Editorial

In this issue of *RCL,* we are devoting more than a third of our space to one country, Ukraine. Though too often thought of by westerners as simply part of the Soviet Union, it is in fact historically a separate and distinct country, with its own language, history, culture and traditions, including religious traditions. A country larger in area than Poland and Yugoslavia together, and with a population of fifty million (nearly one fifth of the entire Soviet population) cannot be ignored, nor simply merged with its neighbours into some vast conglomerate. This is the first time we have devoted so much space in the journal to a single country, and we hope that this will encourage the Ukrainian community in the West to support the research programme on religion in Ukraine which we would like to establish at Keston College.

In this issue we have an article on the Ukrainian Orthodox Church by Frank E. Sysyn (pp. 251-63) and on the Ukrainian Greek Catholic, or Uniate, Church by Ivan Hvat' (pp. 264-80). The latter article is followed by a documentary appendix describing the present-day plight of the Ukrainian Uniates (pp. 280-94). We hope to cover other aspects of religious life in Ukraine in subsequent issues.

Ukraine is situated between Russia and Poland — themselves by no means the best of neighbours — and has at different times found herself at enmity with both. It is hardly surprising that resentment still lingers today, and that bitter comments are often made. Ukrainians especially resent being ruled from Moscow, and its russificatory policies, which have done so much irreparable damage to Ukrainian culture. The destruction of many monuments of Ukrainian architecture, including churches (see photographs on cover and facing p. 272) is only one example of this. (The photographs come from an exhibition entitled *The Lost Architecture of Kiev* organised by the Ukrainian Museum in New York: there are plans to bring the exhibition to Britain). This has led to distrust in Ukraine of all Russians who express nationalist or patriotic sentiments, even when they are patriotic but non-chauvinist members of the independently-

minded Russian intelligentsia, not a few of whom have suffered in labour camps.

Ukrainian churchmen have their grievances against the Moscow rulers, and also against the Russian Orthodox Church, which they see as far too ready to acquiesce in the suppression of Ukrainians. It rankles that the millions-strong Ukrainian Orthodox Church is today merely an exarchate of the Moscow Patriarchate, while the Georgian Orthodox Church, in a country with a total population of only three million, has its own Patriarch. After all, Orthodoxy came to Moscow via Kiev. The Uniates today have no legal existence at all, since they were forcibly obliged to enter the Russian Orthodox Church in 1946. They continue to regard themselves as Catholics, loyal to the Pope (though worshipping according to the eastern, Orthodox, rite), while the Moscow Patriarchate constantly proclaims that they are really Orthodox, seduced for a time by the blandishments of the Roman Catholic Church, but now returned to the fold. Tension over these sensitive issues remains high after centuries, and seems sure to persist.

The issue of peace continues to be an important one for *RCL,* particularly the views expressed on it by independent, unofficial religious groups in Eastern Europe. In this issue we have an article on the peace movement in East Germany (pp. 244-50) by Timothy Garton Ash, a well-informed and perceptive commentator on Germany both East and West, as well as Poland. He points out that we should not assume that popular movements in the East will have the same character as those in the West: members of western peace movements who do make such an assumption simply do not understand the very different, complex and deceptive nature of society in the East. Mr Garton Ash concludes that the unofficial peace movement in the GDR is vigorous, but that its methods of operation and even its aims must necessarily be different from those of similar movements in the West.

Churches do not necessarily have to be large, or to be the dominant church in their country, in order to maintain a viable existence and make a perceptible contribution to national life. Polish Protestants tend to be swamped by their Catholic neighbours, particularly since the election of a Polish Pope, and the tiny Bulgarian Catholic Church has been virtually ignored outside overwhelmingly Orthodox Bulgaria. Yet both have stalwart congregations of faithful who have weathered adversity and produced some leaders of high calibre; and neither has been without influence on the society in which they live. See Paul Keim's article on Protestants in Poland (pp. 295-309) and Janice Broun's article on Catholics in Bulgaria (pp. 310-20).

October 1983 J.E.