

The Prologue

*“Ordained a priest in 1848 (right before the Revolutions), **Heinrich Seldon** first foresaw the probability of the destruction of the Holy Roman Empire when visiting Revolutionary Paris. Meeting a group of anticlerical Freemasons, they openly boasted to him of their plans to end the Catholic Empire once and for all. In this they could not have been more unfortunate. After years of careful research, Seldon (now a bishop) developed a plan based on the Catholic understanding of history, the indestructibility of the Church, and a trust in Divine Providence. The **Seldon Plan** marked out carefully the future path of the Church over a series of crises towards the restoration of the Empire... (Catholic Encyclopedia 117th Edition)*

“Gentlemen, please come in!” The two officers, one wearing the uniform of the Imperial Navy and the other wearing that of the Royal Scots, entered, genuflected, and kissed the Cardinal’s sapphire ring. The crimson-robed prelate motioned them each to a seat, allowing both a closer study of his face. Certainly it was his gaunt features, short aquiline nose, and previously dark hair that had earned him the epithet “The Raven” among his once fellow seminarians. “Gentlemen,” the Cardinal’s voice cut short their examination. “My secretary Fr. Gál Dominik,” he said motioning to the cassocked figure in the shadows of the richly-curtained room, “is the only other person privy to our conversation. But there is no time for extended introductions, I fear. Already there are Freemasons and the Black Hand waiting in Sarajevo.”

The Austrian leapt swiftly to his feet. “But Archduke Franz Ferdinand is there now, your eminence!” “I know, *Ritter Von Trapp*. Every precaution is being taken. Yet precautions are of little use where the devil is concerned I fear. I know something of these secret societies, for my sins I’ve been forced to know,” with this the Cardinal sighed, and Georg Von Trapp reseated himself anxiously. “Now,” said the prelate, “for the reason I asked you to meet me here. Please come this way.”

He led them to another room much like the other, still curtained and dark, but filled with scientific instruments and volumes of history. They halted in the middle of the room, and once more the two officers seated themselves. The Cardinal remained standing. At once there appeared on the wall before them a map of Europe with a complex list of possible events in the margin. “A viewgraph!” the British officer exclaimed. “You did not expect me to have one, Edward Strutt. Well, being a cardinal does have its advantages as well as its burdens.” He chuckled lightly. “But there is no time. To put my information shortly, there is to be war.” Both officers looked at each other morosely. “To be honest, we both expect that, your eminence,” said Strutt bluntly. “I’m sure you do,” was the terse reply, “Yet take a closer look at the information presented to you.”

Once again their eyes returned to the image and this time their reaction was one of amazement. “The historical principle is valid, and the events have been examined through

conversion to mathematics checked by an analytical engine,” this time the octogenarian prelate motioned to the closet-sized machine on his left. “But if this is true it means the empire will be destroyed!” Georg Von Trapp was now pacing furiously with excitement. “Yes, but not permanently. That is why both of you are here.” “But you are speaking of an Empire founded by Constantine and which has stood unbroken since Charlemagne!” “That is so. But let us examine the evidence logically and historically.”

“Never has there been a point in the history of Christendom where so many of its member states are in such revolt. France and North Germany are Atheistic, and England is growing so. Russia is weakening and Spain is in chaos. Look at what will happen when war breaks out.” To save time he handed each of them a paper with the following points inscribed on it;

- ❖ Austria will be forced into war against Russia because of the Black Hand.
- ❖ Prussia will fight against France in an effort to determine which is more powerful.
- ❖ With the aid of England, and most probably America, France will be victorious.
- ❖ Although Austria will fight most valiantly, the Empire will be dissolved by the victorious Freemasons in France and America.

“And this is only the first Crisis. In within three decades of the conclusion of the war, a second and greater war will be fought. These Freemasons never take into account the long range consequences of their actions. Confronted with this evidence, Gentlemen, it is easy to give into despair. Do not do so. For though no one but God may know the whole future, He has permitted His saints some glimpses of it. As I have predicted with accuracy the Empire’s dissolution, so has God promised its eventual Restoration.” With these words he brought forth from his ermine lined cloak a red hardbound book with the letters A.E.I.O.U. engraved in gold on the front cover.

Opening the book, Edward Strutt gasped and handed the book to the Austrian. The book was composed of page upon page of original manuscripts, sometimes in fragments, dating from as recent as the nineteenth century, and as old as the seventh. Some were simply ascribed with their country of origin and no date was given. “It took me a lifetime, but I have been able to piece this together, Gentlemen. Fortunately before my time comes the book will pass into safe hands.” Here he coughed hoarsely “Your eminence, we could not guard this,” Strutt spoke, breaking the awed silence, “We are soldiers and may die in the coming war.” “I do not think you will. Nevertheless I have made preparations otherwise. Now Gentlemen, allow me to hand you these,” The prelate handed them each a letter sealed with his personal emblem.

“I cannot go into detail now. I have done that in my letters to you. However, let me say this. You will each have a distinct duty, and a common one. Your duty, Captain involves remaining in Austria for some time after the war. And yours, Edward, involves protecting the

Hapsburgs, for the safety of the family is most vital. But let me inform you as to the common duty.”

“First, let me say that you must both find apprentices, students who can be trained to continue your missions once you are dead. And now,” He pointed to an elaborate case containing 15 volumes of hard cover books, “This is the first edition of Catholic Encyclopedia. Both of you must work towards creating future editions. These editions are NOT to be published. You are to be constantly revising these editions, as must your successors. The preservation of Catholic knowledge will play a fundamental role in the restoration of Christendom.”

“Finally, and do not forget this, the very last Crisis will be the flight from Rome of the Pope. Then the Restoration will be at hand. That is all I can say to you at the moment. Oh, there is one more thing,” and with this he placed on the table before them another paper, this being very ornate but also durable. Captain Von Trapp gasped once again. “This is a charter signed by the Pope and the Emperor!” The old and weary Cardinal smiled and nodded. “And now let us end with a prayer;”

“Let us pray also for our most Christian Emperor that the Lord God may reduce to his obedience all barbarous nations for our perpetual peace. O almighty and eternal God, in whose hands are all the power and right of kingdoms, graciously look down on the Roman Empire that those nations who confide in their own haughtiness and strength, may be reduced by the power of Thy right hand. Through the same Lord...”

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