

Editorial

The *Letter from the Director* of Keston College in the last issue of *RCL* announced that, due to the grave financial crisis Keston College was suffering, there would be only two issues of *RCL* in 1981, and that the Editor and Editorial Assistant would have to lose their jobs. Sadly, both these measures have had to be implemented, but there has been a good response to the crisis, and *RCL's* future now looks brighter. Next year we plan to publish three issues of the journal, but with an increased number of pages in each, so that the same amount of material as used to be included in the quarterly journal will reach our subscribers. This expedient saves costly postage charges without diminishing the annual content of the journal.

We are most grateful to those of our subscribers, the overwhelming majority, who have generously allowed us to keep their full subscription for this year's reduced *RCL*. This response has enabled us to pull through a difficult financial period: but more than that, it has shown in the clearest possible way that our readers value the journal's work, and wish it to continue.

A special debt of gratitude is owed to our sister organization in the USA, the Society for the Study of Religion under Communism (SSRC). It is entirely due to the energy and vision of its Executive Secretary, Alan Scarfe, and to substantial financial support from SSRC, that this current issue of the journal has been printed, in the USA. When Keston College decided to part with some of its carefully husbanded resources in order to give some financial assistance to its fledgling transatlantic branch in 1978, it never expected that SSRC would so quickly be able to make a material contribution to the international work of the College. Truly a case of "Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days" (Ecclesiastes 11,1).

In assuming the Editorship of *RCL* from the present issue, I am becoming daily more conscious how much I owe to my predecessor, Xenia Howard-Johnston, and her assistant, Gill Ablitt. The new Editorial Assistant, Karylmary Lucey, and I, have found our new tasks easy to grasp thanks to Gill's forethought and precision. She is sadly missed at Keston. Xenia's achievement as Editor of *RCL* from its first issue in 1973 has been outstanding. She has developed it from a small periodical tentatively dipping its toe into almost uncharted waters, to an impressive academic quarterly which has become an authority in an often controversial field. Though she has been ably backed up by the Editorial Board, the dedication, intellectual clarity and sheer hard work which have accomplished this are hers alone. *RCL* can ill afford to lose her.

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In the week in which this issue of *RCL* is being put together for the printers, it has been salutary for Keston College to receive a visit from Janusz Bazydło, the editor of the Polish Catholic *samizdat* journal *Spotkania* (Encounters). Whatever *RCL*'s difficulties may be, they can hardly compare with those of *samizdat* publishers in Eastern Europe, who in many countries are denied all printing facilities and obliged to work in almost total secrecy, under constant threat of arrest. The present situation in Poland means that *Spotkania* has more freedom than other *samizdat* publications in Eastern Europe, a freedom which it is eagerly seizing and using for plans to expand its work. *RCL* has been the first to publish translations of *Spotkania* materials in the past, and in the current issue we publish a lengthy extract (pp. 139-46) from a new book by Father Józef Tischner which the *Spotkania* organization has produced in *samizdat* in Polish. *Spotkania*, in return, has published an article by Keston College staff member Marite Sapiets on the Catholic Church in Lithuania (*Spotkania* No. 8, 1979). We look forward to continued co-operation with *Spotkania* and other religious *samizdat* journals. As they spread throughout Eastern Europe, so does *RCL*'s role as a voice for them in the West increase.

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J.E.