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CIA 'Framed' Bulgaria for Pope John Paul II Assassination Attempt - Report

Diplomacy | April 21, 2011, Thursday

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Pope John Paul II pictured forgiving the man who made an attempt on his life Mehmet Ali Agca. File photo Bulgaria had nothing to do with the attempted assassination of **Pope John Paul II** in 1981 by Turk **Mehmet Ali Agca**, according to a new book.

The book clearing Bulgaria of the **assassination attempt** on the late Pope is called "Kill the Pope: The Truth about the **Assassination Attempt** on **Pope John Paul II**" was co-authored by **Marco Insaldo**, a journalist with the Italian paper La Repubblica, and Turkish journalist **Yasemin Taskin**.

The authors said they had based their claims on 20 years of research [as cited by The Daily Telegraph](#).

The British paper reminds that John Paul II was seriously injured after being shot four times at close range by Turk **Mehmet Ali Agca** on May 13, 1981. It says that based on visits Agca made to Sofia, the theory that Bulgaria's communist secret service, and perhaps even the **KGB**, lay behind the attack emerged about a year after the incident and have now become broadly accepted.

According to "Kill the Pope" book, the **CIA** drew up a story of Communist conspiracy after America's top diplomat circulated a request for material to use against the Communist bloc.

"There is no evidence that Bulgaria had anything to do with the attack on the pope. The Bulgarian connection is the creation of the **CIA**," Insaldo is quoted as saying.

In his words, Agca, who belonged to an outlawed ultra-nationalist and pro-Islam Turkish group called the Grey Wolves, tried to kill the pope purely because of his and the

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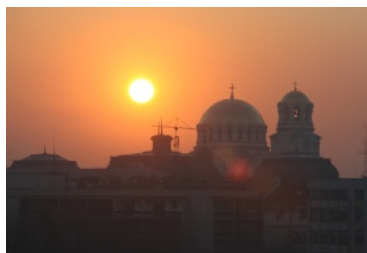
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group's fanatical anti-Western ideology.

The Italian journalist further claims that Agca's visits to Bulgaria were due to flourishing links between the Grey Wolves and Bulgarian organized crime, and that the CIA was aware of this.

"Alexander Haig, then secretary of state, had asked the CIA to find anything that could be used against the communists. The CIA knew the Grey Wolves had connections with Bulgaria through organised crime and that Agca had visited so when he tried to kill the pope they were very smart and exploited the connection," Insaldo explains.

Michael Ledeen, an American foreign policy expert, supported the theory in a series of articles in the New York Times and on the NBC television network one year after the attack.

Mr Insaldo also alleged that Italian secret services, in co-operation with the CIA, forced Agca to confess to a Bulgarian connection: a confession the Turk later retracted.

The Italian journalist added that during one of the many meetings he and co-author had with Agca the Turk said "the attempt wasn't complicated", which he regards as hint that the Bulgarians were not involved.

The Daily Telegraph further cites Italian Judge **Ferdinando Imposimato**, who led an investigation into the **assassination attempt**, dismissed the new book as "rubbish".

In an interview with the Polish newspaper Rzeczpospolita he maintained that the communists were behind the attack. They had looked on with alarm at the way the Polish-born pope had galvanised the anti-communist opposition in his native land and feared his influence could spread unless he was silenced.

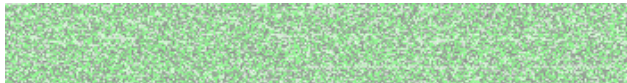
During his visit to Bulgaria in May 2002, **Pope John Paul II** stated that he did not believe in the Bulgarian involvement in the attempt on his life.

Tags: Pope John Paul II, assassination attempt, Mehmet Ali Agca, CIA, Communist Bulgaria, DS, Soviet Union, USSR, communists, Ferdinando Imposimato, Marco Insaldo, Kill the Pope: The Truth about the Assassination Attempt on Pope John Paul II, Yasemin Taskin, KGB

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"By the way, if someone asks you to comment on this incident, tell them the Bulgarian Socialist Party, BSP, has no right whatsoever to talk about using children for political propaganda. It was their party that made me a pioneer ... [read](#)

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- Yes, massively, in order to boost both its science and national pride.
- Yes, but only in certain specific projects that have proven to be successful such as production of space food and development of a space greenhouse.
- No, it's a total waste of funds and efforts, and can solely be used for populist propaganda.

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