

2000 pay tribute to Peter Howard

Evening Standard Reporter

A remarkable Englishman," Quintin Hogg called him, and this was reflected in the congregation of 2000 at the memorial service to Peter Howard at St. Martin-in-the-Field today.

The ex-Fleet Street journalist, author, England rugby captain and bobsleigh champion who became leader of Moral Re-Armament and who died in Peru two months ago, was honoured by ambassadors and diplomats from 43 nations, and by a cross-section of British life — Parliament and Fleet Street, Welsh miners and City dignitaries, rugby players and Oxford dons, housewives and students.

The Bishop of Leicester, Dr. R. R. Williams, and the Vicar of St. Martin's, the Rev. Austen Williams jointly conducted the service. The immediate members of Mr. Howard's family were there—his widow, Doë, and his three children.

Sir Max Aitken and Mr. Philip Howard, Mr. Howard's elder son, read the two lessons.

His secret

Rajmohan Gandhi, grandson of the Mahatma, stood next to Lord and Lady Kilmuir, and Japanese diplomats stood close by a group from Westminster that included Sir Derek Walker-Smith, MP, and Lady Walker-Smith, Mr. J. P. W. Mallalieu, MP, and Sir Hamilton Kerr, MP.

Nearby stood Mr. T. Blackburn, chairman of Beaverbrook Newspapers, and Lord Thomson of Fleet, chairman of the Thomson organisation.

The secret of Peter Howard's life was explained by Mr. Hogg in his address from the pulpit.

He said he had been a friend of Peter Howard from 1926 and knew him as a generous, gay, loyal and understanding friend.

Speaking of Mr. Howard's first encounter with Moral Re-armament as a Fleet Street columnist in 1941, Mr. Hogg said:

"No one who knew him as I knew him can doubt the reality of the experience of conversion—change, as he called it—which he underwent.

"This experience dominated the rest of his life, to which it gave a wholly new direction and sense of purpose, and it brought him in his later years, though he did not seek it, a national, even an international renown."