

Chapter 10

The Cardinal Bertone Show

On September 21, 2007 Cardinal Bertone staged a special televised event in an auditorium at the Pontifical Urbaniana University in Rome near the Vatican. Scores of VIPs were in attendance, including a number of Vatican clerics, former Prime Minister of Italy, Giulio Andreotti, the former Mayor of Rome, the Vice Minister of Government, assorted other politicians, prominent bankers and businessmen, and the recently retired Bishop of Fatima, Serafim de Sousa Ferreira e Silva. The 400-seat auditorium was nearly filled to capacity with these invitees.

Brought to you by...

The emcee for what could be called “The Cardinal Bertone Show” was Father Federico Lombardi, director of the Vatican Press Office, who was not appearing on behalf of the Vatican and had no message from the Pope. Lombardi began by thanking the various sponsors of the event, none of which was a Vatican department. The sponsors included a banking concern, a tourism center, and a prominent artist, Giuseppe de Lucia.

Why had an audience of the rich, the famous and the powerful assembled in an auditorium to attend a privately sponsored event at Bertone’s invitation? The American idiom for such an event is “dog and pony show,” meaning an elaborate public relations presentation that is long on style but short on content. The ostensible purpose of the event, broadcast live on the private religious television channel *Telepace*, was a “presentation” of *Last Visionary* by Cardinal Bertone. But *Last Visionary*, published in May 2007, had already been presented to the public a number of times at other venues, including a summer book fair at Piazza Maggiore De Palma in Scalea, Italy, where a capacity crowd came to hear co-author De Carli discuss the book and answer questions from three journalists (Michele Cervo, Michela Gargiulo and Giorgio

Santelli).²⁸⁵

Lombardi himself evidently felt obliged to offer an excuse for another “presentation” of a book that had long since been presented: “The book has already been published for a while,” he admitted, but “it is right to return to speak of it” in view of the 90th anniversary of the Fatima apparitions, which “will culminate next October with the trip of Cardinal Bertone to Fatima...” (where the Cardinal would dedicate the hideous new “basilica” constructed at the site of the apparitions). But why should the Cardinal’s trip to Fatima in October require a televised “presentation” of his book in September, when that book had already been presented to the public back in May? In that Roman manner, Lombardi was merely stating the polite pretext that concealed the real purpose of this dog and pony show: another attack on Socci’s book and the claims of the “Fatimists,” which Bertone had thus far not only failed to refute but had actually helped to substantiate. Bertone could hardly admit that he had taken to the airwaves *again* in an effort to salvage his position, for that would make him look like a worried man. And yet that is exactly what he had done.

Socci and Paolini are shown the door

As with the appearance on *Door to Door*, Bertone had arranged things so that there would be no opportunity to confront him. No questions would be permitted from any member of the audience, including the representatives of the press. Nevertheless, both Antonio Socci and Solideo Paolini are in attendance in the hope that Socci will be able to pose to Bertone the question the Cardinal had been ducking for more than seven years:

Your Eminence, are you ready to swear on the Gospel that the famous phrase of the Madonna contained in the Third Secret of Fatima noted by the Vatican in 2000—“In Portugal, the dogma of the Faith will always be preserved etc”, said the Madonna—is not followed by anything else?²⁸⁶

Socci and Paolini, along with other journalists, had positioned

²⁸⁵Plaza full for De Carli and *The Last Visionary of Fatima*,” <http://www.unlibroperlestato.org/notizia.php?id=15>.

²⁸⁶Paolo Rodari, “On the Road to Fatima, Socci is Stopped by the Swiss Guards,” *Il Riformista*, September 22, 2007.

themselves outside the auditorium before the start of the event, expecting to encounter Bertone as he entered. *Corriere della Sera* later carried Socci's account of what happened next:

It was a shameful thing. I had only wanted to ask one question for one minute and to receive a terse response: yes or no. But Cardinal Bertone, alerted to my presence, entered directly into the auditorium through a service door. A stratagem that made everyone present laugh. Afterwards, three Vatican gendarmes pushed me outside the place, saying that I could not give interviews. A ridiculous scene that astounded my colleagues who were present and put me in a difficult position, seeing that I am a strenuous defender of the Vatican.²⁸⁷

The Cardinal had literally run away from Socci's question! And the keepers of the hidden text of the Third Secret of Fatima had descended to the use of brute force in order to silence the questioner, who happens to be one of Italy's most prominent and respected Catholic journalists and intellectuals, a vice-director of Rai Due, one of the primary Italian television channels, and the host of his own television show. As Socci is forcibly removed from the premises (together with Paolini), he is heard to remark: "The Church of dialogue has become a Church of monologue."²⁸⁸

The Bishop of Fatima plays it close to the vest

Once the pretext for the gathering—the "presentation" of an already presented book—has been stated, the real agenda begins immediately with some brief comments by the retired bishop of Fatima, Bishop Serafim de Sousa Ferreira e Silva. Serafim, however, provides no real assistance to Bertone. Rather, reading from a prepared text, the Bishop begins his remarks by noting pointedly that he had come to say "*Nothing, almost nothing*" and that "I wish to testify *only to one fact* and it is the following," whereupon the Bishop said that he was present with Bertone during the meeting of April 27, 2000 at which Sister Lucia authenticated "the original envelope which contained the secret" (failing to mention the *two sealed envelopes* Bertone had displayed on television) and "the

²⁸⁷"'Fourth Secret' of Fatima: Socci challenges Cardinal Bertone, thrown out by gendarmes," Bartolini Bruno, *Corriere della Sera*, September 22, 2007.

²⁸⁸Ibid.

four little pages written by hand." That is, the Bishop affirms what is not in dispute: that the text of the vision is authentic.

Tellingly, the Bishop does *not* corroborate Bertone's claim during the radio broadcast in June 2007 (see Chapter 9) that Sister Lucia had made "explicit declarations... in the presence of the Bishop of Fatima" that the vision of the bishop in white is all there is to the Third Secret. Serafim has nothing to say on this point, even though Bertone had staked his entire position on the Bishop's alleged witness of these never-quoted "explicit declarations," which Bertone had never mentioned until after Lucia's death. Serafim's silence on this crucial issue could not have been a mere oversight of the moment, given that the Bishop was speaking from a prepared text.

Nor does Serafim offer any corroboration of Bertone's claim in *Message, Last Visionary* and during his appearance on *Door to Door*, that during the same meeting of April 27, 2000 Lucia had "confessed" with "disarming candor" that she had never received any "express order of Our Lady" that the envelope(s) containing the Secret "can only be opened in 1960," but rather 1960 was "a fictitious date."

The Bishop's evident unwillingness to corroborate Bertone's account on such major points could not be more conspicuous to those familiar with the facts. Instead of backing Bertone to the hilt, as one would expect Serafim to do if Bertone's account were completely truthful and the Cardinal had been unjustly accused of prevarication, Serafim plays it very close to the vest, making it clear that he would testify only to *one* fact. But surely he knows *many* facts about the April 2000 meeting, including whether Lucia really did declare that the vision is the entire Secret and that the Virgin had never spoken to her concerning revelation of the Secret in 1960. Already "The Cardinal Bertone Show" was following the pattern of the Cardinal's other interventions: telling silence on matters concerning the credibility of his entire account.

Bishop Serafim does state, however, that "the Secret of Fatima has now been revealed in *an authentic and integral way*." Here again we encounter the curious locution adopted by Bertone in response to Socci's overwhelming presentation of the evidence of a cover-up: that the "authentic" Secret has been revealed; the "authentic" Secret in the Holy Office archives as opposed to some "inauthentic" Secret somewhere else, perhaps in the papal apartment.

Question: Why does Serafim not simply declare—why has *no one* in Bertone's camp simply declared—that the entire Third Secret

has been revealed? Why use such equivocal language as “revealed in an authentic and integral way”?

Answer: Serafim will not state simply that “the entire Third Secret has been revealed” because he is not comfortable with such an unequivocal affirmation. He is not comfortable with it because he knows there is something else that has not been revealed, something that might have been deemed “inauthentic” by certain parties acting in secrecy.

One can appreciate the inescapability of this conclusion by considering how it would appear if this sort of equivocal language were used in any other context where absolute candor is required, such as testimony in a courtroom, where a witness must tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth:

Prosecutor: Have you revealed the entire contents of the message you received from Mr. Jones?

Witness: I have revealed the message in an authentic and integral way.

Now, if a jury heard that question and that answer, how could it fail to conclude that the witness was hiding something? That is what juries rightly find when a question that calls for a “yes” or a “no” is answered equivocally. And that is what the jury of public opinion ought to find here. Enough is enough. With the Church and the world in peril, the faithful are entitled to a simple answer to a simple question, rather than clever “Roman” nuances that obviously indicate some sort of mental reservation.

Messori plays the authority card

Bertone’s next witness is the renowned Vaticanist and author, Vittorio Messori, who worked with John Paul II on his best-selling book, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*. Like Bishop Serafim, Messori offers nothing of substance, but his appearance does serve a purpose: Messori calls for nothing less than mindless trust in Cardinal Bertone, simply because the Cardinal is a high-ranking Vatican official.

As Messori puts it: “[I]f we can no longer place our trust in the pastors of the Church, at the top of the Church, in a matter such as this, if we have really been misled, led down the garden path

in things like this, where the protagonist is Mary herself... and where these truths, from the perspective of Faith, come directly from Heaven, and these truths have been twisted, cropped and manipulated, well, as a Catholic it is difficult if not impossible for me to accept this perspective." Messori added that while he himself had lent credence to the claim that the Third Secret must involve a prediction of apostasy in the Church as found in the words indicated by the famous "etc", he was now "repentant" because "I am a little old fashioned, I am with *Roma locuta est, causa finita est* (Rome has spoken, the case closed) in the sense that it is absolutely not possible for me to follow those who are also friends, who I esteem and respect, because... it is not possible for me to accept the hypothesis that the very heights of the Church would mislead and manipulate us."

Messori is a subtle and intelligent man, and so it is disappointing to see him abandon all subtlety and intelligence in favor of a public plea for unthinking acceptance of the affirmations of a prelate who, in the first place, *has never really denied* that there is a hidden text of the Third Secret, and who, moreover, has given an account so patently unbelievable that Messori's own esteemed and respected colleagues, no less faithful Catholics than he, cannot accept it.

Now, of course, Cardinal Bertone is not a "pastor of the Church," but rather a Vatican functionary with no pastoral authority whatsoever over the faithful. But even if Bertone had pastoral authority over individual Catholics such as Messori, one cannot say *Roma locuta est, causa finita est* concerning Bertone's representations, for that ancient maxim is reserved only to definitive papal pronouncements, not the affirmations of a lone cardinal, as Messori well knows. The Pope has said nothing about this controversy that in any way binds the faithful to accept Bertone's account. And, as Messori surely also understands, the promises of Christ regarding the indefectibility of His Church most certainly did not include a promise that any given cardinal will always be candid and above the temptation to withhold or manipulate the truth. On the contrary, as Saint Paul warned his own fellow bishops concerning the future of the Church:

Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops, to rule the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. I know that, after my departure, ravening wolves will enter in among you, not sparing

the flock. *And of your own selves shall arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.*²⁸⁹

Thus Scripture itself warns us that certain members of the hierarchy can *and will* mislead the faithful, and high-ranking prelates have done so more than once in Church history. And, as we saw in Chapter 3, Sister Lucia repeatedly warned of “diabolical disorientation” in the Church in connection with the Third Secret, which she herself linked to the Book of the Apocalypse. Yet Messori, like Bertone, appears to have adopted the position that it is simply inconceivable that there could be betrayal and deviation from the truth by members of the Vatican apparatus, a position that finds no warrant in Sacred Scripture, Church teaching, Church history or indeed the Message of Fatima itself.

But surely Messori would agree that not even the Pope could make demonstrably unbelievable statements and expect them to be believed. It is a defined doctrine of our religion that the Faith can never contradict reason;²⁹⁰ and, as Saint Thomas says, against a fact there is no argument. Sad to say, Messori’s remarks can only be seen as an appeal to abandon reason in this affair, to ignore the facts, to place blind faith in a particular prelate who is no less a fallible human being than Messori is. One had the right to expect more from Messori, especially given his earlier recognition that Socci and the “Fatimists” have raised objectively valid points. Messori’s “repentance” is all the more disappointing given that Bertone has not actually denied those points, but has only given the appearance of a denial—something a man as astute as Messori should be able to discern.

Bertone’s surprise witness

The next segment of “The Cardinal Bertone Show” is a surprise the Cardinal evidently thinks will be an unanswerable rejoinder to the critics of the official account: a videotaped interview of Archbishop Capovilla touted as a “denial” that there is any “Fourth Secret” of Fatima. That Capovilla had finally been enlisted in Bertone’s campaign was not particularly surprising, given the pressure that had been applied to the Archbishop over the previous year. Also not surprising, however, is that, just as

²⁸⁹Acts 20:28-30.

²⁹⁰See, e.g. VATICAN COUNCIL I, Faith and Reason, Chapter 4, Canons 5 and 10.

with Capovilla's statements floated earlier in the ridiculous venue of *Diva e Donna* magazine, the videotaped interview contains no denial at all. Rather, the interview backfires as badly as *Last Visionary* and Bertone's own television appearance on *Door to Door*. In fact, during the four-minute segment of the interview broadcast on Telapace, Capovilla actually *confirms* key facts that undermine the official account, while leaving untouched his testimony to Paolini. Before discussing what Capovilla actually says on the videotape, I must make a few preliminary observations.

First observation: This interview of Capovilla was not conducted by any Vatican representative on an official mission of the Church, but rather by Bertone's lay co-author of *Last Visionary*, Giuseppe De Carli. In his written introduction to the transcript of the interview distributed to the press, De Carli states that on August 22, 2007 "this writer found himself at Sotto Il Monte [Capovilla's home town] to gather in person an invaluable version, the only one, of the events that happened almost a half century ago."²⁹¹ He "found himself" in Sotto Il Monte? Had he just happened to be in the neighborhood with a video crew and thought he would drop in on the Archbishop? He and the video crew had perhaps arrived at Sotto Il Monte in a collective hypnotic trance, to be awakened by a snap of the Archbishop's fingers?

To be serious, De Carli's choice of words was designed to eliminate any need to explain *who* had sent him to see Capovilla—obviously, Cardinal Bertone—and why Bertone was using a lay journalist as his agent instead of the Vatican dispatching an official representative to clear up this vexing matter. Clearly, the Vatican wanted absolutely no official connection with any attempt to have Capovilla suddenly "retract" statements he had made a year earlier and which had been published to the world without the least objection by him. This, then, was yet another of those strange private and unofficial moves by which Bertone was seeking to shore up the official account while the Vatican looked on silently.

Second observation: It had been more than a year since Capovilla's testimony to Paolini admitting that there are two envelopes and two texts pertaining to the Third Secret, and Capovilla had expressed no objection to Paolini's account of that testimony as published by Socci ten months earlier. But now, so De Carli's introduction claims,

²⁹¹Transcript provided to the press on September 21, 2007, p. 1. Questions by Giuseppe De Carli; answers by Archbishop Loris Capovilla. All further quotations are translated from this transcript.

“Monsignor Capovilla has decided to break his silence after having read Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone’s book *Last Visionary of Fatima...* and, in a particular way, the reiterated criticisms addressed to the thesis sustained by the Secretary of State in his account.” Notice that Capovilla has *not* “broken his silence” because Paolini or Socci had misrepresented his testimony. We are asked to believe it was Cardinal Bertone’s book that inspired Capovilla to come forward. To say what? To say nothing, as we shall see, except disclosures that inflict more damage on Bertone’s “thesis.”

Third observation: De Carli does not do Bertone any favors by noting in his introduction that during the interview at which De Carli had “found himself,” Capovilla

consulted his personal diary of that period, but *the precision of his recollection is absolute*. Capovilla, notwithstanding his advanced age, is a *miracle of lucidity* and oratorical verve. He is a man one could listen to for hours. The reconstruction of events was *minute, rich with particulars*, filled with suggestions, even pastoral and spiritual.

So much for any possible claim that Capovilla’s memory had been inaccurate when he spoke with Paolini a year earlier.

Fourth observation: Just how cleverly contrived the videotaped interview would be is shown by De Carli’s disclosure in the introduction that “In July of this year Monsignor Capovilla sent a dossier to Cardinal Bertone”—evidently the same dossier Paolini saw Capovilla preparing during their meeting of June 21, 2007. De Carli offers the following quotation from the dossier: “The assertion which has come to be attributed to me, according to which I would have explicitly declared that there is a part of the Third Secret not revealed, is not borne out by any *document*.” But who ever claimed there is a *document* in which Capovilla states that a part of the Secret has not been revealed? His testimony to Paolini on this point was *oral*. The introduction makes it clear that hairsplitting and carefully worded evasions would be the order of the day when De Carli “found himself” at Sotto Il Monte.

Fifth and final observation: It is necessary to recall briefly the main points of Paolini’s account of what Capovilla told him, an account whose devastating details confronted De Carli when he “found himself” in Capovilla’s presence with a video crew:

- Paul VI first read the Third Secret on June 27, 1963, almost

two years before the date given (March 27, 1965) in the official account of June 2000, showing that Paul VI earlier read a text whose existence the official account has not disclosed.

- This huge discrepancy in dates is accounted for by the fact that, as Capovilla stated: “perhaps the Bertone envelope [*plico*] is not the same as the Capovilla envelope [*plico*].”
- Both John XXIII and Paul VI read a text of the Third Secret that was kept in the papal apartment in an antique desk called “Barbarigo” — *not* in the Archives of the Holy Office, where the text referred to in the official account was located—and it was from this antique desk that Paul VI had retrieved the text he read two years before the date given in the official account.
- In answer to Paolini’s precise question: “Therefore, both dates are true, because there are two texts of the Third Secret?”, Capovilla gave this absolutely decisive answer: “Exactly so! (*Per l’appunto!*).”²⁹²

All these affirmations had been in print for nearly a year without objection from the Archbishop, as had his signed and sealed document of May 17, 1967, a copy of which he had provided to Paolini.²⁹³ Any “retraction” of those affirmations and that document now would be patently unworthy of belief. But, in any event, no “retraction” that failed *explicitly to negate each of the affirmations* would even constitute a denial in the first place. That De Carli understands this is shown by his introduction to the transcript, wherein *he*, but *not* Archbishop Capovilla, makes the following declaration:

For decades there have been attributed to Monsignor Capovilla phrases which have fed the legend of a “Fourth Secret.” The “Capovilla envelope”, evoked by Fatimists as something dark and threatening (in “The Fourth Secret” it is spoken of a planetary apostasy of the Catholic Church and of a Rome without faith destined to become the seat of the Antichrist), coincides with the “Bertone envelope.” The Vatican has not hidden the truth, has not had attitudes of a

²⁹²Socci, *Fourth Secret*, p. 142.

²⁹³See [Appendix I](#).

code of silence [*“omertá”*], has not omitted to publish acts and documents, has not responded to the need for clarity with silence. Therefore, all that there is has been brought into the light of the sun.

So, according to *De Carli*—not the Vatican itself in an official statement!—the “Bertone envelope” and the “Capovilla envelope” “coincide” (whatever that means) and the Vatican has not hidden the truth. But *De Carli*’s indignant pronouncement is manifestly false. In the first place, as *De Carli*’s own evidence would show in a few moments (and as I showed in Chapter 6) it is quite impossible for the “Capovilla envelope” to “coincide” with the “Bertone envelope,” for Capovilla’s envelope bears notations in his handwriting, including the dictation of Pope John XXIII, and Bertone *has never produced* this envelope. *De Carli*’s introduction simply ignores the known facts, evidently in the hope that no one will notice.

But what does *Archbishop Capovilla* have to say about the two envelopes in the actual transcript of the interview that follows *De Carli*’s laughably biased “journalistic” introduction? Not surprisingly, given the history of this controversy, on the videotape Capovilla does not deny *a single one* of the affirmations he made to Paolini. Incredibly, Paolini and the four meetings he had with Capovilla *are not even mentioned*. There is an ironic parallel here: Just as Bertone appeared on *Door to Door* without mentioning Capovilla, so does Capovilla appear on “The Cardinal Bertone Show” without mentioning Paolini!

And bear in mind that Capovilla does not actually appear in person during the show. Nor does he appear by a remote live video link, as no less than Bertone, the Vatican Secretary of State, had done on *Door to Door*. That Capovilla had been kept away from live television cameras could not fail to engender suspicion, given that the Archbishop is “*a miracle of lucidity and oratorical verve*” and a “man one could listen to for hours.” The last thing Bertone wanted was that his star witness actually *be* a witness, for that would mean the Archbishop could not be confined to carefully edited utterances, frozen on tape and delivered to the audience without any possibility of contradiction.

Another disastrous interview

Now let us examine the actual statements of Archbishop

Capovilla during the four-minute taped interview screened in the auditorium during “The Cardinal Bertone Show.”

In yet another of the irregularities and contradictions that plague Bertone’s presentations, the printed transcript of the interview is substantially longer than the soundtrack of the video segment broadcast from the auditorium. Moreover, while the video segment is some four minutes in length, the total interview, according to De Carli, was thirty minutes long. The soundtrack, therefore, was clearly subjected to heavy editing, much of it concealed by “covering shots” of graphics or stock film footage that filled the screen while Capovilla was speaking in the background, so that the viewer would not see Capovilla’s image jump at each edit. I shall rely on the more complete printed transcript.

De Carli’s introduction to the transcript states that the videotape and audiotape of the interview are “irrefutable proof,” but fails to say *what* they prove. In fact, they prove that the “official” account is not believable. Let us examine the pertinent portions of the printed transcript:

**Excellency, Pope John knew immediately of the
“Third Secret of Fatima”?**

...Pope John ascended to the Papal throne on October 28, 1958. In December, Cento [the papal nuncio to Portugal], who became a cardinal in the meantime, told him of this envelope and hinted to him that the secret of Fatima had been sent to Pius XII.

Here Capovilla already suggests, contrary to the official account, that an envelope containing the Third Secret was in the personal custody of Pius XII—that is, in the papal apartment, not in the Archives of the Holy Office, as the official account claims. In a few moments, Capovilla will confirm precisely that.

How did Pope John react?

He was not in a hurry to read it. He had other priorities. He had to commence the Petrine service and call the Second Vatican Council. In August of 1959 he was found at Castelgandolfo. It was a moment of calm, of tranquility. At the summer residence arrived the Dominican Father Pierre Paul Phillipe, with the text of the “Third Secret.” And anxious to know its contents. Not so the Pope. “I will look at it Wednesday with

my confessor.”

So far, not one word about Capovilla’s explosive revelations to Paolini, but the Archbishop has confirmed precisely Socci’s thesis, noted earlier, that Pope John deliberately deferred reading the Secret because “he wanted to announce the convocation of Vatican Council II, almost as if to put before Heaven a *fait accompli*.”²⁹⁴ Notice also the level of detail in Capovilla’s recollections, including dates, times, places and even the day of the week nearly fifty years ago. The Cardinal clearly has both an excellent memory and detailed written memoirs of his time as secretary to Pope John XXIII.

The first Pope who came to a knowledge of the “mystery of the century” chose an almost sacramental context. Who was his confessor?²⁹⁵

It was Alfredo Cavagna, eighty years old, theologian and jurist. Together they opened the envelope. The Pope rang me up. He said: “We are taking a look at the text of Sister Lucia but cannot figure it out. Can you give us a hand?” At that moment I felt myself privileged, and I agreed with much humility. I, however, did not know the Portuguese language. *I must add that, at times, I have said and written that in the text there were dialect expressions. In reality there were not.* The fact is that I did not know the language, I misinterpreted. There came to be called a recordist [taker of minutes] from the Secretariat of State, the Portuguese Paulo Tavares, a very good and holy priest. They called him after one or two days. He made a translation. The Pope saw, read, considered, prayed.

Still not a word about the revelations to Paolini. But here Capovilla, obviously under off-screen prompting, suddenly claims he was mistaken in his repeated oral and written testimony over the decades (discussed in Chapter 2) that the text of the Secret that Pope John read in August 1959 contained difficult expressions peculiar to the Portuguese language, requiring that an Italian

²⁹⁴Socci, *Quarto Segreto*, p. 205.

²⁹⁵This question is not posed during the video segment, but it appears on the written transcript, whereas the answer on the written transcript differs in content from Capovilla’s answer on the video, which is in response to an entirely different question. This indicates that Capovilla’s answers on the tape segment have been spliced from the 30 minutes of footage De Carli claims to have taken, and to some extent rearranged.

translation be prepared by Father Tavares before the Pope could comprehend it. As Capovilla here confirms, that translation was not ready until a day or two after Pope John opened the sealed envelope and tried to read the text on his own.

Why would Capovilla go out of his way to claim now, fifty years later, that he was mistaken about the linguistic peculiarities of the text Pope John read in 1959? Recall that in Chapter 2 I also noted Cardinal Ottaviani's testimony that in 1960 Pope John read a text of the Secret in *another* sealed envelope, and that the Pope had no trouble reading this text: "*Still sealed, it was taken later, in 1960, to Pope John XXIII. The Pope broke the seal, and opened the envelope. Although it was in Portuguese, he told me afterwards that he understood the text in its entirety.*"²⁹⁶ Capovilla does not dispute this testimony. Recall also that in *Fourth Secret*, Socci provides as an appendix the analysis of a Portuguese linguist who concludes that the vision of "the Bishop dressed in white" published in 2000 is *devoid* of any difficult Portuguese dialect expressions.

These facts point clearly to the existence of two different texts: the one the Vatican published in 2000, which contains "regular" Portuguese, and the one not yet published, which contains more difficult, idiomatic Portuguese expressions. It seems apparent, then, that in an effort to rebut Socci's presentation, Capovilla has been induced suddenly to suggest that his consistent oral and written testimony, which stood for a lifetime, was a "mistake" (but not a lie).

But Capovilla's excuse for his "mistake" makes no sense: "I did not know the language, I misinterpreted." If Capovilla did not know Portuguese, it would never have occurred to him in the first place to state that the text contained particularly difficult Portuguese expressions, since *all* Portuguese expressions would be difficult (indeed incomprehensible) to him. Therefore, he could not have known that the text contained particularly difficult Portuguese *unless someone told him so*—either the Pope or Father Tavares. Since Capovilla's testimony could only have been based on the advice of others, his sudden declaration that *he* was mistaken, that *he* misinterpreted, uttered nearly fifty years after the fact, has the earmarks of an improvisation designed to explain away statements which seriously undermine the official account, but without Capovilla having to call himself a liar. Nevertheless,

²⁹⁶WTAF, Vol. III, p. 557.

Capovilla confirms the accuracy of reports by Frère Michel and other Fatima scholars concerning the Archbishop's prior testimony on this point.

De Carli's next question concerns the Italian translation of the Secret prepared by Father Tavares, and here Capovilla drops a bombshell—one of the many inadvertent disclosures that have wrecked Bertone's attempt to defend the official account:

He [Pope John] also read the translation from Portuguese to Italian?

*Yes, certainly.*²⁹⁷

Capovilla reveals for the first time that a *written* Italian translation of the Third Secret was prepared for Pope John XXIII in 1959. Well, where is it? According to the official account, the only written translation was prepared on or about March 6, 1967, four years after Pope John died. This is the same translation whose dated envelope Bertone displayed on *Door to Door*, but without showing the translation itself.

Now, what was the point of the 1967 translation of the Secret if a translation had already been prepared for Pope John in 1959 under the auspices of the Secretariat of State and at the Pope's specific request? Obviously, there would have been no point—*unless the 1959 translation was of a different document*. A document we have yet to see. A document that contains particularly difficult Portuguese expressions, which Capovilla mentioned repeatedly in oral and written testimony that he now suddenly declares was all a mistake. This would explain why neither the 1959 translation *nor* the 1967 translation has ever been published. It would also explain why there is no mention of the 1959 translation anywhere in the official account, even though there would have been no reason *not* to mention it *if* the translation were really of the same document the Vatican published in 2000.

So, Capovilla has revealed that just as there are two different but related texts of the Third Secret, precisely as he told Paolini, so are there two different but related translations. Thus far we have seen only one of the texts of the Secret and an envelope purportedly containing the 1967 translation.

²⁹⁷This question and answer are neither seen nor heard on the videotape, but appear only in the written transcript—yet another indication that Capovilla had much more to say than Bertone was willing to broadcast on television.

There is, however, a possible alternative conclusion: that *both* the 1959 and the 1967 translations are of the same text of the Third Secret, the one containing difficult idioms that we have yet to see. Perhaps the 1967 translation of this text was considered an “improvement” over the 1959 translation. In any case, since we have not been shown *either* the 1959 or the 1967 translation—another suspicious circumstance in a mountain of suspicion—we can only speculate on this point.

De Carli’s next question demonstrates that Capovilla’s carefully controlled video appearance would be another exercise in evasion from beginning to end:

Monsignor Capovilla, this is an extremely important point. The text that you read corresponds to that which was presented to the world in June 2000 by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger and by Monsignor Tarcisio Bertone?

But of course! I have said it, and I repeat it gladly now: that is the text. *I don’t recall it word for word, but the central nucleus is the same.*

Of course, no one, including Socci, has ever suggested that the vision of “the Bishop dressed in white” is not an authentic *part* of the Third Secret, or that it is not *one* of the texts Pope John read. The question, as both De Carli and Capovilla know quite well, is whether Pope John read *a second* text in which the Blessed Virgin explains the vision, so that there would be two related texts comprising the entire Third Secret. Capovilla admitted to Paolini precisely that there are two texts: “Exactly so!” he said. During the De Carli interview, Capovilla has not denied what he said to Paolini. Indeed, he has not even *mentioned* Paolini.

Here we encounter a damning omission: *De Carli does not show Capovilla the published text of the vision to refresh his recollection.* Instead, Capovilla is allowed to offer the vague observation: “I don’t recall it word for word, but the central nucleus is the same.” The central *nucleus*? What is that supposed to mean? Why does De Carli not simply *show* the text to Capovilla, rather than having him rely on his memory about a “nucleus”?

De Carli’s failure to exhibit the very text at issue to the witness who is being asked to authenticate that text appears at first blush to be inexplicable. But there is an explanation. Capovilla is *not* relying on his memory about the text of the vision because he

knows down to the last detail what the text contains. He knows this, if for no other reason, because he, like countless other people, has a copy of *The Message of Fatima*, which reproduces the text in its entirety. In fact, as we saw in Chapter 6, Capovilla recommended to Paolini that he obtain a copy of *Message* for himself in order to understand what Capovilla was about to tell him concerning the Secret. Now, since Capovilla has ready access to a copy of the published text of the vision as reproduced in *Message*, he would have no difficulty remembering on camera exactly what is in the document. He would not say something as strangely evasive as “the central nucleus is the same.” Moreover, Bertone himself had displayed the text on television, less than three months before De Carli’s interview of Capovilla. Are we to believe that Capovilla has not seen this telecast or at least a tape of it? Capovilla could also have been given access to the original text at the Vatican if Bertone were really interested in having it authenticated.

Therefore, one can only conclude that Capovilla’s vagueness of recollection is a rhetorical pose. Since he does not have the document in front of him at the moment he is being questioned about it, he can plead a lack of precise memory concerning its contents and thus avoid making any definite affirmations about whether the text of the vision is *the* text—the one and only text—that Pope John read. The Archbishop is unwilling to commit himself to that proposition because he knows there is *another* text, just as he told Paolini. Hence the vague remarks about the “nucleus” of a document he no doubt has near at hand and had read before the videotaped interview.

Consider the absurdity of what we are being asked to believe: that Capovilla cannot answer precisely questions that *anyone in the world could answer precisely* simply by examining the reproduction of the text of the vision in *Message*, a copy of which *Capovilla himself possesses*. We are undoubtedly witnessing one of those typically “Roman” evasions by which one dissembles without actually lying outright.

This would also explain why De Carli will not ask Capovilla to deny outright that he told Paolini there are two texts pertaining to the Secret. No “Roman” evasion would be possible in answer to such a direct question. The Archbishop cannot deny that he told Paolini there are two texts, because he knows that there are. That is why the Archbishop cannot even *mention* Paolini. And neither can De Carli.

In the text read by you in 1959 it speaks of a “bishop dressed in white” who is killed at the foot of a large cross?

Yes, it speaks of this; this appeared to us to be *the nucleus* of that private revelation received by the children of Fatima.

Again, the Archbishop makes a curious reference to the “nucleus” of a text that is literally at his fingertips, but which, quite tellingly, he is not shown on camera. And Capovilla has still not even mentioned Solideo Paolini, much less denied the statements he made to him. Notice that Capovilla has twice been asked to affirm that which no one is denying in the first place: that John XXIII read a text pertaining to the “bishop dressed in white.” Not once, however, has De Carli asked Capovilla to deny that there is *another* text, containing the words of the Virgin, which explains the vision.

The next question and answer will demonstrate even more clearly the skillful evasiveness with which the entire interview was conducted:

And why, according to you, does it continue to be written that John XXIII would have read not this text, but another text, the so-called “Fourth Secret” that the Church would have thus far kept hidden?

How can it be said that it was hidden? The Third Secret was read by John XXIII; his confessor read it; I, his little secretary, have seen it; Cardinal Tardini has seen it; the two most important personages of the Secretariat of State, Monsignor Antonio Samore and Monsignor Angelo Dell’Acqua; all the heads of the dicasteries beginning with Cardinal Ottaviani. While on holiday, at the College of Propaganda Fide, there is Cardinal Agagianian. The Secretary of the Congregation, Sigismondi, saw it.

The question is misleading, but the answer is astounding. For the *third* time De Carli falsely suggests by his question that the “Fatimists” claim Pope John did not read the text of the vision, but rather some other text, when he knows full well that what they actually claim is that the Pope read *both* the text of the vision *and* another text which explains the vision’s meaning. De Carli

continues to feign ignorance of the real issue—the existence of a second text—and the Archbishop continues to fail to address it.

But look at Capovilla's answer: He *does not deny that there is another text*. Rather, he denies only that the text at issue has not been hidden *because* a select group of prelates he identifies has read it. And notice that *Capovilla does not declare that the whole world knows the Secret because the Secret is contained entirely in the vision published in 2000*. Why would the Archbishop—"a miracle of lucidity"—forget to make such an obvious point if the vision already published were really the Secret in its entirety? There can be only one reasonable answer: the Archbishop knows there is more to the Secret than the vision. That is why he will not simply declare, when given the perfect opportunity to do so, that the world has known the entire Third Secret since 2000.

Consider also that whatever that select group of prelates read must have been very grave indeed for so many of them to be summoned by the Pope to the task of reading it. Surely the ambiguous vision of a "bishop dressed in white," standing alone, could not have had such urgent importance that the Secretary of State and the head of every Vatican department would be called upon to scrutinize it under a vow of absolute secrecy that has been maintained for almost five decades.

More than halfway through the interview segment, Capovilla still has made no effort to retract his testimony to Paolini, while De Carli continues to avoid the subject of Paolini entirely. In answer to De Carli's next question, however, Capovilla drops another bomb on the already demolished edifice of the official account:

And the conclusion of this collective reading?

That none of those who had read the text asked the Pope to publish it, to speak of it. The Pope hesitated, then decided: "I have seen it, I have read it, we will reread it." He dictated to me a text to write on the envelope: I give no judgment. He deferred to others: to a commission, to a congregation, or to his successor.

Capovilla reveals, just as he revealed to Paolini, that there is an envelope containing the Third Secret on which Capovilla wrote at the Pope's dictation: "I give no judgment." We also know, as mentioned in Chapter 6, that Capovilla wrote on the same envelope "a note concerning the manner of arrival of the envelope

in his [Pope John's] hands and the names of all those to whom he considered it necessary to make it known."²⁹⁸

As I have already noted, *this envelope has never been produced by the Vatican and has never even been mentioned in the official account.* Why? What reason could there be to withhold the missing envelope besides a desire to hide its contents? If there were nothing to hide, the envelope surely would have been produced or at least mentioned in the official account. Given all the evidence presented, there can be only one conclusion: the missing envelope contains the very text at issue, the still-hidden portion of the Third Secret of Fatima.

Nor can one avoid this conclusion by supposing that the envelope bearing Pope John's dictation and the further note and list of witnesses by Capovilla was merely an outer envelope containing Sister Lucia's inner envelope, and that the outer envelope has since been discarded. It is inconceivable that an envelope bearing papal dictation and other key information, a document therefore of major historical importance, would be tossed in the garbage—unless, again, there is something to hide. But even if the envelope had, by some terrible mistake, been discarded, why would Bertone not simply explain the mishap and thus avoid creating still more grounds for suspicion?

Capovilla's revelation had only further corroborated his testimony to Paolini, testimony Capovilla is *still* not being asked to deny even as the interview draws toward its conclusion.

Excellency, of how many lines is composed the third part of the message that you read with Pope John XXIII?

I do not know with exactitude.

Were there four pages?

To me it seemed a long enough message, in small writing. *Probably* four small pages. *I don't know if it was pages or sheets.* But this is a particular on which I did not linger.

Once again—quite incredibly—Capovilla is not asked to examine the text published by the Vatican in 2000 and displayed by Bertone on television in 2007 in order to confirm that it was

²⁹⁸Socci, *Fourth Secret*, p. 142.

the same text he read with Pope John in 1959. The Archbishop is asked to recall from “memory” the number of lines and pages in a text he read some fifty years ago rather than simply taking a look at the document *he has available at that very moment*. The Archbishop declares with a poker face that a document at hand, a document he has no doubt read many times since 2000, “seemed a long enough message” and is “probably” four pages long, when he has to know *exactly* how long it is. And Capovilla suggests he cannot recall whether the document consists of contiguous pages (on a folio) or separate sheets of paper, when Bertone had shown the whole world only weeks before that the text of the vision is written on four contiguous folio pages. There is no question a game is being played. And, yet again, no effort is made to address the Archbishop’s testimony to Paolini.

I would not want to force your hand or reach hasty conclusions, nor arouse further polemics. Can we affirm, after what you have said, that the secret read by John XXIII is not the “Fourth Secret,” but is, simply, the Secret published and discussed by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith?

I will tell you more. When I heard talk of “Fourth Secret” I was amazed. It had never passed through my head that there exists a fourth secret. No one has said that to me, neither have I affirmed anything of that kind. I have always held that this will not be the last time that the Lord is revealed through the Mother of Jesus or the saints. As far as Fatima is concerned, I read with much joy that which has been defined precisely by then Cardinal Ratzinger and that which has been excellently collected in a volume by Cardinal Bertone. I have from the Magisterium of the Church everything I need. That which has been said truly represents a spiritual food for all of us.

By now it ought to be clear to any discerning reader that the interview is a sham designed to mislead the gullible and the uninformed. Here Capovilla denies yet another proposition not at issue: that there is a “Fourth Secret” of Fatima. Capovilla knows very well that “Fourth Secret” is merely the ironic title of Succi’s book. The real issue, once again, is whether there is a missing part of the *Third* Secret, as Capovilla admitted to Paolini.

Instead of addressing the real issue, Capovilla answers De Carli's carefully framed question—carefully framed to *avoid* the real issue—about whether the text that Pope John read is the text published by the Vatican. Of course it is! But what about the *other* text, the one *not* published by the Vatican, whose existence Capovilla disclosed to Paolini? What does Capovilla have to say about that? *Not one word.*

As for Capovilla's declaration: "I have from the Magisterium of the Church everything I need," what does the Magisterium, the official teaching office of the Church, have to do with anything Bertone and the former Cardinal Ratzinger have said concerning Fatima? As we have already seen, Cardinal Ratzinger himself made it clear that *The Message of Fatima* commentary of June 2000, including its "attempt" to "interpret" the vision of the bishop in white, was and is in no way imposed on the faithful. And it is nothing short of insulting to suggest that the Magisterium has spoken through Bertone's *Last Visionary*, a secular book co-written with a lay journalist. Capovilla resorts to a fallacious argument from authority, when this sophisticated prelate certainly knows the difference between the Magisterium and the opinions of cardinals expressed in a commentary or a book.

De Carli "testifies" for Capovilla

At this point the video segment broadcast in the auditorium ends, although the written transcript continues for another page, embracing three more questions and answers. As soon as the segment ends, the camera returns to De Carli, who has the audacity to declare to the audience:

I conclude, therefore, there is not a Capovilla envelope to contrast to a Bertone envelope. The two envelopes are the same document.

De Carli concludes? But what did *Capovilla* conclude, given that *De Carli* has never asked him whether there are two envelopes, the "Capovilla envelope" and the "Bertone envelope"? Even more audaciously, *De Carli* adds:

I asked Msgr. Capovilla why he had never said these things in so many years. "I said them, I said them," he replied to me, "but no one ever came to ask me explicitly." As we can see, complex questions

sometimes have simple solutions.

One can only shake his head in wonderment at the clumsiness of the deception involved here:

First, it is De Carli, *not the witness*, who supplies the conclusion that there is only one envelope, not two envelopes, pertaining to the Third Secret. That De Carli was forced to resort to this ruse makes it virtually certain that he is complicit in a cover-up, for it is obvious that he could not extract this conclusion from Capovilla. Of course, Capovilla would not say this himself, because he had already told Solideo Paolini—and in fact he had just told De Carli!—that there is another envelope, bearing his handwritten notations at the direction of John XXIII, which Bertone has never produced. Moreover, Capovilla’s contemporaneous “confidential note” (see [Appendix I](#)) confirms the existence of this other envelope, placing its existence beyond any possible manipulated “retraction” today.

Second, De Carli, seemingly alluding to a portion of the interview that does not appear in either the written transcript or the video segment (another indication of heavy editing of the 30-minute interview), suggests that Capovilla had only been waiting for someone to come and ask him explicitly about these matters, and that this is the “simple” answer to a seemingly complex question. *But Solideo Paolini had done precisely that on multiple occasions, and Capovilla told him of the existence of the other envelope.* Yet De Carli pretends Paolini has never questioned Capovilla on the very matters at issue. At the same time, De Carli suggests—without providing any transcript or video—that *he* has questioned Capovilla on these matters, when he presents no questions and no answers! Given that the videotaped interview went on for thirty minutes, of which only four minutes were shown to the audience, it is reasonable to assume that even if De Carli did ask Capovilla the right questions, he did not like the answers and does not wish to reveal them. Do De Carli and Bertone really think no one will notice the game they are playing?

Third, in the continuing written transcript, not reflected in the shorter video segment, *Capovilla himself again confirms the existence of a never-produced envelope containing a text of the Secret*, thus dropping a final bombshell on what is left of the official account:

Excellency, you have also followed the first years of the pontificate of Paul VI. Paul VI read the same message two times. Is that so?

Yes, it is so.

The first time was a few days after his election, June 27, 1963; the second, March 27, 1965.

I have also demonstrated this. On June 27, 1963 I was, that evening, with the Sisters of the Poor in Via Casilina. A worried Monsignor Dell'Acqua telephoned me. The Fatima envelope could not be found. *I replied that probably it could be found in the writing desk called "Barbarigo,"* because it belonged to Saint Gregory Barbarigo and was gifted to Pope John by Count della Torre. *Pope John held it dear, in his bedroom, like a relic.* There were on the right and on the left five or six drawers. Later, Dell'Acqua telephoned me and communicated that *the envelope had been found.* On June 28 Pope Paul called me and asked *who had dictated the lines on the envelope.* I explained that it was the Pope himself who wanted to indicate the persons who had knowledge of the text. "Pope John did not say anything else to you?," Pope Paul asked me. "No, Holy Father, he left it to others to decide." "I will also do as much", responded Pope Montini. The envelope was resealed and *I don't know if it was spoken of further.*

Note well: Amazingly enough, the man who has become *Bertone's own witness* specifically confirms what he said to Solideo Paolini: that a text of the Secret was kept in the papal bedchamber in a writing desk called "Barbarigo," as opposed to the Holy Office archives, and that this text was enclosed in the envelope *Bertone has never produced*, bearing notations dictated by John XXIII.

But attention: Having finally admitted to the existence of the "Capovilla envelope," Bertone is now attempting (through leading questions posed to Capovilla by De Carli) to suggest that the text in the "Capovilla envelope" in the papal apartment is the same as the one in the Holy Office archives, even though this was never mentioned before. Let us examine the huge problems this crude "patch job" on the official account creates for Bertone.

A desperate about-face

Recall how in *Last Visionary* Bertone mocked the very idea of

a text in the papal apartment: “And on what stands the apodictic certainty that the ‘envelope’ always remained in the ‘apartment’, even in a drawer of the bedside table of the Pope?”²⁹⁹ Ha, ha, ha. Now, however, the very claim Bertone mocked is openly admitted in the very transcript De Carli created at Bertone’s request. But why would Bertone include such damaging information in the transcript (while excluding it from the broadcast video segment) if he really is concealing a text of the Third Secret? Why the sudden about-face?

Quite simply, Bertone had no choice, as the existence of a text of the Secret in the papal apartment (never before mentioned by him or the Vatican) could no longer be denied. So, Bertone has adopted a tried-and-true tactic of the trial lawyer: When confronted by irrefutable evidence adverse to your position, try to make it *your* evidence; *embrace* it, even *repeat* it, as if to show the jury that you are not the least disturbed by it and that they too should pay it no mind. Thus Bertone, finally forced to admit there was a text in the papal apartment all along, now readily does so.

Bertone’s new problems

Having been forced to admit the existence of the text in the papal apartment, Bertone has suddenly altered his version of the facts to assert that this text is the same as the text in the Holy Office Archive. He attempts to “prove” this by having De Carli pose the above-noted laughably leading questions, designed practically to force Capovilla to agree that Paul VI read the same text in 1963 and 1965: “...Paul VI read the same message two times.... Is that so? The first time was a few days after his election, June 27, 1963; the second, March 27, 1965?”

With questions like these, it is the questioner, not the witness, who is testifying. That is why leading questions are not permissible during the direct examination of a witness in legal proceedings. Leading questions defeat the search for truth by dishonestly suggesting to the witness the answer the *questioner* would like him to give, as opposed to the answer the *witness* would give if not prompted by the wording of the question.

At any rate, De Carli’s phrase “Paul VI read the same *message* two times” is ambiguous enough to allow Capovilla to agree

²⁹⁹*Last Visionary*, p. 78.

without lying, as “the same *message*” could involve two different *texts* of the same Third Secret, or both parts (the vision and the Virgin’s explanation) read together in 1963 and 1965. Notice, however, that Capovilla does not actually *say* that Paul VI read the contents of the “Capovilla envelope” as such for a second time in 1965. In fact, as De Carli’s own transcript reveals, Capovilla *would not know* whether Paul VI did so, even if it were true. As Capovilla states: “The envelope was resealed [in 1963] and *I don’t know if it was spoken of further.*” Thus, De Carli has simply put words in Capovilla’s mouth by means of his leading questions.

De Carli’s clumsy leading questions aside, Bertone cannot succeed with this contrivance. First of all, if it were really the case that Paul VI read the same text twice—in 1963 and 1965—Bertone would have said so long ago, thus clearing up the apparent mystery. He would have mentioned this in *Message* back in 2000, or in *Last Visionary* or during his appearance on *Door to Door*. That Bertone says it now, only after the emergence of undeniable evidence of a text in the papal apartment, clearly suggests what the law calls a “recent fabrication”—a change of story designed to accommodate facts a witness did not think would come out: “You found a gun in my basement, detective? Oh yes, *that* gun. Of course, it was always there. The previous owner left it behind. Did I not mention this before?”

That tactic will not work here, however, because the evidence Bertone belatedly embraces and attempts to spin his way cannot fail to annihilate his “thesis.” As Capovilla reveals to Bertone’s own handpicked audience in the transcript quoted above, in 1963 Pope Paul’s subordinate, Monsignor Dell’Acqua, asked Capovilla where the “Fatima envelope” was, and Capovilla told him where in the papal apartment it could be found. That is, Dell’Acqua (who was at the time no less than the Substitute of the Secretary of State) *did not make inquiry of the Holy Office because the text Paul VI wished to read was not there.* Yet we know that, as the official account reveals, Pope John did return a text of the Secret to the Holy Office before his death in 1963, and that it was *this* text that Paul VI read in 1965, as opposed to 1963:

In fact Pope John XXIII decided to return the sealed envelope to *the Holy Office* and not to reveal the third part of the “secret.”

Paul VI read the contents with the Substitute,

Archbishop Angelo Dell'Acqua, on 27 March 1965, and returned the envelope to the Archives of the Holy Office, deciding not to publish the text.³⁰⁰

Nowhere does the official account state that in 1963 Paul VI retrieved from the Holy Office the text that John XXIII had returned there, and not even Bertone is claiming that now. Therefore, the text that Capovilla helped Dell'Acqua locate in Pope Paul's apartment in June of 1963—the text kept in the late Pope John's prized writing desk called “Barbarigo”—could not possibly have been the one Pope John returned to the Holy Office before he died. Bertone's tactic has backfired, and there is no way out of the problem. His own witness has confirmed the existence of two separate but related texts of the Third Secret of Fatima: one in the Holy Office archives, the other in “Barbarigo”; one read by Paul VI in 1963—the text Pope John kept in “Barbarigo”; the other read by Paul in 1965—the text Pope John returned to the Holy Office.³⁰¹

In sum, Bertone's belated admission of the presence of the “Capovilla envelope” in the papal apartment, and his failure to produce it or to explain its non-production, are the final blow to his position. He himself has demonstrated conclusively that he is hiding something. Bertone's contrivance—that Paul VI read the same text, contained in the same envelope, in 1963 and 1965—is riddled with gaping holes he cannot possibly explain:

- If Paul VI read in 1963 the same text he read again in 1965, and there is nothing to hide, then Bertone would have produced on television the envelope Paul VI resealed in 1963—the “Capovilla envelope” on which, as Bertone's own evidence proves, Capovilla wrote the words dictated by John XXIII, a list of names of those who had read the contents, and “a note concerning the manner of arrival of the envelope in his [Pope John's] hands...”
- The official account never mentioned that Paul VI read a text of the Secret in 1963, even though that reading was a momentous historical event.
- There would have been no reason for the official account

³⁰⁰*The Message of Fatima*, p. 4.

³⁰¹The Italian original and English translation of the stamped “confidential note” by Archbishop Capovilla, dated May 17, 1967, in which he recorded the precise circumstances of the reading of the Third Secret by Pope Paul VI in 1963 are reproduced in [Appendix I](#).

not to mention this momentous historical event *unless* the text Pope Paul read and placed back in the resealed “Capovilla envelope” in 1963 was (and is) being hidden.

- If Paul VI read in 1965 the same text he read in 1963, the official account of the 1965 reading would have mentioned this – unless, again, there is something to hide.
- As Bertone now reveals through Capovilla, Paul VI resealed the envelope containing the text he read in 1963, stating that he would “do as much as” Pope John had, meaning leave it to others to judge the text. Why, then, would Paul VI reopen the envelope he had resealed in 1963 in order to read the *same* text again in 1965? He wouldn’t.
- If Paul VI decided to reopen the envelope he had resealed in 1963 in order to give it a second reading in 1965, how is it that neither his diaries, nor the records of the members of his staff, nor any Vatican document whatsoever, reflect that the Pope decided to revisit the same text he had previously decided to leave to others to judge?

But even if Bertone’s leaky contrivance could hold water, he has still failed to explain away John Paul II’s reading of a text of the Secret in 1978—three years before the date given in the official account—and Pope John’s reading of a text of the Secret in 1960—the year following the date given in the official account. All told, the evidence, including Bertone’s *own* evidence, shows that three different Popes have read texts of the Third Secret on two different occasions during their respective pontificates: John XXIII in August of 1959 and 1960; Paul VI in 1963 and 1965; John Paul II in 1978 and 1981. Apparently we are expected to believe that all three Popes read the same text twice, but by some incredible coincidence the Vatican’s official records failed to note an historic second reading of the Third Secret by each Pope. Apparently we are expected to believe that although there are—

- *two* different Third Secret envelopes bearing the identical “1960 order” written on each of the two envelopes by Sister Lucia,
- *two* different locations of Third Secret texts,
- *two* different Third Secret translations in Italian, neither of which has been made public by the Vatican, and

- *two* different Third Secret readings in *two* different years by *three* consecutive Popes,

– there is only *one* text of the Third Secret of Fatima. But if anyone still believes that now, he has not given this matter the attention it deserves.

From beginning to end, and no denial

The final question and answer in De Carli's interview of Capovilla are of little consequence, except that Capovilla does confirm the "Fatimist" contention that when Paul VI went to Fatima in 1967 he declined to speak with Sister Lucia: "Sister Lucia requested a private conversation. But the Pope did not speak Portuguese, nor Sister Lucia Italian. 'Sister Lucia, tell everything to your bishop; it will be as if you told it to me.'" The claim that the Pope, accompanied on all his foreign trips by first-rate translators, could not speak to Lucia because of the language barrier must have been as insulting to Lucia's dignity as it is to our intelligence.

The interview concludes with Capovilla declaring: "And today I am happy to have read Cardinal Bertone's book, which in my opinion corresponds perfectly to that which the simplicity of this Sister had wanted to reveal through her life and through Mary. The Madonna says: 'Do what Jesus tells you.' Today He would say to us: 'Do what the Vicar of Christ tells you and you will all be more tranquil and in peace.'" And what has the Vicar of Christ told us to do regarding the Third Secret? Absolutely nothing.

So, Archbishop Capovilla will end the interview without denying a single word he said to Solideo Paolini, while nevertheless confirming that there is an envelope containing a text of the Third Secret that Bertone has never produced. The Archbishop will provide a series of irrelevant answers to a series of irrelevant questions designed to navigate around the crux of the matter: what Capovilla told Paolini. The Archbishop will conclude by telling us very cryptically that Bertone's book "corresponds"—that word again!—to the "simplicity" of what Lucia wanted to reveal in her life and through Mary, which is very conspicuously not the same thing as saying that what Lucia and Mary both wanted to reveal, in the texts that Mary directed her to write, has all been published. He will recommend that everyone take the "papal

tranquilizer”—just listen to the Pope and you will all be calm and peaceful. But the Pope has said nothing about this controversy that would require us to accept Bertone’s representations, but rather has written privately to Socci thanking him for his book. Not even the Vatican apparatus has dared to launch an official defense of Bertone against the indictment Socci has published to the world—especially Capovilla’s testimony to Paolini, which remains completely intact at the end of “The Cardinal Bertone Show.”

Not with a bang, but a whimper

The final speaker on “The Cardinal Bertone Show” is Bertone himself. This is the Cardinal’s moment to answer the many concerns raised by Socci and Catholics the world over concerning his version of events. But, as he has done for the past seven years, Bertone continues to duck every issue. After a brief discourse concerning the Church’s approach to Marian apparitions, he says only this: “On the famous Third Secret, on the truth of the Third Secret, I will not return. Certainly, if there had been some further element, of commentary, of integration, it would have appeared in her [Lucia’s] letters, in her thousands of letters—something that isn’t there.”

It seems that even as he avoids the issues, the Cardinal cannot help but raise further doubts about his account. Why would the Cardinal say that *if* there were a missing part of the Third Secret it would have appeared in Sister Lucia’s correspondence with various people around the world, rather than in a text she wrote specifically at the direction of the Virgin? Why would Lucia reveal an element of the Third Secret in her *personal correspondence* when, as we know, the Secret was transmitted in two envelopes which state they “can only be opened in 1960 by the Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon or the Bishop of Leiria”? Does the Cardinal mean to direct our attention away from those two envelopes, or the never-produced “Capovilla envelope” bearing the dictation of John XXIII? And on what basis does he assert that there is nothing pertaining to the Secret in Lucia’s thousands of letters? Has he read and studied them all?

Although he had staged this entire television spectacle to defend his position, Cardinal Bertone has nothing further to say about the very controversy that had prompted him to stage it. Evidently, the Cardinal believes that the sheer spectacle of the event will create the impression that he has prevailed, even though

the substance of what he has just presented only confirms that he cannot possibly be telling the whole truth.

Still more problems for Bertone

“The Cardinal Bertone Show” is, if that were possible, an even bigger disaster for him than *Last Visionary* and the appearance on *Door to Door*. For the Cardinal’s own witness—the witness he tried to make his own in order to blunt the impact of the witness’ testimony—has completed the destruction of the official account. Despite Bertone’s elaborate attempt to suggest otherwise, Capovilla not only fails to deny even one word of his testimony to Paolini, he confirms key facts which demonstrate that there is a text, a translation, and an envelope pertaining to the Third Secret, none of which the Vatican has produced or even mentioned over the past seven years.

But that is not the end of the problems for Cardinal Bertone on this particular evening. Before the guards throw Socci out on the street, he is able to play for the assembled journalists an audiotape of Capovilla’s statements to Paolini during their aforementioned meeting on June 21, 2007. As the major Italian daily *Il Giornale* reports, on the tape Capovilla is heard to state: “Besides the four pages [of the vision of the bishop in white] there was also something else, an attachment, yes.” As the reporter from *Il Giornale* concluded, Capovilla’s statement “would confirm the thesis of the existence of a second sheet with the interpretation of the Secret. The mystery, and above all the polemics, will continue.”³⁰²

The mystery and the polemics will indeed continue. Meanwhile, however, not only the Church, but the whole world, is moving inexorably toward the ultimate consequences the missing text of the Third Secret no doubt foretells *and* gives us the means to avoid.

³⁰²“The Fourth Secret of Fatima does not exist,” *Il Giornale*, September 22, 2007.