

Fatima - The Trail of the Third Secret

No revelation from God has a more tortured history than that of the Fatima Third Secret. Vested interests from every corner have hidden it, buried it, twisted it, surreptitiously published it, and fraudulently perverted it.

From the beginning Lucy refused to reveal it. She was under command from the Apparition to not divulge that revelation. She obeyed that command. She would not commit it to paper until forced by her religious superiors to write it down. Even then, she hesitated and used subterfuge to keep it.

I shall briefly review the history. This has many twists and turns.

While Lucy enjoyed good health she had occasional bronchial problems. In June 1943 she was struck with pleurisy that began mildly but quickly assumed an alarming character, TWTAf, Vol III, pg 38. She gradually improved into July but then was given a medical shot that caused an infection, and a deepening of her illness. In August she appeared to be recovering. In a letter to Father Aparicio she stated that she had been confined to bed for about two months with a pneumonia that led to liquid pleurisy, complicated by the infection.

This physical danger raised great concerns in the mind of Bishop da Silva. He and Canon Galamba arranged to meet with Lucy in Valenca Do Minho at Asilo Fonseca, a women's college run by the Franciscans. Two conversations were engaged, one between the Bishop and the Mother Superior, the other between Galamba and Lucy. Galamba then asked Lucy to reveal the third part of the Secret. Lucy gestured toward the Bishop and said, *"Now, if his Grace wants, I can reveal it to him."* She was responding to Galamba's request, as her superior, but not in a cooperative frame of mind. Lucy understood the Bishop's personality. He was reluctant about things holy; he did not desire to interfere in divine actions. He demonstrated hesitancy throughout the Fatima episodes where he was required to give a directive. Her remark was intended to deflect Galamba's insistence without disobeying his request. By this time the first conversation had finished and all were standing. Galamba then addressed the Bishop, stating what Lucy had just said. But the Bishop repeated his earlier reactions, *"I do not want to do anything of the kind. I do not want to meddle in it."* This brought an immediate reaction from Galamba, *"What a shame! At least tell her to write it down on a piece of paper and give it to you in a sealed envelope."* Lucy had momentarily staved off the heavy hand of her superiors.

The exact date of this visit is not known. Meanwhile Lucy became seriously ill once more. The Bishop, now greatly concerned, visited her in the infirmary at Tuy on September 15. In view of Lucy's physical condition, and his personality, the Bishop treaded lightly with her. According to her later account, he said, *"If I wanted, if I thought it good to write the part of the Secret still missing, it would not be to publish it now, but so that it would be written."*

Lucy's condition worsened, with the infection in her leg requiring surgery. She then completely recovered. This period gave her opportunity to reflect on the Bishop's request. As a consequence she felt deep spiritual conflict and torment. The Bishop, her earthly spiritual superior, had made a request that was counter to a direct heavenly order. Even though da Silva had promised to not reveal it in the near future, the situation was not satisfactory. As she wrote:

It seems to me that to write it down is already in a way to disclose it and I do not yet have Our Lord's permission to do that. In any case as I am used to seeing the Will of God in the wishes of my superiors I am thinking of obedience and I don't know what to do. I prefer an express command which I can rely on before God so that I can say in all security "They ordered me that Lord." But those words "if you wish" disturb me and leave me perplexed.

From this process she decided to not write the Secret. As she reasoned, *"Although it is sealed, writing it is still revealing it."* She then explicitly stated that she needed a written direct order to obey. Finally, by a letter in October, Bishop da Silva gave her an express order.

She next confided in Antonio García y García, Archbishop of Valladolid in an apparent attempt to confirm Bishop da Silva's right to give such command: *"They have ordered me to write down the part of the Secret that Our Lady revealed in 1917, and which I still keep hidden, by command of the Lord. They tell me either to write it in the notebooks in which I've been told to keep my spiritual diary, or if I wish, to write it on a sheet of paper, put it in an envelope, and then close it and seal it up."* The Archbishop stayed out of it; he would not provide guidance. From October to the end of December she continued to experience anguish. As she had stated to others, she was accustomed to receiving clear confirmation from Heaven itself of such orders and when, on this occasion, no such confirmation was forthcoming, Lucy suffered acutely. *"Yet Heaven is now keeping silent. Is God wishing to test my obedience?"*

We can see how obedient Lucy was to the divine directives, the powerful influence of which had not left her for more than 25 years. She continued to seek relief from the Bishop's order. She again sought the help of Archbishop Garcia y Garcia, who previously had advised her to bide her time. She stated, *" . . . that she had wanted to obey several times, that she had sat down to write, without being able to."* But now she was under direct order. He could not countermand the Bishop's written command. We know from the letter to Don Garcia that this intense struggle continued until December 24, 1943. Then something gave way.

Many believe Lucy was given relief from her anguish by a divine directive to respond to the Bishop's request. This belief is based on an account published by Father A. M. Martins in his *Novos Documentos* (New Documents), September 1984. He reports: *"According to the written declaration of Mother Cunha Mattos, Lucy's superior at Tuy, Our Lady appeared to the seer on January 2, 1944 and told her to write the third part of the Secret."* See TWTAf, Vol. III, pg 55, Note 21. Brother Michael offers no other

direct evidence, except to quote Canon Martin dos Reis who stated, “*Only after this vision was she able to do so without the slightest difficulty, and at the same time was liberated from the great perplexity she found herself in, due to the different attitudes of the two prelates, Bishop da Silva and Archbishop Garcia y Garcia.*”

Unfortunately, these accounts depend upon word-of-mouth, and are not attested in any documents from Lucy herself, except for a remark she made to Don Garcia. She stated clearly “. . . *that this phenomenon was not due to natural causes.*” The commentators believe her remark referred to the impediment that prevented her from writing the Third Secret.

I believe an unusual event took place. The exact date is not known. In any event, she wrote to Bishop da Silva a letter dated January 9, 1944. In it she said:

I have written what you asked of me; God willed to try me but finally this was indeed His will: (the text) is sealed in an envelope and it is in the notebooks . . .

We should carefully note that Lucy does not describe how she came by this Will. She does not say the Virgin Mary visited her, or Our Lady, or any other assignment.

I personally feel she had a different visitation at this moment, which left her with a dictated text, and not just something from her memory of 27 years prior. After all those years, with the strange episodes of her later apparitions, she now came face to face with another truly extraordinary phenomenon. She was visited in a manner different from both her earlier and her later apparitions. While this is sheer surmise on my part, I have found no other way to explain her unusual behavior with regard to the Third Secret.

The great difficulty is that she did not hesitate to describe details of the 1917 visits, nor of the later apparitions. The 1917 visits were described by all the children, including herself, in innocent frankness, without the interference of earthly superiors, or Church authority, before the Church determined a need for control. The later apparitions were described in exquisite detail, perhaps to convince the world of their authenticity. But here was the most important significant event in revelation of the Secret since the presentation in 1917. This was the episode that caused her extreme anguish. Yet she does not describe a divine visit. She merely says, “*this was indeed His will,*” and “. . . *that this phenomenon was not due to natural causes.*” Importantly, she does not say, “*This was Her will,*” referring to Mary.

How do we reconcile this strange behavior, so different from other events? We cannot, simply because the event itself was so different. This was not an event of the Virgin Mary appearing with the Baby Jesus, nor an Immaculate Heart surrounded by thorns, nor other dramatic scenes. I believe she was visited in the same manner as were the prophets of Israel -- Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the others. The word of the Lord came to them, Isa 38:4, Jer 1:4 and so on. Such divine visitation had a long history with the Hebrew people, Gen 15:1-4, I Sam 15:10, I Kings 6:11. This type of visit was not some mysterious or vague feeling, mood, or unction. This was a heavenly being giving direct dictation.

(Or she had a direct voice giving her dictations without visible beings. Compare with Garabandal and many other Marian Apparition events.)

To avoid direct persuasion of human belief in the Fatima revelation, and to permit free decision by every human mortal, Lucy probably was told to not reveal the details of the visit, except for her vague remark to her Mother Superior. None of the people associated so closely with these events, -- not her Mother Superior, nor her confessor, nor her Church superiors, nor those later people who became privy to her letters and the details of her life -- understood this event. Her Mother Superior is shown making a simple statement that Our Lady appeared to her. Lucy may have thus stated the event without further explanation. The reason so many have not been able to grasp this event is the concentration on Catholic Images, so important to Catholic worshippers. They are buried in iconography, not in reality. Then all her commentators engage in idle speculation about the nature of the event.

It was pure text. Her heavenly visitor dictated text to her, just as heavenly visitors dictated text to the prophets of Israel. The Third Secret was not written from faded memory, nor does it contain distorted human interpretation.

Note that Lucy explicitly states that there are two versions, one in an envelope sealed with wax, and one in the Notebooks. She literally obeyed her Bishop. The one in the envelope was on a single sheet of paper, comparable in length to the first two Secrets. This was a summary, by Lucy, to satisfy the request of Bishop da Silva, the one sealed in an envelope.

The second was a far longer text, the one in the Notebooks.

From these statements by Lucy we can deduce the actual events surrounding the writing of the Third Secret. Unfortunately, numerous commentators have twisted these facts. See <http://www.fatima.org/>, many other sites, and many books.

This proposed sequence of events is corroborated by her subsequent behavior. The following is taken from TWTAf, Vol III, pg 49. Brother Michael borrows it from Joaquin Alonso, *Fatima 50*, October 1967, pg 11.

Lucy would entrust this envelope neither to the Post Office nor to any messenger. She waited several months for the opportune occasion to see that it reached Bishop da Silva in all dignity and safety. Finally, Archbishop Manuel Maria Ferrera da Silva, Superior of the Missionary Society of Cucujaes and titular Archbishop of Gurza, came to Valenca do Minho on Saturday, June 17, 1944, on behalf of Bishop da Silva. He was accompanied by his brother, Msgr. Jose Manuel Ferreira da Silva and Father Vernocchi. For her part, on this Saturday morning in the octave of the Feast of the Sacred Heart, Sister Lucy had left Tuy. She was accompanied by one of her sisters, who, of course, was ignorant of the true purpose of the meeting (as were the priests accompanying the Bishop of Gurza). They crossed the Minho and arrived

at Asilo Fonseca around noon. The seer discreetly handed the Bishop of Gurza the Notebook in which she had slipped the envelope containing the Secret.

That same evening, the bishop placed the envelope into the hands of Bishop da Silva, who was then at his country home of "La Formiguera," not far from Braga. The bishop then transferred it to his Episcopal palace at Leiria.

We do not know what the Bishop did with the Notebook. How unfortunate that it became of lesser interest when it contained the major document.

At this time Lucy also wrote a personal letter to Bishop da Silva in which she had several suggestions. One suggestion was that the sealed document should be kept in his possession until his death, when it was to be given to Cardinal Cerejeira, Patriarch of Lisbon. We know the reluctance of the Bishop to give an order to Lucy to write down the Secret. He also showed a reluctance to keep it in his possession. He immediately discussed it with Cardinal Cerejeira, with the idea of sending it on to Rome. When Vatican officials were queried they ordered that it be kept in the Episcopal Chancery of Leiria. On December 8, 1945, more than a year later, the Bishop placed the sealed envelope in a larger envelope, also sealed with wax, on which he wrote in his own hand:

This envelope with its contents is to be given to His Eminence Don Manuel, Patriarch of Lisbon after my death. Leiria, December 8, 1945. (Signed) Jose, Bishop of Leiria.

The envelope was kept in the safe of the Episcopal curia, except for showing to persons on rare occasions. M. Pazen, a reporter for *Life* magazine, photographed it on January 3, 1949. Lucy's Notebooks, those prepared in 1941, and now this one, remained exclusively in the care of the Episcopal curia until sometime around 1955 or 1956. Public records do not exist that permit precise determination when copies of the Notebooks were sent to Rome. The envelope remained in Leiria until 1957, a few months before the death of Bishop da Silva.

Canon Galamba gave testimony that the Bishop had permission to open the envelope any time he desired:

Lucy said only that it could be made known immediately, if the Bishop so commanded. But she did not say that it had to be opened immediately. The dates for making it known were determined in a dialogue between the Bishop and Lucy.

Joaquin Alonso reports this statement in *Secret of Fatima, Fact and Legend*.

We know from many reports that in March 1957, before transfer of the sealed envelope containing the Third Secret to the Vatican, Acting Bishop John Venancio held the combined envelopes under a strong electric lamp. He carefully noted that the Secret was

about 25 lines long and was written on a single sheet of paper with ¾-centimeter margins on both sides. (Joao Pereira Venancio, commonly called the second Bishop of Fatima, was appointed Bishop of Leiria on September 13, 1958, sometime after the death of Bishop da Silva.) See TWTAF, Vol III, pg 481. Under da Silva's order Venancio then placed the envelope into the hands of Archbishop Cento, Apostolic Nuncio at Lisbon. According to Brother Michael photocopies of all of Lucy's writings were also prepared at that time by a printing firm in Lisbon, under order of the Archbishop. Cento immediately sent the envelope and the photocopies on to Rome, where they arrived at the Vatican, with the envelope going to the Pope's office on April 16, 1957.

Alonso wrote that:

It is a well know fact that at the beginning of the year 1957 the Sacred Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith (the former Holy Office) asked the chancery of Leiria to send photocopies of all Lucy's writings to Rome. The rather important photocopies kept in the archives at Lieria date from that time.

This history may not be entirely accurate. Evidence shows that photocopies of the Notebooks were sent to Rome prior to 1957. On May 17, 1955 Cardinal Ottaviani, then head of the Vatican's Holy Office, was sent by Pius XII to the Convent in Coimbra to interrogate Lucy concerning the contents of the Third Secret. The interrogation was so revealing Ottaviani ordered the written text to be immediately transferred to the Vatican. Presumably this text was in the Notebooks, since the envelope with the "short Secret" remained in Fatima. Refer to further remarks below. Also see further evidence from Cardinal Tisserant below. If so, the envelope with the "short Secret" had a somewhat different history from the Notebooks for transfer to Rome. In fact, the Cardinal did not have an interest in the sealed envelope. Lucy probably informed him that the important text was in the Notebooks.

The Date of 1960

Lucy understood, and so stated to Bishop da Silva directly that he had the authority to open the envelope and read the Third Secret at any time.

This fact is highly curious. Her strong reluctance to release the Third Secret is now suddenly transformed into almost eagerness that the Bishop open the envelope. We can only assign that to a heavenly communication that opened the way for her to now become an exponent for publication.

With his continued strong reluctance to be involved with heavenly secrets, he refused to do so. She then engaged in exchanges with him about the opening of the Secret. A series of contacts with Lucy showed that she gave a condition. See TWTAF, Vol III, pgs 470-472.

1. Canon Galamba, privy to the exchanges, stated on many occasions:

“When the Bishop refused to open the letter, Lucy made him promise that it would definitely be opened and read to the world either at her death or in 1960, whichever came first.”

Clearly we have a condition whereby Lucy knew the timing and significance of the unfolding of nuclear weaponry and delivery systems. 1960 was not an accidental choice.

2. On February 3-4, 1946, Father Jongen interrogated Lucy

You have already made known two parts of the secret. When will the time arrive for the third part?" "I communicated the third part in a letter to the Bishop of Leiria," she answered. "But it cannot be made known before 1960."

This is an obvious contradiction to her earlier stand. Is the quotation correct? Did she change her mind about the timing? Or does confusion exist in the record?

3. In an article published in 1981 John Haffert described his meeting with Sister Lucy On August 12, 1946. Later, he had dinner with the Bishop and a group of priests, including Canon Galamba. When the Bishop momentarily left the room Galamba said to Haffert, *"Why don't you ask the Bishop to open the Secret?"* Ignorant about such matters Haffert did not give Galamba a response, staring at him blankly. Galamba continued, *"The Bishop can open the Secret. He doesn't have to wait until 1960."*

“The other Canons were obviously also interested in seeing whether or not I would broach the subject to the bishop -- the subject on which apparently he had silenced them on more than one previous occasion and on which Canon Oliveira was now taking advantage of a newcomer to again broach the question. Just then the Bishop returned and there was a long moment of awkward silence. I finally broke the silence by saying to the Bishop that I understood there was a Secret still to be opened and was there some reason why the Bishop did not wish to open it. His Excellency looked up with what to me was an unexpected degree of firmness.”

4. One month later, on September 7, 1946, Cardinal Cerejeira was in Brazil for the closing of the Marian Congress of Campinas. He declared publicly on the subject of the Secret of Fatima:

From the two parts of the Secret already revealed, the third part has not been made known, but it has been written and placed in a sealed envelope and will be opened in 1960, we know enough to enable us to conclude that the salvation of the world, in this extraordinary movement of history, has been placed by God in the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Note: We know that this is confused. The date is not shown on the envelope.

Cardinal Cerejeira was doing a lot of wishful thinking. He had no idea what was in the Third Secret, and its pronouncement of the doom of the nations. Although atomic bombs had been used in Japan just the previous year, the development of nuclear devices and rocket delivery systems was still in the future. This fact should give us some understanding why Lucy was so reluctant to release the Third Secret. The Third Secret contained information which showed that the world would be destroyed in a few minutes. That could only be accomplished if with suitable delivery systems. We can see how the Secret contained in the envelope was a red herring, a device to sidetrack the True Secret. Hence two versions of the Secret existed: one for public consumption, and one for later revelation.

5. Canon Barthas, during conversations with Sister Lucy on October 17-18 in 1946, had the opportunity to question her on the Third Secret. Here is the account, which he published in *Fatima, merveille du XXe siecle*, pg 83, Fatima-editions, 1952:

When will the third element of the Secret be revealed to us?" Already in 1946, to this question Lucy and the Bishop of Leiria answered me uniformly, without hesitation, and without comment: "In 1960." And when I pushed my audacity so far as to ask why it was necessary to wait until then, the only response I received from either one was: "Because the Blessed Virgin wishes it so." The text of Our Lady's words was written down by Sister Lucy and enclosed in a sealed envelope, and put in the safe of the Bishop of Leiria. It will be opened at the date indicated by Bishop Jose da Silva or by His Eminence the Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon.

6. In 1953, under the title, *Fatima, altar do mundo*, there appeared in Portugal three bulky volumes, handsomely made, and containing a series of studies written by the best Fatima experts of the period. In this quasi-official publication, during his account of the apparitions, Canon Galamba wrote concerning the third Secret:

The third part of the Secret, written down by Sister Lucy, was sealed by the hands of His Grace the Bishop of Leiria and will be opened either after the seer's death or at the latest in 1960.

7. On May 14, 1953, Lucy received a visit from the Armstrong's, an English couple, who were able to question her on the Third Secret. See A. O. Armstrong, *Fatima, Pilgrimage To Peace*, The World's Work, Kingswood, Surrey, 1955. In their account they confirmed all the facts given above and particularly that the third Secret "*had to be opened and divulged in 1960.*"

It becomes clear that Lucy knew there should be no further waiting after 1960. If the Bishop was reluctant to open the envelope and reveal its contents to the world, Lucy had set upon him a condition that he must. His death in 1957 altered that decision.

8. On May 17, 1955, Cardinal Ottaviani, Pro-Prefect of the Holy Office, came to the Carmel of Saint Teresa at Coimbra where Lucy was then located. He interrogated Lucy on the third Secret. In a conference of 1967 he reported this visit and said:

The message was not to be opened before 1960. I asked Sister Lucy, "Why this date?" She answered, "Because then it will seem clearer.

As I noted earlier, the coming nuclear destructions could only have come into sensible understanding after the development of nuclear bombs, with the means to deliver them, by 1960. Indeed, that is when the revelation would have become clear, if the Roman Catholic Church had not decided to interfere in divine revelations.

9. The Patriarch of Lisbon, reporting in *Novidades*, February 24, 1960 stated the directions the Bishop of Leiria had passed on to him, declared:

Bishop da Silva enclosed (the envelope sealed by Lucy) in another envelope on which he indicated that the letter had to be opened in 1960 by himself, Bishop Jose Correia da Silva, if he was still alive, or if not, by the Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon.

Until that time in 1960 there was still no overt action by the Vatican to suppress the Secret. Meanwhile, the Holy Office was discovering reasons why it should not be made known to the world.

10. In November 1956, Father Schweigl, undoubtedly well informed, titled a chapter of his little work: *Towards the Year 1960 . . .*, and he writes: “. . . *The third part of the message must remain secret until 1960.*”

Finally, Brother Michael cites this evidence for release of the Third Secret in 1960:

11. Father Alonso adds: “*Other bishops also spoke, and with authority, about the year 1960 as the date indicated for opening the famous letter. Thus, when the then titular Bishop of Tiava and Auxiliary bishop of Lisbon asked Lucy when the Secret was to be opened, he always received the same answer.*”

Confirmation of the Third Secret Contained in the Notebooks

I shall now show a crucially important verification of the date of opening in 1960.

12. On October 13, 1956, Cardinal Tisserant, Secretary of the Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Church, came as the papal legate to bless " Domus Pacis" at Fatima, international headquarters of the Blue Army.

[As late as 1947 the message of Our Lady at Fatima was hardly known in the United States. In his parish church in Plainfield, New Jersey, Father Harold Colgan started the Blue Army that same year to spread Our Lady's message of warning and promise. The Blue Army spread quickly and soon became an international apostolate,

the World Apostolate of Fatima, with millions of members and national centers in many countries around the world.]

During his homily to the faithful, the Cardinal brought up, with scientific precision and rigor, the prophecy of the great Secret concerning the conversion of Russia. He declared: "*A part of this message must remain hidden until 1960; but a part has been made public in 1942 by the ecclesiastical authorities . . .*"

13. Tisserant then goes on to cite the pastoral letter of Cardinal Alfredo Ildefonso Schuster in 1942, deploring the fact that the letter furnished only ". . . *a very brief and pale expression of what is found in Lucy's notebooks.*" This remark was quoted by G. Renault, *Fatima*, pg 225, 1957.

Why is this remark so important? Cardinal Eugene Tisserant was appointed to the Roman Curia on June 19, 1936. He was the most senior Cardinal in the Vatican during the period when Rome was forming the Second Vatican Council. As Dean of the College of Cardinals he prepared the ballots for the election of the new Pope in October 1958. He was intimately familiar with the Vatican Secret Archives. He was appointed Archivist of the VSA on September 14, 1957. Hence he was privy to all of Lucy's private papers and Notebooks. He was also the Cardinal who met with Metropolitan Nikodin of the Russian Orthodox Church in August 1962, two months before the opening of Vatican II. Nikodin was under control of the Kremlin and hence a political as well as a religious representative. They formed the infamous Pact of Metz, otherwise known as the Vatican-Moscow agreement, wherein Rome agreed to not attack the people or the Communist regime of Russia in order to secure Moscow's permission for the Russian Orthodox observers to attend the Council. Neither during the Council, nor after, was there any direct attack on the Communist regime. The Treaty remains in full force to this day. This political arrangement grossly violated the spirit of the Message of Fatima.

Tisserant was in a position to know exactly the circumstances and content of Lucy's Notebooks, and the status of the transfer of her materials to Rome, including the Third Secret contained in the sealed envelope.

I note the following:

- Tisserant made his remarks in October of 1956. He could not have known the content of the Notebooks unless he had either read them personally, or his staff reported to him. His phrasing suggests he did the reading himself. It seems incredible that he or his staff would visit Fatima to make such inquiries and spend such time in perusing Lucy's material. Therefore, copies of the Notebooks had to be transferred to Rome sometime prior to that date. Given the necessity for a busy man to come to know the material, the copies had to considerably predate October. From the report of the visit of Ottaviani to visit Lucy in Coimbra on May 17, 1955 we know the Notebooks were moved (or photocopied) to the Vatican at that early date.

- Cardinal Tisserant was not afraid to speak in terms of the stark content of the Notebooks. Since he was in such a prominent and influential position we must deduce that the Vatican did not yet have a policy in 1956 to smooth over or hide the content, which we presume must have included the long version of the Third Secret.
- He was strong in his remark that the First and Second Secrets were *a brief and pale expression* of what is found in the Notebooks.
- If Lucy's Third Secret in the sealed envelope was confined to a single page, as we showed above, and in keeping with the physical length of the prior two Secrets, then Tisserant would not have used the word *brief*. Further, if the information cited by all the experts is correct, the envelope containing the Third Secret was not yet in Rome.
- This confirms my estimate that there were two Third Secrets, a short one contained in the sealed envelope, and a much longer one contained in the Notebooks.
- This fact has led me to the surmise that the short Third Secret in the sealed envelope was a red herring, devised by Lucy to detract attention from the real Third Secret. We should recall the extreme difficulty she had with writing this Secret. As we know, Bishop da Silva had her permission to open the envelope at any time, with the consequent danger of his release to the world. Lucy was aware of this threat when she gave him the envelope. Thus she devised a means to avoid premature disclosure of the real Third Secret. She probably wrote a diluted - not false - version of the Third Secret, for the benefit of the Bishop, other curious people, and the general public if the contents of the envelope should be published.. We found precedent for the manner in which Lucy could alter the content of the Secrets according to her personal desires. The contrast between the statement in the official version of the Second Secret concerning Russia, and the statement she made to Augustine Fuentes about Russia, graphically illustrates not only the fact that Lucy edited according to her personal desires, but also to influence her audience. We can see from the tons of writings on the Third Secret in the sealed envelope that the Fatima faithful believe the real Third Secret was contained in that envelope, and that they are virtually unaware of the facts as stated by Tisserant. Knowledge of this remark by Tisserant seems to have slipped by all the "experts" who have analyzed these events.
- But Lucy did not fail to obey the command of her Bishop. She wrote the real and lengthy Third Secret, and then confined it to her Notebooks. She gave her Bishop notice that it was contained in the Notebooks, but God's hand focused everyone's attention on the sealed envelope and not on the true location.
- At this point the content of the sealed envelope is irrelevant. The losing of the envelope and its contents to some "deep well" within the Vatican Secret Archives

is not important to our pursuit of the true Third Secret, except on academic grounds. With the coming holocaust all academic interests will be abandoned. Further, once the Secret is fulfilled there will be no further use to the Secret. Its temporal nature will then be fully recognized. Those Catholics, or any other people, who cling to the Secret, rather than to the Will of God, will be lost anyhow. The Third Secret is merely an instrument of information to guide our decisions.

- If Lucy's Third Secret were equivalent in tone to her other Secrets, colored to suit her imaginary audience, Tisserant would not have used the word *pale*. The real Third Secret was beyond comparison with the other Secrets.

The statement by Tisserant is remarkable. It confirms, first, the fact that there are two Third Secrets, and second, my estimate that the Notebooks contained the larger Third Secret. Clearly Tisserant was privy to the contents of the Notebooks early in 1956 before any of the "experts" believe they were transferred to Rome.

We should not forget Lucy. We can only guess what was going through her mind as she watched the development and deployment of nuclear weapons through the 1950's. She knew that mankind was destined for vast destructions. Now the means for bringing such devastations was unfolding before her eyes. As a consequence she may have had a developing different notion about how much she should reveal. She may have been more forthright about the contents of her "Secret" when Ottaviani interviewed her in 1955. Already in the late 1940's fears were beginning to circulate of the possible destruction of the planet due to atomic processes out of control.

This same fear may have arisen in the minds of Ottaviani, Tisserant, and others within the Vatican. They may have adjusted their attitudes to the possible frightening effect upon the Church body if they had let such stupendous revelations be made known. The problem with the Secrets of Fatima was more than a simple disbelief expressed by many within the hierarchy.

I shall not follow the frustrating tale of the millions of people devoted to the conversion of the world, and of Russia. I shall not discuss the sorry misplacement of religious policies of the 20th century, clung to so fanatically by so many Catholic faithful as the solution to the Second Secret. How unfortunate they did not recognize the hand of Russia in the destruction of our civilization, as part of the coming world judgment. I also shall not discuss how human consecration could somehow avoid that divine destiny. Only blind people, devoid of true devotion to God and his Will, would dedicate themselves to such worthless pursuits. These matters are not pertinent to this treatment on the history of the Third Secret.