

preach their faith in daily life.

Recantations also serve to show other prisoners that the Soviet state is merciful to those who see the error of their ways. In the case of Markus this has meant conditional release from his prison sentence, although he was not at first permitted to return from Siberia to his family in Moscow. Sergei Timokhin was likewise released early, in February 1986.

The reasons for recantations are difficult to identify, and very little documentation is available relating to the recent confessions. Past instances indicate, however, that the KGB is free in its use of physical and psychological pressure to wean confessions from its victims. Mõtsnik was 57 years old and in poor health, with the prospect of three years in camp ahead of him; Markus was half way through his sentence, with a wife and four young children upon whom considerable pressure could be exerted. Razveyev was in a similar position, having a

wife and two children; while Sergei Timokhin — who apparently resisted for several months before breaking — may also have been motivated by concern for his family as he made his confession and denunciation of Valeri Barinov. Barinov's own reaction to his friend's statement is perhaps indicative of the perspective in which such recantations should be understood. "I was surprised that Sergei did this," he said, "but it seems to me that he was simply tricked by the KGB." He even went on to give credit to his friend for not giving others away. "Sergei did not say anything about our group, about its members, about the equipment we used . . . ."

There can be no doubt that, as Barinov's words imply, resistance to KGB pressure is an agonisingly tough and demanding stance to maintain. For some it is unbearably so.

IRENA KORBA

## The Return of the Danilov Monastery to the Russian Orthodox Church

In June 1983, the Danilov Monastery in Moscow was handed back to the Moscow Patriarchate by the Soviet government, according to an announcement by the Soviet news agency TASS. Subsequent reports in the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate (JMP)* have provided more details about the history and architecture of the monastery, and the uses to which it would be put. The monastery, the oldest in Moscow, was founded in the thirteenth century by a son of Alexander Nevsky, Grand Prince Daniil Alexandrovich, who is buried in the monastery. He was also the founder of the Moscow Kremlin. The monastery is situated on the River Moscow, just over three miles from the Kremlin. Restoration and rebuilding at the monastery is clearly going to be very extensive, but the church hopes that it will be completed by 1988, in time for the celebration of the millennium of the church.

The restoration of the monastery is the responsibility of the Executive Committee for the Reception and Restoration of the Danilov Monastery, headed by Metropolitan Alexi of Tallinn, the chancellor (business manager) of the Moscow Patriarchate.

In September 1983, he reported to the Holy Synod that restoration had commenced, a group of architects had been convened for the purpose, and a new bank account had been opened to receive donations to finance the work. He said that donations were already being received from "diocesan bishops, superiors of monasteries and convents, priests, church councils and lay people". Subsequently, *JMP* published the name and number of the bank account, and invited foreigners to send donations in any currency.

It is intended that the monastery will become the new spiritual and administrative centre for the church. At present it has offices scattered in several parts of Moscow. The monastery complex will accommodate the official residence of the patriarch, some institutions of the Holy Synod, and, on an adjacent plot of land, a conference hall for "religious and peace-making conferences".

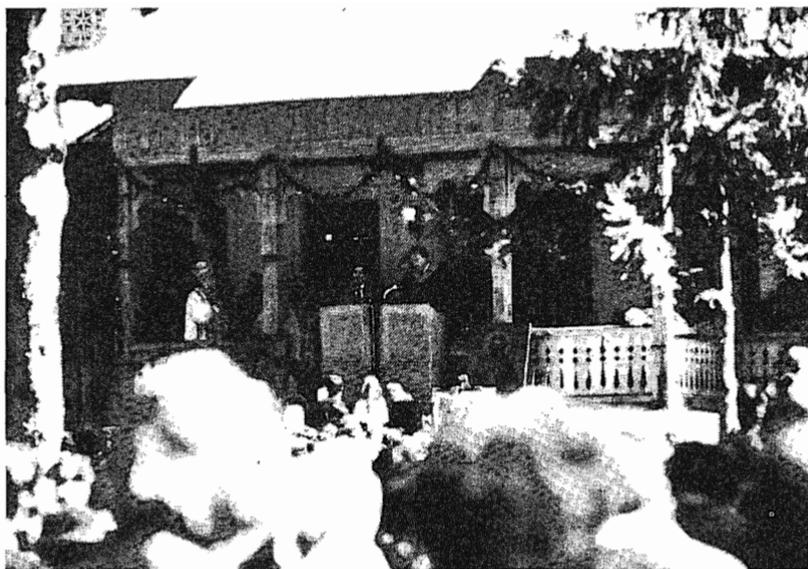
The superior of the monastery, Archimandrite Yevlogi, was born in 1937. He has spent much of his life at the Moscow Theological Academy at Zagorsk, where he was awarded a master's degree in 1979 for a dissertation on Orthodox monasticism, and



Dr Werner Leich, Bishop of Thuringia, newly-elected Chairman of the Conference of Protestant Church Leaderships, GDR. See *Chronicle* item on pp. 211-12. (Photo © W. E. Yoder.)



Estonian Lutheran Pastor Harri Mõtsnik (*left*) and Orthodox layman Sergei Markus (*right*) whose "recantations" were published in the Soviet press in November 1985. See *Chronicle* item on pp. 214-16. (Both photos courtesy Keston College.)



Billy Graham's preaching tour of Romania, September 1985. *Above:* the first public meeting of the tour was held in Vorona Orthodox monastery in Moldavia. *Below:* large crowds gathered outside the "Speranța" Baptist Church in Arad, western Romania, where many were able to hear Billy Graham's sermon relayed on loudspeakers. See *Document* section, pp. 224-27 for a Romanian's account of the tour. (Both photos courtesy Romanian Aid Fund.)



became a professor in 1980. He was responsible for the new building work carried out recently at Zagorsk.

At first it was not clear whether a monastic community would be able to function at the monastery, or whether it would be simply an administrative centre. Reports in *JMP* spoke vaguely of an unstated number of "residents" there. It now seems clear that monks are residing there and that services are being held. According to recent verbal reports, as yet unconfirmed, there are about fifty monks in residence. It is thought that these have been transferred from other monasteries, and that the total number of monks in the Russian Orthodox monasteries has not increased. If a monastic community is in fact being established in the Danilov Monastery, it will bring the total number of Russian Orthodox monasteries in the Soviet Union to seven. There are also ten convents. They are all concentrated in the western part of the country: there are no monastic communities east of Moscow.

There have been several reports of services at the monastery in *JMP*. On 8 June 1985 Patriarch Pimen visited the monastery and conducted his first service there, on the occasion of the anniversary of the translation of the relics of St Daniel to the monastery. On 6 July, Metropolitan Alexi ordained two men, and their names were entered into the annals of the church as a continuation of its centuries-old spiritual traditions. On 15 January 1986, Patriarch Pimen paid a further visit to the monastery, and Archimandrite Yevlogi gave a speech reporting on the progress of the restoration work.

He pointed out that an enormous amount of work had to be done in order to complete the building work by 1988, but said that nearly all the facades of the churches and cathedrals had already been restored.

Many foreign visitors to the church have also visited the monastery. Mostly they have been members of official delegations who have been officially received by the superior and brothers of the monastery. One Russian émigré who was able to return on a visit to the Soviet Union was however able to visit the monastery in an unofficial capacity, in the company of a priest to whom he had been introduced. He was impressed to see many believers working away voluntarily at their immense task. They gladly stopped work to explain to him what they were doing, and showed great enthusiasm and dedication for their work. He

was plied with information about the history of the monastery, and felt the sense of being part of a great tradition which the believers working on the restoration possessed. In more recent times, though, the monastery housed a concentration camp for children.

The return of the Danilov Monastery is one of several concessions made to the Russian Orthodox Church in the last few years. Another example was the modern, purpose-built premises which the Publishing Department was permitted to construct near the Novodevichi Monastery. It is clear that these concessions are rewards for "good behaviour" by the church leadership. The most obvious example of this has been the church's heightened involvement in the Soviet government's peace campaign, which amounts to nothing more than an endorsement of Soviet foreign policy objectives. Though the church has done this consistently since the Second World War, its visibility in the peace campaign as a whole has increased of late. Another example has been the church leadership's failure to support Orthodox Christian prisoners, and in some cases openly to condemn them. This has undoubtedly helped the KGB's crackdown on independent activists within the church, and is clearly the result of a "divide and rule" policy by the Soviet authorities.

Not only is the return of the Danilov Monastery a reward, it also affords an opportunity to demonstrate that the church is free and that relations between church and state are "normal". This is the line taken in an article in the Soviet literary weekly *Literaturnaya gazeta* published on 31 July 1985. The author, Alexander Nezhny, takes issue with comments in some western publications similar to those in the preceding paragraph. He terms them "absurd inventions and provocative fabrications". Having visited the monastery to ascertain what the situation there really was, Nezhny wrote this article, entitled "Seven Centuries Later", which includes a good deal of historical comment, a description of the restoration work in progress and interviews with some of the workers and church officials. This is interesting, but does not add much to what was already known. In an attempt to disprove the western press comments, Nezhny interviewed Metropolitan Alexi, Archimandrite Yevlogi and Metropolitan Filaret of Minsk, Chairman of the Department of External Church Relations. The

latter's response, as quoted, is merely a re-statement of the church's involvement in the peace campaign, and the two former repeat what the functions of the monastery are intended to be. One interesting point, however, is that Metropolitan Alexi denies an allegation said to have been made in the

western press that the return of the Danilov Monastery to the church might mean that it would have to return the Holy Trinity Monastery of St Sergius at Zagorsk to the state.

JANE ELLIS

## The British Council of Churches Delegation to the Churches of the USSR, 17-28 May 1986

What was one to expect from such a visit? The question must have presented itself to our hosts as well as to ourselves. In an attempt to dispel at least some of the doubts, the nineteen-member delegation was early presented with an address by the ailing (therefore absent) Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia. This urged that interdenominational questions be left to one side since existing bilateral discussions could best concern themselves with questions of faith and order. Rather should we turn to problems of the utmost urgency for the welfare of mankind, problems of peace and nuclear disarmament. The statement was clearly drawn up in the awareness that discussions on the previous exchange visit of Christians from the USSR to the British Council of Churches (BCC) in 1983 had indeed concerned itself with such things in the aftermath of the Church of England's *The Church and the Bomb* and the BCC's own *On Making Peace in the Nuclear World*. And it was probably in the same awareness that a non-committal passage was drafted for a possible joint communiqué, which clearly anticipated that these discussions would continue unabated. However, the passage was to be redrafted and the expectations were not to be fulfilled. This was to the credit of both sides in the formal discussions and, one would hope, to the benefit of both.

Instead, and on the prompting of the "home" team (a passage in the Patriarch's address of welcome, elaborated in a heartfelt speech by Protopresbyter Vitali

Borovoi), valuable time was spent on the question of mutual trust, the presupposition for any dialogue or exchange. This involved more than the expression of pious thoughts about openness: it brought actual openness into play. In the furtherance of it both sides were assisted by the absence of prepared papers; and while the first of our two discussions may have lacked a sense of direction, it provided ample fuel for the often vital and forthright discussions which were held when the two parties reconvened towards the end of the visit. The joint statement, which was freshly drawn up on the following day, the penultimate day of the visit, had reason to speak of "frank exchanges in the spirit of mutual good will". The thoughtful chairmanship of our principal host, Metropolitan Filaret of Minsk and Belorussia, had certainly helped to produce this kind of exchange, and he was ably supported by those who flanked him on either side, Alexei Bychkov, the general secretary of the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians and Baptists, and the joint leaders of the BCC delegation, John Habgood, Archbishop of York, and David Coffey, President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland.

By this stage of the visit, mutual good will had been firmly established in the course of the BCC delegates' experiences beyond the conventional boundaries of the conference chamber. For this was not the flimsy kind of good will which feeds on window-dressing and circumlocution. The delegation as a whole had its rich programme of services