

Mother Russia by Rachel Douglas

Russian Church and Russian State

An outlet of the KGB and Communist Party doth protest too much about our revelations on the Kremlin and the ROC.

E*IR*'s writers were labeled "trog-
lodytes" by *Izvestia*, for daring to call
for an end to the terror of the Mutual
Assured Destruction doctrine. But
never, until now, has Moscow said
anything for or against our charge, that
the Soviet State is structured on the
Byzantine model, run from a Kremlin
whose guiding idea is that of the Rus-
sian Orthodox Church and the Tsars—
the myth of Moscow the Third Rome.

That changed with the July 31
issue of the weekly *Literaturnaya Gaz-
eta*, notorious for its links to the KGB.
One week after the release of the *EIR*
Special Report, "Global Showdown:
The Russian Imperial War Plan for
1988," *Lit Gaz* ran a long article by
novelist Aleksandr Nezhnyi on the
restoration of the ancient Danilov
Monastery in Moscow, to be the new
administrative center of the Russian
Orthodox Church/Moscow Patriar-
chate.

"Western propaganda," com-
plained *Lit Gaz*, "is circulating absurd
inventions and provocational fabrica-
tions. The Russian Orthodox Church
is declared to be a state church. . . ."
As the only example of such "propa-
ganda," the weekly cited "an article
published not long ago in the West
German *Neue Solidarität*, [from
which] one can learn that 'the state has
sent student brigades and teams of
specialists' to work on the Danilov
Monastery restoration."

The cited article was based on the
five-part series in this column last
spring, on the 1,000th anniversary ju-
bilee of the Russian Orthodox Church,
coming up in 1988.

The editorial introduction (the pa-
per's editor is Communist Party Cen-
tral Committee member Aleksandr
Chakovskii) asserted, that the Soviet
State's decision to return the monas-
tery to the Patriarchate, in 1983, was
merely "testimony to the normal rela-
tions between State and Church."
Having protested against the charac-
terization of a "state church," the Cen-
tral Committee- and KGB-linked *Lit-
eraturnaya Gazeta* then printed the
words of Nezhnyi, which surpass, in
explicit celebration of the Church's
integral place in the Soviet state, any-
thing we have previously presented in
this column!

Nezhnyi writes, said *Lit Gaz*, on
"one of our traditional themes—the
preservation of monuments of our na-
tive history and culture." That theme
is a Russophile watchword: The Ros-
siya Society, the 14-million strong ve-
hicle for Russian nationalist activism,
is officially in the business of "monu-
ment preservation."

Nezhnyi set the mood: "There are
times, when just one look suddenly
reveals unexpected features in a seem-
ingly familiar picture, and shakes the
soul. . . . So it happened with me
when, having spent a few hours within
the walls of the Danilov Monastery,
unhurriedly surveying its churches,
which are acquiring an appearance
worthy of them, and making the ac-
quaintance of the restorer-architects
and master stonemasons, who, in the
space of four months, have raised a
nearly 40-meter-high belfry above the
front church, I found myself a few
days later in the administrative head-

quarters of ZIL [a Moscow auto plant],
and from the twelfth story on the op-
posite, right bank of the Moscow Riv-
er, in a dense clump of industrial
buildings, caught sight of that same
belfry, those same churches and walls,
and nearly gasped with amazement.
The tangibility of the march of time
. . . gained even greater force, from
the barely perceptible movement of
the black river water flowing beside.
It had quietly streamed, from one end
of the city to the other, from century
unto century. . . . In ancient times,
when it flooded, it had come up right
under the monastery walls—now, . . .
it only preserved in some deepest re-
flections, perhaps, the little hill and
the wooden church on it: around 1282
its construction was ordered, by the
son of Aleksandr Nevskii, Prince Dani-
il of Muscovy.

". . . the work of the restorers is
permeated with such conscientious-
ness, such striving for the truth, such
passionate desire to revive what was
pointlessly lost."

Nezhnyi interviewed Metropolitan
Aleksii of Tallinn and Estonia, the
Moscow Patriarchate administrator in
charge of the Danilov project. "We
aim to complete it by 1988, the 1,000th
anniversary of the adoption of Chris-
tianity by Rus," said the priest.

"The Russian Orthodox Church,"
Aleksii beamed, "by acquiring a new
administrative center, will obtain the
possibility of better organizing its ac-
tivity and more fully carrying out its
assignment. Here there will be church
conferences, . . . international meet-
ings. . . . Without a doubt, the Church
will have the possibility to develop, in
still greater breadth, its patriotic activ-
ity, which was so brilliantly manifest-
ed during the years of the Great Pa-
triotic War, and to activate its peace-
making efforts, which have won it
world renown."