

Chapter 10

CARDINAL BERTONE AND THE COLLAPSE OF THE PARTY LINE

On February 13, 2005, Sister Lucia passed on to her eternal reward at the age of 97, to be followed by Pope John Paul II on April 2. By the closing months of 2006 the former Archbishop Bertone, Secretary of the CDF, had become Cardinal Bertone, successor to Cardinal Sodano as Vatican Secretary of State under Pope Benedict XVI. In a manner befitting the ecclesiastical politician he is, Sodano “hunkered down in the apartment and offices he occupied as former Secretary of State and [defied] the Pope to remove him,” threatening “that any attempt to remove him will be met by Sodano’s revelation of ‘where the bodies are hidden’ from the last ten years of John Paul II’s pontificate—meaning the many things that went terribly wrong on account of the Pope’s declining capacity during that period.”²²⁷

As Bertone assumed his new office—forced to reside temporarily in Saint John’s Tower on account of Sodano’s refusal to relocate—the controversy over the Third Secret had not only failed to abate, it had reached a higher intensity than ever before. Antonio Socci’s *Fourth Secret* (published in November 2006) had shifted to the Vatican a heavy new burden of proof.

A Remarkable Change of Mind

When he set out to write his book on the Third Secret affair, Socci was at first determined to demolish the claims of the so-called “Fatimists” that the Vatican is holding something back. He had once viewed such claims as mere “dietrologies,” an Italian idiom for conspiracy theories that look behind (*dietro*) events for hidden plots. He was convinced that the vision of the bishop in white was all there was to the Third Secret, and that in *The Message of Fatima*, the Vatican-published commentary on the vision and the Fatima message in general, Ratzinger and Bertone had laid all questions to rest.

As Socci first believed, “Fatimist” literature casting doubt on the completeness of the Vatican’s disclosure originated “from the burning disappointment of a Third Secret that controverted all of their apocalyptic predictions.” The “Fatimists” had to be refuted, he thought, because the “polemical arms” in their arsenal were “at the disposal of whoever wanted to launch a heavy attack against the

²²⁷ Christopher A. Ferrara, “World Waits for Indult to Come and Sodano to Go,” *The Remnant*, March 5, 2007, http://www.remnantnewspaper.com/Archives/archive-2007-0215-news_from_rome.htm.

Vatican.”²²⁸ But then Socci encountered unexpected strength in the “Fatimist” case, which he had never studied closely. At the same time, his own suspicions were aroused when Cardinal Bertone declined to grant him an interview, despite their friendly relations and Socci’s intention to defend Bertone’s position. That refusal opened Socci’s eyes to the possibility “that there are embarrassing questions and that there is above all something (of gravity) to hide.”²²⁹

As Socci explains: “In the end, I had to surrender.... Here I recount my voyage into the greatest mystery of the 20th century and set forth the result I honestly reached. A result that sincerely contradicts my initial convictions...”²³⁰ As Socci flatly declares, in agreement with vast numbers of skeptical Catholics, something must be missing: “[T]hat there is a part of the Secret not revealed and considered unspeakable *is certain*. And today—having decided to deny its existence—the Vatican runs the risk of exposing itself to very heavy pressure and blackmail.”²³¹ What completely changed Socci’s mind and made him “surrender” is simply this: overwhelming evidence, which will be surveyed here. The evidence convinced Socci that the “detrologies” of the “Fatimists”—i.e., loyal Catholics who have reasonable doubts about the official account—were actually correct: there must be a separate but related text of the Secret, not yet revealed, containing “the words of the Madonna [which] preannounce an apocalyptic crisis of the faith in the Church starting from the top.” This second text is probably “also an explanation of the vision (revealed on June 26, 2000) where there appear the Pope, the bishops and martyred faithful, after having traversed a city in ruins.”²³² That explanation, writes Socci, would involve “the preannounced assassination of a Pope [the white-clad bishop in the vision] in the context of an immense martyrdom of Christians and of a devastation of the world.”²³³ Only such an explanation would make sense of the otherwise inexplicable vision.

A Devastating Eyewitness

Socci gave wide publicity in particular to the testimony of Archbishop Loris F. Capovilla, the still-living personal secretary of John XXIII. As Socci recounts, in July of 2006 Capovilla was interviewed by the Fatima scholar Solideo Paolini concerning the existence of the posited second text. During that interview Paolini

²²⁸ Antonio Socci, *Il Quarto Segreto di Fatima* [“The Fourth Secret of Fatima”], (Milano: Rai and Eri Rizzoli, 2007) English ed., p. 3; popular ed., p. 10; Italian ed., pp. 12, 13.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, English ed., p. 4; popular ed., p. 11; Italian ed., p. 14.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*

²³¹ *Ibid.*, English ed., p. 162; popular ed., p. 111; Italian ed., p. 173.

²³² *Ibid.*, English ed., p. 74; popular ed., p. 55; Italian ed., p. 82.

²³³ *Ibid.*, English ed., p. 55; popular ed., p. 43; Italian ed., pp. 63-64.

asked the Archbishop whether there was an unpublished text of the Secret, and the Archbishop replied evasively: “I know nothing. (*Nulla so!*)” Note well: he did not answer simply “No!” That answer puzzled Paolini, who expected that the Archbishop, “among the few who know the Secret, would have been able to respond to me that this is a completely impracticable idea and that everything had already been revealed in 2000. Instead he answered: ‘I know nothing.’ An expression that I imagined he wished ironically to evoke a certain *omertá* [code of silence].”²³⁴ Paolini’s impression was confirmed by subsequent events.

After the interview, Paolini received from Capovilla in the mail a package of papers from his files, along with a perplexing cover letter advising him to obtain a copy of *TMF*, which Capovilla must have known that Paolini, a student of Fatima, would already possess. Was this not, thought Paolini, “an invitation to read something in particular in that publication in relation to the documents sent by the same Archbishop?” That intuition was correct. Among the documents Capovilla had sent was one stamped “confidential note” by him, dated May 17, 1967, in which he had recorded the circumstances of a reading of the Third Secret by Pope Paul VI on June 27, 1963, only six days after his election to the papacy and before he had even been seated officially at the coronation Mass (which took place on June 29). But according to *TMF* and the “official account” in general, Paul VI did not read the Secret until nearly two years later: “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.”²³⁵

The huge discrepancy between the date recorded by Capovilla and that set forth in *TMF* prompted Paolini to telephone Capovilla, at precisely 7:45 p.m. on the same day he received the documents, to ask the Archbishop to explain the discrepancy. Capovilla protested: “Ah, but I spoke the truth. Look I am still lucid!” When Paolini politely insisted that, still, there was an unexplained discrepancy, Capovilla offered explanations that suggested “eventual lapse of memory, interpretations of what he had intended to say,” whereupon Paolini reminded him that he had recorded the date of the reading by Paul VI in a stamped, official document. Capovilla then gave this reply: “But I am right, because perhaps *the Bertone envelope is not the same as the Capovilla envelope.*”

Stunned, Paolini then asked the decisive question: “Therefore, both dates are true, because there are two texts of the Third Secret?”

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, English ed., p. 131; popular ed., p. 91; Italian ed., p. 140.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, English ed., p. 131; popular ed., p. 91; Italian ed., p. 141; and citing *TMF*, p. 15 (English print edition).

After a brief pause, the Archbishop gave the explosive answer that confirmed the existence of a missing envelope and text of the Third Secret of Fatima: “Exactly so! (*Per l’appunto!*)”²³⁶

The “confidential note” completely corroborated Capovilla’s testimony.²³⁷ According to the note, on the date Pope Paul read the Secret (again, June 27, 1963), Monsignor Angelo Dell’Acqua—the same “Substitute” referred to in *TMF*—telephoned Capovilla to ask: “I am looking for the Fatima envelope. Do you know where it is kept?”²³⁸ The note records that Capovilla replied: “It is in the right hand drawer of the writing desk called Barbarigo, *in the bedroom.*” That is, the envelope was in the former bedroom of John XXIII, which was now the bedroom of Paul VI; it was *not* in the Holy Office archives, where the text of the vision was lodged. The existence of two different texts comprising the entirety of the Third Secret of Fatima—the text of the vision and the text in the papal writing desk—now stood confirmed beyond any reasonable doubt.

A Feeble Reply

In May of 2007, Rizzoli, the same publisher that had published *Fourth Secret*, rushed into print a book by Cardinal Bertone entitled *L’Ultima Veggente di Fatima* [“The Last Visionary of Fatima”] (*Last Visionary*).²³⁹ *Last Visionary*, which appeared in bookstores a mere six months after *Fourth Secret*, is essentially a 100-page interview of the Cardinal concerning various subjects, followed by another 50 pages of appendices. This mass of verbiage surrounded a mere nine pages of comment in response to the claims of Socci and the “Fatimists” (including Father Gruner, whose name was also mentioned by the Cardinal). The interviewer was a layman, Giuseppe De Carli, a *vaticanista* (reporter on the Vatican beat) and ardent admirer of the Cardinal, whose fawning questions not only posed no real challenge to the Cardinal, but actually attempted to assist him in promoting what Socci had called “the official reconstruction” of the Third Secret. But *Last Visionary* failed utterly to address the substance of Socci’s book, and in particular the testimony of Archbishop Capovilla, which was simply ignored—a telling omission in a book that was supposed to have been an answer to Socci.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, English ed., p. 132; popular ed., p. 92; Italian ed., p. 142.

²³⁷ The Italian original and English translation of the stamped “confidential note,” dated May 17, 1967, are reproduced in Appendix I of *The Secret Still Hidden*.

²³⁸ Notice Dell’Acqua evidently presumed that the envelope was somewhere in the papal apartment, not in the Holy Office archive, of which Capovilla was not the custodian. Otherwise, Dell’Acqua would have asked the custodian of the archive, Cardinal Ottaviani, where the “Fatima envelope” was, rather than Capovilla, Pope John’s former personal secretary.

²³⁹ Bertone, Cardinal Tarcisio, *The Last Visionary of Fatima* (Milano: Rai and Eri Rizzoli, 2007). All English translations are mine.

On May 12, 2007, Socci published in his widely read Internet column this astonishing challenge to Bertone: “Dear Cardinal Bertone: Who—between you and me—is deliberately lying?”²⁴⁰ Socci was responding to the Cardinal’s suggestion in *Last Visionary* that Socci had misled the Catholic faithful in *Fourth Secret*. The significance of this public challenge to the credibility of the Vatican Secretary of State by one of Italy’s most prominent laymen could not be overestimated; nor could Bertone afford to ignore it.

A Mountain of Evidence

By the time Socci’s book was published, Cardinal Bertone, the new custodian of the Party Line, was facing a public relations crisis provoked by the same growing mountain of evidence that had changed Socci’s mind and caused him to publish his breakthrough book affirming the existence of a text of the Third Secret that the Vatican was withholding. We note here some of the key points developed by the sources Socci had studied and by Socci’s own work on the subject, some of which have been mentioned in Chapter 5:

- Sister Lucia revealed that a text of the Secret is in the form of a letter to the Bishop of Fatima, but the text describing the vision is not a letter.
- Our Lady clearly had more to say following the momentous “etc,” which clearly begins another, and thus the third, part of the Great Secret, but the vision contains not a word from Her.
- Our Lady explains everything in the vision contained in the first part of the Great Secret, but we are asked to believe that there is absolutely no explanation from Her concerning the vision in the third part—i.e., the Third Secret.
- Father Schweigl revealed that the Third Secret has two parts: one concerning the Pope, and the other “a logical continuation of the words ‘In Portugal the dogma of the faith will always be preserved etc,’” but the vision does not contain that logical continuation of the Virgin’s words.
- The Vatican-initiated press release from 1960, announcing suppression of the Secret, describes the suppressed text as “*the letter*” that “will never be opened,” containing “*the words* which Our Lady confided as a secret to the three little

²⁴⁰ Article of May 12, 2007 in archive at <http://www.antoniosocci.it/Socci/index.cfm>; see English translation at <http://www.fatima.org/news/newsviews/052907socci.asp>.

shepherds...”, but the vision is not a letter and contains no words confided by the Virgin as a secret.

- Cardinal Ottaviani, who read and had custody of the Secret, revealed that it involved a “sheet of paper” bearing 25 lines of text recording “what Our Lady *told her* [Lucia] to tell the Holy Father...”, but the vision spans 62 lines, and in it the Virgin does not tell Sister Lucy anything at all.
- A text of the Secret was kept in the papal apartment during the pontificates of Pius XII, John XXIII and Paul VI, and at least at the beginning of the pontificate of John Paul II, even though Bertone’s “official account” speaks only of a text in the Holy Office archives.
- John XXIII read a text of the Secret that was so difficult it required an Italian translation of the Portuguese, but he also read another text, the following year, that he could understand perfectly without a translation.
- The text of the vision contains no particularly difficult Portuguese expressions.
- There are two different Italian translations of the Secret: the one prepared for John XXIII, and the one prepared in 1967, neither of which we have been allowed to see.
- Three different Popes (John XXIII, Paul VI, John Paul II) read texts of the Secret on two different dates—years apart—during their respective pontificates, but all three of these second readings are mysteriously omitted from the “official account.”
- Those who have read the Secret have revealed that it speaks of a coming state of apostasy in the Church as well as a planetary crisis, but the vision standing alone says nothing of apostasy in the Church.
- Cardinal Ratzinger revealed that the Third Secret refers to “dangers threatening the faith and the life of the Christian, and therefore of the world,” and further revealed a correspondence between the Message of Fatima and the Message of Akita, in which Our Lady, *in Her own words*, warns of a coming crisis in the Church accompanied by a fiery chastisement of the world. The vision standing alone, however, contains no such warning from Our Lady.

- When pressed to explain in 2000 what text of the Secret John Paul II reportedly read in 1978, given that Bertone claimed John Paul did not read the Secret until 1981, Bertone was evasive and finally said merely that “in my opinion” John Paul did not read a text in 1978, when it would have been a simple matter to ascertain this from innumerable sources at his disposal, including the Pope himself—an omission clearly suggesting that Bertone knew the report was true.
- Archbishop Capovilla, personal secretary to John XXIII, confirmed to Solideo Paolini the existence of two texts and two envelopes relating to the Third Secret, one of which, bearing his (Capovilla’s) handwriting and kept in the papal apartment, had never been produced.
- Capovilla had never retracted his testimony to Paolini, even though he had had every opportunity to do so.
- Bertone, in the process of producing *Last Visionary*, had evidently not even asked Capovilla to retract what he had revealed to Paolini, or had sought a retraction but was refused.
- Bertone had failed and refused to produce the reopened and resealed Capovilla envelope.
- The Vatican had issued no official denial of the allegations in Socci’s book, even though Socci had literally accused Bertone of covering up the very words of the Mother of God.
- On the contrary, Pope Benedict XVI had sent Socci a note “concerning my book, thanking me for ‘the sentiments which have suggested it,’” without the slightest indication that the book is in error.

A Televised Disaster

Having failed to quell mounting skepticism over the “official version” with his publication of *Last Visionary*, which had only conceded Socci’s entire case for a cover-up, Bertone next undertook the extraordinary initiative of appearing as a guest on the Italian talk show *Porta a Porta* [“Door to Door”] on May 31, 2007 in a further bid to refute Socci. Incredibly, while the show was entitled “The Fourth Secret of Fatima Does Not Exist,” a clear reference to the title of Socci’s book, Socci was not invited to defend himself. The field was left open for Bertone to kick a goal into an undefended net, yet

he fumbled the setup completely, not only failing to refute Socci but providing further devastating admissions and revelations.

But this was the risk Bertone was forced to incur by making such an extraordinary televised appearance: If he said nothing in response to Socci's book, he would have conceded the existence of a cover-up and his own involvement in it. But if he made the appearance, there was the potential for further slip-ups and inadvertent revelations. And that is exactly what happened. The details of this televised disaster for the Party Line are set forth elsewhere.²⁴¹ Here, an adumbration of key points will have to suffice:

- During the telecast Bertone, under mounting public pressure, finally revealed on camera that there are actually *two* identical sealed envelopes of Lucia's, bearing the "express order of Our Lady" that the contents were not to be revealed until 1960, even though he had been representing for seven years that there is only one envelope, falsely claiming that Lucia "confessed" she had never received any order from the Virgin linking the Secret to 1960 and forbidding its disclosure until then.
- That is, Bertone had been caught in two demonstrable falsehoods: that there was only one envelope pertaining to the Third Secret, and that the Blessed Virgin had never connected the Secret to the year 1960. Both were exposed as falsehoods by the very evidence Bertone himself displayed on camera, acting as if he did not appreciate the significance of his own revelation.
- Bertone further revealed a *third* envelope of Lucia's, unsealed and addressed to Bishop da Silva, which, together with the Bishop's outer envelope, would make a total of *four* envelopes we are supposed to believe were all created for only one text of the Secret.
- Yet, when he held up Bishop da Silva's outer envelope to a bright light, auxiliary Bishop Venâncio saw only *one* envelope inside, and took exact measurements of both the envelope and the single sheet of paper within it, which contained 20-25 lines of text, just as Cardinal Ottaviani testified.
- The measurements of the envelope and the sheet of paper taken by Bishop Venâncio are entirely different from the measurements of the envelope and the sheet of paper revealed by Bertone on *Porta a Porta*.

²⁴¹ Cf. *The Secret Still Hidden*, Chapter 8.

- Bertone himself revealed, only weeks before his appearance on *Porta a Porta*, in his book *Last Visionary of Fatima*, that in April 2000 Sister Lucia “authenticated” sheets of paper pertaining to the Secret, even though on *Porta a Porta* Bertone revealed only one sheet, folded to make four sides, that contained the text of the vision.
- In *Last Visionary* Bertone also revealed that there was also an outer envelope, not Lucia’s, bearing the note “Third Part of the Secret,” which likewise has never been produced.
- During the telecast Bertone admitted that Cardinal Ottaviani had indeed testified “categorically” (“*categoricamente*”) to the existence of a text of the Secret spanning only one page and 25 lines, whereas the text of the vision displayed on camera spans four pages—four sides of a folded-over sheet of paper—and 62 lines. After a commercial break, Bertone offered the lame explanation that Ottaviani had somehow miscounted the 62 lines of the vision to arrive at 25 lines.
- Confronted with mounting evidence of a cover-up, Bertone adopted on *Porta a Porta* the new line of referring repeatedly to an “authentic” text of the Secret, an “authentic” envelope, and the “only folio that exists in the Holy Office archives,” when he knew full well that there was a text and envelope in the papal apartment, thus suggesting, as Socci would note,²⁴² that he deems a second text of the Secret “inauthentic.”
- Regarding this new notion of an “authentic” text, Bertone referred during the telecast to a document that “actually existed in the archives,” insisting that “there was only this folio in the archive of the Holy Office in 1957, when by order of Our Lady and the Bishop of Leiria, Sister Lucia accepted that the Secret be brought to Rome from the archives of the Patriarch of Lisbon....” Yet the document in question was never in the archives of the Patriarch of Lisbon. It is an undeniable historical fact that in 1957 copies of all Lucia’s writings and the envelope containing the Secret were personally delivered by auxiliary Bishop Venâncio directly from the chancery in Leiria to the Papal Nuncio in Lisbon, Msgr. Cento, who took the documents directly to Rome.²⁴³

As Socci concluded in his reply to the telecast from which he

²⁴² See “Bertone nel ‘vespaio’ delle polemiche” [“Bertone in the ‘Wasp’s Nest’ of the Polemics”], June 2, 2007, <http://www.antoniosocci.com/2007/06/bertone-nel-%e2%80%9cvespaio%e2%80%9d-delle-polemiche/>.

²⁴³ Cf. *The Whole Truth About Fatima*, Vol. III, pp. 480-481.

had so suspiciously been excluded, despite the absence of any real challenge to Bertone's version of the facts the Cardinal had only succeeded in demonstrating that the doubt Pope John professed to have concerning the supernatural origin of the Third Secret

could not refer to the text of the vision revealed in 2000, that does not contain anything "delicate." But only to that "fourth secret" that—as Cardinals Ottaviani and Ciappi revealed—spoke of apostasy and the betrayal by the upper ecclesiastical hierarchy. That "fourth secret" of which John Paul II, in 1982, said that it "had not been published because it could be badly interpreted." That "fourth secret" of which Cardinal Ratzinger, in 1996, said that at the moment certain "details" could be harmful to the faith...²⁴⁴

Bertone's every effort to answer Socci had only dug a deeper pit for him and the other defenders of the Party Line. As Socci had said in defense of himself, Bertone had "offered the proof that I am right," that there is indeed a missing text of the Secret. This disaster prompted yet another unprecedented initiative by the Cardinal Secretary of State.

The Cardinal Bertone Show

On September 21, 2007, with the "official account" crumbling around him, Cardinal Bertone staged his own personal television show in an auditorium at the Pontifical Urbaniana University in Rome near the Vatican. The pretext was the "introduction" of *Last Visionary*, which had been published and introduced at a press conference months before. Like the appearance on *Porta a Porta*, this spectacle only confirmed the existence of the very thing Bertone was attempting to conceal. Here, too, a summary of the key elements of this latest debacle will have to suffice:²⁴⁵

- During the telecast Bertone continued his mysterious failure to address a single question that would penetrate to the heart of any of these matters, which he knows to be in controversy, and in particular has avoided like the plague any questions about the "etc," the text in the papal apartment, the testimony of Solideo Paolini concerning the admissions by Archbishop Capovilla, the never-produced Capovilla envelope, and the mysterious sudden appearance of multiple envelopes never mentioned before.

²⁴⁴ Antonio Socci, "Bertone nel 'vespaio' delle polemiche" ["Bertone in the 'Wasp's Nest' of the Polemics"], loc. cit.

²⁴⁵ For a more complete explanation, see Christopher Ferrara, *The Secret Still Hidden*, Ch. 10, pp. 167-197.

- Called as a witness by Bertone, Bishop Seraphim of Fatima, who purportedly witnessed Lucia's authentication of the text of the vision in April 2000, employed the even more nuanced declaration by declaring on camera that "the Secret of Fatima has been revealed in an *authentic* and integral way," declining to affirm simply that the Third Secret of Fatima had been revealed entirely and that nothing had been withheld.
- Unable to avoid any longer the subject of Archbishop Capovilla's explosive testimony, Bertone broadcast a heavily edited video interview of Capovilla conducted, not by an official Vatican representative, but by Giuseppe De Carli, the journalist who had collaborated with Bertone on *Last Visionary*. The interview *never once addressed Capovilla's admissions to Solideo Paolini*, and Capovilla was never asked by De Carli to retract them.
- Quite the contrary, during the interview *Capovilla fully confirmed the existence of the never-produced Capovilla envelope* and the reading of its contents by John XXIII and Paul VI on dates different from those provided in the "official account" for the reading of the text of the vision published in 2000.
- Despite this devastating revelation, De Carli—but *not* Capovilla—declared on camera that the "Capovilla envelope" which the Vatican has never produced, and the "Bertone envelope" containing the text of the vision, are one and the same envelope—a manifest absurdity from which De Carli would retreat during his later appearance at a Fatima conference sponsored by Father Gruner's Fatima apostolate in Rome.
- Soggi and Paolini, who waited outside the auditorium in the hope of confronting Cardinal Bertone with a key question about the Secret, relating to the famous "etc.," were ejected from the premises by security guards.
- Before they were ejected, however, they were able to play for the other journalists present an audiotape of a subsequent meeting between Paolini and Archbishop Capovilla during which the Archbishop states that: "Besides the four pages [of the vision of the bishop in white] there was also something else, an attachment, yes." As the reporter from the prominent Italian newspaper *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.”²⁴⁶

- Bertone has never denied the existence of this “attachment,” even though *Il Giornale* had declared that it “would confirm the thesis of the existence of a second sheet with the interpretation of the Secret.”

The final speaker on “The Cardinal Bertone Show” was 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 had done for the past seven years, he continued to duck every issue. But even in the act of doing so, he made another serious misstep with the following statement: “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 every time he opens his mouth to speak on the subject, the Cardinal cannot help but raise further doubts about the veracity of his account. Why would he 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 letters to third parties 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”? Did 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 did he assert that there was nothing pertaining to the Secret in Lucia’s thousands of letters? Had he read and studied them all?

Cardinal Bertone’s every effort to salvage the credibility of his account since becoming Secretary of State had only called his credibility further into question. Even the Wikipedia entry for “Tarcisio Bertone” now contains this entry:

After Bertone’s book [*Last Visionary*] was published, Italian journalist Antonio Socci published an article entitled, “Dear Cardinal Bertone: Who—between you and me—is Deliberately Lying?” Catholic attorney Christopher Ferrara wrote an entire book called *The Secret Still Hidden* (content available online) aimed at exposing and debunking the claims of Cardinal Bertone

²⁴⁶ “The Fourth Secret of Fatima does not exist,” *Il Giornale*, September 22, 2007.

with respect to Fatima. The book contains an appendix entitled, *101 Grounds for Doubting Cardinal Bertone's Account*.²⁴⁷

And, soon enough, the Pope himself would reject Bertone's "official account" and "reopen the file" on the Third Secret of Fatima, clearly suggesting that there is much more to the Secret than has been revealed, as Antonio Socci would be happy to note. At the same time, however, as if the Pope had never spoken, various false friends of Fatima down low would rush to save the Party Line dictated by Bertone and his collaborators from on high.

²⁴⁷ "Tarcisio Bertone," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tarcisio_Bertone.