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# Who the hell is Marcel Lefebvre?

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theories and reprinted articles from John Birch Society publications. Its assistant editor Father Paul Leonard has also had his writings printed in Carillon Catholique.<sup>30</sup>

- Jean Viguerie, a professor at the University of Lille who has worked with Action Familiale et Scolaire as well as the Centre Charlier and its affiliate, the Centre Montmauriol.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> “La Messe Traditionnelle” and “Le Decret Quo Primum” in Carillon Catholique #5 septembre 1994

<sup>31</sup> Golias op cit., p. 128

- Thomas Molnar, a university professor from Brussels. Exceptional for Catholic fascists, Molnar even collaborated with the Groupement de recherche et d'études sur la civilisation européenne (GRECE) and wrote a book with the latter's founder Alain de Benoist.<sup>23</sup> It should be noted that most GRECists are anti-Christian, believing Jesus- worship to be too tainted with non-European influences like egalitarianism and pacifism (!) and preferring a kind of virile racist paganism.<sup>24</sup> Molnar is also on the editorial board of *Present*,<sup>25</sup> a French fascist newspaper. When he addressed the CEJCT in 1994 his lecture was also printed in the *Cahiers de Jeune Nation*.
- Claude Polin, a professor at the Sorbonne who is active in anti-communist and monarchist groups in France. Polin has also spoken at several conferences organized by the Cercle Renaissance<sup>26</sup> and the Institut d'Etude de la Désinformation,<sup>27</sup> two ultra-conservative organizations whose membership includes leading members of the European Christian Right, as well as retired military officers and a certain number of officials from the National Front and similar parties. Indeed, Polin is himself a member of the National Front's scientific council.<sup>28</sup>
- Fr. Marcel Nault, an occasional contributor to *The Fatima Crusader* magazine.<sup>29</sup> This publication is full of conspiracy

<sup>23</sup> *Visages de la Nouvelle Droite: le GRECE et son histoire*; Anne-Marie Duranton-Crabol, Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques 1988, p.167 and 252

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, and Golias, op cit. pp. 120–124

<sup>25</sup> Golias, op cit. p. 103

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 178

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 184

<sup>28</sup> "Le Front National: devant et derriere," by Louis-Michel Guilbault, *Le Lys Blanc* p. 34

<sup>29</sup> See *The Fatima Crusader*, #36, #46 and #47

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Arcand, the leader of Canada's Nazi movement in the 1930s (but presumably not himself a Jewish pagan)...

- Jean-Claude Dupuis, for the past three years the leading light in the Cercle Jeune Nation, Quebec's most well-known "intellectual" fascist group. Dupuis was the editor of the *Cahiers de Jeune Nation* from its first issue in 1993 up until its last in 1995.<sup>19</sup> He has written favourably about Le Pen on several occasions, and is known to work closely with Pierre Trepannier, the University of Montreal's resident pro-fascist historian, and the clerical-fascist *Ralliement Provincial des Parents de Quebec*. Dupuis is also a member of the racist *Centre d'information nationale* Robert Rumilly<sup>20</sup> and has worked with this group to organize speaking engagements for Arnaud de Lassus and Michel Berger across the province.<sup>21</sup> Dupuis and other members of Cercle Jeune Nation have also spoken at the Society of Pius X's Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes Church in Sherbrooke.
- Gerry Matatics, an American loose cannon presently vacillating between official Catholicism and outcast traditionalist groups like the Society. Matatics was once a Presbyterian minister well known for his attacks on the Catholic Church but since his conversion in 1986 he has been an ardent promoter of the most reactionary Catholic inanities, and has recently been flirting with those tiny traditionalist groups that see even the Lefebvrists as being too moderate!<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> For a synopsis of Dupuis' work as editor of the journal, see his article "Bilan des *Cahiers de Jeune Nation*," in *Cahiers de Jeune nation* #12, septembre 1995

<sup>20</sup> Minutes of meeting of the *Centre d'information nationale* dated Wednesday, February 17<sup>th</sup> (no year given — most likely 1993). Dupuis is listed as being the the CIN's board of directors.

<sup>21</sup> Francois Dumas op. cit.

<sup>22</sup> "Habemus Papum?" by Karl Keating, *This Rock* July/August 1995

that the National Front is Catholics' best bet in the French elections (as do many other loyal Catholics, it should be said).<sup>14</sup>

- Bernard Lugan, who in 1993 was a member of the National Front's scientific council.<sup>15</sup> Lugan has also lectured at the Centre Charlier,<sup>16</sup> a Catholic centre in France founded in 1979 by brothers Andre and Henri Charlier. Great admirers of Charles Maurras, the Charlier brothers' intend their centre to be a starting point for a "Christian and national counter-offensive against the genocide that is afflicting France and the French."<sup>17</sup>
- Fr. Lorans, a European official of the Society. In 1988 he stated that "Le Pen stands for principles that are similar to ours... as to his understanding of abortion, it is the same as Lefebvre's."<sup>18</sup>
- Louis-Michel Guilbault, the editor of (and author of almost all the articles in) *Le Lys Blanc*, an opinionated magazine from Sorel. Typical articles of his deal with the history of the French aristocracy (he is an ardent monarchist), the supposed connections between Freemasonry and Jewish organizations like B'nai B'rith, the reasons why fascism is a good political system as long as it doesn't turn pagan, and "the correct attitude for Catholics to hold towards Jews" (answer: be on your guard!). I can't decide which is my favourite, his one anti-Nazi article (it was a pagan movement led by Jews and thoroughly anti-Catholic) or a hagiography of Adrien

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<sup>14</sup> Goliath, op. cit.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 112

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 106

<sup>18</sup> "La politique d'extreme-droite de Mgr Lefebvre," by Yves Casgrain, *Le Devoir* 27 juillet 1988

Right-wing Catholics continue to play an important role in the Quebec fascist milieu. In fact, along with "French Canadian" nationalism, traditional Roman Catholicism is one of the defining features of the far-right in this province.

Some reactionary Catholics in Quebec have even split from the Vatican, which they view as being too moderate. These schismatics — the term literally means "splitter" — work within international networks that include racists and fascists from Europe and the United States.

## TO THE RIGHT OF JOHN PAUL II?

Pope John Paul II, president-for-life of the Roman Catholic Church, is widely viewed as being favourable to that faith's right-wing. He has made a point of publicly re-affirming his church's opposition to women's rights, queer rights and the rights of the dispossessed. Yet to some Catholics, the pope is being manipulated by the enemies of the church; to his less charitable critics on the right, he is a conscious minion of the Antichrist, who has overseen the continuing takeover the Christianity by an evil cabal of Jews, Freemasons and Communists.

These Catholics believe that the church was taken over by pro-communist, Jewish, Protestant, Zionist, Satanic, and/or Freemason forces at a series of meetings of all the world's bishops known as the Second Vatican Council, or Vatican II, that ran from 1962 to 1965. It was at these meetings that Roman Catholicism toned down its age-old war of attrition against the world's other religions and attempted to bring several of its own rites up to date. Among other things, the mass that had been elaborated at the Council of Trent between 1545 and 1563, known as the Tridentine Mass, was changed and the use of languages other than Latin was approved.

In the 1970s and early eighties, those Catholic hardliners who looked back fondly on the days of the inquisition were active in a

variety of organizations, the most prominent of them all being the Society of St Pius X.

The history of the Society is inseparable from that of its late founder, Bishop Marcel Lefebvre. Active in the theocratic organization Cite Catholique in the 1960s, Lefebvre felt called upon to denounce and resist the changes brought about by Vatican II. Most hated were decrees that grudgingly accepted people's freedom of conscience and that raised bishops' status, mandating the creation of national bishops' organizations which brought about a degree of decentralization within the church and reduced the power of a clique of conservative Italian mandarins who had become dominant within the Vatican.

Pope Paul VI, blamed by Lefebvre for the changes in the church, was eager to appease the reactionary cleric, so in 1970 he was granted permission to found his Society in Ecône, Switzerland. Rather than calming him down though, this seemed to encourage Lefebvre in his attacks against what he called "modernist" errors coming out of Rome. Things escalated in 1976 when Lefebvre accused the Catholic hierarchy of heresy. His Society was officially banned, and he was forbidden from ordaining students studying at its seminary. When he ignored this ban and ordained them anyway, the Pope hit him with a *suspens a divinis* — a punishment that meant he could no longer give sacraments or celebrate mass.

Around the world Lefebvre's supporters rallied around him, often refusing to say the mass as it was elaborated during Vatican II but rather hearkening back to the old Tridentine rite. Priests who celebrated the old mass were often kicked out of their churches by the local bishop.

When John Paul II became pope he tried to bring the traditionalists back into the fold. He passed a special rule allowing mass to be said according to the old custom as long as the local bishop gave his permission. This did tempt many Catholics back to the church but Lefebvre remained independent. The mass was just a symbol

For your personal edification, what follows is a partial list of people who spoke at CEJCT events between 1993 and 1995 (an asterisk indicates that the individual is also the author of one or more articles in the CEJCT's newsletter *Carillon Catholique*):

- Michel Berger, a retired admiral, is a leading light with Action Familiale et Scolaire, itself a front for Ictus, perhaps France's most powerful reactionary Catholic organization.<sup>10</sup> Its goal is to encourage the growth of a political Catholic movement, with the eventual goal of rolling back all of the social gains that have been made since Marie Antoinette lost her head in the French Revolution. Needless to say, leading members of Ictus, including de Lassus, have made sympathetic comments about the National Front; like Lefebvre they see it as Catholics' best bet in the French elections. Berger tours Quebec with Baron de Lassus (see next) about once a year, regularly speaking in Church's and religious establishments in Sherbrooke, Montreal and Drummondville.<sup>11</sup> AFS has published books about how dangerous Moslems are, as well as about how the Church was very nice to native people in North America during the conquest of this continent.
- Baron Arnaud de Lassus, the leader of Action Familiale et Scolaire (see above).<sup>12</sup> De Lassus is an "expert" on freemasonry, which he characterizes as a fanatical anti-Catholic conspiracy that works in alliance with Jews.<sup>13</sup> Although he has remained loyal to the Vatican, he shares Lefebvre's view

<sup>10</sup> Golias #27-28, automne 1991, pp. 125-128

<sup>11</sup> "Jeune Nation: Quelques jalons pour l'histoire d'une organisation nationaliste de droite au Québec," by Francois Dumas (president of Cercle Jeune Nation), *Cahiers de Jeune Nation* #3, novembre 1992, p. 23

<sup>12</sup> Golias op cit., p. 128

<sup>13</sup> *Connaissance Elementaire de la Franc-Maconnerie*, Arnaud de Lassus, Action Familiale et Scolaire, pp. 93-97

in Winona, Minnesota, was speaking at Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes church in Sherbrooke when he stated that “Not one Jew was killed in the gas chambers. It’s a lie... the Jews invented the Holocaust so that we would kneel before them and accept their state of Israel... the governments don’t touch the Jews but they persecute the Zundels who fight for the truth.”<sup>8</sup> When a complaint was lodged under the hate laws, the RCMP found that there was no basis to charge Williamson because he “wasn’t inciting violence”. The bishop himself was unapologetic, claiming that “The church is going badly because of the Protestants, the Freemasons, the Communists, the media and the Jews... I don’t believe that 6 million Jews were killed (in the Holocaust), it’s a physical impossibility.”<sup>9</sup>

## THE CERCLE D’ETUDES DES JEUNES CATHOLIQUES TRADITIONALISTES

The Lefebvrists do not simply stew in their own theological juices, but engage in a certain degree of outreach amongst other Catholics. Probably towards this end, in June 1993 the Society set up a study group at Laval University in Ste-Foy, the Cercle d’études des jeunes catholiques traditionalistes. The CEJCT organized lectures by far-right luminaries from Canada, Europe and the United States, many of which took place on the university campus, until its pastor, Fr. Roscoe, left for Switzerland in 1995. While it was functioning, the Cercle benefited from a degree of aid from the university’s chaplaincy services, i.e. free meeting space, photocopies, typing plus the prestige of being able to use University symbols on its propaganda.

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<sup>8</sup> “La GRC ne porte pas d’accusation contre l’évêque Richard Williamson,” by Lynda Baril, La Presse 15 avril 1989

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. One year later, at the ordination of thirteen new Lefebvrist priests in Ecône, Williamson praised what he called Lefebvre’s “beautiful racism” which was going to “create a new race of priests.” (Agence France-Presse, 30 juin 1990)

for him: he didn’t want the church to tolerate him, he wanted the church to return to its old burn- them-at-the-stake intolerant self.

In 1987 the Vatican appointed Canadian Cardinal Edouard Gagnon as a mediator — a decision that thrilled the Lefebvrists, who claimed that of all the cardinals Gagnon was the most sympathetic to their cause. But while he did come close, Gagnon was finally unable to broker an agreement between Lefebvre and the pope. The former was convinced that the Freemason-Satanist-Pinko-Jews had taken over, and he was not willing to surrender his Society’s autonomy. In 1988 he took four of the Society’s priests and turned them into bishops — despite having been warned to do no such thing by John Paul. He was excommunicated almost immediately.

## OUTSIDE OF THE CHURCH

By this point Lefebvre had already acquired a large following among right-wing Catholics who cared little what the Vatican might say. His organization controlled hundreds of churches, residences, and schools in several dozen countries, and had acquired financial support from remnants of Europe’s old aristocracy.

The Society had also earned a good reputation amongst butchers and fascists around the world. Always the man of principle, Lefebvre had spoken out in favour of military dictatorships in Africa and South America. Way back in 1976, during a fiery mass in Lille, France, Lefebvre identified the enemy: “The Council (Vatican II) consummated the marriage between Church and Revolution... only bastards will be born of the adulterous union ... We cannot dialogue with freemasons and communists, because you don’t dialogue with the Devil!” There is plenty of evidence of what the bishop would like to do with communists and freemasons though; at Lille that day he also shared his views on the Argentinian dictatorship which was at that very moment torturing and executing

anyone even suspected of being a “subversive”. Lefebvre said that this bloodthirsty regime was a “principled government of order, an authority that is tidying things up, that stops cutthroats from killing people. Suddenly the economy is getting better and the workers have work and they can go home knowing that they won’t be attacked by someone who wanted them to go on strike when they didn’t want to go on strike.”<sup>1</sup>

Lefebvre not only supported fascism in the Third World, but actively promoted it in Europe, too. The Spanish translation of his book “I Accuse the Council,” was launched at the headquarters of the New Forces Party — a Francoist fascist party. At this event Lefebvre was accompanied by Blas Pinar, the NFP’s president.<sup>2</sup> During the 1985 French election campaign Lefebvre publicly encouraged Catholics to vote for Jean-Marie Le Pen, explaining that his ideal was “a government that applies real Catholic principles, like Franco and Salazar did.” Need it be added that these statements were made in an interview he gave to the Italian magazine *Secolo* — the organ of the MSI, Italy’s oldest fascist party.<sup>3</sup>

At no point did Lefebvre tone down the rhetoric. He merely became more and more explicit. In 1986 he criticized the pope’s meeting at Assise with leaders from the world’s other religions, which he said “encourages the false religions to pray to their false gods.”<sup>4</sup> In 1989 he warned a gathering of traditionalists about Moslem immigrants, saying that “It is your wives, your daughters, your children who will kidnapped and brought to those secret places like in Casablanca.”<sup>5</sup> In 1990, less than a year before his death, he claimed in an interview with the official magazine of the National Front that

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<sup>1</sup> “Politique d’abord? Politique aussi,” by S. Mailard, *L’Actualite Religieuse* avril 1988, p. 15

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> J.Y. Camus & R. Monzat, *Les Droites Nationales et Radicales en France*.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., in 1990 a Paris court fined him the equivalent of almost \$1000 US for racial slander against Moslems (*Agence France Presse*, 13 juillet 1990)

any Catholic opposition to the maintenance of a nun’s residence at the former Auschwitz concentration camp was being instigated by Jews.<sup>6</sup>

## IN QUEBEC

While the Society of St Pius X is most active in Europe, it maintains residences and churches in over 40 non-European countries, including most of the Americas. The headquarters of the Society’s Canadian branch have been located in Shawinigan since the 1970s. There are 26 Lefebvrist churches in Canada, eight of which are in Quebec. There are roughly a dozen priests active within the Society in Quebec. The Society also runs a primary and high school, *l’école Saint-Famille*.<sup>7</sup> According to Fr. Jacques Emily, the Lefebvrist’s Canadian leader since 1983, roughly 1000 people regularly attend mass at the Society’s churches, and the group receives donations from three or four times as many people across the country.

While these small numbers show that the Society has little direct impact on the official Roman Catholic church, and they certainly have little effect on the larger body politic, the Lefebvrists nevertheless remain wed to the far-right. And in Quebec, where the far-right tends to be unanimous in its Catholicism and hostility to Vatican II, the Society has been able to maintain some presence outside of its own small circles.

Furthermore, the Society has occasionally made headlines with its public declarations so much out of sync with Quebec society in general and mainstream Catholicism in particular that they are difficult to ignore. In 1989, for instance, one of the Society’s four bishops, Richard Williamson, delivered a virulently racist sermon while touring Quebec. Williamson, who runs a Lefebvrist seminary

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> “Quelque 250 fideles preferent encore la messe en latin,” by Louise Leduc, *La Presse* 19 juillet 1993.