

**FOR SALE**

Britain is losing the companies that made it great.

**WHO WON?**

A cease-fire has been declared in the Israeli-Hezbollah conflict. Both sides claimed victory—but one side is dead wrong.

**BAD MEDICINE**

What the medical industry doesn't want you to know.

OCTOBER 2006

THE PHILADELPHIA

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# TRUMPET



## Feeling the **HEAT**

**Scorching weather is depleting food stocks—and threatening to burn your budget.**



4

## WORLD

### 1 From the Editor: California Disasters Continue—Why?

California is suffering the most from damaged crops and destroyed livestock. There is a reason.

#### AGRICULTURE

### 2 The Coming Food Shortfall

If you were worried about rising gas prices, watch out—prices of common household items are about to go up as well.



6

## WORLD

#### MIDDLE EAST

### 6 Who Won?

Israel and Hezbollah both claimed victory in the Lebanon war. One of them is dead wrong.

### 8 Manipulating the Media

### 12 Selling Britain's Corporate Crown Jewels

Britain isn't so British anymore.

#### AFRICA

### 16 Securing the Horn

Little-reported-on events in Africa have tremendous strategic importance.

### 18 WORLDWATCH

**EUROPE** Emergency Border Squads? ■ British Muslims: London Bombing Justified ■ Germany: Export World Champion ■ Europeans to Replace Americans as Consumers of Choice? ■ Secret Meetings Exposed ■ **LATIN AMERICA** Cuban Oil to Break U.S. Embargo? ■ Chavez Tours World to Boost Venezuela's Profile ■ **AFRICA** The Newest Imperialist Power

### 37 Commentary: Crisis Overload

Our world is drowning in a rising tide of troubles. Here is why this might be a good thing.



22

## ECONOMY

### 29 ECONOMYWATCH

Uncle Sam's Secret Books  
■ Stock Market Welcomes Bad News

## SOCIETY

### 22 Does Medicine Deserve Your Faith?

Shocking truths about the medical industry

### 24 Wasted Expenditures

### 25 When MDs Don't Wash Hands

### 27 Has a Disease for Your Problems Been Marketed Yet?

The trouble with disease-mongering

## RELIGION

#### BOOK EXCERPT

### 30 Legacies

The truth about the legacy of Herbert W. Armstrong—and that of his successors.

## DEPARTMENTS

### 34 Key of David Television Log

### 36 Letters

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**COVER** A farmer examines his corn field, which is dying due to excessive heat and drought. Tom Mihalek/AFP/Getty Images

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**THE PHILADELPHIA TRUMPET** (ISSN 10706348) is published monthly (except bimonthly June-July and November-December issues) by the Philadelphia Church of God, 14400 S. Bryant Ave, Edmond, OK 73034. Periodicals postage paid at Edmond, OK, and additional mailing offices. ©2006 Philadelphia Church of God. All rights reserved. PRINTED IN THE U.S.A. Unless otherwise noted, scriptures are quoted from the King James Version of the Holy Bible. **U.S. Postmaster:** Send address changes to: THE PHILADELPHIA TRUMPET, P.O. Box 3700, Edmond, OK 73083. **How your subscription has been paid:** The *Trumpet* has no subscription price—it is free. This is made possible by the tithes and offerings of the membership of the Philadelphia Church of God and others. Contributions, however, are welcomed and are tax-deductible in the United States, Canada and New Zealand. Those who wish to voluntarily support this worldwide work of God are gladly welcomed as co-workers.

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Gerald Flurry

# California Disasters Continue—Why?

**A** SEARING HEAT WAVE HAS DESTROYED OR BADLY DAMAGED many California crops. The heat caused some of the crops to ripen early. Then the early crops caused a labor shortage, which intensified the disaster.

California dairy farmers witnessed thousands of their cows die. They have had to bury cows by the hundreds in mass graves. The industry has been decimated.

California has a \$31.8 billion farm industry. That means we will all be paying higher prices at the grocery stores. So prepare to reduce your standard of living.

Over 60 percent of the United States is suffering from abnormally dry or drought conditions. At this point, California appears to be suffering most of all.

This state often leads the way in U.S. disasters. Is there a reason? There is a mind-staggering hope embedded in California's catastrophes. Nothing is more important for you to understand.

I wrote this about some California crises in our December 2003 *Trumpet* magazine: "Multi-year droughts, catastrophic wildfires, out-of-control deficits. Why is this happening to the Golden State? The answer will surprise you.

"California has just experienced another crisis. It has just seen its biggest outbreak of wildfire—it broke all past records. Some 750,000 acres were burned, about 3,600 homes destroyed and 20 lives lost.

"Here is what *U.S. News & World Report* wrote about it: 'Throughout the American West, trees already short of nutrients because of crowding are suffering from a four-year-old drought, THE WORST IN 300 YEARS. Bark beetles have attacked the weakened trees across much of the West, killing up to 70 percent of them in some areas. In San Bernardino National Forest, beetles have ravaged half a million acres so far. When fire does break out, the crowding allows flames to leap treetop to treetop in a fast-moving crown fire, as happened in parts of Southern California last week' (Nov. 10, [2003,] emphasis mine).

"California had a six-year drought at the end of the 1980s. Now it has suffered through another multi-year drought.

"That state also has a \$38 billion deficit, the worst of any state in the United States. It cost a governor his job.

"What is happening in California?"

A decade earlier, in December 1993, I wrote this in a *Trumpet* article: "One disaster after another is striking California. These deadly disasters are repeatedly labeled the 'worst ever'! ... With all the disasters that have struck California the past few years, it's as if the state is under a curse.

"The recent fires in Southern California were their WORST EVER. One lady said, '[I]t was like the wrath of God.' ...

"These fires revealed an even greater crisis. Reports say 20 of the 26 fires were set by arsonists! The Los Angeles area is seething with all kinds of hatred—which is only a microcosm of the entire nation. In many areas of the U.S., racial hatred is

ready to explode like the Southern California firestorm. And we no longer have the WILL to implement the strong government action that is needed! ...

"The Rodney King and Reginald Denny trials ... inflamed racial tension. The 1992 Los Angeles race riots were that city's WORST EVER. They were some of the deadliest riots in U.S. history! Others fear riots will also occur in their cities. [That is a justifiable fear.]

"In 1991, wildfires in Oakland, California, destroyed 2,900 structures, and 25 people died from the fires. These fires were the WORST EVER in California! The state is now struggling with a budget deficit that is the WORST EVER—BY FAR—that any American state has faced!

"A six-year drought ended in 1991. It was the WORST EVER in California! That drought was followed by heavy rains and flooding which caused the heavy growth of grass, shrubbery and weeds that led to the dangerous fires."

Why is all this happening to California? I believe we must look more directly to the spiritual.

In an overt attack against Herbert W. Armstrong, in 1979 the state of California, through the attorney general's office, launched a massive lawsuit against the Worldwide Church of God (from which the Philadelphia Church of God came). On January 3, that office initiated a sudden, armed assault on the Pasadena headquarters, in an attempt to claim ownership of the Church's property and assets as well as its continuing income—in violation of the U.S. Constitution. A receiver, secretly appointed by the court, tried to take over and operate God's Church. Completely false, outrageous and baseless allegations of financial mismanagement were made—despite financial and all other required records having been regularly and voluntarily filed. No evidence of wrongdoing was ever found, and on Oct. 15, 1980, the attorney general dropped all charges and dismissed the case. Later, the higher appellate court ruled that the lawsuit was *without foundation*.

California is the only state that ever attacked Mr. Armstrong and his work. Actually, it attacked a lot more than that. California really ATTACKED THE LIVING GOD! It also attacked its only hope—a hope beyond what mankind can even imagine!

Could such an unjustified attack by the state have anything to do with California's problems in the last several years? It certainly does, and you need to know why.

Write for a free copy of Mr. Armstrong's book *Mystery of the Ages* to better understand why there is a strong connection between the state's attack and California's many disasters.

This book will show you why California is only leading the American and British peoples into more disasters, unless our peoples change their way of life. Mr. Armstrong's book will show *you* how to avoid many dreadful events. But even if we don't heed, out of these catastrophes will rise mankind's most inspiring hope ever!

# THE COMING FOOD SHORTFALL



Catastrophic weather crises are threatening one of your most basic needs. BY BRAD MACDONALD



**M**ENTION THE WORD *Britain*, and certain images spring to my mind. I see a nation of rolling hills carpeted with lush, green grass rooted in rich, loamy soils. Bountiful croplands are surrounded by dense, spectacular forests. Rushing rivers and clear ponds provide water for plump sheep and meaty cows. For generations, this was Britain: a picture of agricultural prosperity.

Its former dominion Down Under was much the same. A land of contrasts, Australia's vast heart of desert was encircled by immense agricultural wealth and productivity. Boundless space and seasonal rainfall fostered the growth of acre upon acre of a variety of crops, tree farms, vineyards, olive plantations and dairy farms. Australian sheep and cattle stations can encompass tens of thousands of acres. With seemingly limitless cultivable land blessed by seasonal rainfall, Australia has been a leading exporter of various crops and livestock.

For the past 200 years, the British Commonwealth, particularly Australia, Canada and New Zealand, has epitomized agricultural wealth and prosperity.

Only one country has possessed agricultural richness surpassing that of those nations. As vast as the land Down Under, possessing soils as rich and moist as Britain, the United States stood at the pinnacle of agricultural wealth for decades.

Together, these nations have possessed agricultural wealth of unprecedented and impressive proportions.

Over the years, this agricultural affluence has created societies accustomed to a variety of high-quality foods at low prices. Their storehouses have always overflowed. Opulence is the standard, as these nations enjoy mountains of inexpensive, readily accessible food. Their grocery stores are colossal buildings lavishly decked with bounties of every kind of food and beverage. With aisle after aisle of food stacked ceiling-high, the hardest part of shopping for the consumer can be deciding which variety of each food he or she wants. Fine restaurants and fast-food outlets line the streets of these nations. Inexpensive food is everywhere!

*That is why the coming downfall of American, Australian and British agriculture will be so shocking and devastating.*

Overflowing storehouses are about to

become a blessing of the past. The times of cheap and abundant food in these nations are coming to an end!

Even now, natural disasters and weather catastrophes are devastating crops and spurring a decline in agricultural production in these nations. As a result, food prices are rising, and many analysts predict that the problem will only grow worse. An ominous storm is brewing over your grocery store. Unpredictable and devastating weather conditions are jeopardizing access to one of life's most elemental needs: *food!*

#### **Pervasive Drought**

North America, Britain and Australia are currently being inflicted by some of the worst droughts in their history. Clean and abundant water is becoming a highly sought-after commodity in many regions throughout these nations.

**By the end of July, over 60 percent of America languished in abnormally dry conditions or drought. At the same time, record heat scorched the nation.**

Summer in Britain this year was a sizzler. As early as May, with Britain's Environment Agency warning that the nation may be facing its worst drought in 100 years, the government started imposing water restrictions. By the end of summer, millions of people were under "drought orders," which banned all non-essential use of water. Swimming pools sat empty; cars could not be washed; public parks, golf courses, cricket pitches and other sporting grounds withered away.

This is a nation with a reputation for unflinching wetness!

In May, according to the *Times*, rainfall had "been below average for the past six months while London and much of southern England have experienced *the driest 18 months in the past 74 years*" (May 16; emphasis mine throughout). As summer wore on, rivers, streams and ponds in England and Wales dried up, and trees dropped their leaves prematurely. The nation became a tinderbox of desiccated vegetation and dry soil. In the month of July, there were more than 600 fires in Liverpool alone. Thousands of other blazes fried different parts of the nation as summer sizzled on.

As drought conditions spread north throughout the summer, the Environment Agency was forced to ban some farmers from irrigating their crops. Certain rivers, a traditional source of ir-

rigation, were down 50 percent of their long-term average level. By mid-July, the water level of even the mighty Thames had sunk to a mere 75 percent of its average height.

In many regions, the problem of lack of rainfall was compounded by the lowering of groundwater stocks. In July, groundwater levels in some areas were as low as they had been in the unprecedented drought of 1976, and in some cases, lower.

Drought conditions in Australia are even worse. June this year was the driest on record for the state of Western Australia, the third-driest for Victoria and the fifth-driest for the country as a whole. Regions that have traditionally been agriculturally rich—including the southwest of Western Australia, the Murray-Darling Basin, the entire state of Victoria, much of New South Wales and the south-

eastern part of Queensland—are currently enduring some of the severest droughts in their history. The state of Victoria has not had a solid rainfall year since 1997. Southeast Queensland, experiencing its worst drought on record, has banned residents from watering their gardens with hoses or sprinklers. The Murray-Darling Basin, a massive area of relatively fertile and cultivable land in the southeast of the country, often called the nation's food bowl, is setting "dry" records. According to David Dreverman, River Murray Water manager, the past five years have been the "driest five-year sequence on record" (*Australian*, July 13).

July 22, United Press International reported that across the board, "Australia is experiencing its *most severe drought in a century and its third-worst in history.*" In the Hunter Valley region of New South Wales, packs of wild dogs, following their prey, the kangaroos, to a small strip of irrigated land, are attacking drought-stricken farmers and miners. In many regions, the severity and length of the drought—failed crops year after year, dying stock day after day, escalating debt, the erosion of rural communities—is so heartbreaking that some farmers are losing hope, even committing suicide. A Melbourne-based anti-depression agency says that on average one male farmer in Australia commits

suicide every four days, and there are reports that the rate is increasing.

In America, similar drought conditions are confronting farmers. Regular rainfall is becoming an increasingly rare phenomenon in many parts of the country. By the end of July, over 60 percent of America languished in abnormally dry conditions or drought. From Georgia to Arizona, and north through the Dakotas, Minnesota, Montana and Wisconsin, America's breadbasket is drying up. At the same time, record heat scorched the nation, with periodic surges of fierce and damaging triple-digit temperatures.

For farmers like Harvey Heier in Kansas, wrote the *Christian Science Monitor*, "the effects of the current heat wave are exaggerated because they come on top of a dry winter and dry summer the year before" (July 20). Large swaths of topsoil across the Plains and the Midwest are devoid of moisture. In northwest Kan-

Extreme hot weather in California in July, for example, caused millions of dollars' worth of crop losses and killed thousands of livestock. Yet during the same month, in the northeast U.S., floods flattened fields and devastated cropland.

In Canada, devastating drought in 2001 and 2002, compounded by a cattle industry heavily hit by the mad cow scare, resulted in many farmers going to the wall. Since then, inconsistent winter snow falls coupled with hot, dry summers mean that the chances for a full recovery are slim.

Meanwhile, on the southern end of the planet, New Zealand's agricultural industries continue to suffer the consequences of one of its most destructive and expensive winters in history. Heavy rainfall, severe flooding and blinding snowfalls plagued the nation all winter, and caused tens of millions of dollars in damage.

Severe weather is severely and concurrently inflicting substantial damage

Analysts warn that many basic food products will follow the same trend.

According to a July 22 article in the *Australian*, we are witnessing the gathering of a "perfect storm," as record temperatures in the Northern Hemisphere, low global grain stocks, and an anticipated rise in demand for grain by biofuel companies unite to cause grain prices to surge. On top of rising wheat prices, a likely rise in corn and barley prices will further compound the consumer crunch at the grocery store.

"The concern about wheat production comes at a time when global production is projected to fall short of demand this season, which would make it the *fifth of the past six years where demand has exceeded supply*" (ibid.). According to the Earth Policy Institute, demand for grain will outweigh the actual supply by 61 million tons. "As a result of these shortfalls, world carryover stocks at the end of this crop year are projected to drop to 57 days of consumption, the shortest buffer since the 56-day low in 1972 that triggered a doubling of grain prices" (*Energy Bulletin*, June 15).

In America, this year's battered wheat crop inflated flour prices by 25 percent. Although this price hike has so far primarily been absorbed by bakers and millers, it won't be long before the American consumer is forced to bear the burden of tight supplies of wheat and flour-based products. Interstate Bakeries Corp., the maker of Wonder Bread, has already announced a coming rise in prices.

In America, the price of a dozen eggs has gone up nearly 9 percent since the same time last year; fresh fruit has risen more than 6 percent. And it won't stop there, say economists, "who describe higher transportation costs and lower harvests as a *perfect storm hovering over the grocery*" (WNDU News, August 1). These price increases are just an inkling of what's in store.

Rising food prices, according to John Urbanchuk, food industry economist, are starting to "hit a head right now" and will continue rising for the next year or so (ibid.). In grocery stores around the country, store managers are already noticing that the less-expensive, generic brands of food are leaving shelves faster.

Food price hikes are just beginning, and already the American consumer is feeling the pinch at the check-out line. As energy prices soar and American agriculture suffers under adverse weather

## If soaring gas prices are pinching your budget, get ready to make further adjustments: The cost of a number of food staples is probably going to go the same direction.

sas, where the average rainfall for the year through to July is around 15 inches, Mr. Heier's farm had only received 6.

"The U.S. Department of Agriculture [USDA] said that growing conditions for the U.S. spring wheat crop were the *worst in 18 years* because there was not enough moisture to germinate seeds" (*Australian*, July 22).

By July, the USDA had announced measures to assist farmers across the nation—including designating several counties natural disaster areas, which enables farmers to apply for low-interest emergency loans. The USDA has also released large areas of land set aside by the Conservation Reserve Program for emergency grazing and haying by farmers across the Plains. In New Mexico and Oklahoma, state governments are using the Farm Service Agency's Emergency Conservation Program to provide aid to drought-stricken ranchers in the form of loans and assistance with well drilling, pipe laying and other projects.

In America, as well as in Britain and Australia, seasons used to be much easier to predict and plan around. Farmers could plant crops and expect rain. Many can no longer do that. These "weather abnormalities," as scientists and analysts like to call them, are making farming exceedingly more challenging and costly.

on all these nations that have traditionally been the world's most blessed and productive agricultural superpowers.

This is not to say that problems are not impacting other regions—they are. Europe has had a dry, hot summer; China is having a bad cyclical drought; the Amazon Basin is drying up. In fact, the whole globe is suffering to one degree or another under adverse and unpredictable patterns, which we can expect to continue. However, the long-term severity, geographical extent and the impact on agriculture has been *far worse* in the U.S., Britain and Australia. Consider: Whole states of America and Australia are experiencing *their worst droughts on record*; England, its worst in a century.

The effects are already rippling through these nations' economies and impacting the dinner tables of their citizens. Food prices are rising in each of these nations. Sadly, however, *this is only the beginning of that trend!*

### The Effect on Your Grocery Bill

If soaring gas prices are pinching your budget, get ready to make further adjustments: The cost of a number of food staples is probably going to go the same direction. Global wheat prices are fluctuating around 10-year highs, and it doesn't look like they are about to come down.

conditions, *this trend will only get worse.*

In Britain, the summer drought and heat wave has destroyed crops and boosted fruit and vegetable prices. Grain crops including wheat, winter barley and oats returned significantly lower yields, while the decimation of fruit and vegetable crops is expected to send prices spiraling to 30-year highs.

In August, analysts predicted that yields of many staple vegetable crops would be down as much as 40 percent. The decimation has sparked a country-wide rise in fruit and vegetable prices. As of August, wholesale potato prices, for example, had increased 36 percent over the same time last year.

The same trend is occurring in Australia. In July, the *Age* reported, "The latest inflation figures show the largest quarterly increase in food prices in 23 years ..." (July 28). The Australian Bureau of Statistics showed that the food price index rose 4.1 percent in the June quarter alone, and had risen more than 8.3 percent on the previous year. "This is the highest in-

North America, Britain and Australasia over the past 200 years. Each has been a picture of agricultural prosperity and abundance on a grand scale. These areas have been at the vanguard of agricultural technology and development. They have been agricultural superpowers.

But look at the state of their agricultural industries now. High energy prices are driving up the cost of food production. America, Britain and Australia are among the nations hardest hit by extreme hot weather and drought. America and Britain, especially, are importing more fruits, vegetables and meats than ever. These nations are being slammed from every direction. They are being progressively transformed from agricultural superpowers into agricultural lightweights. It's not difficult to see that these nations are under a curse.

Over the coming months and years, America and Britain and its former dominions—to whom many biblical prophecies are directed, as proved in our free book *The United States and Britain*

As unbelievable as it might be to people who have grown accustomed to such wealth and abundance, agricultural devastation and resulting food shortages are in store for the near future. The seeds of such a crisis have already been sown.

Our lands, once rich and bountiful, are being transformed into soils of brass and skies of iron (Leviticus 26:18-20). The end result of these curses is going to be empty storehouses.

But it doesn't have to be this way!

Blessings and abundance would be restored to these nations if they turned from their lawlessness and embraced the law of God.

The degradation of the physical wealth and prosperity of these nations is a direct result of the moral and spiritual degradation besieging them. Though this truth is sobering, it does highlight a hope-filled biblical principle. In the same manner that disobedience brings curses, obedience brings blessings!

This principle also applies on the individual level. You and I are blessed for

## **Our lands, once rich and bountiful, are being transformed into soils of brass and skies of iron. The end result will be empty storehouses.**

*in Prophecy*—should expect agricultural production to become extraordinarily difficult and, as a result, the price of food at the store to increase.

One prophecy reads, "And also I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest: and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered" (Amos 4:7). Rain in one city, drought in another: Is there a more apt description of the weather patterns in North America, Britain and Australasia?

These nations are cursed because they have rejected the God who is the source of their wealth. "For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal. Therefore I will return, and take away my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof, and will recover my wool and my flax given to cover her nakedness" (Hosea 2:8-9). God gave North America, Britain and Australia their agricultural prosperity. *Now He is in the process of taking it away!*

This is a tragedy of gargantuan proportions!

our obedience to God's law and cursed for our disobedience. The Bible is full of such promises.

God is not a harsh and unforgiving God. He always provides a solution and a way to escape. Whether it's on a national or an individual level, the way to escape the looming crisis lies in repentance and obedience. If you can recognize that the weather abnormalities, agricultural devastation and soon-coming food shortages are curses from God, then understand *why*—and consider what changes you need to make in order to be protected from these tragedies.

To learn more about what it means to be truly repentant and how to have more blessings in your life, request our free booklet *Repentance Toward God*. ■

**The Bible speaks extensively on the future of agriculture in the modern nations of Israel. You may find our booklet *The Lion Has Roared* helpful in guiding your scriptural study of this subject.**



crease in food prices in consecutive quarters since June 1983, and the largest year-on-year jump since 1989" (ibid.).

Fruit prices in Australia rose 52 percent overall for the June quarter. After Cyclone Larry lashed northern Queensland earlier in the year, banana prices in Australia jumped 250 percent. Across Australia the prices of a variety of foods, including dairy products, bread, beef, snack foods and lamb, are increasing.

This sobering trend affecting America, Britain and Australia has far-reaching potential. If agricultural production continues to decline, the peoples of these nations could suffer from more than just price hikes. Bible prophecy tells us that these nations will face an actual *shortage of food!*

### **Cursed in the Land**

Consider the agricultural wealth of

# Who Won?

Israel and Hezbollah both claimed victory. One of them is dead wrong. BY JOEL HILLIKER



**T**HE NOISE AND BLAZE OF WAR engulfed the Middle East for 34 days in July and August before settling down under a fragile cease-fire. Both sides immediately claimed victory. Hezbollah's leader crooned, "We are today before a strategic, historic victory, without exaggeration." Israel's leader boasted, "[T]he [Israeli Defense Forces] warriors always had the upper hand." America's leader concurred: "Hezbollah suffered a defeat in this crisis."

These versions of this war cannot both be true. Events will soon put the lie to one of them, as it becomes clear whether Israel or Hezbollah took the hardest hit and grew most vulnerable.

But even the facts of what really happened during those 34 days reveal much.

Hezbollah proved its mastery of the missile attack, firing 4,000 rockets in 34 days. Israel proved itself helpless to stop them; the fiercer Israel's retaliation, the heavier the rockets came.

Hezbollah garnered the sympathies of the press and the international community, taking on legendary heroic status among Muslims worldwide. Israel became almost universally condemned for defending itself; the world branded its offensive—which was so restrained the enemy never seemed even daunted—as "disproportionate and excessive."

Syria and Iran, Hezbollah's sponsors, despite all the funding, training, weaponry, tactical support and manpower they supplied, emerged after 34 days without having suffered even a whiff of

punishment. Israel, on the other hand, looks like it is due for another trying political shake-up at the highest levels.

Who won? In many ways, the war couldn't have gone worse for Israel—nor better for Hezbollah, Syria and Iran, and the general forces of Islamist extremism.

*The gravity of this historic moment can hardly be overstated.* The Israel of wars past—winning decisive, lightning-fast victories over multiple Arab states—has been visibly replaced by an Israel that failed to defeat a fighting force of only a few thousand well-prepared terrorists.

Step back and you see that, for Israel, this is but a step on the road to ruin.

## A Tough Year

The last 12 months have been a chamber



**VICTORY?** Israeli soldiers rejoice as they leave Lebanese territory after the UN cease-fire was approved. But was this really a victory for Israel?



REUTERS

Ariel Sharon, suffered a massive stroke. Hints of conspiracy still linger concerning what may have triggered this event. His vacant office was filled by Ehud (“we are tired of fighting, tired of winning”) Olmert. The same month, the terrorist group Hamas (“*jihād* is our path and dying as martyrs for the sake of Allah is our biggest wish”) won an election to become the political voice of Palestinians.

Ashes from that political explosion have been settling on the landscape ever since. The government has continued to deal with Palestinian suicide bombers blowing themselves up in Israel’s streets and residential areas. Gaza, flooded with terrorist weapons and manpower since Israel vacated, has served as a staging ground for Palestinian terrorist groups and a launching pad for their rockets. In June, Hamas tunneled into Israel and attacked an Israeli military post, killing two soldiers and taking one captive. And in the background, through it all, has been the voice of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, issuing weekly or daily pronouncements about wiping Israel out or moving it to Europe; about overrunning Israel and the United States with tens of thousands of martyrs; about obtaining nuclear technology that could easily become nuclear weapons; about hastening cataclysmic world war in order to bring about the return of the messiah of Islam.

How can such a crushing litany of crises not take its toll on a nation’s outlook—even its will to survive? In March, a study showed 63 percent of Israelis willing to give up parts of Jerusalem in exchange for “real peace” with the Palestinians—with 75 percent of those open to such concessions admitting that real peace with the Palestinians is impossible. Evidently war-weariness and simple logic don’t coexist easily.

As Israel jadedly hoped for an end to the trouble, its enemies took this as their cue to ramp up its troubles even more.

**Starting a War**

On July 12, Iran unleashed Hezbollah. The terrorist group, camped out on Israel’s northern frontier, captured two Israeli soldiers and ignited a rocket campaign against Israeli towns and cities. The fact quickly became painfully clear that Hezbollah had meticulously planned for the resulting war.

From the beginning, Hezbollah’s strategy was tactically defensive. Dr. George Friedman analyzed it this way: “The group created a network of forti-

fications in southern Lebanon that did not require its fighters to maneuver and expose themselves to Israeli air power. Hezbollah stocked those bunkers so fighters could conduct extended combat without the need for resupply. It devolved command to the unit level, making it impossible for a decapitation strike by Israel to affect the battlefield. ... Hezbollah acquired anti-tank weapons from Syria and Iran that prevented Israeli armor from operating without prior infantry clearing of anti-tank teams” (August 15). In essence, *it was a war of survival*, perfectly calibrated to exploit Israel’s weaknesses and force it into just the kind of high-casualty conflict Prime Minister Olmert had hoped to avoid. Apparently Hezbollah had been taking notes during his “we are tired of winning” speech and had sought a way to indulge him with an opportunity to experience *losing*.

The sophistication of Hezbollah’s weaponry was also impressive. A few examples tell the story. Israel was supposedly surprised to learn on July 14, when an Israeli missile boat off the Lebanese coast was almost sunk, that Hezbollah possessed a radar-guided c-802 anti-ship missile that Iran had acquired from China. One of the anti-tank weapons Dr. Friedman mentioned above has a greater range than that of Israel’s anti-tank weapons. Hezbollah rockets reached as far as the town of Afula, about seven miles south of Nazareth; Israeli Defense Forces claim they were Fajr-5 rockets, which have a 200-pound warhead (double that of the Fajr-3 rockets that hit Haifa, further north) and a 45-mile range. And one cannot ignore the sheer *volume* of rockets Hezbollah’s warriors launched: 4,000 in 34 days—enough to fire them almost indiscriminately (as the *Wall Street Journal’s* Daniel Henninger wrote, they used “unguided artillery Katyusha rockets like bullets”)—and there is the awful possibility that even more powerful armaments have been kept in reserve.

In this round of war, however, Hezbollah wanted only to *avoid defeat*—something no enemy of Israel has ever managed to do. In that respect, it scored a great triumph. Hezbollah successfully launched and survived Israel’s longest war since the War of Independence in 1948, proving itself a more formidable enemy—at least, *to the Israel of today*—than all the Arab states Israel has ever faced.

**War Weariness**

By itself, any single war of the type Israel

of horrors for the Jewish state.

It was only last summer that Israel undertook the painful project of forcibly evacuating all Jewish presence from the Gaza Strip. In return for gifting the Palestinians this territory, Israelis were treated to the sight of Palestinian terrorist rallies and marches of celebration and victory, with masked gunmen firing assault rifles into the air and burning Israeli and American flags. The different groups made clear their commitment not to disarm but rather to move their armed struggle against Israel to its next battleground: Jerusalem.

Just months later, the entire political scene in the region flipped on its head. In January, Israel’s government plunged into disarray when the nation’s stalwart leader,

waged with Hezbollah would tax the resources and capabilities of any government. Trouble is, Israel is dealing with a whole handful of such problems: threats from Gaza, internal terrorist groups, Syria, Iran and elsewhere. Of all the crises it has faced since becoming a state in 1948, it has never seen so many simultaneously.

Israeli leaders and citizens simply cannot continue to operate under such pressure without the onset of severe political and mental fatigue—which gives birth to other problems such as national disunity, lack of willpower and internal conflicts.

With lethal missiles arbitrarily drop-

ping from the sky, Israelis in northern Israel hid and fled. The streets lay deserted as a million people holed up in shelters and over 300,000 flooded south, seeking refuge with relatives or in hotels. The government even offered state-sponsored four-day holidays to northerners, a project Olmert described as being “without precedent in the history of the State of Israel.”

In past wars, Israelis have shown considerable resolve in staying put despite such threats. Associated Press, which called this characteristic stoicism as a “traditional Israeli resistance to mass

flight by its citizens in the face of war,” commented that “a month of war and thousands of Hezbollah rockets appear to have ended that stigma” (August 8).

One can hardly fault people for running from danger—in this case, a heavy, steady rain of rockets being launched by terrorists. Unfortunately, however, the sight of 300,000 Israelis on the run unquestionably strengthened Hezbollah’s reputation in the Muslim world. And running isn’t a viable response to rocket attacks for long, considering how tiny Israel is. There simply aren’t many hiding places.

The physical flight was matched by

## Manipulating the Media

ONE effective component of Hezbollah’s attack on Israel was its canny media campaign. One must not overlook the efforts the Islamists invested in their propaganda operations, nor underrate the success these efforts achieved. They did much to swing international opinion against Israel and to their own favor—a crucial key to Hezbollah’s victory.

The roots of Hezbollah’s manipulation of the media actually trace back to Vietnam. There, in plain view of the world, *a peasant army put the United States military to flight*. This was a monumental geopolitical event that, in the eyes of Islamists, was worthy of thorough study. With help from the Soviet Union, Islamists focused particular attention on the successful role of the antiwar movement in the U.S., amplified by the anti-military media, in applying political pressure on Washington.

During the 1970s, as the Soviet Union became more involved in the Middle East, it began to exploit the Palestinian revolutionary movement. “To further their joint aims, Moscow advised the [Palestinian Liberation Organization] to develop a political image that would gain support from Western elites,” wrote Yossef Bodansky in *The High Cost of Peace*. Thus, Arafat sent a delegation to Vietnam to meet with the Communists there. “[T]he Vietnamese told their Palestinian guests about their success in manipulating the Western media, to the point that they had a direct impact on the United States’ ability to wage war against North Vietnam and the Vietcong.”

The chief of the PLO delegation, Abu Iyad, bemoaned the discrepancy in the West’s attitudes toward the Vietnamese and the Palestinian armed struggles—regarding one as a noble endeavor and the other as rank terrorism. The Vietnamese suggested it was just a matter of packaging. They then coached the PLO to develop a more media-friendly program—one that, while retaining the ultimate objective of eliminating Israel, acknowledged the fact that “in the near term it would be politically advantageous to accept transient phases and even interim solutions. . . . The Vietnamese team in Hanoi introduced the Palestinians to such issues as dealing with the U.S. media and with liberal political circles and institutions, and they provided insight on the power of the Jewish community. Disinformation and psychological-warfare experts assisted the Palestinians in formulating a ‘moderate political program’”—one that used “moderate, even vague” language that appeared nonthreatening to Israel. According to Abu Iyad, the PLO adopted the Vietnamese plan straight away. Soon after, at the Twelfth Palestinian National Council on June 19, 1974, it began its Phases Program/Phased Plan that accepted—implicitly as only an interim step—a Palestinian entity existing on less than the totality of the present State of Israel.



**SUSPICIOUS** Both of these images are supposedly a Lebanese woman mourning the loss of her home. The only problem is that the pictures are dated several weeks apart, and in two different locations—but the woman (and even her clothing) is the same.

As a measure of the strategy’s success, Yasser Arafat spoke before the United Nations for the first time that November, accepted by the international community as a legitimate head of state.

Time and again, Western nations have demonstrated a deep desire to believe that, deep down, all men are reasonable—not so different from us. Neville Chamberlain saw a fundamentally good man in Adolf Hitler. Yitzhak Rabin and Bill Clinton were convinced that Arafat, despite all his rhetoric to the contrary, in his heart, wanted to live harmoniously alongside Jews; this naive view was shared by the Nobel committee members who gave Arafat a peace prize.

Over the last 50 years, the ideals of political correctness have so saturated the Western intellectual world—including the realms of international diplomacy and newsmedia—that the fault for virtually all problems and grievances on the planet has been laid at the feet of the U.S., Britain and Israel, while ruthless villains have come to be routinely excused for whatever vile behavior they may choose to engage in simply because they are “victims.”

The forces of Islamist extremism have long been taking notes on this deep-seated weakness of Israel’s and America’s, determined to exploit it in every way possible. In Hezbollah’s case in its war on Israel, this effort took various forms.

As we reported last month (“Hezbollah’s Propagandists”), terrorist “press officers” chaperoned reporters through bombed-out wreckage in Lebanon showing apparent evidence of destroyed civilian life in an effort to undermine Israel’s claim to be targeting only military sites. In some cases, they opportunistically boosted these images’ emotional

an intellectual flight. Though Israelis flocked to support their government's actions against Hezbollah early on, a month of war exposed cracks in Israel's unity and resolve. Voices of protest over the ground campaign began to emerge from leading intellectuals and politicians; the numbers at antiwar protests started to swell. As Israeli casualties mounted and images of bloodied and dirty soldiers saturated media reporting on the war, it became more apparent that many Israelis are simply tired of the fighting.

"We are getting lost in pursuit of a victory that is not there," wrote main-

stream columnist Nahum Barnea in the *Yediot Aharonot* daily. "There is no point investing in a lost cause," he wrote, urging Olmert to "take what they're offering you ... and run."

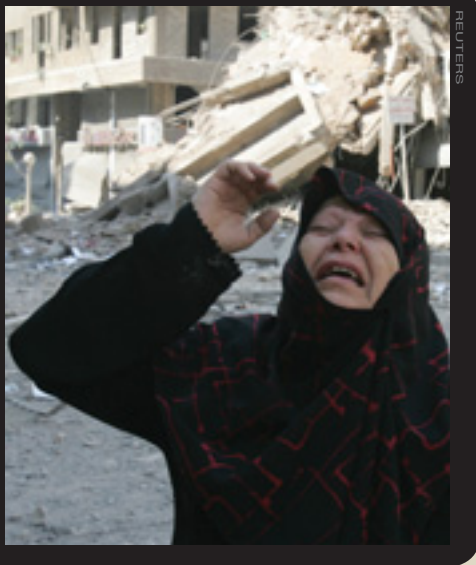
At the same time, the fractures that became evident among the citizenry were magnified within the leadership.

### Divided Leadership

Though the Israeli government has traditionally seen politicians across all party lines (and there are a lot of those in Israel) pull together in time of war, during this recent war, however, politicians and military leaders sparred so violently over strategy that *Israel Insider's* Jonathan Ar-

iel wrote, "Relations between the country's political and military leadership are at the lowest point in the country's history, on the verge of a crisis" (August 9).

Ariel was commenting on a dramatic shake-up the previous day in the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF), when Northern Command Chief Maj. Gen. Udi Adam was abruptly replaced by Deputy IDF Chief of Staff Maj. Gen. Moshe Kaplinksy—an awkward and radical change of command in the middle of a war. Some viewed Adam as a scapegoat sacrificed to deflect criticism from leaders higher up. Adam himself remarked that he had been *restrained* from fighting a truly effective war.



value, parading dead bodies of children before cameramen *for hours at a time*. The truth is not that Israel bombed indiscriminately—in fact, it scrupulously tried to avoid civilian deaths—but that Hezbollah *deliberately launched its attacks from civilian areas, purposefully endangering and sacrificing Leba-*

*nese citizens* (which is a war crime) in order to garner international sympathy when Israel retaliated.

CNN's Nic Robertson, who created a widely broadcast piece that was quite sympathetic to Hezbollah after receiving one of its "guided tours," admitted, "[T]here's no doubt about it: *Hezbollah has a very, very sophisticated and slick media operations*. ... They had control of the situation." Alternatively, journalists who reported the "wrong" information were harassed. *Time* magazine contributor Christopher Allbritton, in his blog while reporting from southern Lebanon, wrote, "To the south, along the curve of the coast, Hezbollah is launching Katyushas, but I'm loathe to say too much about them. The Party of God [Hezbollah] has a copy of every journalist's passport, and they've already hassled a number of us and threatened one."

A primary formula Islamists terrorists use is what Ilana Freedman, who has worked in counter-terrorism for two decades, calls "The first story out wins." A classic example was the infamous "Jenin massacre" of 2002, when the Palestinian news agency ran to the world's newsmedia describing an Israeli door-to-door raid as an Israeli "atrocious" in which 500 innocent civilians were massacred. Despite the fact that an independent UN commission later found that only 56 Palestinians, mostly terrorists, had been killed, the story stuck. In June, Hamas charged that an Israeli gunboat had fired on a Palestinian family on a Gazan beach, brutally killing seven people. Though that version of events made headlines around the world (for example, the *Guardian* reported, "A barrage of Israeli artillery shells rained down on a busy Gaza beach yesterday, killing seven Palestinians, three of them children"),

an investigation ruled out rocket or artillery fire causing the event. Rather, evidence pointed to *an explosive device planted by Hamas*. "But," as Freedman noted, "the first version of the story is what is remembered—indeed, has become a staple of anti-Israel rhetoric, supporting Hamas's charges of Israeli brutality" (*New York Post*, August 8).

Hezbollah used this technique with precision during its war with Israel. Case in point: Qana. Seven hours after an Israeli airstrike, Hezbollah reported 56 Lebanese, including 34 children, had been killed. Yet, the actual number, as reported by the International Red Cross, was 28 deaths, 16 of them children. "Wise media spinners rush to fill the immediate news vacuum," wrote Freedman. "Indeed, they are 'miraculously' on the spot when the story breaks. To gain their PR advantage, they are willing to stage events and manufacture stories, which they spin into sensational, headline-grabbing sound- and sight-bites. Then they rush to get their first story out to the broadest possible audience."

Naked media support for Hezbollah emerged in some bizarre ways. A Reuters photographer was caught doctoring photos in order to increase their sensational appeal and cast Israel in a negative light; evidence that surfaced on the blogosphere forced Reuters to fire him and pull over 900 photos from its database—after, of course, a number of them featured in some of the world's most prominent dailies, including an August 5 front-page photo for the *New York Times*. The Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America suggested other questionable images from Associated Press and Agence France Presse could also have been staged and distributed for use around the world.

It is impossible to calculate the effects of this media trickery on global opinion, but it should not be underestimated. In the end, a sovereign nation was roundly castigated for trying to defend itself against acts of war that threatened the security of its citizens, while a group of terrorists emerged, in many circles, as martyrs and heroes. Arab nations raged with indignation over Israel's supposed ruthlessness; even traditional allies of Israel condemned its actions as "disproportionate." An increase in anti-Semitic acts cropped up in nations all over the world during Israel's campaign in Lebanon. The longer the war raged, the wider the gap became between Israel and most of the rest of the world.

British author Melanie Philips made this poignant comment on her website: "If, heaven forbid, this does turn into a second Holocaust, we can now discern the key difference from the first one. This time the Jews will be blamed for their own destruction."

Surely Hezbollah and its sponsors, as they sit back and assess the results of their efforts, are congratulating themselves for their success in manipulating global opinion by using the media to their best advantage.

**JOEL HILLIKER**

“According to informed sources, there is an almost total breakdown in trust and confidence between the General Staff and [Olmert’s] office,” Ariel wrote. He described a war plan the Israeli military had been perfecting for some two to three years—a swift, multifaceted offensive intended to break Hezbollah in 10 to 14 days—of which Olmert ditched all but certain components of the air attack. “Whatever his reasons, the bottom line, according to these military sources, is that [Olmert] castrated the campaign during the crucial first days” (emphasis mine).

Knowing what we know of Olmert, the fact that a disconnect quickly emerged between him and the military leaders is unsurprising. He was made prime minister by a slim percentage of Israeli voters after having campaigned on a pledge to extract tens of thousands of Jews from West Bank settlements. After winning, he made this inane declaration to Palestinian leaders: “We are ready to compromise, to give up parts of the beloved land of Israel ... and evacuate, under great pain, Jews living there, in order to create the conditions that will enable you to fulfill your dream and live alongside us.” His speech last June—“We are tired of fighting, we are tired of being courageous, we are tired of winning, we are tired of defeating our enemies”—is not exactly the kind of language that fires up the troops for the lethal business of war-making.

Olmert’s jettisoning of the IDF’s functional strategy was simply another manifestation of the same wishful thinking that makes the idea of retreating from the West Bank so attractive to him. Ariel continued, “[A]ccording to military sources, Israel finds itself getting bogged down by a manifestly inferior enemy due to the limitations placed on the IDF by the political leadership. This has been construed by the enemy as a clear sign that Israel is in the hands of a leadership not up to the task, lacking the required experience, guts and willpower.”

As the UN-mandated cease-fire came into effect on August 14, voices within Israel descended upon the prime minister in crushing condemnation—even demanding he leave office. *Haaretz* columnist Ari Shavit, for example, wrote, “There is no mistake Ehud Olmert did not make this past month. He went to war hastily, without properly gauging the outcome. He blindly followed the military without asking the necessary questions. He mistakenly gambled on air operations, was

strangely late with the ground operation, and failed to implement the army’s original plan, much more daring and sophisticated than that which was implemented. And after arrogantly and hastily bursting into war, Olmert managed it hesitantly, unfocused and limp. He neglected the home front and abandoned the residents of the north. He also failed shamefully on the diplomatic front. ... Post-war battered and bleeding Israel needs a new start and a new leader. It needs a real prime minister” (August 11).

Sadly, however, Israel has no strong leaders to fill the office—certainly none that voters appear ready to rally around. It appears the nation is about to be plunged into yet another political imbroglio—something that will only embolden Israel’s enemies all the more.

Considering the stark contrast between Israel’s impotence against Hezbollah and Israel’s past victories, the most monumental outcome of the war was this: IN THE MINDS OF MUSLIMS, IT EVAPORATED ISRAEL’S AIR OF INVINCIBILITY.

Hezbollah called Olmert’s bluff, and Israel lost. Decades of decisive Jewish ascendancy over Arab foes melted into ancient history, mere myth. The sense of Israel’s military pre-eminence shattered into a thousand shards. To Muslims, the unthinkable became viable; the impossible, inevitable.

The door is open for the next attack.

**A Broader War**

In one sense, speaking of this 34-day war as a victory for Hezbollah is misleading. Why? Because it was not an end in itself. Hezbollah’s missiles were less about killing Israelis than about *laying the groundwork for future, deadlier operations.*

Truly, these rockets achieved much for the forces of Islamist extremism. They manifestly chipped away at the willpower and political, mental and physical fortitude of the Israeli government, military and people. They also helped solidify Iran’s position as the pivot of the Middle East’s balance of power. “The Iranians,” wrote Stratfor, “have taken their desire to emerge as the regional hegemon to the next level” (August 9). “Activating Hezbollah in Lebanon and exposing Israel’s weakness—when no Arab state dared to confront the Jewish state militarily—has only reinforced Iran’s ability to reconfigure the balance of power in the Middle East in favor of the Shia” (August 15). Quite a triumph for the enemies of Israel.



**NEW HERO** Pakistani Muslims celebrate the cease-fire holding pictures of Hezbollah’s leader.

But you can be sure they won’t just sit around patting each other on the back for long. They drew blood—their ranks are flush with new recruits—they are eager for more. The foundation has been laid for a broader, more direct conflict. There is a distinct feeling among millions of Muslims that the time for Israel’s destruction has arrived.

Fatigued by crisis and geopolitically isolated, Israel is on the threshold of breakdown. Iran, Hezbollah and radical Islamists, on the other hand, are on the opposite end of the spectrum: *They believe they are on the threshold of achieving their greatest goal.* The more exhausted the Jews become, the more energized and excited their foes grow.

At the beginning of January—when Ariel Sharon was still prime minister and Israeli politics still relatively stable; when Hezbollah was quietly burrowing into Lebanon’s landscape; before Hamas had taken over the Palestinian leadership—*Trumpet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry wrote a letter to certain *Trumpet* subscribers in which he warned that a crisis of massive proportions could erupt in Israel by the end of 2006. “You need to watch Jerusalem as never before. We are going to see one half of that city fall very soon. IT COULD HAPPEN THIS YEAR—2006!” he wrote. Based on a prophecy in Zechariah



14:2, he outlined a specific event about to occur in Israel: the Palestinians taking half of Jerusalem.

Iran, which sponsors Hezbollah and has strong ties to Hamas, has long held the goal of taking control over the Holy City. Could developments over the past year, culminating in Hezbollah's war with Israel, be preparations for Iran and the Palestinians to conquer half of Jerusalem?

Keep your eyes on Iran. It will be central to any crisis that occurs in Israel. "Over the years, Tehran has worked hard to position its henchmen in and around Israel," Mr. Flurry wrote in January. "Its efforts are paying off. Hamas now controls the strategic Gaza Strip and major parts of the West Bank—and dominates Palestinian politics! Hezbollah has grown into a highly organized, well-armed, well-financed organization in neighboring Lebanon. To the south, in Egypt, the Iran-friendly Muslim Brotherhood is growing increasingly popular.

"IRAN HAS A PASSION TO SEIZE CONTROL OF JERUSALEM—AND NOW IT HAS ISRAEL SURROUNDED! The Jewish nation is being 'besieged' (Deuteronomy 28:52).

"Iran has surrounded and infiltrated Israel. Now the city of Jerusalem is on the VERGE OF DESTRUCTION!" Perhaps nothing demonstrates Iran's new boldness better than its having unleashed Hezbollah

in this latest war. And with Israel now being reigned in by the international community in the form of a UN cease-fire, Iran can gear up to fight another day.

The crisis in Israel is not about to end. It is about to intensify.

Everything is gearing toward Iran and radical Islamists igniting a broader, more destructive crisis in Israel, specifically Jerusalem. The *Trumpet* warned about it earlier this year, and now Hezbollah's rockets have laid the groundwork for it.

The *Trumpet* has said it before, but it is worth repeating: *Watch Jerusalem.*

### A Changed Region

This war altered the geopolitical reality of the Middle East in many ways.

Israel is a changed entity. It concluded 34 days of operations seeking protection from an international peacekeeping force, hoping the terrorists would oblige the UN and stop firing missiles. No longer is it the feisty, self-sufficient power of yesteryear.

Make no mistake: Any notion the Hezbollah threat has been permanently eliminated is wishful thinking. Lebanon immediately announced it would not forcefully disarm the group, expecting Hezbollah to disarm itself. The UN wasn't even charged with the job.

The fact that Israel agreed to this weak sham of a plan shows that it has *stopped looking for a long-term solution* to this problem. It is content with just buying time.

The Middle Eastern Muslim world is also profoundly changed. "In Lebanon, Hezbollah has emerged as a massive political force," wrote George Friedman. "Syria, marginalized in the region for quite a while, becomes more viable as Hezbollah's patron. Meanwhile, countries like Jordan and Egypt must reexamine their own assumptions about Israel. And in the larger Muslim world, Hezbollah's victory represents a victory for Iran and the Shia. Hezbollah, a Shiite force, has done what others could not do. This will profoundly [affect] the Shiite position in Iraq—where the Shia, having first experienced the limits of American power, are now seeing the expanding boundaries of Iranian power.

"We would expect Hezbollah, Syria and Iran to move rapidly to exploit what advantage this has given them before it dissipates. This will increase pressures not only for Israel, but also for the United States, which is engaged in combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as in a vague confrontation with

Iran. For the Israelis and the Americans, restabilizing their interests will be difficult" (op. cit.).

Israel may feel it dodged a bullet this time—but the next time is coming, and soon. Columnist Mark Steyn well summarized the greater challenge facing Israel by quoting a warning from the Irish Republican Army, after it tried and failed to kill Margaret Thatcher in the Brighton bombing: "[We] only have to be lucky once," the terrorists said. "You will have to be lucky always."

### Cursed

Why has everything gone so wrong for the Jewish state? The Everest of crises that overshadows it cannot simply be blamed on poor strategy, weak soldiery or bad PR. Its problems preceded its present government, and they will continue even if Israelis undertake the messy business of installing a new government. Israel is at a dead end, and it simply *does not have the means to free itself.*

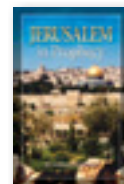
As we wrote last month about the United States ("How to Lose a War"), Israel's basic problem is *spiritual*. The nation has turned its back on God, spurned His commandments, and trusted in itself. And as a result, it is now under a *curse*. Read Leviticus 26:15-32.

Anciently, when the people of Israel obeyed God, He would fight and win their battles for them. As Psalms 124:1-5 state, if not for God, Israel would have perished. But when Israel rejected God, it repeatedly suffered the curses of defeat and captivity.

Today, the times and dates have changed, but the story is still the same. If the Jews would only turn to God and repent of their national and personal sins, God would hear their cry and deliver them from all their enemies. That is the only durable and sustainable solution. Every humanly devised solution will prove to be just another curse.

Biblical prophecy spells out just what Israel's immediate future will look like if it continues on its present course. God pleads, "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" ■

**A detailed biblical explanation of Israel's future can be found in our free booklet *Jerusalem in Prophecy.***





# SELLING Britain's Corporate Crown Jewels

**The continual loss of ownership of the companies that helped make Britain great is a sad reminder of this nation's fall from superpower status. BY ROBERT MORLEY**

**I**F YOU EVER VISIT BRITAIN, WHY DON'T YOU JUMP INTO your rented Mini Cooper and go out and treat yourself to a meal at Harry Ramsden's, Britain's largest fish and chips chain—don't forget the HP sauce for an added touch. For dessert, why not try a KitKat Bar or any other Rowntree chocolate product? On your way to the Savoy, swing by Harrods or the Body Shop and pick up a present for that special someone. It will make your evening just that more relaxing as you sit back and enjoy that Manchester United Soccer match while sipping a glass of Bass Ale or Beefeater gin and tonic.

But as you do these things, be aware that this is no longer a 100-percent traditional British experience. All of these British icons are now foreign-owned—relics of a once-mighty British corporate empire.

The value of British companies purchased by foreigners more than doubled from \$41 billion in 2004 to a record \$91 billion last year. If trends continue, 2006 will set another massive record. During just the first half of this year, foreigners spent \$112 billion snapping up UK firms—a 90 percent increase over the first six months of last year.

These figures reflect the fact that the UK is the world's leading takeover target. “[M]any of the world's largest cross-border takeovers in 2005 targeted UK-based companies,” the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development reported (*Independent*, June 29).

According to the *Guardian*, “Britain is being sold off at a rate unprecedented in modern times. If the foreign takeover bids announced or hinted at over the past few months all go through, airports, ships, banks, gas pipelines, stock exchanges, chemical plants and glass factories will fall into foreign ownership. Yet there is no debate; scarcely an eyebrow is raised. In any other country there would be uproar” (February 17, emphasis ours).

Many of these lost companies are among the most technological-ly advanced and strategically developed corporations in the world.

Here is just a partial list of former British-owned corporate crown jewels—a treasure chest's worth of sparkling industrial gems that now lie in the hands of foreigners:

## AIR AND SEA GATES

The battle for the world's largest airport operator, British-owned BAA, is over. After months of beating back the hostile takeover attempt by Spanish construction giant Grupo Ferrovial and bids by an American-led Goldman Sachs consortium, BAA fell to the Spanish predator in June.

London's *Independent* called the \$19 billion deal “the most dramatic example yet of the way in which strategic UK assets are falling to overseas bidders” (June 7).

Many considered BAA one of Britain's corporate crown jewels because it owns and operates airports that handle 63 percent of travelers going in and out of Britain. In Scotland, BAA handles 86 percent of all air travelers and manages airports at Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen. In London, the number of air travelers through BAA airports soars at 92 percent.

Besides providing jobs for thousands of employees, BAA plays a strategic role facilitating the movement of goods and people into and out of Britain and around the world. In essence, it is the keeper for the United Kingdom's air gates. Now, this strategic British icon is in the hands of a Spanish company.

Thus, BAA took its place alongside TBI, another British airport operator that last year was purchased by an international consortium which included Aena, the Spanish state-owned airports group.

And it is not just Britain's air gates that are being sold; its sea gates are also under siege.

Though Britain was once the dominant global power in trade, today many of Britain's ports and shipping companies are no longer home-owned. P&O (Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company)—a company founded 169 years ago during Britain's superpower days and that remains one of the world's largest shipping companies, with its unparalleled international infrastructure of container ports and ships—was purchased in March by the United Arab Emirates state-owned company Dubai Ports World for \$6.8 billion.

Then, in July, Associated British Ports, the largest UK ports operator, which handles a quarter of the nation's sea-borne trade from 21 domestic facilities, was cleared by regulators to be taken over by a foreign consortium for \$5.1 billion. In January, the former UK-owned PD Ports, which operates the UK's third-largest seaport, as well as other ports and shipping services around the country, was grabbed by another foreign corporation.

**AUTOMOTIVE SECTOR**



Several British manufacturers, including Rolls-Royce, Aston Martin, Bentley, Jaguar and MG Rover, are now all foreign-owned. American companies purchased Aston Martin and Jaguar; the Chinese, MG Rover; and the Germans, Rolls-Royce and Bentley.

**GAS AND ELECTRICITY**

Many of Britain's largest conventional power utilities are already foreign-owned. In 2002, German energy giant RWE Power bought Britain's third-largest energy supplier, NPower, which supplies electricity and gas to approximately 6 million customers. Another German energy giant, E.On, owns even more of Britain's energy distribution system. Through its subsidiary Powergen, E.On provides power and gas to 9 million British customers, making it Britain's second-largest electricity and gas provider. EDF Energy, the French state-owned energy giant, is Britain's fifth-largest electricity and gas provider.

Until recently, few questioned the wisdom of putting the nation's heat and electricity in the hands of foreign corporations. In commenting upon the recent proposed takeover of British utility Centrica by Russian state-owned Gazprom, however, Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown warned it could raise political issues. Gazprom is the company that cut off the gas supply to Ukraine and consequently much of Europe early this year in what was seen as a political spat between the two governments. Centrica is Britain's largest gas utility, supplying gas to 13 million homes.

**NUCLEAR POWER**

In February, British Nuclear Fuels (BNFL), the British state-owned nuclear power manufacturer, announced it had sold its power station construction arm, Westinghouse, to Japan's Toshiba corporation. The Prospect union, which represents several thousand engineers, scientists and managers at 22 sites, attacked the sell-off for "robbing Britain of new-build expertise" (*Morning Star*, February 7).



In July, the government confirmed that it is planning to sell part of its stake in the nuclear power firm British Energy, which manages eight of the UK's nuclear power stations and is the nation's largest electricity generator. In addition, Britain is in the process

of selling British Nuclear Group, the decommissioning division of BNFL. All these sell-offs are part of the government's deliberate strategy of disposing of all its nuclear assets.

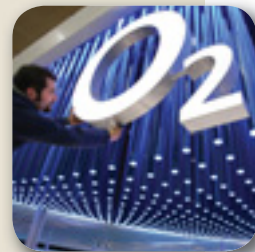
**WATER**

Britain's largest water utility, Thames Water, is foreign-owned, though it is up for sale once again by its German owners. Thames Water supplies water and wastewater services to millions of Britons and other customers around the globe. French-owned Veolia Water also owns and operates several UK utilities.



**TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

Communications providers have also been gobbled up. Last year, O2 PLC, a mobile-phone company, was sold to Spain's Telefonica for \$31.7 billion. In January this year, Marconi Corporation PLC, the last remaining British telecom manufacturer of any size, was purchased by Sweden's Ericsson. Marconi, a British institution whose roots trace back to 1897, was also considered a heavyweight in the British defense industry.



**INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURERS**

Founded in 1886, the strategic British-owned BOC Group, the world's second-largest industrial gases manufacturer, is in the process of being purchased by a smaller German rival, Linde. This deal will make Linde the world's foremost producer of industrial gases.

Another old imperial UK company, one that built parts for the famous World War II Spitfire fighter, Pilkington, was taken over in June. The 180-year-old glass company manufactured the windows that fighter pilots used to peer through. It has been bought by Nippon Sheet Glass, a comparatively smaller Japanese company; the merger creates the world's largest glass manufacturer.



A much more strategic British military company, the engineering firm Doncasters Group, was recently purchased by the United Arab Emirates state-owned company Dubai International Capital. Doncasters produces components for military vehicles and aircraft, including the M1-Abrams tank and the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter.

**FINANCE**



British banks have also been targets. Although some of the most famous names became foreign-owned during the 1980s, the trend is continuing. In 2004, Abbey National, Britain's sixth-largest bank and second-largest mortgage lender, was purchased by Spain's Banco Santander for \$16.7 billion. Alliance & Leicester PLC, another large British bank, is rumored to be on the auction block.

Even the London Stock Exchange is currently fighting off a hostile takeover attempt by Nasdaq.

**MEDIA**

Much of the news that Britons receive is now delivered through outlets controlled by non-UK interests. Foreign media-mogul Rupert Murdoch alone owns the *Times*, three other national newspapers and a television station.

**SPORTS**

Raleigh was once the world's largest manufacturer of bicycles. Now it is just another foreign-controlled name in an increasingly competitive global market and no longer even manufactures bicycles in the UK: Its new foreign owners closed up shop and moved production to Vietnam and other Asian countries.

It might be surprising to some, but Britain's probably most well-known, if not most adored, soccer team, Manchester United, is also foreign-owned.



The London *Times* lamented, “Big British companies are falling into foreign ownership almost daily,” with few protests (June 8). It called the sell-offs a “mass asset-stripping of the UK’s corporate infrastructure” (March 3).

Granted, British companies purchase foreign companies as well—but not nearly as many. During the first half of this year, for example, while 2,401 UK firms were gobbled up, British companies bought only 667 overseas businesses.

“[W]ith this rate of takeover, within a generation most British workers outside the public sector will be working for foreign companies,” the *Guardian* reported. “The scale of what is happening is truly breathtaking. ... [N]o other economy is as open as Britain’s or makes takeovers so easy” (op. cit.).

**Why UK Firms Have Fallen So Quickly**

Today, most shareholders and CEOs don’t care who is buying their companies—they are more concerned about the share-price premium they are receiving by being taken over. If shareholders can buy a stock one day and sell it the next for an immediate profit, most people would say they made a good investment. Similarly, if you were to ask CEOs what their primary duty is, the top answer would probably be to maximize shareholder returns.

One of the quickest ways to maximize returns is to be bought out. “Because of a focus on short-term performance, it’s extraordinarily difficult to say no to a cash bid .... [A]ll the big risks are in turning a bid down knowing the share price will fall,” says Paul Myners, chairman of Marks & Spencer, a large British retailer (*Economist*, March 4). In other words, corporate leaders are afraid of shareholder backlash due to short-term weakness in stock price from not pushing the sale through, even if the long-term prospects of the company would be better if they weren’t bought out. This is one of the reasons corporate boards find it so hard to resist foreign takeovers, and why many British companies are no longer acting in the best interest of their nation.

“Leading UK institutions are incapable of deferring gratification,” says Myners. “They are addicted to a hit from a cash bid” (*Daily Telegraph*, June 11).

Unfortunately for Britain, the fate of much strategic domestic industry and finance lies at the whims of shareholders and CEOs, who are usually more

concerned about immediate gains than about longer-term economic and national security consequences.

**Why No Watchmen Are Warning**

The *Guardian Weekly* says the reason British leaders are not speaking out against the rash of foreign takeovers is the nation’s desperate need for an inflow of foreign cash. Besides America, Britain’s economy needs the money more than any other. “Britain’s industrial and financial



**PRIME MINISTER TONY BLAIR DOESN’T SEEM TO HAVE ANY APPREHENSIONS OVER FOREIGN OWNERSHIP.**

jewels are being auctioned to pay for a record trade deficit. ... With no end to the trade deficit in sight, the auction will go on until the cupboard is bare” (February 17). Due to Britain’s trade deficit, foreign nations are holding increasing numbers of British pounds. If Britain doesn’t allow those pounds to be spent purchasing British assets, it risks foreigners dumping pound holdings and subsequently risks a devaluation of its currency.

Another reason more British leaders haven’t spoken out is their current open-market ideology. “British politicians of all parties, unlike their continental equivalents, could not care less if British industry ... is foreign-owned” (*Times*, March 3). Many of Britain’s leaders feel that takeovers are just part of the free market and capitalism. Further, some believe that since so many foreigners want

to invest in Britain, escalating foreign takeovers must be a sign of economic strength and therefore not of concern.

Indeed, British Prime Minister Tony Blair doesn’t seem to have any apprehensions over foreign ownership. In June, he said that foreign takeovers of airports, utility companies and other strategic companies are beneficial to consumers (*Independent*, June 9).

But that kind of thinking can be dangerous, especially when the rest of the world isn’t on the same playing field. In much of Europe, governments restrict foreign takeovers and tend to promote the creation of national champion corporations. Nations like Germany, France and Spain fight to protect their strategic industry from foreign takeovers. But the British apparently lack that basic sense of loyalty and national vision.

Yet, the question that pro-open-market and foreign-takeover enthusiasts fail to adequately address is: How can a nation consider it “economic strength” to have a giant portion of its corporations foreign-owned? Whatever problems it may solve or benefits it may provide in the near term, it creates far bigger problems in the long term.

**Dangers of Foreign Ownership**

One problem with foreign ownership is that once the domestic company is sold, its future dividends and profit streams are more likely to then flow outward from the home nation. As columnist Carl Mortished said, the whole job of these foreign corporations is to “invest overseas and repatriate the profits for the benefit of [their] shareholders” (*Times*, July 5). As increasing numbers of British companies are taken over, progressively more and more of the profits made from British consumers leave the country.

Additionally, foreign takeovers often result in job losses. In many cases, when British companies are bought out by their foreign competitors, jobs are shed in the resultant company consolidations. Also, some foreigners have purchased British firms only to obtain their technology; once they have it, owners can close shop and move production overseas to lower-cost countries, taking jobs with them. This is great news for shareholders of the foreign company, but bad news for British workers and local economies.

Another downside of foreign ownership is that more corporate decisions will



probably reflect the national interests of the new owners. For example, if an Italian corporation had to retrench or make cutbacks, it might consider it better to close a British factory than an Italian one.

In other words, once a domestic corporation is purchased, the destiny of its technology, operations, employees and profits resides in the hands of the new foreign owners.

Often, foreign owners are more reluctant than local owners to invest in developing or fixing infrastructure; in some cases, they can seem more interested in just pumping every last dollar possible from their new acquisitions. Take Thames Water, for example. Not once since the company was purchased by the German utility RWE has it passed regulatory leakage targets. Thames Water pipe infrastructure in Britain is in such disrepair that last year it leaked 196 million gallons a day. These massive leaks continue at a time when much of Britain is in the midst of drought and many Thames customers are banned from washing their cars and watering their lawns. Meanwhile, Thames Water profits soared more than 30 percent last year, partially because of a 21 percent price hike it charged customers. Amid a customer uproar, regulatory authorities are requiring Thames to spend more money in the future to replace old plumbing. Perhaps this is part of the reason behind the German company's decision to put Thames Water on the auction block while it is still profitable. Analysts predict that the German owners will make a \$3.2 billion profit over the original purchase price, in addition to yearly profits made since the 2000 purchase.

Economic considerations aside, there are other very real geopolitical problems with massive foreign ownership. Remember the Gazprom lesson. Should British consumers be so confident that European and other foreign countries would never attempt to coerce or threaten their nation?

Brian Winterflood, chairman of Winterflood Securities, certainly thinks there is good reason for worry. He says "people ought to be more responsible when they are selling off the national silver. ... We tend to do everything to extremes in the UK, and we are proud of being a capitalist example, but there is a danger in making ourselves hostage to foreign companies" (*The Express*, July 14).

How about Britain's seaports and

airports? Is it far-fetched to think that a foreign nation seeking to influence or browbeat Britain would do everything in its power to do so—including threatening port operations? Although Ferrovial (the company that purchased BAA), for example, is a public company, it is based in a foreign country, and its directors and shareholders are foreign. Is it a stretch to say that its loyalties lie outside the UK? Dubai Ports World, the company that purchased once-British P&O, is a state-owned corporation and will almost definitely maintain first loyalty to the United Arab Emirates, a country whose people have ties with many anti-Western radicals and extremists. What about defense contractors and nuclear power plants—should they be owned and operated by foreign interests?

## **IF THE RATE OF BRITISH COMPANIES BEING PURCHASED BY FOREIGNERS IS ANY INDICATION, THE NEXT DOWNTURN IN THE WORLD ECONOMY WILL BE EXTRAORDINARILY BAD FOR BRITONS.**

In times of peace and economic prosperity, foreign control of strategic industries and infrastructure may not be an immediate threat. But in times of major economic recessions—or, worse, times of geopolitical upheaval and war—the loss of ownership of national industries can be catastrophic.

If the rate of British companies being purchased by foreigners is any indication, the next downturn in the world economy will be extraordinarily bad for Britons.

### **Unique, and Forgotten, History**

British history is unique. Unlike the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Ottomans, the Spanish, Imperial Japan, or Imperial Germany, the British never set out to deliberately conquer other nations in an overt effort to build an empire. As Lord Palmerston once observed, it appeared the British had inherited an empire during "a fit of absentmindedness"! The reality is, they were literally *gifted* an empire by Almighty God in express fulfillment of a promise He made to the ancient patriarch of the Israelite peoples, Abraham.

*The United States and Britain in Prophecy* describes this history thoroughly and explains in vivid detail the remarkable truth that the nations of

the British Commonwealth (those of British heritage—primarily Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa) and the United States of America are the modern-day descendants of the Israelite tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. Their greatness is a direct result of God fulfilling His promises to Abraham and his seed.

Also unlike the other great imperial nations of history, the British never lost their empire to any conquering power. *They gave it away!* This has never happened in all of human history.

And now, not content with having given away its vast land possessions, a whole slice of global geography upon which "the sun never set," it seems the British nation is on a headlong rush to give up every last vestige of capital investment in British-owned businesses.

This is all the more remarkable when one considers that the rest of the world once rode on the coattails of the Industrial Revolution spawned on British soil, with British inventiveness underwritten by British capital. The reality is that Britain—which once ruled the waves, controlling every key sea and land gate in the world, the envy of the world for the sheer massiveness and opulence of its globe-girdling empire—this Britain, which under the leadership of Winston Churchill stood alone just 65 years ago against a tyranny that could have swept the world into its cruel grasp—is now in the process of selling off what remains of its once vast national business assets.

And, in large part, these gems of British ingenuity are being sold to nations that traditionally regarded Britain as, if not an enemy, then certainly a competitor during the former colonial era.

The fact is that, since World War II, Britain has embraced a foreign policy that has steadily changed it from the greatest imperial nation in man's history to one that is opening itself up to becoming a vassal of the greatest current colonizing power of this age, the European Union!

To deliberately choose to place strategic national assets in the hands of former enemies surely represents the most extreme perversity of government policy operating directly against Britain's own national interest. Britain will yet rue the day that it literally sold off the jewels of its own, homegrown national industries! ■





# Securing the Horn

**STANDING GUARD** A German Navy speedboat patrols the Gulf of Aden, near Djibouti. Germany's presence reflects its strategic interest in the region.

**Overshadowed by events in the Middle East, tensions grow off the Horn of Africa as nations vie to secure the vital marine passageway of the Red Sea.**

BY RON FRASER

**S**INCE THE NATIONAL ISLAMIC Front seized power in Sudan in 1989, the United States has eyed the Horn of Africa with increasing concern. Sudan—intent on building a radical Islamist state, sympathetic to Islam's most extreme factions such as al Qaeda—has operated as a gateway for the free movement of Islamic terror organizations throughout the Horn—a region that embraces Africa's central north-eastern coastlands including Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Eritrea, as well as Sudan.

Over the past 13 years, terrorists have carried out a series of attacks in this region aimed at U.S. and Israeli targets. In Mogadishu, Somalia, 18 American soldiers were killed during a terrorist attack in 1993. Terrorists struck in the region again in 1998, bombing American embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; these attacks killed

over 200 people and injured more than 4,000. Two years later, the USS Cole was struck by terrorists in Yemen, just off Africa's east coast, killing 17 American sailors. In November 2002, al Qaeda-supported terrorists targeted Israelis, bombing a hotel full of Jewish tourists and firing a surface-to-air missile at an Israeli airliner near Mombasa, Kenya.

The Horn of Africa is one of the most unstable regions on the planet. Ethiopia and Eritrea continue to spat over border issues. Ethiopia has troops on the ground inside Somalia to protect the country's nominal government. This is a response to the raging factional battles within Somalia—a country that since 1991 has lacked a functional central government—as the extremist, revolutionary Islamic Courts Council (ICC) movement consolidates its power over the weak, U.S.-backed Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG). Currently, control of the country lies in the hands

of various warlords, with the transitional government having little actual authority. In June this year, Islamist extremists took control of the capital, Mogadishu, and began consolidating their hold on various parts of the country, imposing strict sharia law. Reports reveal that a stream of sophisticated arms originating in Iran, Egypt and Libya is reaching the Islamic extremists. Meanwhile, in August, the fragile TFG was further destabilized when the cabinet was dissolved due to various rifts.

Sandwiched between Somaliland, Ethiopia and Eritrea, the tiny nation of Djibouti is of major strategic importance because of its harbor facilities located on the southwestern extremity of the Red Sea. France, the nation's old colonial master, maintains a strong presence there, as does the U.S., Djibouti being America's sole African military base. France and the U.S. remain situated in this country in an attempt to moni-

tor and limit the spread of Islamic terrorists—the region of the Horn being a stronghold for and a crossroads between various terror groups moving north and south through the Middle East.

Should Islam gain control of south Sudan (which is currently an autonomous region) and the whole of Somalia, the scene would be set for incursions into Ethiopia—which is already over 40 percent Islamic—with the prospect of imposing an Islamic regime there. If such a situation materializes, the whole of the region bordering the eastern and western perimeters of the Red Sea could fall into extremist Islamic hands. Such a phenomenon would give the Islamic nations total control not only of the geography within which Middle Eastern oil deposits reside, but also of the vital two sea links through which much of this oil is shipped: the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea.

This situation would be untenable for the European Union, China and Japan, and unthinkable for the U.S. in terms of maintaining any semblance of global stability. Nevertheless, this is the scenario currently playing out in the Horn of Africa.

If Somalia yields to Islamic extremist rule, Ethiopia and tiny Djibouti would become the sole remaining bastions of resistance to the spread of radical Islam in the extremists' push to engulf the Horn of Africa. Thus, the southward spread of Islamic extremism in east Africa is of tremendous concern to the major oil-consuming economies. Most crucially, that concern centers at present on extremist Islamic movements gaining traction in Somalia.

Western nations, notwithstanding the strong French and U.S. troop presence in Djibouti, remain divided in their opinions about what to do to stem the tide of Islamic extremism in Somalia, diverted as they are by ongoing conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere in the Middle East, not to mention North Korea's continuing antics, the risk of recurring violence in East Timor, and the need to secure their own borders from extremist Islamic incursion.

The West has basically left Ethiopia to go it alone in demonstrating any real resistance to what amounts to an Islamic revolution within Somalia. As one source states, this has simply "allowed the ICC to advance unhindered, contributed to the breakdown of the TFG and raised the probability of an armed confrontation between the ICC and Ethiopia, which would

be likely to generate a wave of ultra-nationalism in Somalia that would redound to the advantage of the Courts [ICC] and might ignite a regional war" (Power and Interest News Report, July 18).

A regional war in the Horn of Africa would be devastating to the Western alliance. With their troops already stretched to the limit striving to enforce peace on multiple fronts and now a fresh call to supply personnel and hardware in support of an international "peacekeeping" force in the Is-



raeli-Hezbollah imbroglio, the last thing anyone wants is a full-scale regional war in the Horn of Africa.

Yet circumstances are simply going to force the attention of the U.S., Britain and the EU onto this piece of strategic real estate. Somalia's coastlands border one of the most crucial of the globe's sea gates—the Gulf of Aden—giving access to the Red Sea, the waterway through which much of the Middle East's oil is transported.

Cleverly, as part of its long-range plan to sew up control of the globe's sea gates, China has steadily moved into this region. Already controlling Port Said, the eastern port on the Suez Canal, China is also involved in operations at Port Sudan, located at mid-point on the Red Sea's Africa coast. China has consolidated its political role in this vital seaway by building arms factories and associated infrastructure for the Islamic government in Sudan, thus aiding that government's efforts in the genocide of the

people of Darfur, a region that impinges on important oil and gas developments in which China has an intense interest.

But there is another nation that eyes the vital sea passage stretching from Suez to Aden, linking the Mediterranean with the Indian Ocean: Germany.

Somalia has figured twice in recent times in the post-unification revival of the German armed forces. In 1994, Germany conducted its first "out of area operation" since World War II by deploying a naval force to the Horn of Africa in support of the United Nations' UNOSOM mission in Somalia.

In February 2002, in the largest deployment of German naval vessels since World War II, the German government dispatched a naval task force to the Horn on a mission that involved the securing of its waters from incursion by terrorists. The Germans stayed. In fact, with the German Navy running security off Gibraltar in the Mediterranean and also off the Horn of Africa, no vessel presently sails through these marine choke points without being under the watchful eye of Germany. This continuing presence of the German Navy at these two crucial sea gates could well, given our

understanding of Bible prophecy for those regions, develop into a permanent presence for the foreseeable future. Having taken up such positions, it is highly unlikely that Germany will yield them up to any other nation.

Now, with indications that the German Navy may be called upon to ride shotgun off the coast of Lebanon, Germany's presence in the Mediterranean, especially the Middle East coastlines, will likely be further strengthened.

Germany and its vassal federation, the European Union, can ill afford to permit the spread of Islam in Africa to interrupt their present process of recolonizing—by trade, aid and "peacekeeping" operations—the politically weak but resource-strong nations of that continent, especially the oil-rich gulf region and its crucial seaways, access to which they need for their spreading global hegemony.

As the situation heats up in Somalia, watch for German interest and involvement in the Horn to heighten. ■



REUTERS (2)

**SECURED?** An EU border guard stands at the Poland border.

## EUROPE

### Emergency Border Squads?

IN MID-JULY, THE EUROPEAN Commission announced plans to create rapid reaction teams of border guards to deal with the European Union's illegal immigration crisis. The purpose of these teams is to respond to requests for help from EU member states.

The rapid border intervention teams are to provide "expertise and manpower"

for countries in difficulty. Consisting of border guards and experts, they will carry out border patrols. The EU leading security agency, Frontex, will draw up the operational plans, accompany the teams on the ground, and conduct regular training.

Planning such an operation "is currently complicated by a muddle of different

### British Muslims: London Bombing Justified

A POLL REPORTED ON IN THE August 7 *Scotsman* says almost one fourth of British Muslims believe the July 7, 2005, suicide bombings in London were justified by the British government's support of the U.S.-led "war on terror."

The poll, conducted for a British television news documentary, found sympathies with the terrorists skewed heavily toward younger Muslims—with those under age 24 twice as likely to say they "agreed" or "tended to agree" the attacks were justified as those who were over age 45. This indicates the danger, unless forcibly checked, will only grow greater with time.

Two other alarming poll results were reported by the *Scotsman*: "[N]early half of those polled, or 45 percent, believe the 9/11 attacks on New York were a conspiracy between the United States and Israel. ... A third of those questioned said they would rather live under Sharia [Islamic] law in the UK than British law."

Britain is infected with a deep sickness that gravely threatens its long-term health.



**OFFENDED** British Muslims protest.

Drastically committed to the politically correct ideals of multiculturalism it is now unable to bring itself to identify a plain threat to its existence, believing instead that all Islamist radicalism must be a reaction to some fault of Britain itself. Thus, having completely sacrificed its historical identity, the very concept of "Britishness," it permits all manner of hostile behavior in its midst, believing *tolerance* to be the only way to defuse tensions with radicals.

As a result, young Muslims, who are born in the country and grow up as beneficiaries of its largesse, are becoming radicalized, *not* in the madrassahs of Iran and Pakistan, *but actually on British soil*.

The 7/7 bombings were carried out by homegrown British boys who learned to hate their homeland so fiercely as to be willing to die in order to bring it hurt (the same was the case with those arrested in connection with the plot to blow up planes uncovered in August). This poll profoundly illustrates a sobering fact: That attack was but one manifestation of an enormously invasive danger lurking in the heart of the formerly Great Britain.

### Germany: Export World Champion

IN 2005, FOR the third year in a row, Germany was the world champion in exports. Last year, German companies exported US\$942 billion worth of goods, a 7.5 percent increase over 2004. One third of Germany's gross domestic product comes from exports. The export surplus last year was US\$193 billion, the largest in post-war history.



INDEXOPEN

The president of the Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce—which has 3.5 million member companies—referred to Germany as a "global hub" and said the nation has "a good chance of becoming a kind of competence center in many technology fields" (*Deutschland*, June-July 2006).

That prediction is certainly in line with Bible prophecy. In Revelation 18 we read of the power of the merchants influencing the development of the end-time European combine. With Germany at its core, this European power will be the economic hub for the world.

The reality is that many of these globalist financiers and businessmen are already strongly attached to the fulfillment of the Teutonic vision of the resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire. They are described as the "great men of the earth" in Revelation 18:23. We ought to remember that twice in the past century, such merchants marched in step with the military—with devastating results.

## Europeans to Replace Americans as Consumers of Choice?

THE EUROPEAN UNION has broken another record. In June, unemployment in the 12 nations that use the euro fell to its lowest level since the EU's statistical agency started keeping records in 1998 (ABC News, August 1). Although this may be good news for Europeans, it may not be so good for Americans.

An important shift within the global economy is taking place: Japanese and European consumers and companies, for the first time in years, have started spending again. The March 20 *Wall Street Journal* explained the significance of this shift: "[T]he re-emergence of spending in those nations has implications far beyond financial markets. For one thing, *it means that the world might be less dependent on the American consumer*, whose willingness to borrow and spend has been a primary driver of world growth for the past five years" (emphasis ours).

European and Asian consumption replacing that of the U.S. could have huge implications for Americans, because if China, Japan and other exporting countries no longer depend on the U.S. consumer to purchase their goods, they won't need to buy U.S. Treasuries to prop up the dollar.

So far, Americans have been able to avoid the consequences of living beyond their means because Asian nations, especially China and Japan, have chosen to willingly lend money to the U.S. To this point, this policy has benefited those nations: By readily buying up U.S. Treasuries, Asian nations have kept the value of the dollar high and the value of their currencies relatively lower.

Thus, American consumers have been able to purchase more Asian goods.

But now things are changing. As America's massive debts have increased, propping up the dollar in this way has become a greater credit risk. Foreign nations already hold hundreds of billions of dollars' worth of U.S. debt, and they seem increasingly reluctant to keep financing America's prof-



DREAMSTIME

ligate spending habits.

Today, as the *Wall Street Journal* implied, Europe is finally starting to rise

from years of slow economic growth. Unfortunately for America, if Europeans really do replace the U.S. as the consumers of choice, support for the dollar may start drying up—and that probably means higher interest rates, a weaker dollar, or both. Since so much of America's

economy in recent years has been based on rising housing prices and consumer spending, that is not good news for the U.S. economy.

## Secret Meetings Exposed

SIX OF THE EUROPEAN UNION'S largest nations are being criticized for conducting secret meetings and making important decisions about some of the Continent's most critical issues. These nations are not only holding regular meetings on issues such as immigration and terrorism, but often there is little to no public information about the agenda or outcome of the meetings.

A scathing report produced by the British House of Lords EU Committee slams "the lack of transparency at the meetings that have been taking place since 2003 and are attended by justice ministers from the UK, France, Italy, Germany, Spain and Poland" (EUobserver.com, July 19). The latest meeting occurred in March this year.

On July 18, the BBC reported, "Ministers at the talks, which took place over two days at the Baltic resort of Heiligendamm, Germany, discussed their joint response to terrorism, illegal immigration and organized crime. The [House of Lords] peers said they would expect decisions taken at those meetings to 'attract wide interest from the media,' the European Parliament and national parliaments. But they complained, '*This was not the case*'" (emphasis ours).

These leaders from the EU's six most powerful and influential states are not only discussing—but also *making decisions on*—critical, Continent-wide issues. These meetings, which have been occurring for three years, have received little to no attention from the media, the European Parliament or Europe's national governments, and there is barely any public record of their agenda or outcome.



GERARD CERLES/AP/GETTY IMAGES

**PLAYER** Spain's justice minister is one of several officials attending critical, little-publicized EU meetings.

The report stated that at the meeting in Germany earlier this year, "They discussed almost every aspect of EU policy of interest to them, and in many cases reached firm conclusions on the action which should be taken and the timetable for it. However, in the United Kingdom, the meetings went almost entirely unnoticed" (ibid.).

As a 25-member bloc of nations, the EU is currently incapable of making quick decisions and speaking with one mind. Conflicting national interests prevent the EU from asserting itself as a legitimate and unified power. Europe's six largest nations conducting clandestine meetings and making important decisions without involvement from the other 19 EU member states is likely the only way they can get something done! Still, this is yet another example of the anti-democratic nature of the European Union.

Of the six nations identified in the British House of Lords report, there is one nation in particular that we should keep our eyes on: Germany. This nation is already becoming the driving force behind European unification.

L A T I N A M E R I C A

## Cuban Oil to Break U.S. Embargo?

ON JULY 24, THE *Washington Times* reported Cuba is drilling for oil just 60 miles off the Florida coast.

Cuba, a nation the United States has embargoed for the last 45 years, may actually end up pumping oil from sovereign U.S. territory.

Although the Cuban-sanctioned drill rigs are technically on the internationally recognized Cuban side of the Straits of Florida, if the oil fields are developed, some of the oil pumped will probably come from the U.S. side. And since the drilling platforms on the Cuban leases are not physically encroaching on U.S. territorial waters, the U.S. cannot stop them.

Further frustrating matters is the fact that Florida lawmakers, citing environmental concerns, have banned American oil companies from drilling within 100 miles of the coast. So here we have Cubans drilling for oil that may, in part, be within American boundaries—while U.S. oil companies can't touch it.

Experts predict that, while world oil demand is still rising, global crude oil production will peak over the next few years. Consequently there has been a rush of international oil companies eyeing potential Cuban oil fields.

With the help of Canada, Europe and Latin America, Cuba has pumped \$1.7 billion into developing its energy sector since 2004. Cuba's oil production has increased from 18,000 barrels per day in 1992 to 75,000 barrels per day today. Cuba now produces approximately half of the oil it needs; an amount set to increase as it develops the 750 million barrels of

proved reserves the Energy Information Administration says lay in Cuban territory. Cuba also is a joint claimant with Mexico and the U.S. for the 4.6 billion barrels of oil and 9.3 trillion cubic feet of natural gas that studies suggest may exist in the Gulf of Mexico. In fact, if even a portion of the exploration yields results, Cuba could quickly turn into a net oil exporter.

Some argue that parts of the Cuban embargo should be rescinded because they hurt American companies most. They argue that because of America's desperate need for oil, and the fact that foreign companies will continue to rush to drill in Cuban waters, American oil firms should be exempt from the Cuban embargo.

Those who want to get rid of the embargo argue all it has done is increase other nations' influence in Cuba.

## Chavez Tours World to Boost Venezuela's Profile

IRONICALLY, VENEZUELA is both one of America's largest suppliers of oil and one of its most dangerous enemies in South America.

In July, President Hugo Chavez embarked on a world tour—which included visits to Belarus, Russia, Qatar, Iran, Vietnam and Mali—aimed at garnering support for Venezuela's bid for a seat on the United Nations Security Council. He claimed he would “very humbly, with all the humility that we feel in our hearts, contribute modestly toward the battle to free the world from the imperialist threat”—meaning America—if elected to the UN seat (*San Francisco Chronicle*, July 23).

In his quest for the



**POWER DRILL** A rig drills for oil in Cuba's Gulf waters, where it is believed large quantities of oil reside.

Other nations certainly don't seem to be afraid of running the U.S. economic blockade, and seem to be taking full advantage of the lack of U.S. competition in Cuba—and in many areas besides energy.

In 2005, Cuba's trade with the world soared 22 percent. Over 1,800 foreign firms from 43 countries attended Cuba's 23rd International Trade Fair last year, and hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of deals were signed.

Cuba was also able to sell over \$500 million worth of bonds early this year through

the London Stock Market, and the growth of tourism within the country has been the highest of any Caribbean country over the last decade.

With the amount of foreign investment moving into Cuba, especially in the wake of increasing oil exploration, even if U.S. law is not amended to allow U.S. oil companies to bid for drilling rights in Cuban waters, the days of the blockade's effectiveness may be nearing an end.

That fact alone shows the decline of effective power and influence that the U.S. is able to project today.

Council seat, Chavez has much support—particularly in the Arab world. Venezuela was recently granted observer member status in the Arab League. According to Central University of Venezuela international relations professor Maria Teresa Romero, “The Arabs have appreciated Chavez's declarations of support [in relation to recent events in the Middle East], and the Arab League has promised to lobby in behalf of Venezuela in the United Nations” (ibid.). Perhaps this has something to do with his stance on Israel: During his tour, Chavez denounced Israel's military campaign in



**PLEDGE** While visiting Iran, Chavez (left) vowed to Ahmadinejad to “stand beside Iran ... under every circumstance.”

Lebanon as “a true genocide.”

Reports suggest that Venezuela is leading Guatemala, the U.S.-backed candidate, in the race for the Security Council seat. But even if Venezuela does not get elected to the Council, its latest military acquisitions are making it an increasingly



**ON THE LOOKOUT** Wen Jiabao (left) toured Africa in June in search of resources; in Ghana, he pledged to its president (right) that Beijing would help Ghana “achieve its developmental

## A F R I C A

# The Newest Imperialist Power

**D**URING THE 1800S, the world’s powers fought for control of Africa’s resources. Today the trend continues, only this time an Eastern power is quickly becoming a major African player.

Last year, trade between China and Africa jumped 36 percent to almost \$40 billion, according to official Chinese figures (*Financial Times*, February 23). And if the flurry of high-level Chinese visits to Africa is any indica-

tion, China’s trade with the continent is set to take another huge jump this year.

So far this year, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao has undertaken three African trade tours. Chinese President Hu Jintao also visited several African countries in April, while in January Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing completed an African trade trip. This November, Beijing will host a major China-Africa summit to promote trade.

dangerous foe for the United States.

During his stop in Russia, Chavez signed military contracts worth approximately \$1 billion. The deal includes the purchase of 24 of Russia’s most sophisticated fighter planes, the Su-30MK2. The Russian-made fighter jet is comparable to the U.S. F/A 18E/F Super Hornet and F-15E Strike Eagle. The Russian planes may also be equipped with Russia’s most high-tech missile, the KH-31A, can penetrate U.S. naval air defenses. Chavez claims the planes will give his nation a deterrent capability against a U.S. invasion, saying they would be able to destroy any U.S. aircraft carriers in the Caribbean.

With this arms sale,

Venezuela is set to become the most militarily powerful nation in Latin America (*ibid.*).

Chavez has also announced that Russia will build a factory in Venezuela to produce the Kalashnikov AK-103 assault rifle. Critics suggest the rifles will end up supporting anti-American guerrillas in U.S.-allied South American countries.

Venezuela is certainly becoming a thorn in America’s side. However, the true irony in the story may not just be that America is relying on an enemy to provide its oil, but that the money Americans spend on that oil is being used to purchase weapons to threaten and oppose American influence.

This slew of activity represents China’s robust efforts to secure the raw commodities it needs for its booming manufacturing sectors. African oil and minerals have become increasingly important to China, which is in the midst of its fourth year of 10 percent economic growth.

However, China’s move into Africa has caused problems for America.

First, Chinese involvement is inhibiting U.S.-supported African regime change by supplying the continent’s dictators with financial, political and technological support. China has been more than willing to overlook human rights atrocities committed by the African governments that trade with it. “On the political front, China will not interfere in internal affairs of African countries. We believe that African countries have the right and capability to solve their own problems,” explained Wen (Xinhua, June 18).

Second, and perhaps more important, China’s thirst for raw commodities, especially oil, has put it in direct competition with the United States. Although 15 percent of America’s oil comes from Africa, a full quarter of China’s oil imports now come from that continent (Geostrategy-direct.com, August 2).

As China’s demand for oil has grown, so have its efforts to gain political influence in Africa—and its willingness to exploit the West’s queasiness over doing business with Africa’s more unsavory and unstable regimes.

China willingly supplies military equipment to Sudan in exchange for access to its vast oil fields. China commonly uses its veto power on the UN Security Council to block U.S.-led efforts to impose sanctions, which could lead to regime change and

thus open Sudanese oil to the international community. A similar situation exists in Zimbabwe, where Chinese investment aimed at obtaining coal and precious metals and selling military equipment provides a lifeline to a corrupt government that has all but destroyed one of the formerly richest countries in Africa.

Consequently, China makes allies and gains a competitive advantage in parts of Africa that America will not enter.

A recent political incident highlights how China’s influence in Africa has grown. In August, the central African country of Chad announced it was switching diplomatic ties from Taiwan, a democratic U.S. ally, to China. “It’s because China’s power and influence is rising on the world stage,” said He Wenping, director of the African Studies Section at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (Agence France Presse, August 7). Today, all but five of Africa’s 53 nations recognize China as opposed to Taiwan, a situation in stark contrast to that in the 1990s. Some analysts worry that Chad’s switching back could cause a “domino effect” with the few remaining countries (*ibid.*).

Stephen Friedman, a senior research fellow at the Center for Policy Studies in Johannesburg, summarized the situation this way: “The West is very worried about China’s involvement in Africa. ... Seeing a new superpower emerging is making it very uncomfortable” (Associated Press, August 8).

Yet, contrary to what many analysts believe, it is not America, but *Europe* that ultimately needs to fear China. To see what the Bible predicts concerning Europe and China, request our free booklet *Russia and China in Prophecy*.

# Does MEDICINE Deserve Your FAITH?

What the medical industry doesn't want you to know **BY ROBERT MORLEY**

**M**EDICAL HEALTH providers tell us that people with more health-care options live longer, healthier lives.

Drug companies claim that pharmaceuticals can do wonders for people—calm your children, end your depression, lower your cholesterol.

Is it true?

If the people manning the hospitals and doling out the drugs are right, where are all the healthy medicated customers?

Americans pay an estimated 2½ times more per person than people in the country with the next-most-expensive health care. Why, then, do studies show that Americans have worse health and lower life expectancies than those in many other industrialized nations like Greece, Spain, Austria, France and Germany?

That is the paradox of modern medicine in the United States: General health continues to deteriorate, even as Americans spend more money than ever before to become healthy.

Still, people's faith in the medical system remains steadfast.

## Soaring Medical Costs

Recent government studies show that, given soaring medical costs, within a decade Americans will be spending an unbelievable *one fifth of all their dollars on health care*. Analysts see “no end to increases in the cost of going to the doctor and taking medicine” (Associated Press, February 21). In fact, the cost of medical care is projected to rise 7.2 percent each year—a rate far above the government's official inflation readings.

Already Americans spend more than 16 percent of the nation's gross domestic product on health care. In 2004 alone, that was \$2 trillion. If the estimates are correct, by 2030 America will be spending a third of its national output on medical care—by mid-century, the proportion will have risen to 46 percent.

Such exorbitant health spending is obviously unsustainable. At those levels, just providing health services for the nation's elderly, disabled and poor would require massive tax increases—probably on the order of doubling them—or vast reductions in services.

Even at current expenditure levels,

many American companies are in crisis situations. At General Motors Corp., for example, leaders cite skyrocketing health-care costs, which add approximately \$1,500 to the price of each vehicle, as a major reason they are in such financial trouble. The American auto industry spends more money on health care than on steel.

Individuals also feel the pain of health-care costs. A survey published by Harvard Medical and Law School estimated that in 2005 almost 700,000 bankruptcies—half the total number that occurred that year—were filed because of costs relating to illnesses. Even people with health insurance are struggling to pay medical costs: A 2005 Commonwealth Fund report found that of the 77 million Americans straining to pay their medical debts, almost two thirds have some form of health insurance.

But is all the money Americans throw into health care producing the improved health they yearn for?

Despite all the new drugs and treatments, degenerative illnesses are at epidemic levels. Cancer, heart disease and stroke kill 1.4 million Americans per





ISTOCK PHOTO

year. The American Legacy Foundation largely blames poor lifestyles choices, pointing out that, in 2000, 81 million Americans were smokers, obese, or both. In 2004 alone, an estimated 1.37 million—3,748 people a day—were diagnosed with cancer. (Consequently, cancer drug sales are soaring. America's second-largest biotechnology company, Genentech, reported that during the first quarter of this year sales of its cancer drugs Avastin, Herceptin and Tarceva rose 96, 123 and 94 percent respectively.)

Among young adults, a segment of the population usually thought of as being healthy, sharp increases in many illnesses have been noted. Even our *children* are becoming unhealthy. One third of U.S. children are either overweight or obese; one in four children between ages 5 and 10 show early signs of heart disease. Type-2 diabetes, a condition normally only found in adults, is on the rise in children.

These massive health crises continue to grow even as use of drugs and medical treatments expands. That does not necessarily mean modern medicine causes the problems—but it certainly is not solving them, and often exacerbates them.

## Medical Facts and Consensus Absent

In 19th-century Europe, if you had the misfortune to become ill, chances are you would have had one of the most common treatments of the day: having your blood sucked out by leeches. Leech-bloodletting treatment, a practice whose roots go back 2,500 years to ancient Egypt, was used to treat everything from headaches to mental illnesses. Leeches were used to supposedly cure obesity, hemorrhoids, laryngitis, and even eye disorders. Bloodletting was so universally accepted that France imported over 33 million leeches in 1827.

Later, when medical practitioners actually *tested* the practice of leech-bloodletting, they found that it did absolutely no good and actually harmed people.

Today, most patients would expect medicine to be based upon hard scientific evidence. Yet, almost 200 years later, medicine is a cauldron filled to the brim with popular treatments that have been debunked by evidence. “The problem is that we don’t know what we are doing,” says Dr. David Eddy, a heart surgeon—

turned-mathematician and health-care economist who is confronting and exposing the oft non-science-based medical industry (*Business Week*, May 29). What is required is an “evidence-based medicine” revolution, he says.

According to *Business Week*, “Even today, with a high-tech health-care system that costs the nation \$2 trillion a year, there is little or no evidence that many widely used treatments and procedures actually work ....” Most people would probably be shocked if they knew how many treatments have no scientific proof that they actually help patients. “We don’t have the evidence [that treatments work] and we are not investing very much in getting the evidence,” says the executive vice president of the Commonwealth Fund, Dr. Stephen C. Schoenbaum. Dr. Nelda Wray, research chief at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, worries that “the majority of surgery we do for symptom relief is only effective because of the placebo effect—with significant potential of harming the patient” (*Forbes.com*, Oct. 27, 2003).

Despite the evidence, much of the medical establishment is either ignorant and apathetic, or it willfully refuses to accept that its guesswork has been shot down.

According to Dr. Eddy, who has spent much of his controversial career proving that the practice of medicine is more conjectural than scientific, only 15 percent of physicians’ decisions are supported by solid evidence. Other doctors and health-care-quality experts who have endorsed Eddy’s work say the percentage of medical treatments that have been proven effective is shockingly low, citing figures between 20 to 25 percent.

Stated another way, you must take the benefits of 75 to 80 percent of any medications, surgeries or treatments your doctor recommends **ON FAITH ALONE**, because *there is no solid proof showing their effectiveness*. In fact, most drugs have negative side effects, so the treatments being prescribed may actually harm you in another way—and possibly even more seriously.

Dr. Eddy has exposed many of medicine’s sacred doctrines to be false. For example, he traced the common practice of preventing women from giving birth vaginally if they have had a previous cesarean to the recommendation of just one doctor. He proved that most doctors were mostly oblivious about the success rates of various procedures, such as surgery for enlarged prostates. Against

many doctors' objections, Eddy also proved that the annual chest X-ray that many doctors make significant money from actually shows nothing helpful.

One of the problems with today's medical practice is that doctors decide how to treat patients based upon inherited traditions, using their best human judgment as opposed to proof, says Eddy. His work shows that medical establishment rules and judgments are not necessarily right and that medicine makes "decisions with an entirely different method from what we would call rational" (*Business Week*, op. cit.).

To prove how "woefully unmatched" doctor judgment is "by the complexities of medicine," and to show how many cherished beliefs are uncertain, Eddy conducted public surveys and lectures at medical society meetings. At these seminars, Eddy would commonly ask doctors to think of a representative patient with an illness and a typical treatment. He would then ask the doctors to write down the outcome of the treatment.

At one urologist society gathering, doctors were asked what the odds were that a man after having corrective surgery would be able to urinate normally. Amaz-

ingly there was no agreement among the doctors' predictions. Even though "[a]ll the doctors were trying to estimate the same thing ... they all gave different numbers," and there wasn't even any clear trend, with predictions of success ranging from zero to 100 percent (ibid.).

Unfortunately, as Eddy points out, that kind of doctor confusion is typical. "A lot of things we absolutely believe at the moment based on our intuition are ultimately absolutely wrong," said Dr. Paul Wallace of the Care Management Institute (ibid.).

Professional preference and tradition as the prescription of the day is all too common for the medical establishment. In fact, "Your chances of undergoing a particular operation can vary vastly from one zip code to another, fluctuating by as much as tenfold" (Forbes.com, op. cit.). Dr. Gary Kirsh at the Urology Group in Cincinnati says, "Because there are no definitive answers, you are at the whim of where you are and who you talk to" (*Business Week*, op. cit.). Kirsh readily admits that he performs many brachytherapies—implanting small radioactive rods directly into cancer in an effort to kill the cells. But, he says, "[I]f you drive 1½ hours down the road to Indianapo-

lis, there is almost no brachytherapy." If you were to seek treatment in Loma Linda, California, where in 1990 the first proton beam machine was installed, the odds are you will be treated with proton beam therapy. Go to a surgeon and he will probably recommend surgery, go to a chemotherapist and you will likely get chemotherapy treatment.

Which of these procedures works best? Clearly these doctors have no idea.

### Why No Hard Evidence?

With the many advances in science and technology, one may wonder why so many treatments are not based on proven facts.

One reason is that generating information is time-consuming and expensive. Clinical trials can take years and cost multiple millions of dollars. Additionally, by the time results are found, science and medical industries may have already moved on, making the study less relevant, and few organizations are motivated to fund studies that draw little attention. Explaining why hospitals implement new technologies before they have been fully proven, Giridhar Venkatraman, director of surgical services with consulting firm Sg2, says, "By the time research has validated the outcomes, it's often too late to implement it and get the return on investment" (*Modern Healthcare*, February 13).

In America, the *Journal of the American Medical Association* reported in July 2005 that nearly a third of all clinical research produces conclusions that are later refuted and rejected. Additionally, many doctors don't even have an efficient way of accessing the information. "Most patients assume that their doctors know what research has been done, and if they realized what a tortuous maze it is to get the research to the point of clinicians making the decisions, they would probably be horrified," says Chris del Mar, dean of Bond University's Faculty of Health Science and Medicine in Australia (*Weekend Australian*, June 3).

Del Mar also says that the time required to search for evidence, knowing the right questions to ask, then determining how reliable the answers are, plus understanding how they apply to the patient, are all big barriers for busy doctors trying to help as many people as possible.

### Conflicts of Interest

While there are some arguably legitimate factors involved, there is another, more insidious side to why so many unproven treatments and procedures are

## WASTED EXPENDITURES

**Each year, Americans spend billions on procedures that medical evidence says are unneeded.** Why then are these operations still being performed? Consider the money facts for these surgeries that studies suggest are unnecessary:

- In the 1950s, the rage was to routinely remove children's tonsils, a procedure later found to bring absolutely no benefits to the vast majority of children. Now, each year, 300,000 children have ear tubes implanted to supposedly help drain fluid and prevent hearing problems. Data shows, however, that ear tubes do not actually help reduce the fluid in the ears. Cost: \$2,000 to \$4,000 per procedure; 300,000 operations per year; \$600 million to \$1.2 billion spent annually.
- Before getting your back operated on, you might want to check the facts. Among people with precisely the same symptoms, operations like spinal fusion are performed 20 times more often in some parts of America than in others—suggesting it could be a fad. Evidence suggests that, in the long run, physical therapy, exercise, and just plain old passage of time does as much to fix the problem as surgery does. In fact, many who have had back operations are *worse off* for it. Cost: \$50,000 per procedure; 325,000 spinal fusions per year; \$16.25 billion spent annually.
- Available data now shows that the 400,000 bypass surgeries and 1 million angioplasties (where mesh tubes are placed inside diseased arteries to hold them open) performed each year are unnecessary except for about 3 percent of the most severe cases, reports Dr. David D. Waters, chief of Cardiology at San Francisco General Hospital. Cost: \$20,000 per bypass surgery; 400,000 operations per year; \$8 billion spent annually.
- Removal of the uterus (hysterectomy) has been one of the most overdone operations for several decades running. Experts report that up to 75 percent of the 600,000 hysterectomies performed each year may be unnecessary. "The medical establishment puts no value on having a uterus if a woman is no longer having babies," says gynecologist Michael Broder, who has studied hysterectomy overuse. Cost \$8,300 per hysterectomy; 450,000 unnecessary hysterectomies per year; \$3.7 billion spent annually.

Sources: *Business Week Online*, May 29; *Forbes.com*, Oct. 27, 2003; *Science Daily*, March 1, 2005; *ABC News*, Aug. 27, 2004

performed: greed. It seems to exist at all levels within the health-care system. Doctors, drug manufacturers, medical device makers, hospitals (and even governmental regulators) all have one thing in common: “enormous financial incentives to provide more and more care,” even without proof that the care is the most effective—or even that it helps at all (*Business Week*, op. cit.).

Part of the problem is that many doctors hold both professional and financial interests in the treatments they offer. This may explain why some doctors are reluctant to change their ways, even when common medical practices are proved faulty. Some even lobby Congress to squash funding for studies that may prove their professional beliefs and treatments to be in error. As a result, Congress sometimes slashes funding or halts government-financed research on controversial issues. Dr. Joe Thompson, health adviser to Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee, says the federal government Agency for Health Care Policy and Research “often” has its budget targeted by self-interest groups (*ibid.*).

“There is no question that the economic interests of the physician enter into the decision” process, says Dr. Kirsh (*ibid.*). Doctors often get paid based upon the number of patients they see. “I can see three patients with acute needs every 15 minutes,” says Texan doctor Melissa Gerdes, who says she is doing her best to make herself available to more clients (*New York Times*, June 24). Surgeons too are paid according to the number of people they operate on. If a surgeon recommends waiting or other alternatives as opposed to cutting, his take-home pay drops.

“Conflict of interest is hard to rule out,” especially when “[y]ou get paid for operating and not paid for not operating,” says Dr. Jack Paradise, a professor of pediatrics and otolaryngology at the Pittsburgh School of Medicine and Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh.

But there is an even greater conflict of interest relating to pharmaceutical and medical device manufacturers.

Pharmaceutical companies are known for spending billions wooing doctors with free samples, lavish gifts, and trips under the guise of promoting better products or furthering education. Last year, the pharmaceutical industry spent \$60 billion on drug promotion, which Reuters reports was nearly double what it spent on research and development (June 26). Dol-

lars put toward marketing to physicians jumped 81 percent—from \$12.1 billion to \$22 billion—between 1999 and 2003. Free samples accounted for \$16 billion of that, while much of the rest was spent on the doctors themselves (*Christian Science Monitor*, Dec. 28, 2005). The concern is that doctors may become reliant upon contributions from these medical companies or feel obligated to recommend their products.

Although doctors on the whole don’t seem worried about potential conflicts of interest, the American Medical Student’s Association disagrees, saying that all medical students and doctors alike should just say “no” to all personal gifts. It gets down to trust, they say: “By accepting gifts, we are taking in biases that are going to affect patient care” (*ibid.*). Critics also say doctors should not place so much trust in medical company claims and should use independent sources of information that are not linked to the companies producing the treatments.

The fact is, pharmaceutical and medical device manufacturers are, first and foremost, *businesses*. As such, their first loyalty is to their shareholders, not necessarily to the people using their products. With financial considerations trumping medical considerations, these companies’ methods of pushing their products promote the overuse of unneeded and/or less effective treatments. Since the primary source of income for these companies is sales, there is a huge pull for them to “turn ordinary conditions, like jittery legs [or temper tantrums], into ‘diseases’ that need treatment,” so as to boost profit and shareholder returns (*Business Week*, op. cit.; see “Has a Disease For Your Problems Been Marketed Yet?” page 27).

In one case, after pleading guilty to illegally marketing its epilepsy drug Neurontin, a subsidiary of drug company Pfizer was ordered to pay \$430 million. The company was aggressively pushing the drug for conditions like bipolar disorder, back pain and headache—conditions there was either little or no evidence it helped. While the company enriched itself with billion-dollar sales built upon massive marketing campaigns—which included trips and compensation for doctors—lawsuits allege that patients were experiencing suicidal thoughts, convulsions and tumors.

This type of behavior is why the Food

and Drug Administration (FDA) is supposed to act as a watchdog over the marketing practices of medical companies. Yet evidence shows that the FDA itself also has conflicts of interests that make it largely ineffective in its purpose.

In 1992, the drug industry negotiated a deal with the FDA: In exchange for a faster review process of new drugs, the drug companies would pay user fees to the FDA. These fees now pay more than half the salaries of the review staff! Also, most FDA employees either used to work for drug companies or plan to in the future. This is known as “revolving door” access. Moreover, many of the FDA employees have financial ties to the pharmaceutical industry.

On top of that, FDA advisory committees, according to a *USA Today* study published Sept. 25, 2000, are not truly independent. The experts on these committees advise the FDA on whether

**Last year, the pharmaceutical industry spent \$60 billion on drug promotion, which Reuters reports was nearly double what it spent on research and development.**

to approve a drug, what warning labels are appropriate, and how evaluations should be designed. The study found that 54 percent of the time, the experts either owned stock in the company that produced the drug under evaluation, or they had received consulting fees or research grants from it.

The Nov. 18, 2004, *Washington Post* noted that the FDA’s apparently-lenient treatment toward drug companies raised the question of whether “the agency is focusing more on bolstering the pharmaceutical industry than protecting public health.”

Hospitals too are loaded with conflicts of interest that result in the wide use of unproven treatments. Like medical companies, hospitals are businesses that seek to maximize their revenues. The more patients they treat, the greater their cash flow. This doesn’t necessarily mean that financial considerations are put ahead of patient care, but studies show that there are huge variations between treatments at different hospitals.

Consider: A 2006 report from researchers at the Center for the Evaluative Clinical Sciences at Dartmouth Medical School studied 306 hospital referral regions to compare treatments of patients during their last six months of life, and

the results were “striking.” For example, the average number of days chronically ill patients stayed in hospitals varied between 6.5 and 19.4 per region. The number of doctor visits received by dying patients ranged between 15.7 and 50 per region. Why the huge discrepancy? Are people in diverse parts of the country so biologically different that the treatments they are receiving in hospitals should vary so much?

The reason behind the discrepancies is economics. Dr. Thompson says hospitals spend huge amounts of money developing new technology, and they want a return on their investment. New operation rooms for surgery, or new radiation equipment, according to *Business Week*, “are profit centers for hospitals ... Once a hospital installs a shiny new catheter lab [for example], it has a powerful incentive to refer more patients for the procedure” (op. cit.).

Combine that with Americans always demanding to be treated immediately, and you have the prime conditions for “overuse and inappropriate use,” says Thompson. “There is a massive amount of spending on things that really don’t help patients, and often put them at greater risk. Everyone that’s informed on the topic knows it, but it is such a scary thing to discuss that people are not willing to talk about it openly,” says the head of health care at one of America’s largest corporations, who didn’t want to be attributed (ibid.). Scary indeed.

### Misplaced Faith

In Luke 18, Jesus Christ uses the parable of the widow and the unjust judge to show that people should continually ask God for their needs. Then, to a group of self-trusting people who thought they had all the answers, Christ asked a lightning-bolt question: “Nevertheless when

the Son of man cometh, SHALL HE FIND FAITH ON THE EARTH?”

Yes, when Jesus Christ returns at His Second Coming, *will He find faith?*

There is indeed *abundant faith* on the Earth today—but not the type Christ was hoping to find. Today’s faith is largely in modern medicine to solve and heal all our ills.

Look at the facts, and you must acknowledge the general role of *faith* in modern medicine—faith not in God, but in a rickety system of flawed diagnosis and guesswork treatment whose effectiveness is corroded by greed.

While this may come as a shock to some, it shouldn’t. Particularly considering the trillions of dollars involved, how could this oversized giant of an industry remain immune from the cancerous ravages of human nature? Endemic problems plague every other aspect of human endeavor—international relations, government, business and finance, education, social work, even religion. Why then should people believe—despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary—that *modern medicine deserves our faith?*

Such faith is woefully misplaced.

But if modern medicine can’t be relied upon to fix society’s health problems, who or what can be?

There is only one Being who has all the answers, the Being who designed and created man in the first place. It is He who created the physical laws by which our bodies function correctly—laws we should do our utmost to abide by. Following these physical laws does not merely treat the *effects* of disease and sickness—it eliminates the *causes*. These laws include regulating what and how much we eat and drink, upholding cleanliness and hygiene, getting plenty of sunshine and fresh air, sufficiently and properly exercising, sleeping and resting the right amounts, avoiding bodily injury, and maintaining a positive mental attitude.

In addition, only God has the power to *heal* you—and in His Word, He has spelled out iron-clad PROMISES TO HEAL those who satisfy certain basic conditions. Herbert W. Armstrong expounded upon these in his booklet *The Plain Truth About Healing*, which we offer to you free upon request.

There is a time coming when all disease will eventually be eradicated and perfect health will be the norm. For information on how this will occur, request our book *The Wonderful World Tomorrow—What It Will Be Like*. ■

## When MDs Don't Wash Hands

**W**HAT kills as many Americans as AIDS, breast cancer and auto accidents combined? A new super bug? Avian bird flu? How about SARS? No. The answer is lethal infections contracted by otherwise healthy individuals while hospitalized for even routine procedures (*New York Sun*, February 9).

Shockingly, over 2 million people in the United States will contract an infection while in hospital this year, and about 90,000 will die. That equals America’s war dead in Korea and Vietnam combined—every year.

“It is a tragic irony that each year ... about one [person] every five minutes ... die[s] from an infection contracted in the one place they should feel safest,” says Dr. Betsy McCaughey, former lieutenant governor of New York State and founder and chairman of the Committee to Reduce Infection Deaths, who is working to get hospitals to put more focus on preventing infection.

Hospitals are obviously a home to the many types of infectious organisms that patients bring with them when they come for treatment. If hospitals are not careful, the bugs can breed and spread to other patients. Hands, gloves, clothing, utensils, stethoscopes and a multitude of other equipment can carry organisms from patient to patient.

That is why Dr. Mark Dougherty, an epidemiologist, describes today’s hospitals as “swimming in a sea of bacteria” (*Lexington Herald-Leader*, March 26).

The problem is, “[M]ost hospitals have not made preventing infections a top priority,” says Dr. McCaughey, who also notes that many hospital administrators bluntly admit it is a matter of money and that they just “can’t afford to take these precautions.”

McCaughey claims that today’s medical establishment places far less emphasis on teaching hygiene than it did 50 years ago. Why? Simple focus on hygiene has been replaced by a widespread and liberal use of antibiotics. Dr. Barbara Gordon remarks that years ago hospitals made sure doctors received freshly laundered white uniforms every day, implying that uniforms doctors wear today are oftentimes not as clean as they should be (*New York Sun*, op. cit.). As a result of poor hygienic practices, McCaughey says one out of every 20 patients will contract an infection during his or her hospital stay (*Modern Healthcare*, January 30).

What should patients do? Simple as it sounds, Dr. McCaughey says you need to ask that hospital staff clean their hands before treating you. Studies show that health-care professionals fail to wash their hands between patients approximately half the time. Hospital staff wear gloves because they are afraid of contracting infections from the patients. Make sure medical staff put on new gloves before contacting you.

Preventable deaths due to infections caused by the failure of health-care staff to perform simple sanitary procedures is just one symptom of the failure of modern medicine today.

# Has a Disease For *Your* Problems Been Marketed Yet?

More disorders are being diagnosed than ever before. Is there actually more disease, or is the medical field just expanding the definitions of disease?

BY ROBERT MORLEY

**M**ENTAL AND PHYSICAL ILLNESS is a real and increasing problem in today's society. But there is also another problem: an escalating trend to highlight a rare disease, proclaim that it affects large numbers of the population, and then prescribe medication to treat it.

Call it disease-mongering.

In the last few decades, advertising has made the public aware of such afflictions as social anxiety disorder, panic disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, premenstrual dysphoric disorder, menopausal disorder, erectile dysfunction and obesity disorder. Other ailments that have been found in recent years include irritable bowel disorder, restless legs disorder and hypertension. Researchers have now even identified as a disorder "pre-hypertension," the condition of being *in danger* of developing hypertension (*New England Journal of Medicine*, April 20).

Many people now readily accept these conditions, originally unheard of or thought of as extremely rare, as being mainstream.

Disease-mongering is a successful money-making strategy and is "being increasingly refined by the pharmaceutical industry and its colleagues in the advertising industry," says Peter Lurie, deputy director of Public Citizen's Health Research Group (United Press International, April 10). Drug advertisements constantly bombard people with, "One in five have this illness ..." or, "If someone you know or love is suffering from these symptoms ..." (followed, of course, by a pitch for the miracle cure).

Advertisers propose solutions to

conditions you may not have even realized were problems!

According to Ray Moynihan, author of the book *Selling Sickness*, a classic example of disease-mongering is how pharmaceutical company GlaxoSmithKline turned the formerly little-known "social anxiety disorder" into a huge market for its anti-depressant drug Paxil. He credits Paxil's marketing slogan, "Imagine being allergic to people," for expanding the drug's sales. The Paxil website actually claims that "more than 12 million Americans suffer from this disorder in any given year" and consoles prospective clients by telling them that "some people find comfort just by learning that social anxiety disorder is a medical condition."

In the case of bipolar disorder, a looser definition has resulted in some experts claiming that up to 10 percent of the population is affected—as opposed to the past estimation of 0.1 percent. U.S. children as young as 2 years old are being started on two or three treatment medicines, even though the classic definition of the illness says that symptoms "don't usually show up until the teens"—not to mention that, according to Dr. Jon McClellan at the University of Washington in Seattle, "there isn't even any evidence that any of them work in children" (*Business Week*, May 8).

In this diagnosis-happy climate, every complaint or tendency one might possibly have becomes a symptom of a disease.

Some physicians and health-care professionals are now speaking out against this mass-marketing of ailments. However, in terms of public awareness, their criticisms are drowned out by the infomercials equating mild or loosely related problems to symptoms associated with rare and serious disorders.



## One Example: IED

A blatant example of disease-mongering has recently been publicized across America. Some medical specialists say Americans are commonly afflicted by an ailment called Intermittent Explosive Disorder (IED). They declare that it “is not the rare occurrence that psychiatrists had previously thought” (*Chicago Tribune*, June 6). Dr. Emil Coccaro, the University of Chicago’s chief of psychiatry, says, “Our new study suggests IED is really out there and that a lot of people have it.”

Those who agree with Dr. Coccaro claim that a recent nationwide study shows 1 in 20 (or 16 million) Americans have symptoms of IED, characterized by recurring outbursts of extreme anger and violence as seen in cases involving road-rage or spousal abuse. Their study asserts that approximately 5 percent of Americans have “physically assaulted someone, threatened bodily harm or destroyed property in a rage an average of five times a year” (*ibid.*). The average monetary damage resulting from these super tantrums, the study purports, averaged \$1,359 per person, or about \$21.7 billion nationwide—annually!

Interestingly, the IED study also showed that while diagnoses are rising among teenagers, they are much more rare among people in their 40s, and even more so among individuals over 60. “[O]lder people tell us they’ve never had it,” said Ronald Kessler, a professor of health-care policy at Harvard. It is young adults, teens and children who most often exhibit the “symptoms” of outbursts of verbal and physical violence.

Most individuals diagnosed with Intermittent Explosive Disorder report that anger episodes first occurred during childhood or adolescence, and increased rapidly in their teenage years. “In most situations, he is relatively affable, calm and very responsible,” says Jennifer Hartstein, a psychologist at Montefiore Medical Center in New York, of a newly diagnosed 16-year-old. But when in stressful situations at home, he “explodes and tears apart his room, throws things at other people”—to the point that his parents have called the police (*Connecticut Post Online*, June 6).

A generation ago, people would have considered this a case of a rebellious teenager throwing a temper tantrum after being punished for disobeying his parents. Today, the medical establishment labels it a “disorder” and believes it has found a

biomedical fix.

Dr. Daniel Deutschmann, a psychiatrist and clinical professor at Case Western Reserve University, says he has found medicating aggressive IED patients with anti-epileptic drugs to be successful (*Plain Dealer*, Cleveland, June 6). Meanwhile, Coccaro believes medicines such as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) and mood stabilizers should be included in treatment to “increase the threshold at which people will explode” (*Scribe Newswire*, May 31).

Such treatments are recommended despite study results showing that among people classified as having this disorder, 81.8 percent were also diagnosed with depression, anxiety, and alcohol or drug abuse disorders—“*disorders that are strongly or entirely related to lifestyle choices.*”

Treating the IED symptoms with medication will not treat the sources of these disorders; in fact, it will probably impede the lifestyle changes that would truly improve health and well-being. By classifying temper tantrums and other supposed conditions as diseases, medical specialists are telling an affected individual that without medication, nothing can change: he or she is fated to have impulse control disorders and health problems indefinitely. What a discouraging and hopeless message!

And where does that leave people who, as in the case of IED, cannot afford the SSRIs, mood stabilizers or other medicines that are supposedly needed?

## Denying Responsibility

Overall, this characterization of emotional outbursts and lack of self-control as symptoms of pharmaceutically treatable disease represents another major shift in thinking regarding what defines behavioral and lifestyle choices, and what defines biomedical proclivities. It also revolutionizes our ideas on what our responsibilities are to society.

Instead of teaching and training our children to control their emotions and impulses, and spending time making sure our children become stable, productive members of society, drug companies have found that people will pay for the seemingly easy, responsibility-free solution: medicating our kids. Moreover, adults are readily embracing that remedy for themselves as well.

In our society, it is acceptable to have a “disorder.” The prevailing attitude is, *no one can be blamed for being sick.* After

all, biological problems can’t be helped.

Or can they? In reality, although much illness is caused by factors outside our control, it is *our own choices* that generally affect our health the most. The human body and mind was not designed by our Creator to be sick or uncontrolled.

As society searches for biomedical solutions for all its problems, it increasingly sends the message that it is all right to have symptoms of disorders—even violent impulse control problems—with the catchall excuse, “It’s because I am sick.”

That is the crux of the problem with disease-mongering: It promotes the idea that everybody has a biomedical excuse for the consequences of poor health and lifestyle choices. It absolves people of guilt for their actions and of responsibility to change the underlying cause of their problems by just taking a pill. Consequently, bad behavior gains legitimacy.

What other impulses that we do not feel like controlling will become diseases? What about crime? After all, crime has long been called an epidemic! Now, because of disorders like IED, criminal expression is actually being classified as a disease.

Americans love their quick-fix, labor-free culture—which is why they embrace pharmaceuticals. But people aren’t looking at the *causes* of problems—their family relationships, work habits, mental outlook, diet and so on. Changing is hard. It’s inconvenient. It is much easier to believe a pill will make everything better.

Let’s face it: New drugs are not a solution, but a mask. They will not mend the shattered lives of young children whose parents fight or separate, fill the void of a missing father or mother, teach parents how to properly rear their children, teach people the value of healthful living, or end man’s hatred toward his neighbor. Drugs will never remove the cause that has brought about the effect of physical or mental disease.

The question we should be asking is: What is *causing* our ills? Then the challenge is to really accept the hard answer that we are not living our lives the way God designed us to, and set our minds to fix that. That can truly give suffering individuals and their families hope. ■

For more reading related to this topic, request a free copy of our two booklets *What Science Can’t Discover About the Human Mind, and Human Nature: What Is It?*



## Uncle Sam's Secret Books

**D**ID YOU KNOW CONGRESS writes its own accounting standards—standards that would be illegal for a business to use because they ignore important costs such as retirement benefits and other future obligations?

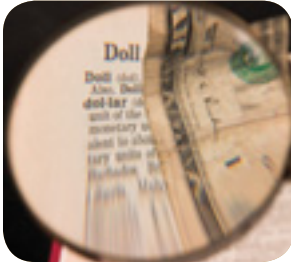
Using its own accounting standards, the government officially reported that its 2005 budget deficit was \$318 billion. However, a document produced by government accountants using *standard*

*accounting* rules showed that the government actually ran a huge \$760 billion deficit for 2005. If the government accounted for future retirement promises (as the government legally requires businesses to do) such as Social Security and Medicare, the budget deficit would actually be a massive \$3.5 trillion.

Since 1997 alone, the audited federal government's fig-

ures reveal a \$40 trillion deficit, when adjusted to include future retirement accruals.

America is heading for bankruptcy, says Professor Laurence Kotlikoff in a paper published by the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis (*Telegraph*, July 14). According to Kotlikoff, "The



DREAMSTIME

U.S. government is, indeed, bankrupt, insofar as it will be unable to pay its creditors, who, in this context, are current and future generations to whom it has ... promised future net payments of various kinds." He says the payment solutions—which he describes as "terrifying"—include an immediate and permanent "doubling of personal and corporate income taxes" or "two-thirds cut in Social Security and Medicare benefits," or slashing of all "federal discretionary spending by 143 percent."

Why haven't more governmental leaders addressed the issue? For one, the government's own accountants don't really think the government will follow through with its promised retirement benefits. Social Security and Medicare do not "represent a legal obligation because Congress has the authority to increase or reduce social insurance benefits at any time," wrote the acting director of the president's Office of Management Budget last May (*USA Today*, July 14).

A second and probably more important reason that leaders fear drawing public attention to the government's precarious financial condition is that it would hurt the dollar. Remember, confidence is the only thing backing the greenback's value.

"The United States has experienced high rates of inflation in the past and appears to be running the same type of fiscal policies that engendered hyperinflations in 20 countries over the past century," warns Kotlikoff (*Telegraph*, op. cit.). When you think hyperinflations, think of past Argentinean peso and

Russian ruble crises.

Also, think about evaporating savings, soaring prices and escalating unemployment—all characteristics of inflationary environments.

The statistical manipulation surrounding the government's massive deficits is delusional: Cooking the books may make things look better in the short term, but it only causes bigger problems later.

"[I]t is impossible to have effective monetary and economic policy when guided by faulty statistics," says economist Jim Willie. "Effective policy demands accurate information, reliable future indicators and competent forecasts. This is indisputable. We do not have it" (Financial Sense Online, July 26). Reliance on bad statistics will result in economic debacles, Willie warns. He says people should prepare for "big [economic] accidents" in the near future.

Unfortunately for Americans, bad leadership and erroneous accounting are pointing to a future of broken promises and financial hardship.

## Stock Market Welcomes Bad News

**U**.S. STOCK MARKETS HAVE BEEN acting very strange of late, and economists worry this may portend serious trouble.

On July 19, Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke warned Congress the economy was slowing down. Investors took that as a positive, and the stock market rose. On July 28, after the release of governmental statistics stating sharply lower economic growth during the second quarter, U.S. stocks again rallied strongly.

It seems strange stocks would go up in value after poor economic news. If this was an isolated incident, it could be written off as a market aberration—but it isn't. The stock market has lately been rallying upon the release of all kinds of negative economic indicators: weaker-than-expected manufacturing activity and other figures that show a slowdown in the U.S. economy.

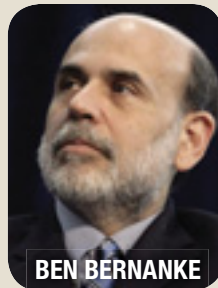
Economic analyst Paul van Eeden summed up the ominous market action on July 6: "The reasoning goes that a sufficient slowdown in the economy will cause the Federal Reserve to stop raising interest rates, and since higher interest rates are generally bad news for stocks, then a hiatus in rising interest rates should be good for stocks.

"You don't have to be a genius to figure out that when the market hopes for bad economic news and interprets them as good news, something is wrong. Since when are falling retail sales good for stocks? Since when is reduced manufacturing activity good for stocks? Are stock traders so obsessed with the Fed's next move that they forget to look at what is really going on?

"If the U.S. economy is slowing down, as confirmed by tepid retail sales and slowing manufacturing activity, then it is merely a matter of time before corporate earnings come under pressure and stock prices start falling.

"When the market becomes this shortsighted, you should know that we are in a dangerous environment. Anything can happen."

Whether or not recent market action indicates a pending collapse remains to be seen. But given the plethora of negative economic indicators of late—the unwinding of the yen carry trade; inverted yield curves; rising inflation and interest rates; record negative personal savings rates; record trade deficits and governmental debt; a deflating housing bubble—a stock market bust looms ever larger.



RUETENS

BEN BERNANKE

In his new book, *Raising the Ruins*, available this winter, *Trumpet* executive editor Stephen Flurry exposes the reality of what happened to the Worldwide Church of God. Here is the second chapter.

STEPHEN FLURRY

# LEGACIES

**“[W]e are acutely aware of the heavy legacy of our past. ... So to all ... who have been casualties of our past sins and mistakes of doctrine—I extend my sincerest heartfelt apologies.”**

Herbert W. Armstrong

—Joseph Tkach Jr, *Plain Truth*, March-April 1996

Joseph Tkach Jr.

**T**KACHISM HAS PORTRAYED HERBERT W. Armstrong’s legacy as that of an ignorant, wild-eyed religious fanatic who used his power to abuse people. The problem with that portrayal, besides being false, is that it represents a minority viewpoint, *even among members and former members of the Worldwide Church of God*. In *Transformed by Truth*, Joseph Tkach wrote, “While a large number of the letters we have received over the past few years can be characterized as angry and hostile, we always have gotten a few precious letters from members encouraging us to maintain our current course” (emphasis mine throughout). He doesn’t give exact figures, but admits that a “large number” of letters they receive are from members who are upset about what Tkachism has done.

Tkach said that church attendance peaked at 150,000 in 1988, two years after Mr. Armstrong died. By the time Tkach wrote his book in 1997, WCG attendance had dwindled to about 58,000—an attrition rate of over 60 percent. Yes, their “remarkable” transformation, as Michael Fezell wrote four years later in his own book, resulted “in the exodus of more than half of the church’s members and clergy ...” Today, that mass exodus must surely be nearer to 75 percent. That’s not to say that *all* those who left did so in order to uphold Mr. Armstrong’s teachings. But neither did they hang around to lend their support to Tkachism.

In 1996, Mr. Tkach Jr. wrote a “Personal” in the *Plain Truth*, where he offered a pathetic apology on behalf of Mr. Armstrong, *who had been dead for 10 years*. “We have much to repent of and apologize for,” he said, explaining that the church had been “judgmental and self-righteous.” He then rattled off a number of “flawed” doctrines Mr. Armstrong taught. “These teachings and practices are a source of supreme regret. We are painfully mindful of the

heartache and suffering that has resulted from them,” he wrote, without elaborating on HOW, exactly, people *suffered* as a result of what Mr. Armstrong taught.

“We’ve been wrong,” he told subscribers, before concluding with this: “So to all members, former members, co-workers and others—all who have been casualties of our past sins and mistakes of doctrine—I extend my sincerest heartfelt apologies.”

By the time Tkach wrote this apology, ALMOST ALL *Plain Truth* readers from Mr. Armstrong’s era had long since CANCELED THEIR SUBSCRIPTIONS. Judging by the circulation nosedive after 1985, it seems the real “casualties” were among *Plain Truth* readers who were uninspired by Tkachism.

Under Mr. Armstrong, the *Plain Truth* was a popular international magazine with an ever-increasing circulation. Mr. Armstrong’s whole work—his writings, his sermons, his institutions, *his entire life*—had a hugely positive impact on millions of human beings who wanted to be *part* of that work. Tkachism ruined all that, and then apologized for what Mr. Armstrong did?

Of course there were the occasional critics who disliked Mr. Armstrong’s theology. As the *Pasadena Star-News* wrote the day after Mr. Armstrong died, “[T]hose who choose—or who believe they are divinely chosen—to spread the message of monotheism in the world are bound to endure more than their share of mortal vicissitudes. Many of these men and women, however, leave a legacy that makes all their suffering worthwhile. Herbert W. Armstrong was such a man.” There were obstacles and hardships along the way—critics and skeptics—but his LEGACY made all the difficulties worthwhile. That’s how the *newsmedia* in Mr. Armstrong’s own backyard (the *NEWSMEDIA* of all things!) represented his legacy.

Yet, 10 years later, Joseph Tkach Jr.—the man sitting in the same office Mr. Armstrong established—felt it neces-



sary to apologize for Mr. Armstrong's "heavy legacy" of "heartache" and "suffering." Tkachism, we're to assume, has brought nothing but joy and peace into our lives.

Notice what Tkach wrote in the *Christian Research Journal* in 1996: "The leadership and faithful members of the Worldwide Church of God are deeply grateful for God's mercy in leading us into the light. Yet our progress has not been without costs. Income has plummeted, costing us millions of dollars and requiring us to lay off hundreds of long-time employees. Membership has declined. Several splinter churches have broken off from us to return to one or the other of our previous doctrinal and cultural positions. As a result, families have separated and friendships have been abandoned, sometimes with angry, hurt feelings and accusations."

Only in the upside-down world of Tkachism can Mr. Armstrong be blamed for all that. Mr. Armstrong wasn't the one who caused the income to plummet. He wasn't responsible for reducing the headquarters staff from 1,000 employees down to 50. He wasn't the one who drove out 75 percent of the membership. Mr. Armstrong didn't abolish all of the church's teachings, prompting splinter groups to break away, thus destroying families and friendships.

Mr. Armstrong caused none of that. *Tkachism* is responsible for that.

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#### ■ "A GIANT OF A MAN"

Judging by the large outpouring of response to news of Mr. Armstrong's death, evidently dozens and dozens of prominent leaders from around the world had nothing but deep respect for Mr. Armstrong as a man and high praise for his work.

The king of Thailand, Bhumibol Adulyadej, said that Mr. Armstrong, "through his understanding, wisdom and humanitarianism, has sought to give encouragement and assistance to people all over the world, particularly to Thailand where he has devoted much of his time and resources thereby becoming a close and valuable friend of our country."

Otto von Hapsburg, then member of the European Parliament, sent this message: "Deeply shocked by news of the death of unforgettable Mr. Armstrong. Am with you all in prayers and hopes for successful continuation of his life's work."

Prince Raad of Jordan, along with his wife, called Mr. Armstrong a "great humanitarian and philanthropist, a loss the world can ... ill afford at times such as these"—to repeat, a loss THE WORLD can ill afford!

Teddy Kollek, mayor of Jerusalem at the time, wrote, "One could only be deeply impressed by his vast efforts to promote understanding and peace among peoples. His good deeds were felt in many corners of the world"—except, apparently, within the Tkach household. According to Tkach Jr., Mr. Armstrong's church was "judgmental," "legalistic" and "self-righteous"—fostering attitudes of "superiority."

Jerusalem's mayor disagreed. So did California's attorney general, who, at the time, said Mr. Armstrong's "long and productive life leaves a lasting benefit for many." Pasadena's mayor—the man living right there in the same city, with an up-close view of the Worldwide Church of God, called Mr. Armstrong a "giant of a man who provided leadership of good will and principle." City officials in Pasadena absolutely loved Mr. Armstrong and his work. Myron Stolp of the Rotary International in Pasadena said just after Mr. Armstrong died, "I can scarcely name an activity in

which Ambassador has not in some way been involved!" Cy Graph, president of the Pasadena Chamber of Commerce at the time, said, "In his own quiet way Mr. Armstrong has done more to promote positive relations between countries than has the [U.S.] State Department."

Even the leader of the free world at that time weighed in on the positive impact Mr. Armstrong had on his church and all Americans. U.S. President Ronald Reagan sent this note to the WCG upon hearing that Mr. Armstrong had died: "To the congregation of the Worldwide Church of God: Nancy and I join all those mourning the loss of Herbert W. Armstrong. As founder and leader of the Worldwide Church of God, Mr. Armstrong contributed to sharing the word of the Lord with his community and with people throughout the nation. You can take pride in his legacy. Our prayers are with you. God bless you."

Yet, just 10 years later, the pastor general of the Worldwide Church of God—the very church Herbert Armstrong raised up—apologized to *Plain Truth* readers for all the "heartache" and "suffering" Mr. Armstrong had caused.

Why should we believe him? Well, because HE SAYS so—that's why!

President Ronald Reagan, on the other hand, said we should take pride in Herbert Armstrong's legacy.

I'm going with President Reagan's endorsement.

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#### ■ LIFELONG LEGACY

As God opened Mr. Armstrong's mind to the truths of the Bible, He also opened doors so Mr. Armstrong could teach those truths to a large audience.

What many remember as one of the top religious programs on television in the 1980s, *The World Tomorrow*, actually began as a small radio program in Oregon back in January of 1934. The *Plain Truth* began one month later, with Mr. Armstrong rolling a few hundred copies off an archaic mimeograph machine. By the time of his death, that monthly magazine was sent free to more than 8 million subscribers worldwide.

In 1939, Mr. Armstrong started the *Good News*—a bulletin, established mainly for members and co-workers of the church. Like the *Plain Truth*, it eventually developed into a full-color magazine and peaked with a circulation of over 1 million about a year-and-a-half after Mr. Armstrong died.

In the spring of 1946, only 12 years after his work started, Mr. Armstrong saw that if the work was ever to span the globe, he needed more help. To train that help, he needed to raise up a college. As he prayed about it and collected his thoughts, he began looking for a place to build around Pasadena, California. On November 27 of that year, Mr. Armstrong located what seemed to be a suitable building, though it was somewhat run down. Upon signing the dotted line on the place, Mr. Armstrong produced a special edition of the *Plain Truth* magazine announcing the exciting news: "This year, September 22, our own new school, Ambassador College, will swing open its doors to students!"

He continued, "Ambassador is to be a general liberal arts institution—not a Bible school, ministers' college, or theological seminary. It will fit students for all walks of life, offering a general and *practical* basic education, with unusual advantages for special technical courses, as well as a thorough, sound, complete Bible course. ... There

is no other college like Ambassador.” The vision for this educational institution was clear in his mind even before it opened. And it resulted in not one, but *three* Ambassador College schools. The headquarters campus in Pasadena opened its doors in 1947; sister campuses opened in Bricket Wood, England, in 1960, and Big Sandy, Texas, in 1964.

As the college developed and grew, so did the work of the church. In 1953, the radio program began airing in Europe on Radio Luxembourg. Two years later, in 1955, *The World Tomorrow* appeared on television for the first time, although it lasted for only a brief span of time.

The *Plain Truth* went full-color in 1965, 31 years after its inception. The church also began publishing the magazine in German, French, Spanish and Dutch during the 1960s. By 1967, *The World Tomorrow* was now poised and ready for another venture into the world of television—only this time, it would enjoy rapid growth.

Mr. Armstrong spent much of the 1970s traveling the world to spread the gospel message to kings, presidents and other heads of state, while at the same time writing vigorously for the many church publications. Through his travels, Mr. Armstrong met with royalty including the late Japanese Emperor Hirohito, the late Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie, King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand, and the late King Hussein of Jordan. He had an endearing relationship with Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, before his assassination in 1981. He later gained an audience with Sadat’s successor, Hosni Mubarak. Mr. Armstrong discussed the cause of world evils with former Japanese Prime Minister Eisaku Sato and met with six successive Japanese prime ministers as well. Mr. Armstrong was on very friendly terms with then-President Ferdinand Marcos of the Philippines and was awarded the Presidential Merit Medal in 1983. Other heads of state Mr. Armstrong visited include Israeli prime ministers Menachem Begin and Golda Meir, Thai Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanonda and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

### ■ PERFORMING ARTS

In 1972, Mr. Armstrong broke ground for the construction of Ambassador Auditorium in Pasadena. He dedicated this beautiful building, constructed with some of the finest materials on Earth, to the great God. In its grand opening, in 1974, the Vienna Symphony Orchestra performed under the direction of Carlo Maria Giulini.

Over the next 20 years, multiple hundreds of performers, including famed opera stars like Luciano Pavarotti, Plácido Domingo, Joan Sutherland and Beverly Sills, delighted audiences from all over Southern California and beyond inside Ambassador Auditorium. In what some have referred to as the “Carnegie Hall of the West,” renowned performers such as legendary pianists Artur Schnabel and Vladimir Horowitz, and celebrated cellists like Yo-Yo Ma and Mstislav Rostropovich left audiences spellbound. Jazz icons Frank Sinatra, Benny Goodman, Bing Crosby and Sammy Davis Jr. also showcased their talent in “Pasadena’s crown jewel.” Other famous performers who graced Ambassador’s stage include Andrés Segovia, James Galway, Marcel Marcéau and Bob Hope. Pianist Alexis Weissenberg said, “I cannot adequately explain Ambassador to other artists who haven’t performed there. It goes beyond the beauty of the

place, the fantastic acoustics. It’s also the people one deals with there. It’s unique in the music world.”

Yet another legacy that was neither heavy nor burdensome.

After 2,500 concerts and recitals, it was the *Tkaches* who shut down the famous performing arts series in 1995, saying they could not afford to subsidize the program and that it “had nothing to do with the mission of the church” anyway (Deposition of Joseph Tkach, September 8, 1998). “News of Ambassador’s closure,” the *Los Angeles Times* reported, “rumbled through Pasadena’s business and political circles like an EARTHQUAKE.” The community was terribly disappointed. In fact, one reason it took so long for the WCG to sell the Pasadena property is the resistance that city officials put up over proposals to turn the campus into a residential community.

“Our mission in the building is over; we aren’t going to keep it,” Bernie Schnippert, the church’s director of finance and planning, told the *Los Angeles Times* in 2002. “If it is not bought by the city or bought by a benefactor, the church will tear it down.” Quite a legacy! They actually gave the city an ultimatum: *Either buy Ambassador Auditorium for the appraised value of \$22 million, or else we’ll demolish it!* In the end, city officials held firm and prevented the auditorium from being sold to a developer. This forced the WCG to divvy up the property and sell off the parcels piece by piece. Harvest Rock Church bought the auditorium in 2004 for a little more than a third of the appraised value.

After the sale, like a good politician, Schnippert’s tune changed. “The Ambassador Auditorium has *always* been an important part of the Worldwide Church of God’s ministry,” Schnippert told the *Worldwide News*. “We are pleased that this religious and cultural jewel will continue to be used for the glory of God.” He said this just two years after threatening to demolish the structure.

It makes you wonder what Pasadena city officials think about the legacy of Tkachism.

### ■ POWER STRUGGLE

During the 1970s, internally the church withstood its share of controversy and dissension. Much of it happened in Mr. Armstrong’s absence. During this controversial decade, he was away from headquarters traveling about 300 days a year.

In 1974, 35 ministers revolted and took a few thousand members with them. Soon after, Mr. Armstrong’s son, Garner Ted, attempted to wrest control of the church from his father. In Mr. Armstrong’s absence, the younger Armstrong began changing many of the core doctrines of the church and pursuing accreditation for Ambassador College. This, Mr. Armstrong would write later, led to church teachings being watered down and permissive behavior on campus at Ambassador. “God Almighty and Jesus Christ were virtually thrown out of the college—and were rapidly being thrown out of the church!” (*Good News*, September 1979).

Shortly thereafter, Garner Ted was disfellowshipped from the church. Unfortunately for the work, the troubles did not stop there. During the autumn of 1978, six disfellowshipped WCG members began to plot a conspiracy against the church in the form of a class action lawsuit. Mr. Armstrong wrote in the June 24, 1985, *Worldwide News*, “This resulted in an ex parte order by a judge. Secretly without prior notice, deputies on order of the Attorney

General's office swooped down on the church on the morning of January 3, 1979." This launched what became the single greatest attack against the Worldwide Church of God to that point.

## ■ A FIGHT FOR GOD'S CHURCH

Perhaps at no time is the true character of a leader unveiled more than at a time of crisis. The year 1979 was such a time in the WCG. Those familiar with the WCG at the time witnessed firsthand Mr. Armstrong's fighting spirit. The main accusation Garner Ted brought against the church was his father's "lavish spending." The charges (which were later thoroughly disproven) prompted the state attorney general to appoint retired Judge Steven Weisman as the receiver of the church. On the morning of January 3, Judge Weisman entered the WCG headquarters in Pasadena and summarily "fired" Herbert Armstrong, or so he thought. At the time, Mr. Armstrong was residing in Tucson, Arizona, which somewhat shielded him from the State of California's assault.

Describing Mr. Armstrong's reaction to these events, Stanley Rader wrote in his book *Against the Gates of Hell*, "Problems have never upset Mr. Armstrong, and he reacted even to this serious threat with serenity, courage and confidence."

Two and a half weeks later, church members demonstrated their unwavering support for Mr. Armstrong by gathering at the headquarters campus in Pasadena. The slow trickle of people soon turned into a flood that converged upon the Hall of Administration. Members brought food and bedding to lodge in the church's offices in order to prevent the receiver from taking control of WCG property. Mr. Armstrong did not organize the event. None of the church leaders anticipated it. It was a spontaneous reaction of faith and courage by those members who set out to defend the WCG.

After the gathering of thousands of members, church officials Dean Blackwell and Joseph Tkach organized a church service in the Hall of Administration where the receiver was supposed to come in and work. By this time, news of the attempted overthrow had gone national. It was being covered by many major newspapers.

Mr. Armstrong responded in a live telephone hook-up to Pasadena from Tucson: "The people of God have always been willing to suffer whatever they have to do for the living God! And I tell you, this has drawn us together." He advised the members to "be subject to the powers that be," but that "we are to obey God rather than man." He said, "[I]f we have to begin to suffer the persecution of being thrown in prison, I will be the first to be ready to go. The living God is fighting this battle for us ...." That evening, the headline for the late edition of the *Los Angeles Times* blared, "Ready for jail—Armstrong."

Herbert Armstrong fought diligently against the state's unconstitutional attack. In the process, the WCG received enthusiastic support from dozens of churches that recognized the danger of such an attack. This support came from different churches with different teachings, but which all held to the same constitutional right to freely practice their religion.

On October 14, 1980, the state dropped the case against the WCG when the legislature passed a law barring the attorney general from investigating religious organizations the way they had the WCG.

Commenting on Mr. Armstrong during this trial, Stanley Rader wrote, "Over the years of my close association with this remarkable man, I have noted abundant evidence that he is the embodiment of his own message of hope and trust that the living God will provide man with the wisdom to prevail over obstacles" (*Against the Gates of Hell*).

If anything, the California attack revitalized the aging apostle and strengthened the church. The period between 1979 and 1986 was truly the church's finest hour—the era of its greatest-ever growth.

## ■ "INCOMPARABLY RICHER"

Perhaps none was as deeply impacted by Mr. Armstrong's legacy as those who worked right alongside him. After Mr. Armstrong died, many of these faithful supporters recorded their thoughts for the *Worldwide News* tribute issue of February 10, 1986.

Larry Omasta worked closely with Mr. Armstrong on the television program. "... Mr. Armstrong knew," Omasta wrote, "that the camera lens represented a world that needed the message he had to deliver. That, I think, is what made him such a compelling speaker. He did not speak at his audience—he spoke to them."

A WCG evangelist, Norman Smith, had worked with Mr. Armstrong on the radio broadcast back in the 1950s: "Mr. Armstrong was a towering influence in our lives. The personal memories we each have of his powerful broadcasts will be an inspiration to continue and complete the work we are given to do."

Dexter Faulkner, executive editor for the *Plain Truth*, said, "Mr. Armstrong was a seasoned professional communicator, widely recognized for his outstanding ability in writing and advertising. ... [H]e was interested in what God wanted in the church's publications. And he insisted that every headline, every article, every advertisement bring this world a little closer to God's Kingdom."

Ellis La Ravia, vice president of the Ambassador Foundation, said, "His example of drive, enthusiasm and determination in God's service set the standard for all of us. He always gave God credit for everything. He left high standards. He will be missed."

Roderick Meredith, a professor at Ambassador College at the time, referred to Mr. Armstrong as a "second father" for many of the college students. According to Dr. Meredith, Mr. Armstrong "was a human dynamo, working, driving and building a dedicated organization through which Christ could work to impart His message to this generation. ... As with any other truly great man, there will never be another like him."

Leroy Neff, former treasurer for the WCG, said, "No one I have known has had such singleness of thought and purpose. Most of his thoughts and conversation related to God's work and God's Word. ... I found him to be the most generous person I have ever known."

Frank Brown, regional director in Britain, Scandinavia, East and West Africa and the Middle East, said he felt Mr. Armstrong's greatest attribute, "apart from his desire to do God's work, was his clarity of vision. He had the rare ability to think far in the future and envision not only what God was leading him to do, but its ultimate outcome. Mr. Armstrong was a visionary. ... Those of us in the church today are all

incomparably richer for having a part in Mr. Armstrong's vision and reality of the future. He was loved. He will be missed."

No one in that tribute issue mentioned anything about Mr. Armstrong's "heavy legacy" of heartache and suffering or his self-righteous judgmentalism.

## COURSE ALREADY CHARTED

Ironically, that same "heavy legacy" Tkach Jr. loves to pin on Mr. Armstrong was responsible for appointing his father to the office of pastor general. And at the time of his appointment, Tkach Sr. seemed proud of Mr. Armstrong's legacy. "What an impact Mr. Armstrong had on my life!" he wrote. "Because of his yieldedness, God was able to use him in a profound way to proclaim the most important message the world will ever hear."

The day Mr. Armstrong died, Mr. Tkach told the headquarters staff, "The admonishment is now for those of us still living who now have a task that is set before them, a course that has already been charted by God's apostle. We need to maintain that course and not deviate from it one iota." At Mr. Armstrong's funeral, Mr. Tkach prayed, "We readily admit and acknowledge that there is no man who can fill his shoes, but, Father, we aim to follow in his footsteps."

Of course, that never happened. As we will see, Tkachism deviated off course *even before Mr. Armstrong died*. Today, the church is completely transformed. Its mission has changed, its doctrines are different, its traditions are gone—its very identity is transformed. And all these changes, Tkachism admits, have brought about "catastrophic results" ([www.wcg.org/lit/aboutus/history.htm](http://www.wcg.org/lit/aboutus/history.htm)).

How then is it possible to pin the blame for this destruction on Mr. Armstrong? It's the *legacy of Tkachism*—not Mr. Armstrong—that RUINED THE CHURCH. If we judge by fruits, we become acutely aware of *Tkachism's* heavy legacy. It's Tkachism's self-righteous judgmentalism that brought so much heartache and suffering into the lives of thousands of members, former members and co-workers who loved Mr. Armstrong and faithfully supported his work. ■

# THE KEY OF DAVID

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**California, Sacramento** KSPX 6:00 am, Fri

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**Delaware, Salisbury** WBD 9:30 am, Sun

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**Florida, Miami** WPXM 6:00 am, Fri

**Florida, Orlando** WOPX 6:00 am, Fri

**Florida, Panama City** WBPC 9:30 am, Sun

**Florida, Tallahassee-Thomasville** 9:30 am, Sun

**Florida, Tampa** WXPX 6:00 am, Fri

**Florida, West Palm Beach** WPXP 6:00 am, Fri

**Georgia, Albany** WBSK 9:30 am, Sun

**Georgia, Augusta** WBAU 9:30 am, Sun

**Georgia, Brunswick** WPXC 6:00 am, Fri

**Georgia, Columbus** WBG 9:30 am, Sun

**Georgia, Macon** WBMN 9:30 am, Sun

**Georgia, Savannah** WBVH 9:30 am, Sun

**Hawaii, Hawaii** Na Leo Chan. 54 6:30 am, Sun; 8:30 am, Wed

**Hawaii, Maui/Lanai/Molokai/Niihau** Akaku Chan. 52 6:30 pm, Sun; 3:30 am, Mon

**Hawaii, Kauai** Ho' Ike Chan. 52 9:30 am, Tue

**Idaho, Boise** KWOB 10:30 am, Sun

**Idaho, Idaho Falls-Pocatello** KWIB 10:30 am, Sun

**Idaho, Twin Falls** KWTE 10:30 am, Sun

**Illinois, Bloomington-Peoria** WBPE 8:30 am, Sun

**Illinois, Chicago** WCIU 9:30 am, Sun; WCPX 5:00 am, Fri

**Illinois, Rockford** WBR 8:30 am, Sun

**Indiana, Fort Wayne** WBFW 8:30 am, Sun

**Indiana, Indianapolis** WIPX 6:00 am, Fri

**Indiana, Lafayette** WBFY 8:30 am, Sun

**Indiana, Terra Haute** WBI 8:30 am, Sun

**Iowa, Cedar Rapids** KPXR 5:00 am, Fri

**Iowa, Des Moines** KPFX 5:00 am, Fri

**Iowa, Kirksville-Ottumwa** KWOT 8:30 am, Sun

**Iowa, Mason City-Austin-Rochester** KWBR 8:30 am, Sun

**Iowa, Sioux City** KXWB 8:30 am, Sun

**Kansas, Joplin-Pittsburg** KSXF 8:30 am, Sun

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**Kansas, Topeka** WBKS 8:30 am, Sun

**Kentucky, Bowling Green** WBWG 8:30 am, Sun

**Kentucky, Lexington** WUPX 6:00 am, Fri

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**Louisiana, El Dorado-Monroe** KWMB 8:30 am, Sun



**Nevada, Reno** KWBV 9:30 am, Sun  
**New York, Albany** WYPX 6:00 am, Fri  
**New York, Binghamton** WBXI 9:30 am, Sun  
**New York, Buffalo** WPXJ 6:00 am, Fri  
**New York, Elmira** WBE 9:30 am, Sun  
**New York, New York City** WPXN 6:00 am, Fri  
**New York, Syracuse** WSPX 6:00 am, Fri  
**New York, Utica** WBU 9:30 am, Sun  
**New York, Watertown** WBWT 9:30 am, Sun  
**North Carolina, Durham-Raleigh** WRPX 6:00 am, Fri  
**North Carolina, Fayetteville-Lumber Bridge** WFPX 6:00 am, Fri  
**North Carolina, Greensboro** WGPX 6:00 am, Fri  
**North Carolina, Greenville** WEPX 6:00 am, Fri  
**North Carolina, Greenville-New Bern-Washington** WGWB 9:30 am, Sun  
**North Carolina, Wilmington** WBW 9:30 am, Sun  
**North Dakota, Bismarck-Dickinson-Minot** KWMK 10:30 am, Sun  
**North Dakota, Fargo-Valley City** WBFG 8:30 am, Sun  
**Ohio, Cleveland** WVPX 6:00 am, Fri  
**Ohio, Lima** WBOH 9:30 am, Sun  
**Ohio, Steubenville-Wheeling** WBWO 9:30 am, Sun  
**Ohio, Zanesville** WBZV 9:30 am, Sun  
**Oklahoma, Ada** KSHD 8:30 am, Sun  
**Oklahoma, Lawton** KWB 8:30 am, Sun  
**Oklahoma, Oklahoma City** KOPX 5:00 am, Fri  
**Oklahoma, Tulsa** KTPX 5:00 am, Fri  
**Oregon, Bend** KWBO 9:30 am, Sun  
**Oregon, Eugene** KZWB 9:30 am, Sun  
**Oregon, Medford-Klamath Falls** KMFD 9:30 am, Sun  
**Oregon, Portland** KPXG 6:00 am, Fri  
**Pennsylvania, Erie** WBEP 9:30 am, Sun  
**Pennsylvania, Philadelphia** WPPX 6:00 am, Fri  
**Pennsylvania, Wilkes-Barre** WQPX 6:00 am, Fri  
**Rhode Island, Providence** WPXQ 6:00 am, Fri  
**South Carolina, Charleston** WBLN 9:30 am, Sun  
**South Carolina, Florence-Myrtle Beach** WFVB 9:30 am, Sun  
**South Dakota, Rapid City** KWBH 10:30 am, Sun  
**South Dakota, Sioux Falls-Mitchell** KWSD 8:30 am, Sun  
**Tennessee, Jackson** WBJK 8:30 am, Sun  
**Tennessee, Knoxville** WPXK 6:00 am, Fri  
**Tennessee, Memphis** WPXX 5:00 am, Fri  
**Tennessee, Nashville** WNPX 5:00 am, Fri  
**Texas, Abilene-Sweetwater** KWAU 8:30 am, Sun  
**Texas, Amarillo** KDBA 8:30 am, Sun  
**Texas, Beaumont-Port Arthur** KWBB 8:30 am, Sun  
**Texas, Corpus Christi** KWDB 8:30 am, Sun  
**Texas, Harlingen-Weslaco-Brownsville** KMHB 8:30 am, Sun  
**Texas, Houston** KPXB 5:00 am, Fri  
**Texas, Laredo** KTXW 8:30 am, Sun  
**Texas, Lubbock** KWVB 8:30 am, Sun  
**Texas, Odessa-Midland** KWWT 8:30 am, Sun  
**Texas, San Angelo** KWSA 8:30 am, Sun  
**Texas, San Antonio** KPXL 5:00 am, Fri  
**Texas, Sherman** KSHD 8:30 am, Sun  
**Texas, Longview-Tyler** KWTL 8:30 am, Sun  
**Texas, Victoria** KWVB 8:30 am, Sun  
**Texas, Wichita Falls** KWB 8:30 am, Sun  
**Utah, Salt Lake City** KUPX 5:00 am, Fri  
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**Virginia, Harrisonburg** WBHA 9:30 am, Sun  
**Virginia, Norfolk** WPXV 6:00 am, Fri  
**Virginia, Roanoke** WPXR 6:00 am, Fri  
**Washington D.C.** WBDC 8:00 am, Sun; WPXW 6:00 am, Fri

**Washington, Kennewick-Pasco-Richland-Yakima** KWYP 9:30 am, Sun  
**Washington, Seattle** KWXP 6:00 am, Fri  
**Washington, Spokane** KGXP 6:00 am, Fri  
**West Virginia, Beckley-Bluefield-Oak Hill** WBB 9:30 am, Sun  
**West Virginia, Charleston** WLTX 6:00 am, Fri  
**West Virginia, Clarksburg-Weston** WVWB 9:30 am, Sun  
**West Virginia, Parkersburg** WBPB 9:30 am, Sun  
**Wisconsin, Eau Claire-La Crosse** WBCZ 8:30 am, Sun  
**Wisconsin, Milwaukee** WPXE 5:00 am, Fri  
**Wisconsin, Rhinelander-Wausau** WBWA 8:30 am, Sun  
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**Honduras** WGN 6:00 am, Sun  
**Mexico** WGN 7:00 am, Sun  
**Panama** WGN 7:00 am, Sun

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**Aruba** WGN 8:00 am, Sun  
**Bahamas** WGN 8:00 am, Sun  
**Belize** WGN 7:00 am, Sun  
**Cuba** WGN 8:00 am, Sun  
**Dominican Republic** WGN 8:00 am, Sun  
**Haiti** WGN 7:00 am, Sun  
**Jamaica** WGN 9:00 am, Sun  
**Puerto Rico** WGN 8:00 am, Sun

## EUROPE

**Malta** Smash TV 4:30 pm, Sat; 10:00 pm, Tue

## AFRICA/ASIA

**South Africa** CSN 6:30 am, Sun  
**Philippines nationwide** Studio 23 8:30 am, Sun

## AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND

**Australia nationwide** Network Ten 4:30 am, Sun  
**Adelaide, South Australia** Chan. 31 11:30, Sun  
**Perth, Western Australia** Chan. 31 11:30 am, Sun  
**Tasmania** Southern Cross TV 6:00 am, Sun  
**New Zealand nationwide** TV3 6:00 am, Fri

**Louisiana, Lafayette** KLWB 8:30 am, Sun  
**Louisiana, Lake Charles** WBLC 8:30 am, Sun  
**Louisiana, New Orleans** WPXL 5:00 am, Fri  
**Maine, Bangor** WBAN 9:30 am, Sun  
**Maine, Presque Isle** WBPQ 9:30 am, Sun  
**Massachusetts, Boston** WBPX 6:00 am, Fri  
**Massachusetts, Holyoke-Springfield** WBQT 9:30 am, Sun  
**Michigan, Alpena** WBAE 9:30 am, Sun  
**Michigan, Cadillac-Traverse City** WBVC 9:30 am, Sun  
**Michigan, Detroit** WPXD 6:00 am, Fri  
**Michigan, Grand Rapids** WZPX 5:00 am, Fri  
**Michigan, Lansing** WBL 9:30 am, Sun  
**Michigan, Marquette** WBMK 9:30 am, Sun  
**Minnesota, Duluth-Superior** KWBD 8:30 am, Sun  
**Minnesota, Mankato** KWYE 8:30 am, Sun  
**Minnesota, Minneapolis** KPXM 5:00 am, Fri  
**Mississippi, Biloxi-Gulfport** WBGP 8:30 am, Sun  
**Mississippi, Columbus-Tupelo-West Point** WBSP 8:30 am, Sun  
**Mississippi, Greenwood-Greenville** WBWD 8:30 am, Sun  
**Mississippi, Hattiesburg-Laurel** WBHA 8:30 am, Sun  
**Mississippi, Meridian** WBMM 8:30 am, Sun  
**Missouri, Columbia-Jefferson City** KJWB 8:30 am, Sun  
**Missouri, Hannibal-Keokuk-Quincy** WEWB 8:30 am, Sun  
**Missouri, Kansas City** KPXE 5:00 am, Fri  
**Missouri, St. Joseph** WBJO 8:30 am, Sun  
**Montana, Billings** KWBM 10:30 am, Sun  
**Montana, Bozeman-Butte** KWXB 10:30 am, Sun  
**Montana, Glendive** KWZB 10:30 am, Sun  
**Montana, Great Falls** KWGF 10:30 am, Sun  
**Montana, Helena** KWHA 10:30 am, Sun  
**Montana, Missoula** KIDW 10:30 am, Sun  
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## Is This World War III?

WITH THE NEW STRIFE BETWEEN ISRAEL and Hezbollah, one has to wonder if this may be the precursor that will lead to the taking of half the city of Jerusalem. I personally do not see Iran backing down from its goal of trying to destroy Israel. Also, there seems to be a willingness by other nations to send troops into the region, and with the U.S. military not likely to become involved by much of any measure, the door may become wide open for the Europeans to step in. Certainly the UN peace-keeping forces are of little use. A joke would be a better description for them. ... [T]his does not look good for the foreseeable future.

*Terrence Amon—STONEBORO, PENN.*

## The Real Truth

JUST RECENTLY, I CAME ACROSS ONE OF your magazines for the first time. I was truly amazed at the depth into events that your articles cover. We live in scary times these days when our world is so full of hatred and deceit. ... [Y]our magazine is unbiased and straight to the point. In times like these, our people here in the U.S. deserve to know the truth about what is happening in our world. I would like to say thank you for being a source of honesty when it comes to getting the truth out. ...

*Randy Wylie—AMARILLO, TEX.*

I REALLY ENJOY READING ALL THE sources you offer and find I wish other people could see what is happening today in the world. When I tell them about this source, they think I'm just wasting my time, but finally I have found something that makes sense and has opened my eyes to the real truth—in how the world is changing and also where this time is heading. I really think we are heading to a real difficult time because today's society is way too liberal and because of the lack of leadership this country has. I also see our education system, which I think is terrible. ...

*Samuel Villasenor—ILLINOIS*

I DON'T FEEL THAT I AM OBTAINING much, if anything, from radio or TV, and we don't bother with newspapers. I do, however, look forward to the *Trumpet!* Keep up the good work.

*C. Roger Riewaldt—IRMO, S.C.*

## Prejudiced Reporting

THOUGH I AM NOT A CHRISTIAN, I have found some of your reporting to be more realistic than many other publications, and for that you have earned my respect. Unfortunately, some of your staff appear to believe that their viewpoint is the only legitimate one around ... and that's a dangerous misconception of reality. What truly confuses me is that you seem to encourage this type of reportage, and that limits your credibility. One of the features that drives me fairly crazy is how some of your correspondents will give such detailed, insightful reports, and then turn around and display such profound prejudice in the final paragraph(s). Just when you're making strong, valid points, you go off on a tangent of "biblical prophecy" that's so far out of the realm of reality that the rest of the story loses credibility as well. ... Problem is that if you allow preconceived notions to enter into the authorship, then there is no "authority" with which to base your statements on. ...

*Gary Hallford—VACAVILLE, CALIF.*

The *Trumpet* is not intended to simply relay events, a litany of facts that are available from many other news sources. What distinguishes it from other newsmagazines is the analysis we provide as we seek to understand the true meaning of events—analysis based on "the more sure word of prophecy" (2 Peter 1:19). And just as we strive for absolute accuracy in our reportage, so too are we careful to limit speculation and stick to visible trends based on thorough scriptural proof. You can check our record of accurate analysis and prediction by ordering a free copy of our sample edition, titled "He Was Right!"

I MUST ADMIT THAT I AM SCARED WHENEVER I open the pages of your magazine, the *Trumpet*, ever since you correctly predicted the name of the current pope way ahead before he was chosen by the College of Cardinals. Your batting average is excellent when it comes to providing your readers with advance news. Your latest issue carried more horrible news in the days ahead. I just want to know, how close are we now to the prophesied end of this age? The signs outlined by Jesus Christ and other prophets as precursors of those fearful events to affect all of us are now slowly being unveiled before our very eyes. Is there a way to escape these prophesied events?

*Socrates C. Punay—SAN DIEGO, CALIF.*

Jesus Christ said that no man knows the day or the hour of the end of this present age of man (Matthew 24:36), but that we can know the season, when it is "near, even at the doors" (verse 33). Though we do not set specific dates, the signs of the imminence of Jesus Christ's Second Coming are extraordinarily strong; the *Trumpet* will continue to report on them intensively. To learn about protection, check the June 2004 *Trumpet* on theTrumpet.com for Herbert W. Armstrong's article, "There Is a Way of Escape!"

## A Great Distinction

I HAVE BEEN A SUBSCRIBER FOR ALMOST two years, and I can truly say I treasure your knowledge of the Word of God. Your publication of books, booklets and magazines free of charge is a great distinction between the Philadelphians (Church of God) and the so-called Christian denominations today. I see that this is the true work of God's Church. Receiving your materials deeply changed my life and strengthened my faith in God. ... Studying through several books written by Herbert W. Armstrong really caused me to withdraw from the previous church I used to attend on Sundays. I started keeping God's laws and having private fellowship at home. Within those periods, I felt scattered and isolated. But thank God that you always impelled and strengthened me through the *Trumpet* magazines, books and booklets. ...

*Badi Maina—PAPUA NEW GUINEA*

I LOVE YOUR INCISIVE AND HARD-HITTING analyses of world events. The truth was never popular, but must be told. Left-wing liberals with their politically correct agenda have succeeded in handcuffing the Western nations into bondage. The sad part is that our leaders are both blinded and deaf. Jesus said, "Having ears they hear not, and having eyes they perceive not." Thanks for telling it as it is. The present situation is finally focusing world attention on the fact that both multiculturalism and its sinister childish political correctness are bankrupt concepts aimed at destroying our nations.

*Ray Fulford—B.C., CANADA*

## Comments?

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# Crisis Overload

Our world is drowning under a rising tide of troubles. BY JOEL HILLIKER

THE BAGHDAD MORGUE IS BEING OVERWHELMED BY corpses, almost all of which died violent deaths, mostly gunshots to the head. Iraq is devolving into a civil war. Shiites and Sunnis, rather than cooperating in bringing effective and unified governance to their nation, are lunging at each other's throats. The notion of Iraq becoming a peaceful, self-sustaining, stable state—a democratic model for the Middle East—is dimming.

This is disheartening news to say the least—and not only to Iraqis. For the United States, this can only be interpreted as failure in its single biggest global project—its primary theater of operations in the “war on terror.” Now if it pulls out, it effectively gifts the Arabian Peninsula to Iran. If it stays, it does so, in the words of Stratfor, “as a purely symbolic gesture, without any hope for imposing a solution” (August 8). An unenviable pair of options.

What is truly remarkable about this situation is the fact that *Iraq doesn't even represent the biggest news in the world right now.* It was relegated to page-2-or-3 news by Israel and Hezbollah. And by all appearances, the war in Lebanon was orchestrated by Iran—at least in part to distract attention away from its nuclear program, another geopolitical headache. Then, in August, a foiled terrorist attack on British planes pushed all of those headlines to the background.

Buried even deeper in the back pages is Afghanistan—yet one more troubled area whose problems are only getting worse as the “ousted” Taliban makes a comeback. Did we mention North Korea? It was only July that Kim Jong Il test-fired a volley of missiles including one with the potential to strike America's West Coast. Then there is Fidel Castro—that perennial gadfly of the U.S.—whose poor health has left Cuba's future uncertain.

The news about Castro, which came on the same day of another notable event—the demilitarized zone separating North and South Korea being breached by a shooting incident—prompted Stratfor to make the following observation: “The United States, which is obviously concerned with all three incidents [including the Lebanon war], is on complete overload. This isn't a Bush thing. It's an institutional thing. Managing three unrelated crises at the highest level of any government stretches things beyond capacity. If these events happened sequentially, they would absorb almost all analytic and decision-making capacity. When they happen together, two would-be crises are subconsciously declared ‘non-crises’ and handled at the lower pay grades—or actually, not handled at all” (August 2, emphasis mine).

What is happening to the world? It is dizzying enough simply staying informed about these events—let alone having to make binding policy decisions on each one of them. Columnist Peggy

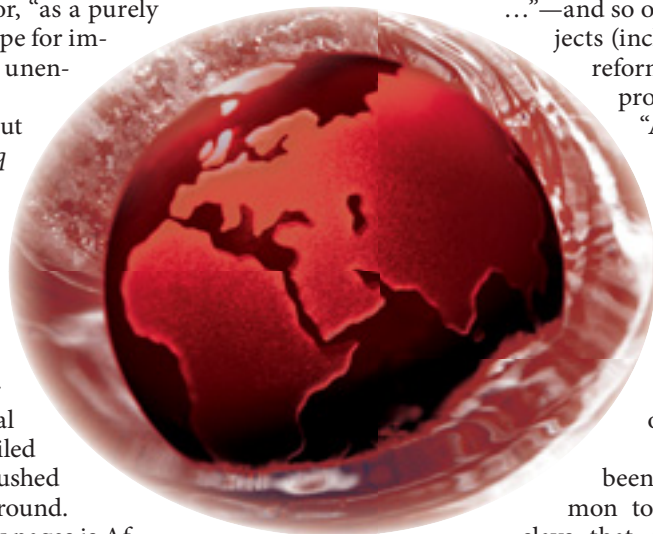
Noonan recently commented how global concerns, combined with domestic problems, are simply overwhelming our leaders: “We are asking our politicians, our senators and congressmen, to make judgments, decisions and policy on: stem-cell research, SDI, NATO composition, G-8 agreements, the history and state of play of judicial and legislative actions regarding press freedoms, the history of Sunni-Shiites tensions, Kurds, tax rates, federal spending, hurricane prediction and response, the building of a library annex in Missoula, the most recent thinking on when human life begins, including the thinking of the theologians of antiquity on when the soul enters the body, chemical weaponry, the Supreme Court, U.S.-North Korean relations, bioethics, cloning, public college curriculums ...”—and so on; she went on to list 29 more subjects (including such “minor issues” as UN reform, homeland security and nuclear proliferation) and then concluded: “And that was just this week” (*Wall Street Journal*, July 13).

There is no question that the pace of earth-shaking events is quickening, that hatreds between enemies are growing hotter, that the vitriol of public debate is turning more acidic—that, in short, the complexities and perils of our world are spinning beyond our ability to manage them.

Some would argue that it has ever been thus—that this complaint is common to man throughout history. What slays that argument, though, are uniquely modern realities: technology that shrinks continents and bridges oceans, linking individuals, groups, populations; news that encircles the planet in an instant; pools and rivulets of radicalism that are meeting and finding each other as they surge forward into streams, rivers, torrents of anger that manifest as terrorism; chemical, biological and nuclear armaments—weapons of *mass* destruction—that have proliferated beyond the possession of sovereign states with rational, predictable patterns of behavior. This is different.

More and more in the news one sees commentators allowing a certain *hopelessness* to creep into their reporting and analysis—alluding to unprecedented times, plagues, curses, biblical-scale occurrences, apocalyptic events. Step back, one cannot escape the sense that we are lurching into a world ominously unlike the one we have inhabited for the last couple of generations.

Perhaps—here, a note of hope amid the hopelessness—as this tsunami of crises crests, more and more people will be shaken from the *delusion* that mankind is capable of solving its own problems. Jesus Christ prophesied that humanity, left to itself, would erase all life from the planet. By now, as we watch Armageddon approach, we should be able to recognize the wisdom in His words, and take that as a prod to turn in repentance to God, in whom lies our only hope. ■



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