

# Gottfried Keller elected for the third time president of the Foreign Press Association

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## Gottfried Keller elected for the third time President of the Foreign Press Association

A singular honour has been paid to one of our compatriots, which should not go unrecorded in our Colony's paper, especially as it has been mentioned in a number of English Dailies and Periodicals.

At a recent meeting of the Foreign Press Association, Mr. Gottfried Keller was elected, for the third time, President of this Association, which, we understand is a unique record in its history, and we extend to him our most sincere congratulations. A great compliment has thus been paid not only to himself, but also to our country.

In 1941 he was called for the first time to be the head of this Association, and his outspoken and impressive articles during the war years resulted in bitter attacks being made upon him by Nazi propagandists, who accused him of being in the "pay of Churchill."

It might be an opportune moment to briefly refer to the history of this professional organisation, which is the oldest Foreign Press Association in the world, having been founded in 1888 by a doyen Russian journalist, Gabriel de Wesselitzky, London representative of St. Petersburg's *Novoje Vremya*.

In those days the Association had barely twenty members. It now has some 160 members representing 32 different nations, its members represent every trend of world opinion from Spanish Facism to Russian Communism.

For its London headquarters, the Foreign Press Association is at present dependent on the goodwill of the Foreign Office. At 15, Carlton House Terrace, one room on the ground floor and two in the basement, have been placed at its disposal. This space allocation, somewhat inadequate, was the result of an appeal made

by the Association's 1946 President, and our countryman, Dr. H. W. Egli, when the Ministry of Information closed down.—

In 1947, Gottfried Keller was again elected President, and now for 1949. In 1943, he became Chairman of the International Committee of Journalists. He is well-known in the London Swiss Colony through his regular talks on "Current Affairs" given at the monthly meetings of the "Nouvelle Société Helvétique" (London Group) during the last war, thus enabling our compatriots to get acquainted with the happenings both here and in our country, during a period, when unbiased news were very difficult to obtain.

Mr. Keller was born in 1905 in Aarau, the son of States Councillor, Dr. Gottfried Keller, the eminent parliamentarian. In 1934, he was appointed London correspondent of the "Agence Télégraphique Suisse," and three years later became, in addition, London correspondent of the "Basler Nachrichten." He is married to a charming compatriote of ours, who ably assists him in his none too easy task.

During his years of office, he has presided over many important functions, amongst them the 60th Jubilee Dinner (1948) which was attended by the Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers, Ambassadors and H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh, and more recently when the Foreign Secretary, Mr. E. Bevin made his big speech about European Unity. (See photograph.)

He is not only an organiser, but an excellent speaker. His witty, short after-dinner speeches have become one of the attractions of the F.P.A. functions.

We extend to Mr. Gottfried Keller our best wishes for a successful year of office.



Left to Right:—Mr. Ernest Bevin, Foreign Secretary; Mr. Gottfried Keller, President, F.P.A.; Monsieur R. Massigli, French Ambassador.