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U.S.S.R. in Retrospect: Exhibit Examines Life and Religious Persecution in the Former Soviet Union

In conjunction with the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Soviet Union, the W. R. Poage Legislative Library presents an exhibit featuring personal stories of religious persecution and artifacts from the U.S.S.R. The opening reception for the exhibit, which will feature guests from England and a noted collector of Russian artifacts from Fort Worth, will be held Thursday, February 24, 2011, from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Waco, TX – Feb. 10, 2011. The W. R. Poage Library and the Keston Center for Religion, Politics and Society will unveil the exhibit, *U.S.S.R. in Retrospect*, with an opening reception on Thursday, February 24, 2011, in the Poage Library from 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. The exhibition will provide a cultural window into everyday life and religious persecution inside the former Soviet Union. Special guests at the reception include collector Dr. Robert Platt, Rev. Michael Bordeaux, founder of the Keston Institute in Oxford, England, and the current chairman of the Institute, Xenia Dennen.

The exhibit will include Soviet-era materials from both Dr. Platt and the Keston Center. The Platt artifacts include flags from all 15 Soviet republics, pins, stamps, plates, toys, money and military and political memorabilia. The Keston Center artifacts include *samizmat* or underground religious publications, printed propaganda from the State, photos, music books and letters from people attempting to flee religious persecution. Visitors will also have maps, timelines and personal stories to help bring context and life to the materials.

The Keston Center was founded in 2007 to house the Keston Archive and Library which was moved to Baylor University from the Keston Institute in the UK. The Keston Institute, formerly known as the Keston College, was formed by Rev. Michael Bourdeax in 1969. The Center partners with the Keston Institute, “To promote research and encourage the study of religion in Communist and post-Communist societies and the relationship between religion and Marxism.”

The W. R. Poage Legislative Library is located at 201 Baylor Avenue on the Baylor campus with parking available at the Weithorn Visitor’s Center or the Dutton Street Parking Facility. The exhibit gallery is open weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The exhibit will run until August.

The reception and exhibit are free and open to the public.

For more information about the exhibit, go to: www.baylor.edu/lib/poage/ussr or contact the Poage Library at 254-710-3540. For more information about the Keston Center, go to: www.baylor.edu/kestoncenter or contact Larisa Seago at 710-4647.

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