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By Malachi Martin



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## **Editorial Review**

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### **Chapter 1**

#### **PAPAL OBJECTIONS**

Every Pope worth his salt sets a dominant strategy for his papacy. He formulates many policies, pursues various particular aims: but all policies and each single aim are framed within the scope of that strategy.

The Society of Jesus was established by the papacy in 1540 as a very special "fighting unit" at the total and exclusive disposal of the Roman Pope -- whoever he might be. From their beginnings, the Jesuits were conceived in a military mode. Soldiers of Christ, they were given only two purposes: to propagate the religious doctrine and the moral law of the Roman Catholic Church as proposed and taught by the Roman Pope, and to defend the rights and prerogatives of that same Roman Pope. Purely spiritual and supernatural purposes. And specifically Roman Catholic. Surprisingly enough, given this mandate of the Society, papal strategy itself has become the wedge of separation between Jesuits and papacy -- indeed, the very arena where the lethal battle between the two is being fought.

Plus XII, Pope from 1939 to 1958, had found himself in a new world dominated by two rival superpowers, one of which -- the USSR -- he held in anathema. His postwar policy was one of intractable opposition to Soviet Marxism, and of support for "Western" civilization, centered in Europe and protected by the United States.

John XXIII, Pope from 1958 to 1963, was convinced that an "open windows, open fields" policy would induce others -- including the Soviets -- to refashion their own attitudes and policies. Pope John lowered as many barriers between the Church and the world -- including the Soviet Union -- as he could in his short, action-packed pontificate. He even went so far as to guarantee the USSR immunity from attacks by the Church, a stunning reversal of papal attitudes.

It was a huge gamble. And it could only work if an adequate amount of goodwill reigned among his opposite numbers.

The gamble failed. The great poignancy was that when he died, Pope John, peasant-realist that he was, knew that his openness had been seen as weakness, and had been taken advantage of by men of much smaller spirit.

Pope Paul VI, 1963-1978, blind to the deficiencies of John's policy, further refined it. The Holy See became nothing less than a plaintiff at the bar of Soviet power, pleading on diplomatic grounds for a hearing; instituting cautious conversations; practicing the week-kneed art of concessionary approaches -- and even stooping to mean-spirited deception and betrayal of the admittedly difficult Primate of Hungary, Cardinal Mindszenty, in order to please the Soviets and their castrated Hungarian surrogate, Janos Kadar.

In all of this, Paul VI, personally the gentlest of all modern Popes, unwittingly compromised his papal authority. His grand strategy for his Church was taken over and prostituted by others, reducing him to an impotence that scarred his last disease-ridden years until his death on August 6, 1978.

Still, it was Paul VI who, very late in the day of his papacy, realized that the original dual purpose of the Society of Jesus had been changed. Under his pontificate, an extensive critical dossier about the Society was compiled. It is enough for the moment to say of that dossier that its contents were damning. It was a portrait, in effect, of a Jesuit Order that, like a weathervane atop a roof, had been turned by a different wind. For Jesuits, the papacy no longer held primacy of position. The corporate aim of the Society was now to place itself and the Church at the disposal of a radical and purely sociopolitical change in the world, without reference to -- indeed, in defiance of -- papal strategy, policies, and aims.

In 1973, Paul VI, alarmed more than ever by the way the Society's members were behaving, tried to stop the onrush of events. He met with the head of the Order, Jesuit Father General Pedro Arrupe, several times. More than a few of those interviews between the two men were stormy. More than once, Paul wanted Arrupe to resign. One way or the other, Arrupe survived all papal attacks. Paul VI did insist that Arrupe convey to his Jesuits "Our demand that the Jesuits remain loyal to the Pope." Arrupe and his assistants in Rome at that time were intent on preparing for another international assembly of the Order, a General Congregation, as such an assembly is called. So he bought time, valuable time. Paul, in his weakness, could find no alternative but to wait.

Paul did make one last but equally ineffective attempt to recall the allegiance of the Society to the papacy during the ninety-six-day international assembly of Jesuit leaders, the 32nd General Congregation of 1974-1975. His effort met with total incomprehension and stubborn -- some said even self-righteous -- opposition from the Order. Pope and Jesuits simply could not agree. The Jesuits would not obey. Paul was too weak to force the issue farther.

"When you have people [the Jesuits]," wrote Jesuit Father M. Buckley about Paul's attitude to that 32nd General Congregation, "who do not think they have made errors either in content or procedure, and when they are suspected, resisted or reproved by the very man they are attempting to serve...you have...a very serious religious problem."

To say the least.

Cardinal Albino Luciani of Venice was elected to succeed Paul VI on August 26, 1978. Even before he became Pope, he had apparently made up his mind unfavorably about the Society.

And apparently the Society had already made up its mind about Pope John Paul I. No sooner had he been elected than the Jesuits asserted themselves. Father Vincent O'Keefe, the most prominent of the four General Assistants to Arrupe, and the one being groomed to succeed Arrupe one day as Father General of the Order, told a Dutch newspaper in an interview that the new Pope should reconsider the Church's ban on abortion, homosexuality, and priesthood for women. The interview was published.

Pope John Paul I was incensed. This was more than contempt. It was an assertion that the Society of Jesus knew better than the Pope what morals Catholics should practice. And it was an assertion that the Society had the authority to speak out; that is, it was a direct appropriation of the authority that belonged exclusively to the papacy.

John Paul I summoned Arrupe and demanded an explanation. Arrupe humbly promised to look into the whole matter. But John Paul could read the handwriting on the wall as clearly as any Pope. On the basis of Paul VI's critical dossier, and with the help of a very experienced old Jesuit, Father Paolo Dezza, who had been Confessor to Pope Paul VI and now was John Paul I's confessor, the Pope composed a hard-hitting speech of warning. He planned to deliver it to the international assembly of Jesuit leaders and Father General

Arrupe at another of their General Congregations to be held in Rome on September 30, 1978.

One of the striking features of his speech was John Paul I's repeated reference to doctrinal deviations on the part of Jesuits. "Let it not happen that the teachings and publications of Jesuits contain anything to cause confusion among the faithful." Doctrinal deviation was for him the most ominous symptom of Jesuit failure.

Veiled beneath the polished veneer of its graceful *romanità*, that speech contained a clear threat: the Society would return to its proper and assigned role, or the Pope would be forced to take action.

What action? From John Paul's memoranda and notes, it is clear that, unless a speedy reform of the Order proved feasible, he had in mind the effective liquidation of the Society of Jesus as it is today -- perhaps to be reconstituted later in a more manageable form. John Paul I had received the petitions of many Jesuits, pleading with him to do just that.

The Pope never delivered that speech of warning. On the morning of September 29, after thirty-three days on the Throne of Peter, and one day before he was to address the Society's General Congregation, John Paul I was found dead in bed.

In the following days, Jesuit Father General Arrupe petitioned Cardinal Jean Villot, who as Vatican Secretary of State ruled the Holy See in the interim period between John Paul I's death and the election of his successor: Could the Jesuits have a copy of that speech?

After a discussion with the College of Cardinals who were helping him to prepare for the election of the next pope, the Cardinal prudently refused. Arrupe was told instead that in the opinion of Villot and the Council, "it was high time the Jesuits put their affairs in order."

For their part, Arrupe and the Jesuits decided to sit the time out and see who would become the next Pope. Time was the commodity they always sought to have.

More than either of his two immediate predecessors, Karol Wojtyla of Poland, elected as John Paul II on October 16, 1978, could not afford to hesitate in this matter of the Jesuits. John Paul II's grand papal strategy embraced the First World of capitalism, the Second World of Soviet Communism, and the Third World of so-called underdeveloped and developing countries.

Wojtyla was extremely hard-headed in analyzing the character and limitations of papal strategy since 1945. In his view, Plus XII had guided the Church on the basis of a "siege" mentality, permitting papal strategy only clandestine movement within the Soviet empire, but providing no challenge to the continual erosion of the Church in that area. John XXIII's policy of "open fields" had been a failure. Paul VI's policy had consisted merely of a refinement of an already faulty and failed policy. By the time of Paul VI's death in 1978, his Secretariat of State had managed to work out protocol agreements with more than one member-government of the Soviet Socialist "fraternity," but none had been initialed, let alone signed and sealed into law. In any case, even had those protocols been ratified, it had already become clear enough that they would have made no difference to the status of Roman Catholics under Soviet rule.

In John Paul II's analysis, as long as the so-called First, Second, and Third Worlds were locked in the glacial chill of superpower rivalry unendingly fueled by the face-off between Marxist Leninism and rigid capitalism, there would not be the faintest hope in earthly terms that anything could be salvaged -- that any battle would be won or any solution found for the dangerous dilemma of the nations. The situation would only disintegrate, slowly but inevitably, possibly levelling civilization as men have known it in the last quarter of

the twentieth century, and reducing human history to a long, tortured sleepwalk until the end of the human night.

Wojtyla judged the time ripe for a completely different tack than Pius, John, or Paul had taken before him. His would be a "muscle" approach: Where Catholics constituted majorities or sizeable minorities in closed societies, there they should lay claim to the socio-political space that was rightfully theirs -- make an assertion of their rights, in other words, on the basis that their very presence as Roman Catholics would be enough to make such self-assertion stick.

As Cardinal Archbishop of Krakow in Poland, Wojtyla had already sharpened his wits in devising a strategy whereby such Catholic majorities and minorities as he had in mind could lay claim to their rights; yet he had not run afoul of the totalitarian and unscrupulous military control characteristic of Communist governments.

John Paul's "muscle" approach did not rule out dialogue and discourse with the Soviets and their surrogates. On the contrary. But it would be of a totally different sort than John XXIII or Paul VI had carried on. And in fact, no world leader today has personally spoken to Soviet leaders as often and as directly as John Paul II, starting from the very beginning of his pontificate. He received the USSR's prestigious and many-lived Andrei Gromyko on January 24, 1979, barely more than three months after his papal election. That was but the first of eight personal meetings between this Pontiff and Gromyko between 1979 and 1985. His telephone conversations with Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union are the Pontiff's own business; let it merely be said that they take place. If you are a Slav of the Slavs, if you speak Russian in addition to two or three other eastern European languages, if you are Pope, and if you are Karol Wojtyla, the powerbrokers wish to speak to you.

It would be essential to John Paul II's "muscle" strategy that he provide and successfully impose a new world leadership, fueled exclusively and unimpeachably by moral and spiritual motives. In order to have even a hope of succeeding in so bold and so radical a strategy, John Paul II would have to demonstrate such leadership as he was proposing in two key areas: His supreme authority in doctrine and morality would have to be vindicated and reasserted within his worldwide Church; and a concrete example would have to be forthcoming of what such leadership could provide by way of solution to the international dilemma.

Hence the two most visible lines of John Paul's papal activity: his worldwide trips, and his careful guidance of the Solidarity movement in Poland. The appearance of his papal persona in all major countries and many minor ones would be the means of reestablishing that authority. And if the Solidarity movement achieved freedom of economic and cultural action under the aegis of Soviet Communism in Poland, then both Communists and capitalists would have a ready example to show that doctrinaire politics need not result in slavery or poverty or devastating militarism.

This was the dream. Hard-headed certainly, in strategy; but still, the dream. And it put this Pope immediately at loggerheads with the globally powerful Society of Jesus.

With the guidance and financial help of John Paul II, Poland's Primate, eighty-year-old Stefan Cardinal Wyszynski, was achieving progress in evolving an attitude in the Solidarity organization by which the Church and its people could escape the grip of Communism culturally and socially. The ethos of Solidarity was developed precisely to allow such cultural and social freedom, while leaving intact the political and military grip of Marxism. "Do not endanger the Marxists in the Communist Party of Poland, in the National Parliament, in its army or the security forces," was the watchword of Solidarity's founders. "Let them be. Let us claim freedom in the other areas."

At the same time, at the other side of the world, in the area that stretches from the southern borders of Texas down to the tip of South America, Jesuits and others were carrying on their own policy as creators and chief fomentors of a new outlook -- "Liberation Theology," they called it in a typically effective bid for romantic appeal -- based on Marxist revolutionary principles and aimed at establishing a Communist system of government. The contradiction between John Paul's Polish model and the "Liberation" model advocated ardently and openly by the Jesuits in Latin America could not have been more stark or bold-faced.

John Paul II, like John Paul I before him, was privy to the dossier on the Jesuits compiled under Paul VI. And he possessed as well the speech of reproval John Paul I had prepared but never delivered. In November of 1978, within a month after his election, the Pope sent John Paul I's speech to Father General Arrupe in the Gesù, as Jesuit international headquarters in Rome are called. The Pope meant the gesture as a benign warning: I make this speech my own, the gesture said. He received in return, as was to be expected, the Father General's due protestations of loyalty and obedience. But they were to prove to be only that -- protestations.

On the evening of December 31, as a gesture of goodwill, the Pope went to the Jesuit Church of the Gesù, in order to honor the Society by his presence during their traditional year-end religious ceremonies of thanksgiving to God. John Paul let the Jesuits know beforehand that he wanted to see no Jesuit in civilian clothes. Nor did he. It was perhaps a small enough concession to the Pope, to whom each and all present had important and unique vows. But it was the only concession.

Even John Paul's retinue remarked on the polite coldness of the Jesuit notables gathered for the occasion. After the religious ceremonies, the Pope dined with the Jesuits in their refectory. He was pleasant in his remarks, one Jesuit present at the meal complained later, but "he gave us no hint about the future of the Society."

That complaint spoke volumes. The Jesuits had been able to ignore Paul VI and John Paul I. Why should they heed John Paul II? Jesuits would simply have to hold on and outlive this Pope, as they had the previous two.

Within two months of that year-end meeting between the Pope and his Jesuits, during February and March of 1979, Father General Arrupe called press conferences in Mexico and Rome at which he asserted blandly that there was no friction between the Holy Father and the Jesuits. Yes, Arrupe acknowledged to journalists at the International Press Office of the Holy See, he had received that speech of John Paul I, which John Paul II had made his own. Rumor had it, he went on, that "it had a pejorative sense and was a reprimand" for the changes made in the Society under Arrupe's fourteen-year leadership. But that was nonsense, Arrupe said. The Pope knew that "of course, the Society of Jesus had changed," he went on. "It could not do otherwise, seeing that the Church herself has changed." There was, in reality, no friction, he concluded.

His Holiness saw it otherwise: There was grave friction. What John Paul called "friction about fundamentals."

Jesuit theologians and writers in Europe and the Americas had been, and were still, writing and teaching about fundamental Catholic beliefs and laws in a way that opposed traditional papal teaching and the previous teaching of the Church as a whole -- about papal authority; about the marriage of Marxism and Christianity; about sexual morality in all its aspects; about such sacred Catholic beliefs as the Mass as a sacrifice, the divinity of Jesus, the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, the existence of Hell, the priesthood. They were in fact redefining and recasting everything in Catholicism that Catholics have always considered worth living for and dying for -- including the very nature and constitution of the Church that

Christ founded.

Father General Arrupe continued to permit the publication of books that contradicted the entire gamut of traditional teachings, and to defend his men who wrote and taught in this vein. No papal appeal to Father Arrupe seemed ever to have any effect in the face of the Jesuit General's intricate and resourceful delaying action.

Arrupe would examine the situation, he promised the Holy Father. He already had inquiries in hand, he said. He would report back soonest. It was difficult to separate truth from vicious rumors. He would endeavor to clarify positions. Time was needed. His men were doing their best. Their views had been distorted. The accusations against his men were too vague. He needed names and details and dates and places. Father Arrupe would, in fact, do anything except get his men back into line as the Pope's men. As this Pope's men, in particular.

It was significant in John Paul's eyes that Father General Arrupe had allowed such a situation to arise at all. After all, reason dictates that if, as head of the Order, you allow one of your Jesuits to publish a book advocating a change in the Church's ban on homosexuality, you as General must regard it as an open question. Jesuit John J. McNeil was permitted by his American and Roman Superiors to publish such a book. If you repeatedly bless the work of another of your Jesuit men who openly votes in the United States Congress for financing abortion-on-demand, you as General must regard abortion, too, as somehow an open question. Together with American Jesuit Superiors, Arrupe repeatedly blessed the ten-year career in Congress of Father Robert F. Drinan, who did just that "We reject the idea," said Arrupe, directly contradicting John Paul's explicit wish and command, "that Jesuits must systematically avoid all political involvement."

By summer's end 1979, it was clear to John Paul that Arrupe would do nothing to curb even those of his men who cast doubt on basic doctrines ranging from the divinity of Jesus to the infallibility of the Pope.

In September 1979, some dozen presidents of national and regional Jesuit Conferences were gathered in Rome for a meeting with Arrupe. Arrupe and his Jesuit aides thought it would be a good idea to have an audience with the Holy Father. Accordingly, Arrupe requested and was granted an audience for himself, his chief Jesuit counselors in Rome, and the dozen visiting presidents.

The audience took place in the Vatican on September 21. John Paul posed for photographs with individuals, made small talk after his formal address, presented gifts of rosaries to each one present. But there was no mistaking his message.

"You are causing confusion among the Christian people," the Pontiff complained in his message to the Jesuit leaders, "and anxieties to the Church and also personally to the Pope who is speaking to you." The Pope listed his complaints about the Jesuits, speaking about their "regrettable shortcomings" and their "doctrinal unorthodoxy," and requesting them to "return to full fidelity to the Supreme magisterium of the Church and the Roman Pontiff." He could not, he said, be more explicit or go much further in his forbearance with Jesuit deviations.

No longer could a screen be thrown up in the form of a complaint that the Pope "gave us no hint of the future of the Society." But there are other sorts of screens, and the men of the Society have ever been resourceful.

Arrupe sent a circular letter dated October 19 to all Major Superiors of the Society together with a photograph -- a copy for each single community of Jesuits all over the world and, of course, destined for



wide publication in the world media -- showing himself as Father General kneeling before the Pope. His letter, he commanded, was to be read by each and every one of his 27,347 Jesuits.

John Paul II, he reminded his men, was the third Pope who had called them to attention. He quoted John Paul II's words in his September 21 speech, and demanded annual reports from all Superiors as to how they were observing John Paul's admonitions.

When all in the letter was said and done, however, both its tone and the framework were merely political. In effect, the General was saying, Jesuits had failed to observe the formal exterior conventions that normally satisfied papal demands and Roman bureaucratic conditions. His letter was in essence an invitation for Jesuits to consider how they were acting and come up with rationalizations and explanations that would conform to exterior norms and thus offset open papal criticisms.

Not once did Arrupe say bluntly: We have gone astray, we Jesuits. As Superior General, I now forbid this, recall that man, expel this other man, impose the following rules and reforms. Rather, the letter implied: We have political difficulties with this new Pope; help me politically.

Reaction to the letter -- and therefore to John Paul's strictures -- were of a kind with Arrupe's letter. Father Arrupe received what in essence he had asked for: commentaries from Jesuits in bulk quantities, some quite resentful, on the Pope's admonitions. As one intramural joke went, Arrupe was a victim of "fallout" from the "W [for Wojtyla] bomb."

While Arrupe's tactic in dealing with the situation bore its fruit in much paper, one Roman Cardinal remarked, "He should not have asked for a basketful of letters -- which he got -- but the bleeding heads of just about 5,000 Jesuits -- the greatest offenders -- all neatly arranged on wooden platters."

Be that as it may, there was no trace of the hoped-for change. No shift in corporate Jesuit behavior was in sight.

It was all becoming too much. By now, John Paul II was in a great historical hurry. The Solidarity movement was being readied for its first major public operation; as far as John Paul could find out from soundings in Warsaw and Moscow, Solidarity's planned future could come off. At the same time, the galling fact was that on the other side of the Atlantic, the Jesuits' adversary strategy was progressing just as rapidly, if not more so. Above all in Nicaragua.

Nicaragua was, in fact, fast developing into a public and dramatic test case between Pope and Jesuits. There the Pope's aims and those of the Jesuits were irreconcilable. Solidarity in Poland was developed precisely to loosen the effective grip of Marxism on the sociocultural life of the Polish people. In Nicaragua, the Jesuits aimed at establishing a Marxist system of government that would embrace the sociocultural and political and economic life of Nicaraguans. If John Paul could not control the Jesuits in Nicaragua, where the stakes on the table might, in essence, involve the success of his entire papal strategy, then he could simply not control them anywhere.

On the other hand, from the Jesuit point of view, if John Paul II could frustrate their explicit policy of political activism in favor of a Marxist regime -- if their expenditure of men and energy in Nicaragua were brought to nothing by this Pope -- then they would have failed in their corporate objectives. This Pope would proceed to move in on them elsewhere.

It was an adversarial situation from the beginning. Clearly, the materiel of war between Pope and Jesuits was

in place.

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