



*"Watchman,
what of the night?"*

The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come. Isaiah 21:11-12

"THESE LATTER DAYS"

Pope John Paul II Engrossed in Study of Eschatology

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A full-color photo on the program booklet at Assumption College's academic convocation, September 10, 1985, featured an American flag intertwined with the flag of the Holy See. At the special convocation, this Roman Catholic college in Worcester, Mass., conferred honorary doctorates on Pio Laghi, Pro-Nuncio to the United States, and William A. Wilson, U.S. Ambassador to the Vatican, who is also a Catholic.

In reporting this convocation, Joseph L. Conn, managing editor of Church & State (Nov, 1985), quoted Wilson in his acceptance speech. Wilson, noting that the diplomatic exchange between the United States and the Holy See had gone beyond the mere effort to collect political information, declared it had now developed into "a quest for morality." Then he added:

In these latter days, we have consciously entered into a quest to recognize and to understand the role of religion in international affairs. (p. 4)

It is true in the speeches made at this convocation not only by Wilson, but also by Pio Laghi and Cardinal Bernard Law of Boston, the emphasis was on the religious

aspect and objective of the diplomatic exchange between the United States and the Vatican. In fact, Laghi quoted Pope John XXIII who asserted that the "Holy Church which I represent is the Mother of Nations, of all nations." (Ibid., p. 5)

Cardinal Law, in praising the diplomatic exchange, called it a "breakthrough of those false stereotypes and empty fears that are fanned by prejudice." He expressed hope that there would be "other breakthroughs" where "the religious mind and sentiment and the best principles of this nation can be yoked together for the common good." (Ibid.) In other words, this convocation called for a union of church and state in the United States, with the church part being the Roman Catholic church. BUT, why did Wilson refer to these times as "these latter days"?

In 1984, the Granada Publishing Limited of London, England, published a book - The Year of Armageddon - by Gordon Thomas and Max Morgan-Witts. These men have authored nine other books, among them Pontiff, with a total global sales in excess of 36,000,000 copies. However, strangely this book is not yet available in American bookstores; and the report is that if and when released in the United States, there will be sizeable deletions. (As late as December, while on a trip East, I checked with book stores, and found that one chain's listing did not include this book, though it listed other books by these authors) This book is written in diary-entry form covering one year in the activities of the Vatican

- 1983. Describing the actions of the Pope on that New Year's Day, the authors write:

This morning, when he was awoken at five o'clock, his first action, as it is every morning, was to kneel on the prie-dieu near his bed and pray before the icon of the Blessed Virgin on how best to fulfil the momentous task God, through her, has given him. At seven o'clock, another part of his daily habit, he offers a second such prayer while he celebrates Mass in his private chapel in the apartment." (p. 32)

Following Mass, Pope John Paul II on this New Year's Day hurried to his study to scrutinize a folder bearing just two words - Sommario (Summary) and Segreto (Secret). The authors of the book detail the description of the Pope's study, and give some insight as to why the bookshelves contain the books they do. Their fascinating account reads:

The study bookshelves offer a further clue to the many changes which have occurred in the pope's personality during the past year. Where once there were only uniform rows of leather-bound editions of the classics and the works of theologians and philosophers, these have been joined by copies of the International Defence Review and the Defence Management Journal, as well as books with such arresting titles as The Problems of Military Readiness, Military Balance and Surprise Attack: Lessons for Defence Planning. Beside his encyclicals bound in white calf - they include the original draft of Laborem Exercens (On Human Work), a powerful evocation of the right to have meaningful employment under just conditions, including the right to organize unions - is a scrapbook of letters from Solidarity members in Poland saying what a comfort they found the encyclical...

Close to the encyclicals are books dealing with a subject that now rivets the pope: eschatology, the study of biblical teachings which argues that God will inaugurate His Kingdom on earth through a series of 'happenings' to close an age. John Paul believes with a fervour which sometimes astonishes even his personal staff that, possibly before the end of the century, something 'decisive' may sweep the world. Could it be pestilence, a second Black Death? Or drought or famine on an unimaginable scale? Or nuclear war? He frequently now fears the latter; perhaps, he has been known to ponder, he has been cast in the role of head of the Church during what could be the final decade of the world before it is permanently blighted by a nuclear holocaust.

The need to purify and unify the Church before this awesome time of final judgment occurs helps explain

why John Paul has felt it a pressing duty to make so many arduous trips outside Italy, bringing his message to over 100 million people on five continents. He has expounded the great themes of Christianity, generated trust and goodwill even among non-believers and made himself the very visible foremost Christian leader of the age; an astute amalgam of priest, storyteller and missionary. (pp. 32-33)

The Pope's interest in eschatology was reflected in his Apostolic Letter issued at the close of the Jubilee Year of Redemption. In it he combined the concept of peace with "the question of Jerusalem." After reviewing why the adherents of the three great monotheistic religions - Christian, Jew and Muslim - look to Jerusalem, he called it "the Holy City," the Pope wrote: "Jerusalem stands out as a symbol of coming together, or union, and of universal peace for the human family." He declared that he longed for the day when all "taught by God" would listen to His message of peace and reconciliation so that whether Jew, Christian, or Muslim, each could greet the other "in the city of Jerusalem with the same greeting of peace with which Christ greeted the disciples after the resurrection: 'Peace be with you.'"

Concluding this Apostolic Letter - "Redemptionis Anno" - John Paul II wrote:

This peace proclaimed by Jesus Christ in the name of the Father who is in heaven thus makes Jerusalem the living sign of the great ideal of unity, of brotherhood and of agreement among peoples according to the illuminating words of the book of Isaiah: "Many peoples shall come and say: 'Come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.'" (Isa. 2:3) (L'Osservatore Romano, April 30, 1984, p. 6ff.)

It must be kept in mind that Isaiah 2:2 declares - "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the tops of the mountains" - a clear prophetic inference of the church upheld by the states of earth - and that "many people" will call for a gathering to the mountain of the Lord "for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." (Isaiah 2:2-3) The Law has already been proclaimed from Mount Sinai. What universal law would be considered that it should be proclaimed from Jerusalem?

We have before us the evidence that the present Pope is absorbed in the study of last day prophecies. From his own Apostolic Letter there is indication which of the prophecies is attracting his attention. At the Convocation at Assumption College, the very words - "these latter days" - were associated by the American Ambassador to the Vatican with a purposeful "quest to recognize and understand the role of religion in international affairs."

[It must be observed that while the prophecy of Isaiah does indicate an exaltation of the church and a gathering in Jerusalem from which a law will go forth, this same prophecy states that God is not in this call of "many people." He has forsaken these people "because they be replenished from the east, and are soothsayers like the Philistines, and they please themselves in the children of strangers." (Isa. 2:6)]

Both Wilson and his counterpart, Laghi, at the convocation emphasized that the relations between the U.S. and the Vatican had passed from a "'listening post' mentality" with the gathering of information as its chief objective to "a quest for morality." Laghi indicated "that most of his time is spent on church affairs, not diplomatic relations with the U.S. Government." (Church & State, Nov., 1985, p. 5) It is true that Laghi is not only Pro-Nuncio from the Vatican to the U.S. Government, he is also the apostolic delegate charged with handling communications between the American Catholic Church and the Vatican. But with the shift of emphasis as to the purpose of the diplomatic exchange, Laghi's role in "church affairs" could mean more than merely the affairs of his own church!

It must also be remembered that one of the chief arguments pressed in the debate to place an ambassador at the Vatican was the fact that much needful information would accrue to the U.S. Government from such a diplomatic exchange. While the Vatican Secretariat of State still receives "highly sensitive political, economic and ecclesiastical information" from its network of over one hundred nuncios, pro-nuncios and apostolic delegates, Thomas and Morgan-Witts point out in their book that rather than John Paul's network for information gathering, it was the CIA station chief in Rome who first informed the Pope of Andropov's

fatal illness, and it was the same intelligence officer who informed John Paul of his death. (The Year of Armageddon, p. 382)

These same authors illuminate the very heart of papal influence in the affairs of nations when they write -

John Paul, probably more than any other modern pope, has made sure the activities of the Roman Catholic Church are known in nearly every nation and have a bearing on most aspects of human life.

Noting that Eugene Rostow, former Reagan advisor on arms control, "maintained that any discussion of the Church's international role must include both its spiritual and temporal dimensions, these writers continued-

John Paul's actions perfectly illustrate the point. In the wake of the assassination attempt he has shown renewed determination to promote the Holy See's sway at an international level. Building on the truism that the Church has for centuries exerted a profound and incalculable spiritual and cultural influence in many parts of the world, shaping the minds of men and the impulses which govern their decision-making, he has inextricably entwined Catholicism and modern-day politics...

He is not working alone, of course. Great though his personal influence is, it remains small when compared with the power of the Church as a whole. Not only is its organization dedicated to the moral and spiritual education of Catholics and indeed western society at large, the Church is also a powerful voice in the political awareness of the West. (Ibid., p. 273)

The Convocation at Assumption College was one more evidence of this fact.

OTHER FACTORS

The authors of The Year of Armageddon give some deeper insights into the US-Vatican relationships. They write - "It is the CIA which dominates the intelligence knowledge of the Vatican." (p. 220) Then they give some history:

From that day, almost forty years ago, when one of the founder members of the CIA, General William 'Wild Bill' Donovan, was received in audience by Pius XII and decorated with the Grand Cross of the Order of Saint Sylvester, the oldest and most prestigious of papal knighthoods, an award given to only one hundred other men in history, who 'by feat of arms, or writings, or outstanding deeds, have spread the Faith, and have safeguarded and championed the Church'; from that day Donovan bowed his head before the Pope, the CIA has

remained ensconced, virtually without interruption, as the prime intelligence advisor to successive pontiffs (pp. 220-221)

[Actually, General William H. Donovan was the head of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the first U.S. Intelligence Agency. It was created in 1942 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt for the purpose of obtaining information about enemy nations and sabotaging their war potential and morale. In 1945, President Harry Truman transferred various parts of the OSS to the State Department and the old War Department. Under the National Security Act of 1947, the OSS was replaced by the CIA. The question still lingers - What did Donovan do during the brief life of the OSS (1942-1945) to merit the prestigious papal knighthood bestowed upon him by Pope Pius XII?]

The evening following the day in 1983 on which Pope John Paul II gave an audience to a delegation from the People's Republic of Bulgaria (Bulgaria was implicated in the attempt to kill the Pope), the authors of The Year of Armageddon decided to spend some time "appraising the current role of the CIA" in the pontificate of John Paul II. They had accumulated much source material from many sources - Cardinal Franz Koenig of Vienna, Major Otto Kormek of the Austrian Intelligence, Kriminalhauptkommissar Hans-George Fuchs of the BKA in Wiesbaden, Archbishop Alibrandi of Dublin, and a number of people working in the Vatican. They also had published documents their researchers had gathered for them. Their own special data marked "highly confidential", which only they see, gathered from ambassadors accredited either to Italy or the Holy See was before them. Based on this information they concluded:

The CIA is as close to the pope as the telephone which is never far from the reach of its present director, William J. Casey. He has, if anything, advanced the long-standing and intimate relationship which 'Wild Bill' Donovan formed with the papacy.

Casey, more than any other director since then, has systematically developed the CIA's ties with the Vatican. Apart from the distressing and short-lived period following the assassination attempt, the CIA has retained its position as John Paul's main guide through the murky world of secret intelligence. (p. 221)

Then comes the revelation -

We remind ourselves Casey is a member of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, a vaunted Vatican order which dates from the Crusades when 'warrior monks' served as the fighting arm of the Catholic Church. (p. 222)

The CIA Rome is "the working level" at which the agency relates to the Papacy. Two European ambassadors reminded Thomas and Morgan-Witts that it was one thing for CIA Rome to send a weekly briefing to John Paul, but unacceptable for the Station Chief to have daily access to the pope's office. This is solved by using the Order of the Knights of Malta. By so doing, Casey has opened up a sophisticated conduit which allows the CIA, on an indirect and informal basis, to exchange ideas and opinions with the pope. Casey does not even have to pick up the telephone. "There are powerful emissaries in the order who can convey the CIA's views to John Paul, in that essential "informal" way which distances the agency from the Papacy. . . And, if none of them is going to Rome, then Casey has a Knight on the spot. He is William Wilson" the American Ambassador to the Holy See. (p. 223)

The CIA is also developing links with one of John Paul's favorite secret societies, Opus Dei. In Chile, this society receives direct financial support from the CIA. Thus the Central Intelligence Agency could still reach John Paul II if unable to do so either through the regular channel, CIA Rome, or the Knights of Malta.

The picture is not complete unless we know something about the Knights of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, and Opus Dei. This we shall pursue in the following articles. #

OPUS DEI

This Roman Catholic Lay Order founded in Spain in 1928 now consists of "a zealous orthodox network of 74,000 lay Catholics and 1,200 priests spread across 40 nations." Opus Dei, meaning in Latin, "Work for God," has now become "one of the most influential, controversial movements in Roman Catholicism." (*Time*, June 11, 1984) Called by detractors, "the Holy Mafia," it nevertheless enjoys the backing of John Paul II.

Its founder, Josemaria Escriva, a Hospital Chaplain in Madrid, Spain, "received an instantaneous vision of the Opus Dei concept as church bells began to ring." Its objective was to lead the laity to play an important

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WHO ARE THE KNIGHTS OF MALTA?

This is the caption of the lead article in the National Catholic Reporter of October 14, 1983. The subtitle of this article in "the independent Catholic newsweekly" reads - "Behind the charity, a rightist Catholic 'old boys' network."

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[All direct quotes will be from the National Catholic Reporter unless otherwise noted - Editor]

Within the Roman Catholic Church, there is a liberal element and this independent Catholic newsweekly appears to speak for it. On the other hand, there is a conservative core which the National Catholic Reporter pictures as centering in the Order of the Knights of Malta, "the oldest chivalric order in existence, dating back to the Crusades when 'warrior monks' formed the military vanguard of the Catholic Church." Gordon Thomas and Max Morgan-Witts, as they close their one year report of the Papacy in their book, The Year of Armageddon, include a chapter they title - "Towards Tomorrow." In this chapter, they write:

Papal diplomacy, the political core of a highly centralized bureaucracy, has more than at any other time in its 500 years of very active history, become involved with international events.

The procedures for doing so remain the same - a well-established mixture of international, constitutional and canon law, theology and conscience.

But under John Paul, papal politics no longer oscillate between conservatism and liberalism. They are firmly committed to the right. (p. 379)

"SMOM [Sovereign Military Order of Malta] represents the cutting edge of right-wing Catholicism in the U.S., a hidden mating ground where the Catholic church and the U.S. ruling elite intersect. These links suggest a greater U.S./Vatican interrelationship than is generally considered the case." This fact is what makes the CIA-Papal connections, the U.S.-Vatican diplomatic exchange so critical. Further, because members of the Order of Malta are in key positions it necessitates that we know what this Order is and its objectives.

The SMOM has two faces. Most knights of the Order "insist that SMOM is simply a charitable organization." The Encyclopaedia Britannica notes that "since its first beginnings it has never ceased to serve the poor and sick, and from the early 19th century the order, in all its forms, has continued to discharge this Christian work in accordance with its own splendid tradition." (Vol. 19, p. 838, 1958 edition) Martin A. Lee, author of the article in the National Catholic Reporter, tells of the charitable activities the knights - operation of "modern clinics, research centers, leprosariums and schools for the deaf and blind" - but adds - "charity typifies only the public face of SMOM. In private ceremonies, the knights have decorated Nazi spies and CIA operatives."

In 1798, Napoleon took the island of Malta, and the knights long rule of the island came to an end. After the expulsion from Malta, the knights ceased to be a territorial power. However, Lee writes:

Although SMOM has no land mass other than a small headquarters in Rome, this unique papal entity mints coins, prints stamps, has its own constitution and issues license plates and passports to an accredited diplomatic corps. ...

Elected to a life term subject to papal approval, the Italian grand master of the order, Fra Angelo de Morgana di Cologna, holds a rank equal to a cardinal and is recognized as a sovereign leader by 47 nations. ...

Pope John Paul II recently upgraded the Vatican's recognition of SMOM to full diplomatic relations.

The Knights of Malta have their own national holiday, "which they celebrate with much pomp and circumstance. Each year on St. John's day, June 24, SMOM members dress in black capes and scarlet uniforms, wave

swords and flags with the eight-pointed Maltese cross." The Order's "annual formal visit to the Vatican [is] to renew its allegiance to the Holy Mother Church." (The Year of Armageddon p. 222) "When Casey, Buckley, Luce and others dress in medieval garb, these modern crusaders rekindle the mystical mission to defeat all enemies of their notion of church."

"The Order's real power derives from the lay members scattered throughout five continents. Nobility forms SMOM's backbone, with nearly half of its 10,000 continents belonging to Europe's oldest and most powerful families. ... The SMOM's U.S. section has approximately 1000 members - including 300 'dames' - who hail from society's upper crust. ... Its roster includes many of the corporate establishment's movers and shakers."

The membership list of corporate executives and personnel includes, Lee Iacocca of Chrysler, Barron Hilton of the hotel chain, Francis X. Stankard of Chase Manhattan Bank, William Simon former treasury secretary and energy czar and now currently a director of Citicorp, and Martin E. Shea an executive vice-president of Morgan Bank. Shea is the SMOM's secretary in the U.S. "At Morgan Bank's New York headquarters is a telex which links SMOM/U.S. to SMOM headquarters in Rome."

"Today one corporation stands out as the center of SMOM in the U.S. - W. R. Grace & Co. J. Peter Grace, company chairman, is president of the U.S. SMOM." On the board of W. R. Grace are eight knights, including John D. J. Moore, "who was ambassador to Ireland under Presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford," and Felix Larkin "former Department of Defense general counsel."

"Other SMOM members have CIA connections. Clare Boothe Luce, former ambassador to Italy, is a Dame of Malta. She currently serves on the president's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, which oversees CIA covert operations." As already noted, the present CIA Director, William Casey, is a knight, as was also John McCone who ran the CIA in the early 1960s. Other knights have links with the intelligence community. Among these are William F. Buckley, Jr., "former CIA operative, cur-

rent National Review editor and political consultant to another right-wing Catholic, William P. Clark, Reagan's [former] national security advisor; James Buckley, his brother a former U.S. Senator from New York and now serving as under secretary of state for security assistance.

"Deceased members include Joseph Kennedy (father of the Kennedy clan - although none of the Kennedy brothers joined the order)." If the Kennedy brothers are members of the liberal Catholic element in the Church as it appears they are and were, could this shed some light on questions still unanswered in regard to President John F. Kennedy?

Another deceased member was John J. Raskob, formerly General Motors board chairman and a major financier of the Democratic party. Raskob was one of the 13 founding SMOM members in the U.S. He was serving as "treasurer of the SMOM's U.S. component when he was implicated in a military plot to seize the White House in the early 1930s. (The goal was to turn President Franklin Roosevelt into either a Mussolini-type strong-man or a figurehead. But the scheme was exposed when General Smedley Butler, U.S. Marine Corps commander, blew the whistle on Raskob and coup plotters.)"

This raises some questions as to what took place following this abortive coup? Did Roosevelt see the "light"? In 1939, he appointed Myron C. Taylor as his special envoy to Pope Pius XII. Although not a Catholic, Mr. Taylor received the Knights of Malta's highest award of honor - the Gran Croci Al Merito Conplacca. Then when a full diplomatic exchange took place between the U.S. and the Vatican, the ambassador appointed by Reagan was a member of the SMOM.

In 1948 another person received the Knight's highest award of honor. He was General Reinhard Gehlen, "who ran Adolph Hitler's spy operation against the Soviet Union. ... In the late 1940s, Gehlen and his well-developed spy apparatus - staffed primarily by ex-Nazis - were incorporated into the fledgling CIA. Gehlen later became the first director of the BND (the West German CIA), which provided a substantial percentage of NATO's raw intelligence during the cold war."

Another interesting footnote to history involving Roosevelt after he saw the "light" was an operation known as "Operation Underworld." The late Cardinal Francis Spellman served as the "grand protector and spiritual advisor" to SMOM's U.S. wing. "In the early 1940s, Spellman served as an intermediary in secret negotiations between the Roosevelt White House and high-level organized crime figures... FDR promised to release mob chief Lucky Luciano from prison if the mafia could guarantee the protection of American ships based on the eastern seaboard that were vulnerable to German attack.

"Spellman turned to his mob contacts in New York to arrange the deal after seeking permission from Pope Pius XII. He went on to serve as Pope Pius' right arm and was a staunch supporter of U.S. military involvement in Vietnam."

In 1946, the SMOM gave an award - Croci Al Merito Seconda Classe - "to James Jesus Angleton, who ran counter-espionage operations in Rome for the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the forerunner of the CIA. Angleton later went on to head what has been described as the CIA's 'Vatican desk.'

"According to an ex-CIA official, Angleton was in charge of an extensive spy network that included priests behind the iron curtain who passed information on a regular basis to the office of the papal secretariat which, in turn, maintained a liaison relationship with the CIA. Angleton also assisted CIA analysts in preparing intelligence briefings on matters pertaining to the Holy See, such as profiles on leading papal candidates.

"As chief of the CIA's super-secret counter intelligence staff, Angleton was involved in a wide range of covert operations, including mail opening and spying on domestic dissidents in the U.S."

The SMOM is an Order from the Dark Ages come to life in the 20th Century. #

role in the church. In 1946, Escriva moved the movement to Rome where he died in 1975. In 1981, the Vatican took the first steps toward his canonization. The elevation to sainthood would vindicate the movement as created "under divine inspiration."

Opus Dei "offers the church a corps of well-educated, disciplined, profoundly devoted Catholics, who as laity in ordinary jobs, can penetrate society in ways that priests cannot... A 1979 Opus memo reported that members around the world work, among other things, at 487 universities and schools, 694 newspapers and periodicals, 52 TV or radio stations, 38 publicity agencies and twelve film companies." (Ibid.)

A Vatican correspondent for the Spanish newspaper, El Pais, says that John Paul likes Opus' "activism, their anti-communism, their internal compactness where no plurality of ideas exist. He likes their total submission to Rome." (RNS) An air of unremitting doctrinal conservatism pervades the organization. A member of the Opus Dei General Council declares - "We are among the most committed defenders of the notion that undebatable truth exists. Doctrine is not debatable, and when doubts arise over what is binding truth, the final word is the Pope's and not some theologian's." (Time, op. cit.)

As unnerving as it may be to liberal Catholics, the members of Opus Dei represent to John Paul, an ideal for today's lay church member. "There is speculation that the organization will gradually fill the traditional role of the Jesuits as an elite vanguard ready to do the bidding of Pope and church." (Ibid.)

"Retired Jesuit Superior General Pedro Arrupe was once quoted as having said that when Jesuits look at Opus Dei, it is 'like a mirror in which we see reflections of what we were in the past and of what we should no longer be.'" (RNS)

There are developing links between the CIA and Opus Dei. "In Chile, where the order has the tacit support of many bishops, Opus Dei receives direct financial support from the CIA. The agency has also reportedly provided Opus Dei with evidence of Jesuits who challenge papal pronouncements and who are involved in political causes the CIA opposes. Further, we have been told it was the CIA who suggested to John Paul that he should encourage Opus Dei to begin working in Poland" (The Year of Armageddon, p. 224) #

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