THE ATHANASIAN

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Disarming America

John Kenneth Weiskittel

Just over two years ago this newsletter carried "Gun Control: The Coming Showdown" (September 1, 1989 issue), a study that showed the way in which the American people were being psychologically conditioned to seek the passage of new gun laws. Among the antigun myths cited in that article were those destined to elicit emotional responses, the propaganda equivalent of having a loaded revolver shoved into one's face.

Further evidence of the deceitful way the gun control lobby operates was in full display earlier this year in its push for passage of the Brady bill. This federal legislation seeks to establish a nationwide waiting period for the purchase of handguns and to penalize states that do not impose background checks on prospective buyers. As this article goes to press, the House's version of the bill (a seven-day wait) and the Senate's (a five-day wait) must be reconciled before a final vote can be made. When this takes place passage is probable, and the showdown mentioned in the earlier study will grow nearer. (By the time our subscribers read this article Brady may already be law.)

The Brady bill is significant for a variety of reasons: the extraordinary means used to secure its passage presents a veritable textbook lesson in the use of propaganda; the surprising — or seemingly surprising — support it received, as well as the genuinely surprising counterproposal made by the opposition; how its supporters include advocates of an *outright ban on privately owned firearms*; the dangers ahead if the forces behind the Brady bill are allowed to proceed unimpeded to future projects. The following article seeks to provide our readers with some background material that can be utilized to fight any attempt at gun confiscation.

Without Warning

The history of the gun control movement in America has been a chronicle of deception. Proponents of such legislation have regularly resorted to factual distortion, manipulation of feelings and slanderous allegations about their foes. In the drive to pass the Brady bill, however, the antigun fanatics have surpassed themselves in the amount of disinformation they've managed to circulate.

The bill — officially named the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act in the House of Representatives (corresponding legislation in the Senate was part of the Biden Crime Package) — draws its name from James Brady, press secretary for former President Ronald Reagan. When an assassination attempt occurred in 1981, Brady was struck in the brain by an errant bullet and has spent the past ten years confined to a wheelchair. In *The Unseen Hand: An Introduction to the Conspiratorial View of History* (Publius Press, 1985), A. Ralph Epperson writes: "There are many who believe that one of the reasons that John Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King were assassinated by gunfire was to develop popular support for legislation to either register or confiscate the weapons of the American citizen." (p. 394) It is difficult to believe that the assassins took this into consideration although conspirators *did* later use the killings to promote gun control. Whatever the relative degree of validity of such a theory, the use of the Brady tragedy is one that the antigun lobby has successfully used to generate support for its cause — and it is doubly effective in that the object of pity is not in a grave somewhere but is able to speak out on behalf of the lobby. And speak out is precisely what James Brady has done. One way has been to appear in a newspaper advertisement for Handgun Control, Inc. (HCI), a group whose current chairperson happens to be Brady's wife, Sarah. The ad, entitled "This handgun statistic just broke his silence" and carried in such papers as the *New York Times*, features a photo of Brady sitting in his wheelchair and a statement attributed to him. "Ever since I was shot," the text reads, "I have watched from my wheelchair as the gun lobby blocked one sane handgun control proposal after another..." Brady goes on to make the point that he is now supporting the "sane" proposal bearing his name, adding that 95 percent of all Americans (87 percent of handgun owners) and "every

major law enforcement organization in the country" also favor the law.

Although the figures cited above might not stand up to closer scrutiny, it is the overall impression that is in more immediate need of a challenge. The implication of the ad is that it is reasonable to endorse such legislation — later in the text he refers to "sane handgun laws" — as if there is something sick or evil about anyone who doesn't support them. Is this overstating it a bit? Hardly. Consider the following: "In fact, it seems the only people against the Brady bill are psychopaths, criminals, drug dealers and the gun lobby." It is sad to think that Brady's injuries have left him so embittered that HCI can persuade him to lump groups representing millions of law-abiding Americans with assorted kooks and crooks.

But the brunt of the Brady bill blitz was yet to come. In mid-June, Home Box Office (HBO), Time-Life's cable television subsidiary, broadcast "Without Warning: The James Brady Story," a "docudrama" starring Beau Bridges in the title role. Allen R. Hodgkins, III, reporting on the film in the July, 1991 issue of the National Rifle Association's (NRA) magazine, *American Rifleman*, notes that it was to premiere in April but this "was postponed by HBO so that it would coincide with debate in the U.S. Congress on the Brady bill." ("Made-For-TV Movies Shill For Handgun Control, Inc.," p. 60) (The House passed the bill on May 8; the Senate, on June 28). HBO claimed the film was a "family story" and not a political one but, given the crucial timing, it is hard to discount Hodgkins' allegation that it has, in fact, "provided millions of dollars in free advertising to... (HCI), and its chief propagandists, Sarah and Jim Brady, "especially when he quotes its producer, David Puttnam, as saying "it would be marvelous if this film would put... change into motion." (*Ibid*. Hodgkins also reveals that the NRA was tar-brushed as an "evil empire" by Brady when he testified before lawmakers on Capitol Hill.)

Neutralizing The Opposition

The propaganda barrage described above was very effective in rallying the support of the general populace to the Brady bill. But the gun banners sought to target even those who would naturally be heavily in favor of Second Amendment rights. The group in question? Well-meaning, but ultimately gullible, *conservative Republicans*.

During a "hearing" conducted in March, which, writes Robert W. Lee, "was... heavily stacked to favor the proposal," a Justice Department official told the panel that President George Bush's Administration opposed the bill. ("The Campaign To Disarm America," *The New American*, June 4, 1991, p. 7) But that was before "the Gipper" made a special appearance.

On March 28, Ronald Reagan shocked many by throwing his support on the side of the measure. After longtime opposition to federal gun control, he made a complete about-face in a speech at George Washington University, declaring: "It's just plain common sense that there be a waiting period to allow local law enforcement officials to conduct background checks on those who wish to buy a handgun... I support the Brady bill and I urge Congress to enact it without further delay. With the right to bear arms comes a great responsibility to use caution and common sense on handgun purchases." (Cited, James J. Drummey, "Review of the News," *The New American*, April 23, 1991, p. 11) What made this all the more surprising to many is the fact that Reagan is an NRA member, but it was not, however, a spontaneous change on his part. Lee writes:

> ...His turnabout at such a crucial point in the debate caught many gun owners by surprise. But it had actually been carefully orchestrated over many weeks. In January, Mr. Reagan had called Sarah Brady to express support. Later, when Mrs. Brady learned that he would be coming to Washington, she called him and secured his firm commitment to endorse the bill. (p. 7)

Joining Reagan in support for the Brady bill were former Presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford, both of whom are commonly perceived to be "moderate" to "conservative" in their political philosophy. (Such a perception, however, is untenable when their political careers are given close scrutiny — moderate, as in compromising, perhaps; conservative... *never*.)

Naturally, such backing of the bill duped many ordinarily pro-gun people into believing that Brady was merely an *anticrime* measure. This was followed by a typical flip-flop by Bush. Donald S. McAlvany, writing in the May, 1991 issue of his *McAlvany Intelligence Advisor*, gives a bit of the background behind it:

> For years George Bush has pretended to be pro-gun rights and against gun controls. As a lifetime member of the National Rifle Association, it was supposed that he was a pro-gun advocate. He was, in fact, courting the vote of the Republican right —

it's called conning the gullible. In 1989, he endorsed a ban on semiautomatic weapons and helped kick off the campaign to abolish so-called assault rifles. With Ronald Reagan's endorsement of the Brady Bill, Bush has found the excuse, or cover, to support that legislation as well and, on April 18, Bush came out publicly in support of the permanent banning of nine types of semiautomatic weapons. ("Guns & Silver: To Have & To Hold," p. 7)

The effect of such apparently unlikely advocacy on conservative Republicans is to have them asking themselves, "If *he's* for it, how can I be against it?" Through this same neutralizing tactic, used again and again by those bogus conservatives in the White House — from higher taxes and more socialistic government programs to recognition of Red China and the weakening of our national defense by way of a series of treaties with the Soviet Union — a plethora of leftist policies is being foisted on our country because "conservative" Republican presidents have been able to persuade their followers that there were "good reasons" for embracing them. As often as not, they were able to use their personal popularity, charisma, position, or a mixture of these, to convince GOP faithful to cast better judgment to the wind.

"The Brady bill is a prelude to confiscation," contends the NRA, "because it would start a nationwide list of gun owners." Certainly concern over this influenced the group to support an alternative bill by Representative Harley Staggers (D - West Virginia). On this subject Lee writes:

> ....The Staggers alternative would have established a system for conducting instant background checks for handgun purchases. It had been endorsed by the NRA, but many gun enthusiasts were urging lawmakers to support it only as a lesser-of-evils alternative to the Brady bill. (p. 10)

It is amazing to find the most influential component in the gun rights lobby coming down on the side of a gun control bill sponsored by a less-than-conservative legislator. (In the August 27, 1991 issue of *The New American*, Staggers fares no better than a lukewarm 42 percent in the magazine's "Conservative Index." The higher the percentage, the more the congressman "voted for constitutional principles of limited government.")

The similarity between the Brady and the Staggers bills is exposed by Larry Pratt, executive director of Gun Owners of America (GOA), in the course of an interview:

> The Staggers bill simply provided that there be a background check in every place in the country, along with a statement that — though there was no provision for penalty for not complying — the police would not keep a registration list. So we had the same problem with both bills, a gun registration opportunity for anitgun police. ("Gun Owners Fight Brady Bill," *The New American*, June 4, 1991, p. 12)

How, then, one may ask, did the NRA come to back Staggers? That question can only be answered in part here. In the April, 1984 issue of *American Opinion*, contributing editor Alan Stang wrote an article entitled "There Is Serious Trouble Brewing At The N.R.A." which told of a faction inside the group that sought to see that "(t)he political battle against the subversion called 'gun control' was to be muted." (p. 24) Stang recounts a supplement in the April 22, 1983 issue of *Gun Week* by the Federation for the NRA that challenged an amended version of the McClure-Volkmer gun bill. According to the ad, Warren Cassidy, director of the NRA's Institute for Legislative Action (ILC), proposed "one that substantially modified or nullified every significant provision in the original bill; *the N.R.A. proposal contained a 14-day waiting period and police background check on handgun purchasers.*" (Cited, p. 25) Cassidy is no longer ILA director but there is reason to fear that infiltrators may still be at work within the NRA. (Indeed, is there any reason to believe they would *not* be at work to pervert its true purposes?) H. Wayne Sheets, writing in *American Rifleman* for August, 1991, states: "NRA's many and diverse programs recently received a boost when the Internal Revenue Service... approved the NRA Foundation as a tax-exempt, nonprofit organization." (The NRA Foundation Receives Approval From IRS," p. 57) Whenever such government acceptance is granted, there is inevitable speculation over *what strings are attached*. NRA members need to be vigilant concerning the direction in which their group may be being steered. An emasculated NRA or one that is actually subtly pushing for gun control is capable of doing as much or more harm to Second Amendment rights than any openly antigun group.

Brady And Beyond

This article has not contained a refutation of the Brady bill *per se*. Why? Well, most of the arguments put forth in favor of gun control were examined in the earlier article. It hardly seems necessary to remind readers that, if the past quarter of a century has proven anything, it is that gun *laws*

emphatically *don't* deter violent crime. In that period, literally thousands of gun control measures have been passed at every level of government in our country, yet the rape, assault, armed robbery and murder rates have all increased at alarming levels. Waiting periods have no significant effect on these statistics simply because the vast percentage of legally purchased guns (over 95 percent) are *never* used in the commission of a crime, while most guns used criminally are illicitly obtained (stolen, black market, etc.). Then again, maybe it isn't the criminals the Brady bunch *wants* to control.

While the lion's share of attention has focused on the Brady bill, others being proposed are no less dangerous — perhaps even more so! For example, House Resolution (HR-19), states McAlvany, is "a comprehensive ban on nearly all rifles and shotguns since it is cleverly worded to ban all semiautomatic or single shot firearms which are not suitable for 'sporting purposes…' " (p. 6) The Secretary of the Treasury and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) will be determining what constitutes suitable use. (*Ibid.* The BATF defines this use as hunting.) Anyone not complying with HR-19 would face fines and prison sentences. McAlvany writes:

> It is important to understand that this is *not* a gun registration bill. *This is a gun confiscation bill* designed to confiscate almost all rifles and shotguns in America as well as most ammo magazines. Tens of millions of honest, patriotic Americans who believe in defending their families, their homes and the U.S. Constitution, and who believe in the Second Amendment…, *will not* turn in their rifles and shotguns if this bill passes. Therefore, tens of millions of Americans will overnight be declared by our government to be criminals and tens of thousands will be jailed as well-publicized examples to intimidate the rest… (*Ibid.*)

The impact of HR-19 is that the number of firearms available to American citizens would be greatly reduced.

Another unconstitutional measure that has been proposed is HR-1400, known as the Bush Crime Bill. Among its provisions is one that would "(o)utlaw all pistol or rifle gun magazines with over a 15-round capacity." (McAlvany, p. 5) This, however, is almost a minor inconvenience compared to another one, which would further secure the underpinning of a totalitarian society. Again, Don McAlvany observes:

> Police or government agents of the FBI, DEA, CIA, BATF or CID will, under the Bush Crime Bill, be able to enter a home, car or business without a search warrant or court order and seize property, financial records or firearms. This legislation, which says that it will rely on the "*good faith* of local and federal police performing their duties not to abuse their power," totally nullifies our Fourth Amendment protection against unwarranted search and seizure. In cases where law enforcement officers *suspect* the commission of a violent crime, drug-related activity or *violation of gun laws*, Fourth Amendment protection will be completely eliminated and *no good faith by police is required*. Never before has a single group, like U.S. gun owners, faced such an attack on their most basic constitutional rights. [Let's not forget the unborn's rights, Mr. McAlvany — JKW.] Noncourt-approved wiretaps are likely to follow on a widespread basis. (*Ibid.*)

Anyone convinced that we can rely on the "good faith" of police not to abuse their power would do well to ask a member of Operation Rescue about this.

Gun prohibition is something that is seldom spelled out, though in recent years some of its advocates have dared open avowals. Democrat Michael Dukakis, in the 1988 presidential campaign, was accused by the NRA as having declared: "I do not believe in people owning guns, only the police and military." (That charge he never was able to refute.) Former HCI chairman Pete Shields once admitted to the CBS program *60 Minutes*: "Yes, I'm for an outright ban (on handguns)." (Cited, Lee, p. 5) Liberal Representative William Clay (D - Missouri), two days before he voted in favor of the Brady bill, called it "a minimum step. We need much stricter gun control, and eventually we should bar the ownership of handguns except in a few cases." (Cited, "Brady Bill Vote in House Emboldens Anti-Gunners," *American Rifleman*, July 1991, p. 61)

Sentiments like these are to be expected from such sources but, when a journalist widely perceived to be conservative echoes them, there is more cause for concern. And this concern was voiced by *New Dimensions* magazine reporter David Kupelian, noting in an article about recent attacks on the Bill of Rights (during that document's 200th anniversary):

> In a recent column entitled "The embarassing Second Amendment," nationally syndicated columnist and TV commentator George Will struggled to reconcile the fact that he favors both

strict gun control *and* strict construction of the Constitution." Will suggests the only legitimate approach for "gun control advocates who want to square their policy preferences with the Constitution" is to "deconstitutionalize the subject by repealing the embarrassing amendment." Will reasons this way: "The Bill of Rights should be modified only with extreme reluctance, but America has an extreme *crisis* of gunfire..." ("An American Celebration: But who's spoiling the party?", July, 1991, p. 23)

Shocking? Only to those who ignore the fact that Will is a member in good standing of the New World Order Club, better known as the Council on Foreign Relations. Repealing the Second Amendment fits the CFR's plans perfectly.

Speaking of the Bill of Rights, a new book ostensibly praising it succeeds in very nearly squeezing the life out of the Second Amendment. Kupelian states:

> ...*In Our Defense: The Bill of Rights in Action*, by Ellen Alderman and Caroline Kennedy (daughter of the slain President), claims that the Second Amendment confers no right to private gun ownership whatsoever. In an interview Kennedy declared simply: "There is no right to keep and bear arms pertaining to the individual." The Second Amendment, insist the two authors, refers only to a "collective right" to self-defense. In other words, Americans have the "collective right" to defend themselves by means of an armed militia, such as the police, Army, and National Guard, but not to defend themselves personally with firearms. (p. 22. Kupelian makes the good point that, if Second Amendment rights can be interpreted to apply in only a "collective" sense, there is nothing to stop the enemies of freedom from arguing that "the First Amendment, by the same reasoning, must confer only a 'collective right,' but not an individual right, to freedom of religion, freedom of the press, and free speech.")

And schoolchildren no less than their parents are being conditioned to accept unquestioningly repeal of the Second Amendment in textbooks such as *The Constitution & the Bill of Rights*. How it does this is seen in the following quote:

> ...Amendment 2 gives the people the right to own guns. Today there's not much reason to fear an army taking over the country, so there's no need to own guns for that reason... Because there is so much crime today, there is talk about gun control laws. Gun control laws might mean more laws will have to be made about who can *own* guns and why they need to *own* guns. The Constitution may even need to have another amendment about guns." (Cited, *ibid.*, p. 23)

Another textbook, *Our Constitution: A Working Plan for Democracy*, redefines "militia" as follows: "The Second Amendment gives Americans the right to 'keep and bear arms' as part of 'a well-regulated militia.' That means the states can have their own troops and those troops can have weapons." (Cited, *ibid.*)

A Signpost To Slavery

The right to keep and bear arms by *private* citizens is an essential part of any free nation. This is a lesson of history that both the friends and enemies of liberty have learned. It is a lesson, however, that the gun control people want Americans to forget. Using the pretext of "fighting crime," they would have law-abiding citizens voluntarily lay down their arms, much as in the way U.S. treaties with the Soviets, which involve scrapping weapons systems, are done in the name of "world peace." In this sense, the antigun lobby can be said to be advocating *domestic* disarmament.

Registration of guns as a step towards their ultimate confiscation was utilized by both the Nazis and Communists. (In Holland the Nazis and in Cuba the Communists simply used registration lists prepared by the preceeding governments when they began to round up weapons.) They assured the populace that their only interest was in "fighting crime." In *None Dare Call It Conspiracy*, (Concord Press, 1972) authors Gary Allen and Larry Abraham listed fourteen "signposts to slavery," those being warning signals of abridgements of freedom on the way to a police state. The list, compiled with the assistance of Mike Djordjevich, a refugee from Yugoslavian Communism, includes as its second signpost: "Abolition of private ownership of handguns." (Cited, p. 132) How much more ought we to suspect, then, attempts to ban semiautomatic weapons, weapons which would be essential if private citizens ever are called to resist the imposition (from without or within) of a totalitarian government on our shores? (So far, attempts at state and local gun registration in Colorado and California have, thank God, met with virtually no compliance.)

And this very point is the most crucial of all in the gun debate. David Kupelian underscores this quite well when,

calling the Second Amendment "the linchpin for the entire Bill of Rights," he writes:

> ...As the Founding Fathers constantly asserted, citizens relinquish a part of their own right to self-determination when they form a government. The ultimate check on that government they retain — one that history has shown to be absolutely necessary — is to deny government a monoply on the means of force. A large, well-armed populace historically has exerted a powerful influence on governments, preventing potential tyrants from even entertaining certain dastardly ideas, let alone implementing them. (p. 23)

Similarly, syndicated columnist Walter Williams has noted that the "Second Amendment is not a deer-hunting or duck-hunting amendment. It affords us some protection against "wanna-be" tyrants. The people leading the attack on the Second Amendment are the very people who want to control greater portions of our lives and restrict our freedoms. Therefore, part of their agenda is to first disarm us." (Cited, Lee, p. 10)

Certainly there is cause for real concern when the actions of President Bush are examined. Donald McAlvany observes: "Gun control in America is apparently to be a major cornerstone of George Bush's and Mikhail Gorbachev's New World Order. It will be very difficult for the globalists to establish their world government under the United Nations without first disarming the American people." Clearly the issue is one that is rapidly reaching the critical stages and it may be time for American gun owners to begin to exercise some mental reservation when asked to volunteer information about their firearms.

As for Catholics, there is a saint who might legitimately (if not officially) be called the patron of handgun enthusiasts — Saint Gabriel Possenti. He was born in Assisi in 1838 and was a skilled marksman from his youth. While a Passionist seminarian, Saint Gabriel rescued the town of Isola from terrorists by taking a gun from one of them and ordering the others to drop theirs. He quickly commanded their respect by killing — with a single shot — a lizard that had darted across the street. Pope Benedict XV canonized him in 1920. May Saint Gabriel Possenti, by his merits and prayers, move God to come to our aid in this hour of great need for our country! †

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CAPSULE COMMENTS

Fr. Francis E. Fenton

(As is quite evident from a reading of the following items, they are no more than what the above title indicates: brief observations on a few subjects of current interest and importance. No attempt is made to document any of the statements. From my own reading and study, however, I believe them to be true and simply offer them for what they may be worth to the readers of *The Athanasian*.)

To hold that John Paul II is not a valid Pope is not a denial of the Papacy. A person cannot be or ceases to be a Roman Catholic who rejects the Church's teaching on the Papacy. This, however, is not the position of a sedevacantist. As a Roman Catholic, he firmly believes in the Papacy while firmly believing as well that John Paul II is a non-Pope — and the two positions are perfectly compatible. "Where Peter is, there is the Church." (Saint Ambrose) True enough. But, where Peter (that is, a true Pope) is not, there the Church is not.

††

Over the past two or three years a number of articles have appeared promoting the thesis that, at the papal conclave in 1963, the one who was really chosen as Pope was not Paul VI but rather Cardinal Siri of Genoa (died in 1989) — and that Cardinal Siri knew this very well. I certainly have no desire whatsoever to get involved in this matter but bring it up merely to make one observation. If indeed it were true, then this would mean that Cardinal Siri — even though he was personally convinced that he was the authentic Pope and that, consequently, Paul VI and his successors were antipopes — remained silent about it for 26 years (1963-1989)! Despite the ongoing and utterly horrendous tragedy (surely unparalleled in history) that the Church was experiencing throughout that period, the true Vicar of Christ refrained from publicly identifying himself as such! I, for one, find this most difficult to believe, to say the least.

††

Conservative and self-styled traditional "Catholic" publications (*The Wanderer, The Remnant, Fatima Crusader, The Angelus, New Jersey Catholic News, The Catholic Voice,* etc.) do inestimable harm to the cause of genuine traditional Catholicism. Whatever may be their good intentions, they mislead their readers on the most fundamental issues involving the Church, primarily John Paul II and the Conciliar Church. Those whose reading on subjects relating to the Church is limited to newspapers or newsletters of this kind can only have a distorted notion of the reality of the situation. They are, in effect, being deceived through a selective type of journalism which excludes almost entirely any reference, say, to the sedevacantist position, much less any objective treatment of it. Even though a very strong case is made — an irrefutable one, I contend — to prove that John Paul II is a non-Pope, publications of the kind noted above simply ignore it. Not very honorable on their part, it seems to me.

††

A survey taken some months ago reveals that 91 percent of Americans routinely lie. Not surprising but a sorrowful commentary indeed on the generality of the population of the USA. And, because of the power and influence they exert, among the foremost purveyors of falsehood are the mass media and the federal government. No intelligent, well-informed individual will unquestionably accept as true the statements of the national news media on vital current events. Nor will he accept as true the words of official spokesmen for the Bush administration in similar matters. President Bush himself is, of course, the primary case in point here. While his dishonesty is of a subtle kind and so not apparent to the naive or uninformed, it is readily obvious to those who know the score. Although he employs such noble terms as morality and principle and patriotism in some of his speeches and statements, one is grossly deceiving himself who takes those words from Mr. Bush at face value. As for the Constitution of the United States, "our" President, while occasionally giving it lip service, couldn't care less about it. His beloved One World Order is what really counts — and that Order will, for sure, obliterate the Constitution.

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In their treatment of the subject most conservative writers and publications seem to be of the mind that, if the trend or drive towards the New World Order continues at its current pace, that objective will be accomplished by the end of this

century. In my opinion, that abhorrent global tyranny will be at least substantially realized much sooner than that unless, perhaps, there should develop in the near future a massive protest by the rank and file of the American people in opposition to it, a prospect which appears highly unlikely at the moment. The USA is, I submit, the only country in the world which may still have the potential to halt the movement towards the satanic New World Order, a movement now in high gear despite any appearances to the contrary. Given the fact, however, that the powers that be in the American government are undoubtedly among the principal activists and promoters in the formation of the One World tyranny — and given the fact too that the vast majority of Americans (thanks primarily to the mass media of disinformation) remain in blissful ignorance of what is transpiring — the chances, I contend, seem very slim at present that the USA can prevent the imposition upon the American people of the godless, amoral, inhuman One World Order being prepared for them.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Fr. Oswald Baker (England)

Question:

Given the conviction that death is the gateway to eternal bliss in our true home, is there not something wrong with a Christian who lives in dread and fear of death?

Answer:

Fear of death is natural. It is natural precisely because the disruption of the union of body and soul is most unnatural. Body and soul have been united since the first moment of our existence, and their separation — which is what death means — is a physical evil, a punishment brought upon mankind by sin. It is understandable that we shrink from it. We also usually think of death as an event which overtakes others, not self.

The fear is natural. To recognize death as the gateway to our heavenly home is supernatural. Consequently, the holier your outlook and way of life, the less your fear of death, fear giving way to joy, till you say, with Saint Nicholas of Tolentino, "I love life only because it leads to death."

To be obsessed with the thought of death is unhealthy, but we must keep death in mind so that we may live well and merit the heavenly destiny which, Our Lord revealed, awaits us hereafter and for which alone we exist.

Question:

Has there been any change in recent years in the Church's teaching concerning Genesis chapters one through three — the account of the creation of Adam and Eve and the first human pair, and their sin, with its effect on the whole human race?

Answer:

The Church has spoken infallibly on this subject only once. This was at the Council of Trent, in 1546, which declared that the entire human race was involved in the sin of our first parents. Trent did not pronounce on the question: were our first parents one human pair, or were there several first humans? This question was not raised at that time. It has been since, in, for example, the writings of the Jesuit scientist Teilhard de Chardin, who maintained that a number of pre-human individuals crossed the threshold of humanity at the same time. It was in our own day that the Church condemned the works of Teilhard. Besides the Council of Trent, the other key document on the subject is an encyclical of Pope Pius XII, in 1950, which stated that it is difficult to reconcile with Catholic doctrine the theory that the human race is descended from a number of first humans. Thus the Church still accepts (but not with an absoluteness and finality ruling out all speculation) that Adam and Eve were two individuals — not general names for male and female but two real persons — from whom the whole human race has inherited original sin.

Question:

What of the charge that the Church is too much concerned with the next life to be of much help for social justice in this life? If priests are not to be active in politics, how can they implement the Church's social teaching?

Answer:

The Church is indeed primarily concerned with guiding us to heaven because this was Our Lord's dominant care and purpose. On special occasions He fed the hungry and cured the sick, but he issued a general command, "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endures to everlasting life." (John VI, 27) The Apostles arranged collections for needy communities, but they appointed deacons for social welfare work so that they themselves could attend to their duties as priests. The duties for which priests are ordained are to offer the Sacrifice of the Mass, to preach and administer the sacraments, to teach and to sanctify, bless, absolve, console and pray. To engage in politics is for the layman. A priest must never, even remotely, be identified with any political party. His concern must be with principles rather than politics.