundred tons of thin Bible paper made possible the early delivery of Bibles of better quality than had earlier been obtainable. Mr Han Wenzao expressed his thanks, saying, "Owing to the good quality of the paper, these Bibles are thinner and more handy."

It should be emphasised, all the same, that the printing of Bibles and other religious literature represents no more than a minor aspect of the work of the Amity Foundation. The Foundation's main purpose is seen as the general social betterment of the Chinese people.

ARVAN GORDON

## New Leaders for the Protestant Church in the GDR

On 2 February 1986 Dr Werner Leich, Bishop of Thuringia, was elected as the new

Chairman of the Conference of Protestant Church leaderships. He succeeds Dr Johan-