

WHERE Does RUSSIA Stand NOW?



by JOHN M. HAFFERT

Six months after Pope Paul went to Fatima the official atheist publication of the Soviet Union published a lengthy article on the Fatima miracle.

It was a remarkably accurate account but of course claimed the miracle to be a hoax to counteract the "socialist revolution then beginning to free the world from the captivity of religious prejudices."

"Renewal of the World"

Perhaps the most extraordinary statement in that Soviet article was that the three major deterrents to the worldwide success of the "socialist revolution" were Hitler, the Cold War and The Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima. It described the Blue Army in this way:

"Differing from the crusades of their predecessors in anti-sovietism, the fathers of this new 'missionary' army count not on a 'holy war' but on the renewal of the world, on a cold war. And the program of the new organization set as its task: 'to attain the spiritual renewal of the modern world by means of a total rejection of the materialistic and worldly spirit' and 'in this way to defeat atheistic Communism,' thus 'realizing the promise of the Blessed Virgin Mary: the conversion of Russia to the true faith.'"

The Soviet publication added that the seed of this Blue Army, sown on the rich soil of "religious fanaticism, germinated abundantly." It admitted The Blue Army had over twenty million members throughout the world, most of them in the United States. And it spoke especially of the Pilgrim Virgin around the world as having a *major* effect (anti-soviet, of course!).

So if there had been no Nazism, no Cold War, and no Blue Army, the entire world now (according to the Soviets) would be Communist... and atheist. I have the distinction to have been named by the Soviets, together with Msgr. Colgan, as "founder" of The Blue Army. And although one does not like being placed on a par with Nazism and the Cold War, I marvel that an *army of prayer*, using such simple weapons as the Pilgrim Virgin, could be seen by the Soviets as *one of the three principal impediments to the success of their world revolution.*

Between the Lines

I have often wondered what the people of Russia read between the lines of this Soviet publication....

They necessarily read that there was a miracle at Fatima in which the Blessed Virgin foretold the Second World War and gave a message of peace. They read of great penance at Fatima (the article described the

"bloody" field of Fatima because of bleeding feet and knees of pilgrims). It spoke of the Pope going to Fatima, and even admitted that he did not say anything anti-soviet but only spoke of "the miracle of peace"!

And the Russians know how to read *between* the lines.

Today, sixty years after the revolution and sixty years after Fatima, what is actually the situation in Russia?

There are probably two major questions before most of us:

- 1) What does the "conversion" of Russia mean?
- 2) May Russia provoke still further wars (as Our Lady foretold), perhaps even an atomic one?

The Conversion

By the "conversion of Russia" Fatima experts like Dr. Andre Richard of Paris and Dr. Maria Alonso of Madrid say that Our Lady means *conversion of the Soviet to God.* Others suggest that it means union of the Eastern and Western Churches, and certainly this will ultimately come (and is already on the way). But Our Lady spoke of "an *atheist* Russia" and then promised that "*Russia* will be converted." So The Blue Army interprets this as *the Soviet Union acknowledging God.*

Right now that acknowledgement is mounting to such a degree that Bernard Levin, writing in *The London Times* (August 2, 1977), said:

"Why does Brezhnev not act against them (the religious dissidents)?... Because he knows the regime over which he presides is doomed. A new and utterly unprecedented Russian Revolution is coming in which no shot will be fired, no Preobrazhensky Regiment will mutiny, no Lenin will come from abroad in a sealed carriage to raise the flag of revolt."

It took Bernard Levin three installments in *The London Times* (from last August 2nd to 4th) to cover this whole story which he substantiated with quotations from recent news filtering out of the Soviet Union. His conclusion is that *there has already begun a religious revolution in Russia "that now even the Soviet cannot stop."*

The next big question is: In desperation, like Hitler in the Berlin bunker sending word to burn Paris, will the Soviet leaders make a last desperate effort by an atomic war?

Will They Launch War?

Here the prospect is uncertain and frightening.

When I was in Russia last May, the MAJOR item on the Soviet budget was the building of air-raid shelters. And while we were on our way to Russia we learned that the Chinese Chiefs of Staff (the Generals) issued a joint statement to the effect that *now the Third World War is inevitable.*

This question was put to Harold Brown, the U.S. Secretary of Defense, in an interview last September with *U.S. News and World Report*. The Secretary answered that *the continued Soviet*

build-up is real...the outlook "serious." Asked if the Soviets were preparing for a nuclear war he countered: "That's a potential danger." He said *they might be reaching the point when nuclear war was "feasible" for them.*

The Secretary then spoke of growing U.S. concern over the priority the Soviets are now giving to bomb shelters. "It suggests," he said, "that they may conclude that they could survive...after an all-out thermonuclear exchange."

So if that is what our Secretary of Defense admits publicly, any of us would be far from realistic if we did not echo Secretary Brown's own conclusion: It is "serious."

Interesting Note

At least our government heads would survive. The main underground shelter is at Mt. Weather, Va. and in addition there are the airborne posts. Both Russia and the U.S. have jets ready to keep their Presidents and top officials *in the air* for the amount of time that a nuclear attack would last. *U.S. News*, last September 5th, said: "Although U.S. Presidents have been reluctant to be associated with the airborne command post, Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev uses his plane frequently."

How About Us?

Our Lady of Fatima said that error would spread from an atheist Russia "throughout the entire world, fomenting further wars... several entire nations will be annihilated."

But if we look at what is now happening in Russia, can we suppose that the religious dissidents would support a war against the free world? Hardly.

The problem with atomic war is that only a handful of loyal experts

are needed to launch it! And the war game is not conquest but survival. The survivor wins. And the Russian leaders are more prepared to survive.

It may be that AFTER an atomic war the great triumph Our Lady has promised will be caused by the rising up of the religious dissidents among the Soviet survivors who will launch (not only in Russia but in the world) the "new revolution" recently predicted by Bernard Levin in *The London Times*.

Finds Some Comfort

Two things comfort me (and I hope will comfort you):

1) Our Lady has promised the *triumph of Her Heart*. And can we see the triumph of the heart of our Mother given to the world at the foot of the cross, as a triumph over millions of atom-blasted bodies?

2) When Hiroshima was destroyed in the first atomic blast, nineteen persons in a house just *eight blocks* from the center of the explosion survived. They are still alive today although *everyone else within a radius of one mile was killed*. And those people were "Blue Army" people, in the sense that they lived the Message of Fatima.

No Place to Hide!

The Chinese Generals may be right in stating that atomic war is now inevitable. But why be afraid? There is nothing we can do. There is no place to hide. If we had shelters we might not have sufficient notice to get to them. And when Our Lady predicted the very worst that could happen, did She not add "my Immaculate Heart will triumph"?

If I am saying Her Rosary as She asked, fulfilling Her requests and wearing the Scapular which unites my heart to Hers, what have I to fear?

"Now is the time when God asks the Holy Father, in union with all the Bishops of the world, to make the Consecration of Russia to my Heart, promising to save it by this means." (Our Lady to Lucia, June, 1929)

For a pamphlet on the importance of the Collegial Consecration together with a printed form of petition, please send stamped self-addressed envelope to *The Blue Army*, Washington, N.J. 07882.