

## Mother Russia by Luba George

### Soviet attacks on Pope grow frenzied

*The Kremlin combines venomous outbursts against John Paul II with stepped-up plans for the millennium.*

The first five weeks of 1986 have shown that the Russian campaign against Pope John Paul II and the Catholic Church, both abroad and inside the Soviet Union, will intensify, and preparations for the 1988 "Holy Russia" Jubilee will accelerate.

In 1985, as the Soviet Union and the Russian Orthodox Church/Moscow Patriarchate began their preparations for the 1,000th anniversary of the Russian Orthodox Church, attacks on the Pope and the Vatican escalated over the embittered outbursts of 1984, coupled with a mounting crackdown and persecution against the clergy and population of Soviet Lithuania—the only Soviet Republic with a majority Catholic population.

The late-January issue of the Soviet weekly, *Nauka i Religiya* (*Science and Religion*) carried the most frantic attack to date by any Soviet publication against the person of Pope John Paul II.

The *Nauka i Religiya* broadside, accused the Pope of having made a "pro-American . . . slide to the right" and of operating under "the growing influence of pro-American circles." This declaration that the Pope is equivalent to the American "enemy" comes two months after the historic Bishops Synod in Rome which condemned Adam Smith colonialism—sometimes called "free market economics"—Marxist determinism, and Jacobin Liberation Theology. In the period of preparations for the Synod, the Papacy reaffirmed the central distinction between Christianity and Or-

thodoxy—the issue of the *Filioque*, that all men contain within them the potential to be "sons of God"—anathema to Orthodoxy.

Referring to the Synod, the Pope is personally attacked for his calls to wage a struggle against "atheism and Marxism," i.e., Liberation Theology, "through promoting a splitting of the masses along religious lines," and for his "putting pressure" on the pro-Sandinista section of the Nicaraguan clergy.

*Nauka i Religiya* in particular reflects the anger of the Soviet leadership that the Vatican has refrained "from any criticism of American militarism," following with the charge: "The entire financial mechanism of the Vatican is strongly intertwined with U.S. monopoly capital."

At the just concluded Lithuanian Party Congress, one of 14 non-Russian Republic party congresses held before the 27th Party Congress on Feb. 25, the Kremlin threw down the gauntlet.

The Feb. 2 address to the congress by Lithuanian Party boss Petras Griskevicius was a declaration of war against the Roman Catholic Church in Lithuania: "In numerous parts of the Lithuanian Republic, the work against the Church, until now, has not been conducted effectively enough . . . under the cover of religion, ideological deviations have arisen, which have to be fought by intensified atheistic propaganda."

Griskevicius announced that Lithuania will crack down against "cleri-

cal extremism," and pledged an intensified drive to spread the use of the Russian language in Lithuania.

With 1988 but two years away, the Soviet state is working overtime to ensure that the major Russian Orthodox Church monasteries are completely restored in time for the millennial celebrations. The biggest of the restoration projects is the Danilov Monastery, new headquarters of the Moscow Patriarchate.

To speed up the Danilov Monastery restoration, Swiss sources report that in mid-January, at the U.S.S.R. Foreign Trade Bank (Vneshtorg Bank), the Soviet government opened an account titled "Fund for the Restoration and Construction of the Danilov Monastery Complex" (Nr. 07070020).

The chief of administration for the Moscow Patriarchate, Metropolitan Alexei of Tallinn and Estonia, announced that all people abroad who wish to support the Danilov Monastery reconstruction project could contribute to this account.

The Danilov Monastery Commission, of course, will see none of the millions of dollars, deutschemarks, and Swiss and French francs flowing into the Danilov account: The Soviet state will see and get every last penny of the foreign exchange—turning over to the Commission the "equivalent" in rubles and kopeks.

P.S. In a call made Feb. 6 by *EIR* to Bishop Sergei, head of the Russian Orthodox Church delegation at the World Council of Churches in Geneva, it was confirmed that such an account has been set up: "General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachov has shown personal interest in the preparations for the thousand-year celebrations and for the restoration of the Danilov Monastery, and in this context he has exchanged letters with Patriarch Pimen," said Bishop Sergei.