

ticularly in the West, has vastly degenerated from that Christian humanism which characterized it at the height of the Italian Golden Renaissance, to the point that it has become what John Paul II has called “the culture of death”; and (3) that this degeneration must be combatted both in society at large as well as in the ranks of leading institutions.

From this standpoint, John Paul II’s “conservative” battle for life and against radical change in the Roman Catholic Church, is entirely coherent with his “liberal” fight for the rights of the world’s oppressed. Both battles are informed by the same premises.

The Population Question

Szulc delivers his strongest diatribes against John Paul II in dealing with the Pope’s leadership in opposition to the United Nations’ Conference on Population and Development, which took place in September 1994 in Cairo, Egypt. He quotes the Pope’s critique of the conference’s draft document, in which he stated, “the theme of development . . . including the very complex issue of the relationship between population and development, which ought to be at the center of the discussion, is almost completely overlooked.”

Szulc claims that John Paul II “appeared to be endorsing” the “belief held by some in the Third World that

population control programs are the genocidal conspiracy by the wealthy nations to keep down poorer societies by preventing them from growing.”

You bet he is! Nor is it a mere “belief”: To anyone whose employer is not a leading mouthpiece of the international Malthusian establishment, this “conspiracy” is plain as day—although it’s a conspiracy of an elite oligarchy within the “wealthy nations,” not the nations themselves.

But Szulc, from his editorial perch, explains that, “[m]ost specialists in Third World problems reject this approach on the grounds that money is limited and that no infrastructure can be created in the foreseeable future to meet the demands for even a minimal decent existence for a world population projected to expand from 5.7 billion estimated in 1994 to 10 billion within the next two decades. U.N. experts have urged efforts to stabilize the number at 7.2 billion by the year 2050.”

The limits to growth imposed by such genocidal institutions as the United Nations and its mouthpieces in New York and London are a given for Szulc. Therefore, he concludes, people will die.

‘God Prepares His Arrows’

To Szulc’s credit, the parts of the biography which are not heavily overlaid

with editorial comment, make for fascinating and informative reading. Szulc interviewed hundreds of Wojtyla’s friends and associates, and had “informal” discussions with the Pope himself. He presents a biographical account which—if you get past Szulc’s dogma—leads one to conclude, with Szulc, that John Paul II has “quintessential human decency.”

Perhaps a better characterization is given by Wojtyla’s friend, Cardinal Deskur, who says of John Paul II’s life and papacy, “God prepares his arrows. . . . Everything the Holy Father endured in his life, prepared him for what he had to be.” Indeed, the most striking, and moving, aspect of Karol Wojtyla’s life, is that, faced with recurring suffering and hardship, at each point he has turned that suffering and hardship to the good. From childhood, when he lost his mother at age nine, his brother at twelve, and his father at twenty-one; through the Nazi and Communist occupations of Poland; through assassination attempts and serious physical ailments, Wojtyla has used the suffering to steel himself for a life of thoroughgoing commitment to carrying out Christ’s work—love—and with the culture and humanity for which he is indeed known and loved throughout the world.

—Marianna Wertz

Picture of a Man of Morality

In 1993, Pierre Salinger returned to the United States after twenty-five years in Europe. He had moved to France in 1968, because he was “still completely shattered by Bobby’s [Kennedy] assassination, which rekindled the painful memories of John Kennedy’s.”

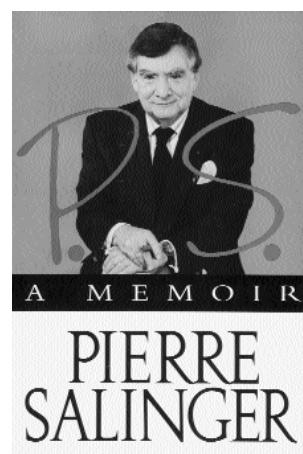
This book’s introduction reports that in 1991, with the Gulf War coming to an end, Salinger was “seized by a sudden mad desire to run for President of the United States.” At that time, he considered buying a half-hour of time on all three major networks to announce his candidacy, but then decided against it.

This book reveals those tragedies,

which the nation and the world as a whole experienced in the 1960’s, through the eyes of a man who was an intimate of both slain Kennedy brothers. It reveals how the world has changed since then, in large part for the worse. And it reveals a man who, at seventy years of age, in the process of overcoming this tragedy, has preserved his moral outlook, a “global person” not afraid to combat what he refers to as George Bush’s “new world disorder.”

Early Years

There are two factors in Pierre Salinger’s early years, which clearly had



P.S., A Memoir
by Pierre Salinger and
John Greenya
St. Martin’s Press, New York, 1995
304 pages, hardbound, \$24.95

a formative influence on his development. First, he reports that his mother's father, Pierre Bietry, was a member of the French Parliament from 1906 to 1910. The highlight of his grandfather's public service was his vigorous defense of Capt. Alfred Dreyfus, who had been convicted of treason in 1894. Evidence proving Dreyfus' innocence had been suppressed by the military. At one point in 1906, his grandfather's remarks on behalf of Dreyfus became so heated that the Assemblée was shut down for the day and his grandfather ejected.

Second, from age four to twelve, Pierre Salinger trained to become a concert pianist. At the same time, he was also studying composition and conducting, as well as the violin. Although at age twelve he abandoned the idea of becoming a musician, this training undoubtedly helped form his character. In later life, as President Kennedy's press secretary, it was he who organized the celebrated performance of 'cellist Pablo Casals at the White House.

After serving in the Navy during World War II, and winning the Navy and Marine Corps Medal for heroic conduct, Salinger attended the University of San Francisco, a Jesuit school, and went to work as a journalist with the San Francisco Chronicle. His two biggest stories—and the two of which he is most proud—were, first, a series of articles which proved that an indigent black man who had been unfairly convicted of murder was innocent; and second, a series exposing the appalling conditions in many of California's jails, which he wrote after having himself been thrown into a number of them, in the course of his reporting.

Salinger's commitment to justice in public policy is also reflected in his 1964 campaign for U.S. Senator in California. He lost that campaign because he opposed Proposition 14, a proposed constitutional amendment that would have nullified California's fair-housing law. As he writes, "I hadn't sweated out the historic events of Birmingham, Alabama, and Oxford, Mississippi, with John F. Kennedy so I could turn around a

few years later and sell out the Civil Rights movement." When he lost, Bobby Kennedy told him, "My brother would have been proud of the way you lost."

Perhaps the moment in the book which is most revealing of Salinger's character, concerns how he responded in 1977 to the suicide of his son Marc, who was, like so many young people of his generation, an indirect casualty of the assassinations of the 1960's and the war in Vietnam, with the added fact in his case that he had known the President personally as a child and thus felt his loss even more intensely. The Mass card Salinger and his first wife chose for their son bore a picture of St. Francis and the text of the prayer of St. Francis, which begins, "Lord, make me an instrument of your peace."

Two Big Stories

In 1990, three years before he moved back to the United States, Salinger, who had become the Paris bureau chief of ABC-TV and then ABC News' senior European editor, would report on two of the biggest stories of his life. The first story was the Gulf War, about which Salinger has written the book *Secret Dossier: The Hidden Agenda Behind the Gulf War*. As Salinger briefly reiterates in this book, "This was a war that could, and should, have been prevented—by the United States of America. . . . The Gulf War was not necessary." And the reason it was not stopped, he says, was "because President Bush wanted to go to war."

The second story was his exposure of the fact that the Pan Am 103 flight was not bombed by the two Libyans and the Jordanian accused of so doing. Salinger was the only Western journalist to interview all three of these suspects. Salinger writes: "I have come to the conclusion that the United States shifted the focus of world suspicion away from Syria and Iran and toward Colonel Gadhafi of Libya. Why? Among other reasons, because Syria and Iran were helpful to the United States in the Gulf War, the former actively and the latter passively. It is important to remember that the United States wanted Syria to negotiate

a peace accord with Israel, which would be difficult, to say the least, if Syria was still charged with the Pan Am 103 bombing."

What Salinger demonstrates in this case is that the United States and the United Kingdom knew full well, that the people indicted by the U.S. Department of Justice were innocent, but they indicted them nonetheless.

Salinger's personal knowledge of such corruption is also reflected in a letter he wrote to the French paper *Le Monde* attacking an article which had slurred John Kennedy. He writes: "Do not forget that the head of the FBI during the Kennedy administration was J. Edgar Hoover, who made substantial false efforts to destroy the Presidential image. I have personal proof of this, since Mr. Hoover leaked information about me which was totally false."

'Disintegration of History'

In the epilogue to the present book, Salinger reflects on the problems facing the world today. "There is one more thing I want to talk about before ending this book. I've been involved in global work for decades, and I am stunned at how badly all nations are dealing with the world today. The central point is the disintegration of history. Whole generations have forgotten history. Even many of today's world leaders have forgotten history. And believe me, as one who has seen a number of international crises firsthand, they cannot be handled without an understanding of history.

"After the Gulf War, President Bush put out a statement proclaiming that we had moved to what he called a 'new world order.' How wrong he was. We are in a new world *disorder*, and a lot of that disorder is linked to the fact that leaders lack an understanding—or even a sense—of history in dealing with significant problems."

Although one might differ with Pierre Salinger on particular issues, he is a man with a sense of justice, who at least knows where to look for solutions, and a man who, like his French grandfather, is not afraid to fight for justice, even when the cause of justice is unpopular.

—William F. Wertz, Jr.