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The End of Britain Is Nigh

BY RICHARD PALMER



First Minister Alex Salmond meet fans of Dundee and Dundee United football club who are voting 'Yes' in this month's referendum on September 1.

IF THE latest opinion poll proves accurate, in just one week the United Kingdom will cease to exist. The latest figures from *YouGov* show that 51 percent of Scots plan to vote "Yes" to independence, compared with 49 percent for "No."

"On September 19, people over all Britain could wake up in a diminished country, one that doesn't bask on the world stage but hobbles instead," wrote the *Spectator's* political editor James Forsyth in an article a couple of months ago. "If Scotland votes to leave the United Kingdom, it would be Britain's greatest ever defeat: the nation would have voted to abolish itself."

The union between England and Scotland has been at the foundation of the UK's greatness. That union has literally changed the whole world.

Before that union, the British Isles was a provincial backwater.

Any time England went to war, her enemies allied with Scotland and had an easy backdoor into England. Once the fighting between England and Scotland was ended, the two

could turn outward and, together, they changed the world. Without that union, it was impossible for either to be anything other than a second- or third-rate power.

Why? What could cause the end of a 500-year-old harmonious marriage? The answer can be summed up in two words: government hand-outs. The entire breakup debate has descended into an argument over which side can give Scots the most government money.

The material distributed by the pro-independence campaign is basically made up of two parts: a vague emotional appeal to Scottishness and a promise that with indepen-

dence the government would be able to give out more money and goodies.

The latter argument stands out most on the "Yes" campaign's home page. The website's *Answers* section has nothing about how an independent Scotland can be a greater nation or play a greater role in the world. But, there's plenty about pensions, healthcare and social services. The idea is that independence will turn Scotland into a socialist utopia. The country that gave the world Adam Smith wants to swap him for Karl Marx.

The "Yes" campaign's argument is basically this: *Those evil English won't let Scotland have access to the magic money tree. Declare independence, and we can take as much money as we want and give it out to everyone.* Insert "north sea oil" instead of "magic money tree" and that's almost literally the "Yes" campaign's argument—even to the point of inventing a conspiracy theory where the British government, oil companies and the Shetland Islanders have a secret oil field they won't tell the Scots about.

see END page 12



STEPHEN FLURRY

Hamas Terrorists Now More Popular in West Bank

THE TRUMPET DAILY | September 9

Hamas's recipe for success: Commit terrorism, provoke a war, use human shields, cause thousands of deaths—and surge in Palestinian popularity polls.



Five Things That Could Go Wrong in Iraq

Byron York, WASHINGTON EXAMINER | September 10

IF THERE'S one thing America's misadventure in Iraq from 2003 to 2011 taught everyone, it is that things can go terribly wrong when the U.S. intervenes in a foreign environment with deep sectarian divisions, an ineffectual government, armed factions and the general complexities of the Middle East.

So now, [President] Barack Obama plans to step up U.S. involvement in Iraq with more airstrikes and an effort to strengthen and better organize Iraqi and Kurdish military forces, as well as some Syrian rebels. In his address to the nation Wednesday night, the president laid out a multipoint proposal for action. He also had an opportunity, which he chose not to take, to warn Americans of some of the specific ways his new intervention could go wrong. ...

Since the president decided not to talk about possible downsides, here are a few—not at all a definitive list

1 The Iraqi government doesn't get its act together.

Obama's entire Iraq policy rests on the notion that the country will form a government that is truly inclusive. According to this line of thinking, if Sunnis, purged under former Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, are given a meaningful, proportionate role in the government, their support for radical groups like the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria will diminish. ...

But what if the Iraqi government turns out to be not as inclusive as the president hopes "It may be that the government comes together but the country does not. That is, the Shia-Sunni split is impossible to repair, at least at this moment. ... The danger is that having reengaged in Iraq, we don't succeed," [according to Peter Wehner, a former Bush White House official].

The bottom line is that—by the president's own reasoning—if a

genuinely inclusive government fails to materialize, the U.S. mission, no matter how far-reaching, will fail.

2 The ground war is a dud.

Nobody believes the U.S. can defeat the Islamic State with air power alone. A real victory over the Islamic State, the thinking goes, will be won with a ground war, supported by an overwhelmingly American air campaign. Without U.S. combat troops, the war will be fought by non-American boots on the ground—mostly Kurds and the notoriously unreliable Iraqi Army, as well as, in Syria, some of the opposition forces the president once mocked as ineffective. Together, their performance will determine the outcome of the fight.

"The ground campaign is what is going to defeat [the Islamic State] in the end," said retired Gen. Jack Keane, a former Army vice chief of staff, on Fox News Wednesday night. "In that ground campaign, we are totally dependent on surrogate forces. Whether we can do this or not, nobody knows." ...

3 We really do become the Shiite Air Force.

One major concern about American intervention in the Iraqi mess is that, by joining the fight against the Sunnis in the Islamic State, the United States would effectively go to war on behalf of the Shiite side of the sectarian divide. Everyone agrees that would be a disaster. "This cannot be the United States being the air force for Shia militias or a Shia-on-Sunni Arab fight," retired Gen. David Petraeus said over the summer. ...

Despite being an outcome that all Americans want to avoid, that could be exactly what happens. "We're already seeing reports where U.S. strikes against [the Islamic State] are having the effect of bailing out Iranian-backed Shiite terrorist groups," said Republican Rep. Ron DeSantis, who served in Iraq in 2007 and 2008. "When I was in Iraq, once al Qaeda in Iraq was defeated, the main military front was taking on the Mahdi Army, a terrorist organization. Now, you

How Stable Is Nuclear-Armed Pakistan?

Jeremiah Jacques | September 5

FOR THE last two weeks, Pakistan's two leading opposition movements have laid aside their differences and rallied together in a violent effort to overthrow the government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

Tens of thousands of protesters led by Imran Khan and outspoken cleric Tahir ul-Qadri have flooded into the capital city, Islamabad, saying they will not leave unless Sharif steps down. They have accused him of corruption and rigging last year's election. The prime minister has denied all charges and has asked Khan and Qadri to negotiate. Both opposition leaders so far have refused these calls.

Since mid-August, Islamabad has been largely incapacitated by the unrest. Many roads have been closed, businesses have been suffering steep losses, and troops and police have been occupied protecting government facilities.

Although the tensions appeared to be easing, the unrest has unnerved the country where power is often transferred by military coups instead of elections. It has also concerned the international community, in large part because Pakistan is a member of one of the world's most exclusive clubs: The Nuclear Nine.

Pakistan's military, which is mostly pro-Western, controls its 100-plus nuclear weapons. But a collapse of the government could mean an uncertain future for the arms. It is possible that they could even fall under the control of some of Pakistan's many Islamic extremists or terrorists groups. A 2011 United States government analysis called Pakistan "the least stable of the nine nuclear weapons states and the one where there has been significant support for Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda, not only among the general population but also within the military and intelligence forces."



Protesters in Islamabad on August 30

It is telling that bin Laden was able to live, undisturbed, just a few hundred yards away from a prestigious Pakistani military academy for nearly a decade.

The instability of Pakistan's nuclear weapons was perhaps most evident in 2007 and 2008, when homegrown terrorists attacked its nuclear sites at least three times.

Even if the current wave of unrest in Pakistan blows over, the potential for turmoil in the nuclear nation remains high. The *Trumpet* has often warned of the danger of Pakistan and its nuclear arsenal falling under the control of radical Islam. In January 2008, editor in chief Gerald Flurry wrote that "Pakistan also has the nuclear bomb and could be taken over by radical Islam, with plenty of help from Iran." This nation, the world's seventh-most powerful military power, could soon become a "proxy of the Iranian mullahs," he warned. "[T]his would be the worst possible disaster!"

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could be in a situation where we are essentially serving as an air force for Shiite terror groups."

4 We drive away our timid, reluctant allies.

In his speech, the president said America's coalition partners have already started playing roles in the anti-Islamic State campaign. ... "The administration believes that the way you get the others to do more is you make clear all the things the U.S. is not going to do. The evidence shows you get more from allies when you reassure them on what you will do," [Peter Feaver, a former Bush National Security Council official, said in an interview Wednesday]. ...

5 The status-of-forces-agreement problem blows up.

... So what happens when the

bombs fall, the rockets are fired, and people, including, inevitably, some innocents, are killed? "We appear to be ramping up without a status-of-forces agreement, without the immunity protections the administration said was necessary," said Feaver. ...

Tough on the Islamic State? Iran Senses U.S. Weakness

COMMENTARY | September 10

AFTER WEEKS of indecision, President [Barack] Obama is finally, albeit in a limited manner, mustering U.S. strength to respond to the challenge from [the Islamic State] terrorists. But at the same time, another

dangerous Islamist power is sensing U.S. weakness in its struggle to build a nuclear weapon. The latest news about Iranian maneuvering prior to the resumption of the nuclear talks with the West provides a stark contrast to any talk about a more muscular Obama foreign policy. ...

Iran is going full speed ahead with a diplomatic campaign to undermine Western sanctions aimed at forcing them to come to terms on a nuclear agreement. Secretary of State John Kerry began the process of weakening and perhaps dismantling the restrictions on doing business with Iran last fall in the hope that this would lead Tehran to meet him at least halfway and sign another weak accord that might let them keep their nuclear program while committing them to not

build a bomb. But in the months that have followed Kerry's interim deal, the Iranians have ... reverted to their pattern of previous negotiations in which they have stalled and continued to try to run out the clock until it is too late to stop them. ... Iran's public stance and its diplomatic offensive leave the impression that they are standing firm and will agree to nothing that ultimately limits their ability to build a bomb.

The Obama administration's zeal for a deal with Iran is no secret. Nor is the president's desire to craft a new détente with Tehran. That impulse is only strengthened by the fact that both Iran and the U.S. view the [Islamic State] terrorists as an enemy. ... [T]he administration's belated realization that letting [the Islamic State] flourish in Syria and Iraq was a colossal error is leading some to conclude

that it should work together with the Iranian regime in an attempt to crush the group. But ... no one should trust Tehran or its motives in intervening against [the Islamic State]. Nor should this temporary confluence of interests be allowed to impact the U.S. effort to stop Iran from going nuclear. ...

[T]he mixed signals coming from Washington about Iran are already being interpreted abroad as indicating the administration's lack of resolve on the nuclear issue. As the *Times* notes, Iran seems to be making progress in getting Russia ... and South Africa to think about backing away from sanctions or openly breaching them. And so long as the U.S. is behaving as if the nuclear issue is not a priority and that increasing, rather than weakening, the restrictions in the coming year is on the table ..., it's hard to blame these countries and others who are tempted

to do business with Iran, that Obama doesn't care much about the issue.

But whatever the administration is planning to do in the talks or if they fail, the Iranians seem determined to prepare themselves to withstand any pressure from the West. They are secure in the knowledge that Obama will never use force against them and that America's allies and partners in the negotiations will crumble even if the president will not. Under those circumstances they have little incentive to be reasonable in the talks.

President Obama is reluctantly bringing the U.S. into the war on [the Islamic State]. But unless he wakes up and starts acting in a manner that will cause the Iranians to fear the consequences of trying to keep their nuclear program, he may face an even more dangerous conflict against a country on the verge of gaining a nuke.

EUROPE

No QE Without German Assent

Ambrose Evans-Pritchard,
TELEGRAPH | September 3

GLOBAL MARKETS are behaving as if quantitative easing (QE) were a done deal in the eurozone. They are betting that the European Central Bank (ECB) will pick up the baton from the U.S. Federal Reserve in a seamless transition, keeping the world's monetary system smoothly supplied with liquidity as [the] Fed winds down QE in October.

The Eurostoxx 50 index of equities is up 8 percent since mid-August in spite of the EU showdown with Russia. Belief that the ECB will soon sweep into crowded bond markets on a vast buying spree is a key reason why yields on 10-year German Bunds have broken all records, falling to 0.88 percent last week, with French yields down in lockstep to 1.23 percent.

Yet there is in fact no stimulus, and nor is there likely to be much for a long time. Europe's policy settings

continue to be contractionary. ...

France's François Hollande is pushing through €50 billion (US\$64.7 billion) of austerity measures over three years to comply with EU rules, guaranteeing mass unemployment through his presidency.

Italy's Matteo Renzi is caught in the same vice, forced to keep cutting in order to plug a budget largely caused by a triple-dip recession and near deflation—themselves the result of ECB policy.

Even Germany has stalled. There is no recovery in sight. Eurozone retail sales fell in July and consumer confidence dropped to a six-month low in August. ...

Some have construed Mario Draghi's call for fiscal stimulus at the Jackson Hole conclave two weeks ago as a radical shift in EMU policy, heralding a reflationary blitz You might equally construe it as a primordial scream by a man placed in an impossible position.

The politics of EMU remain as poisonous as ever, a simmering conflict between debtors and creditors. The ECB still suffers from the design flaws

of monetary union, ideological fetishes and mutual suspicions that have prevented it from acting at each stage of the crisis until the last desperate moment. In key respects, the North-South divide is becoming harder to bridge. ...

Markets forget that Germany's constitutional court ruled in February that the ECB's back-stop plan for Italian and Spanish debt "manifestly violates" the EU treaties and is probably "Ultra Vires," meaning that the Bundesbank cannot legally take part. ...

This time Mr. Draghi is in conflict with Berlin. He is using the threat of QE to pressure Ms. Merkel to abandon Germany's policy of pro-cyclical budget surpluses, so damaging for EMU as a whole, calculating that she may accept fiscal stimulus as a lesser evil than QE.

There are hints that this game of brinkmanship may yield something. ...

Mr. Draghi has raised hopes that are beyond his political gift, and which he cannot easily fulfill. His speech at Jackson Hole is one of the strangest episodes in the short history

The Ukrainian Crisis Is at a Point of No Return

NATIONAL INTEREST | September 10

PETRO POROSHENKO, Ukraine's embattled president, is looking to make a deal with the enemy. And why wouldn't he be? In a preemptive move on the eve of the NATO summit in Wales, the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, announced a plan for peace talks in Ukraine. Western leaders, breathing a sigh of relief, expressed a "cautious optimism" for the ceasefire. But the West's quiet acquiescence to the Russian plan has left Ukrainian leaders with few options.

In the weeks leading up to the NATO summit on September 4, Russia escalated its military invasion of Ukraine.

In late August, Russian armored troops and weapons crossed Ukraine's southeast border in what Ukrainian officials called a "stealth invasion." The counteroffensive pushed back the Ukrainian military's previous gains into separatist controlled territory. ... Russia continues to deny involvement.

[W]estern leaders, including [U.S.] President Barack Obama and German Chancellor Angela Merkel, have been unwilling to use the "I-word"—invasion—when referring to Russian action in Ukraine. The day before the NATO summit, speaking in Estonia, President Obama made it clear that the United States would not provide military support to Ukraine. ...

The Baltic States have good reason to fear. Putin's policy track record in Ukraine is littered with contradictions and broken promises. ...

The West's "cautious optimism" should have given way to a sobering realism about the ineffectiveness of Western policy toward Russia, but it has not. ... If the purpose of the sanctions was to deter Russian aggression, by that measure, they have failed. If the purpose was to show Russia that there are economic consequences for military invasion, then they have failed by that measure as well. So far, the sanctions have not affected the daily lives of most Russians, and Russian public support for Putin's policy on Ukraine remains high. ...

Western leaders squandered a key opportunity to take a strong stance against Russia after the Crimean annexation in March. If the NATO force was deployed six months ago, Putin may have thought twice about invading Ukraine. Putin has exploited this tactical mistake masterfully. As Russia continues to set the agenda on Ukraine and the West continues to implement the same ineffective strategy, Ukrainians feel increasingly abandoned. The crisis has reached a point of no return, and Poroshenko is left with no options.

of the ECB, a digression from his written script to admit that inflation expectations have become unhinged and that deflationary dynamics have begun to take hold.

He abruptly switched sides, aligning himself (not the ECB) with France and Italy. He seemed to concede that the policy regime he has been defending for three years is destructive and misguided, and that the critics have been right all along.

One might suspect that he has reached the point of emotional rupture, too sensitive to continue defending the indefensible, intuitively aware that the project is beyond saving. He already looks like a man preparing for his new destiny in Rome as Italy's salvation president.

Fragmentation Means German Hegemony

Ambrose Evans-Pritchard,
TELEGRAPH | September 10

EUROPE is disintegrating. Two large and ancient kingdoms are near the

point of rupture as Spain follows Britain into constitutional crisis, joined like Siamese twins.

The post-Hapsburg order further east is suddenly prey to a corrosive notion that settled borders are up for grabs. "Problems frozen for decades are warming up again," said Giles Merritt, from Friends of Europe in Brussels.

The best we can hope for—should tribalism prevail—is German political hegemony in Europe. The German people so far remain a bastion of rationalism, holding together as others tear themselves apart. The French are too paralyzed by economic depression and the collapse of the Hollande presidency to play any serious role.

The far worse outcome is that even Germany succumbs to centrifugal forces, leaving Europe bereft of coherent leadership, a parochial patchwork, wallowing in victimhood and decline, defenseless against a revanchist Russia that plays by different rules.

Former NATO chief Lord Robertson warns that a British breakup is doubly dangerous, setting off "Balkanization" dominoes across Europe, and

amounting to a body blow for global security at a time when the Middle East is out of control and China is testing its power in Asian waters.

He warns that the residual UK would be distracted for years by messy divorce, a diminished power, grappling with constitutional wreckage, likely to face a resurgence of Ulster's demons. Scotland's refusal to allow nuclear weapons on its soil means that no U.S. warship would be able to dock in Scottish ports, while its withdrawal from all power projection overseas would push British fighting capability below the point of critical mass.

"The world has not yet caught up with the full and dramatic implications of what is going on. For the second military power in the West to shatter would be cataclysmic in geopolitical terms. Nobody should underestimate the effect this would have on existing global balances," he said.

Europe has largely disarmed already. While America spends \$76,000 per soldier each year, EU states are down to \$18,000, largely earmarked for pay and pensions, according to the Institute for Statecraft. Almost

nothing is being spent on new equipment. Europe has slashed defense budgets by \$70 billion over the past two years even as Russia blitzes \$600 billion on war-fighting capabilities by 2020 and turns itself into a militarized state, a Sparta with nuclear weapons.

A portrait of Peter the Great hangs above the desk of Russia's Vladimir Putin. One might conclude that Mr. Putin will not rest until he has avenged the post-Soviet losses of Narva, Riga and Poltava, the triple victory sites of that mercurial tsar. The first two lie across the EU line in the Baltics, the latter deep within Ukraine.

The Scottish precedent threatens ... to set off a chain reaction. ... "If the Scots and Catalans go, the Flemish will follow. The precedent creates so much pressure," says Paul Belien, a Belgian author and Flemish nationalist. ... "I am not happy. I fear the Scottish experiment will end in economic disaster and discredit our cause. We are the ones who subsidize Wallonia, so we're really in the position of England," he said. ...

"Scotland is our example," says Eva Klotz, leader of Süd-Tiroler Freiheit movement in the Italian Dolomites. "What is happening in Scotland changes everything for us. That the Scots can vote—and crucially that England respects it—shows that it's

possible to achieve self-determination democratically, without war and violence," she said.

Yet there is a twist. The sub-plot of the Süd-Tirol campaign is reunification with Austria, 100 years after it was torn away and handed to Italy as a strategic barrier, or spoils of war. There are many such pockets across Europe: the Swedes in eastern Finland, the Germans on the wrong side of the Belgian border or indeed across much of Alsace, the Irish Catholics of Derry, and soon perhaps the Shetlanders within a new Scotland. Above all there are the Hungarians.

Europe's stability since 1945 is built on the sanctity of borders, a universal acceptance that nobody will reopen this Pandora's box, even if they have legitimate cause. It is why Russia's seizure of Ukraine has been such a shock, so dangerous since it drew a chorus of apologists within the EU, some aiming to exploit it, others useful idiots. ...

Yet Germany seems largely immune to fragmentation fashion Some may view German dominance with alarm. Yet perhaps we should be thankful that at least one great European state is holding the line. ...

The EU was supposed to lock in a European Germany, not a German Europe. The grand design assumed a plausible level of parity between Berlin

and Paris, buttressed by an array of cohesive nation states led by London. This is dying before our eyes. ...

TW IN BRIEF

■ Pope to visit EU Parliament

Pope Francis announced September 11 that he would accept an invitation to address the European Parliament. The visit to the Parliament in Strasbourg will take place on November 25. The president of the Commission of Bishops' Conferences of the European Community (COMECE), Cardinal Reinhard Marx, said, "The decision to come to Strasbourg before visiting any individual EU member state as such gives a strong signal that the pope supports and encourages the pursuit of European integration and unity." EU Parliament President Martin Schultz extended the invitation to the pope in October last year. At the time, the *Vatican Insider's* Giacomo Galeazzi, wrote that the pope wouldn't be satisfied with merely visiting Parliament and having a few photos with politicians. "Bergoglio is no fan of blown-up media campaigns unless he can see concrete results, so a papal visit to Strasbourg would mean a crammed schedule with lots of topics to discuss," he wrote. Time will tell what "concrete results" this visit has.

ASIA

China, Russia to Build Giant Seaport

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE |
September 10

CHINA AND Russia will build one of the largest ports in northeast Asia on Russia's Sea of Japan coast, reports said, in a further sign of the power-houses' growing alliance.

The seaport is expected to be able to handle some 60 million tonnes of cargo a year, China's state-run People's Daily Online reported late Wednesday—comparable to Britain's

busiest port Immingham or Le Havre in France

The new facility will be located in far eastern Russia, just 18 kilometers (11 miles) away from the Chinese border. The region is also close to North Korea.

Chinese and Russian leaders inked a deal on the port at May's Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) in Shanghai, the report said. ...

Resource-hungry China is seeking to diversify its sources of energy amid booming domestic consumption, while Russia—at odds with the

West over its annexation of Ukraine's Crimea Peninsula—is seeking to refocus its gas and oil exports towards Asia.

Last week, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese Vice Premier Zhang Gaoli attended the groundbreaking of a gas pipeline that will help Russia supply China under a huge energy deal. After a decade of tough negotiations Chinese and Russian leaders inked a 30-year deal, \$400-billion agreement in May that will eventually involve 38 billion cubic meters of gas annually.

"We are today starting the biggest

Russia's Next Land Grab

NEW YORK TIMES | September 9

UKRAINE ISN'T the only place where Russia is stirring up trouble. Since the Soviet Union broke up in 1991, Moscow has routinely supported secessionists in bordering states, to coerce those states into accepting its dictates. Its latest such effort is unfolding in the South Caucasus.

In recent weeks, Moscow seems to have been aggravating a longstanding conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan while playing peacemaking overlord to both. In the first week of August, as many as 40 Armenian and Azerbaijani soldiers were reported killed in heavy fighting near their border, just before a summit meeting convened by Russia's president, Vladimir V. Putin.

The South Caucasus may seem remote, but the region borders Russia, Iran and Turkey, and commands a vital pipeline route for oil and natural gas to flow from Central Asia to Europe without passing through Russia. Western officials cannot afford to let another part of the region be digested by Moscow—as they did when Russia separated South Ossetia and Abkhazia from Georgia, just to the north, in a brief war in 2008, and when it seized Crimea from Ukraine this year. ...

Three times in the 1990s, Armenia and Azerbaijan signed peace agreements, but Russia found ways to derail Armenia's participation. (In 1999, for example, a disgruntled journalist suspected of having been aided by Moscow assassinated Armenia's prime minister, speaker of Parliament and other government officials.)

An unresolved conflict—a “frozen conflict,” Russia calls

it—gives Russian forces an excuse to enter the region and coerce both sides. Once Russian forces are in place, neither side can cooperate closely with the West without fear of retribution from Moscow.

The latest violence preceded a summit meeting on August 10 in Sochi, Russia, at which Mr. Putin sought an agreement on deploying additional Russian “peacekeepers” between Armenia and Azerbaijan. ...

Before the meeting, Moscow had been tightening its grip on the South Caucasus, with Armenia's tacit support. Last fall, Armenia's government gave up its ambitions to sign a partnership agreement with the European Union and announced that it would join Moscow's customs union instead.

Renewed open warfare would give Russia an excuse to send in more troops, under the guise of peacekeeping. Destabilizing the South Caucasus could also derail a huge gas pipeline project, agreed to last December, that might lighten Europe's dependence on Russian fuel.

But astonishingly, American officials reacted to the current fighting by saying they “welcome” the Russian-sponsored summit meeting. Has Washington learned nothing from Georgia and Ukraine? To prevent escalation of the Caucasus conflict, and deny Mr. Putin the pretext for a new land grab, President [Barack] Obama should invite the leaders of Azerbaijan and Armenia to Washington and show that America has not abandoned the South Caucasus. This would encourage the leaders to resist Russia's pressure. ...

Letting the South Caucasus lose its sovereignty to Russia would strike a deadly blow to America's already diminished ability to seek and maintain alliances in the former Soviet Union and beyond.

construction project in the world,” Putin said at the ceremony outside the Siberian city of Yakutsk.

Zhang said that he hoped the pipeline would be completed within four years. “China is to devote consistent and unswerving effort to establishing a strategic partnership of energy cooperation with Russia as agreed upon by the heads of state of the two countries,” he said, according to China's official Xinhua news agency.

China Deploys Troops in South Sudan

WALL STREET JOURNAL | September 9

CHINA BEGAN deploying 700 soldiers to a United Nations peacekeeping force in South Sudan to help guard the country's embattled oil fields and protect Chinese workers and installations, a spokesman for the African nation's

president said Tuesday.

The airlift of the Chinese infantry battalion to the South Sudanese states of Unity and Upper Nile, the site of the only operating oil fields still under the control of the central government in Juba, was expected to take several days, spokesman Ateny Wek Ateny said.

While Beijing's troops will operate under UN command, their posting to South Sudan marks a sharp escalation of China's efforts to ensure the safety of its workers and assets in Africa and guarantee a steady flow of energy for domestic consumption.

The deployment marks the first time Beijing has contributed a battalion to a UN peacekeeping force, UN officials said. In March 2013, China sent some 300 peacekeepers to Mali to protect Chinese engineers building a UN camp in the town of Gao.

China's state-owned National Petroleum Corp. holds a 40 percent

stake in a joint venture that operates in South Sudan's vast oil fields. The company also has a 1,000-mile export pipeline that carries crude through neighboring Sudan to Port Sudan on the Red Sea.

Before the latest fighting in South Sudan flared, the country accounted for 5 percent of China's crude imports, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. Output has since plummeted by a third—to 160,000 barrels a day—following the outbreak of fighting late last year.

More than 10,000 people have been killed and some 1.5 million uprooted from their homes in South Sudan since fighting erupted in December ...

The UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan is authorized by the Security Council for up to 12,500 troops and 1,323 police personnel. As of July 31, it had a total of 11,389 soldiers, police and military liaison officers. Under its mandate, UN peacekeepers are

Japan, U.S. Discuss Offensive Military Capability for Tokyo

REUTERS | September 10

JAPAN AND the United States are exploring the possibility of Tokyo acquiring offensive weapons that would allow Japan to project power far beyond its borders, Japanese officials said, a move that would likely infuriate China.

While Japan's intensifying rivalry with China dominates the headlines, Tokyo's focus would be the ability to take out North Korean missile bases, said three Japanese officials involved in the process.

They said Tokyo was holding the informal, previously undisclosed talks with Washington about capabilities that would mark an enhancement of military might for a country that has not fired a shot in anger since its defeat in World War II.

The talks on what Japan regards as a "strike capability" are preliminary and do not cover specific hardware at this stage, the Japanese officials told Reuters.

Defense experts say an offensive capability would require a change in Japan's purely defensive military doctrine, which could open the door to billions of dollars worth of offensive missile systems and other hardware. These could take various forms, such as submarine-fired cruise missiles similar to the U.S. Tomahawk.

U.S. officials said there were no formal discussions on the matter but did not rule out the possibility that informal

contacts on the issue had taken place. One U.S. official said Japan had approached American officials informally last year about the matter.

Japan's military is already robust but is constrained by a pacifist Constitution. The Self Defense Forces have dozens of naval surface ships, 16 submarines and three helicopter carriers, with more vessels under construction. Japan is also buying 42 advanced F-35 stealth fighter jets.

Reshaping the military into a more assertive force is a core policy of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. ...

The Japanese officials said their U.S. counterparts were cautious [about] the idea, partly because it could outrage China, which accuses Abe of reviving wartime militarism. ...

Part of Japan's motivation for upgrading its capabilities is a nagging suspicion that the United States, with some 28,000 troops in South Korea as well as 38,000 in Japan, might hesitate to attack [North Korea] in a crisis, Japanese experts said. ... "We might

want to maintain some kind of limited strike capability in order to be able to initiate a strike, so that we can tell the Americans, 'unless you do the job for us, we will have to do it on our own,'" said Michishita, a security expert at the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies in Tokyo. ...

"Gen. Douglas MacArthur and the U.S. officials who wrote Japan's Constitution were experienced and world wise. If they were around today, they would recognize Japan's shifting tides and take action to reverse them. But, as the Prophet Isaiah wrote, American leaders today act like children (Isaiah 3:4). The biblical name for the United States is Manasseh, which in Hebrew means forgetful. Those leading America today are living up to this name: Like children, they are destitute in experience and forgetful even about very recent history. As the U.S. snubs history, turns inward and ignores geopolitical shifts, the barriers established to prevent another world war are being systematically dismantled." —Trumpet, December 2013

allowed to use "all necessary means" to protect imperiled civilians at oil installations. If attacked, Mr. Ateny said, the Chinese soldiers are "combat-ready and can fight back." ...

India Signs Free Trade Agreement With ASEAN

ECONOMIC TIMES | September 9

INDIA SIGNED a free trade pact in services and investment with the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on Monday in New Delhi. The accord is aimed at allowing freer movement of professionals and encouraging investment. ...

ASEAN—comprising Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam—and India are

targeting \$100 billion in trade by 2015. Nine out of 10 ASEAN countries have signed the accord, while the Philippines is expected to do so soon after completing domestic procedures.

The services pact ... covers issues such as transparency, domestic regulations, recognition, market access, national treatment, increasing participation of developing countries, joint committee on services, review, dispute settlement and denial of benefits, a commerce department official said. ...

Putin Tightens Control of Defense Sector

REUTERS | September 10

PRESIDENT VLADIMIR Putin signed a decree on Wednesday taking direct charge of a commission that oversees Russia's defense industry as Moscow

tries to reduce reliance on Western equipment following sanctions over the Ukraine crisis.

He also said NATO was using rhetoric over the conflict in Ukraine to "resuscitate itself" ...

"A more dictatorial Russian government is coming fast That power will be able to challenge Europe when nobody else can, including the U.S. ... Russian elections have recently moved President Vladimir Putin much closer to becoming a dictator. This strikes intense fear in Europe. The Europeans still remember how violent Russia was in World War II, and Russia is a close neighbor with massive piles of nuclear weapons. ..."

—Gerald Flurry, Trumpet, January 2004

Related: ["Putin II' Tightens Grip on Russian Media"](#)



GERALD FLURRY

'In the Beginning'—Man Created

Do you know why man was created? Do you know why you were born? The Bible contains the answers!



Britain Awakens to Breakup Dangers

Ambrose Evans-Pritchard,
TELEGRAPH | September 8

POWERFUL INVESTORS across the world have woken up to the possibility that Scotland may vote to break up the United Kingdom, with some already preparing defensive action that risks a potentially dangerous flight from sterling and Britain's bond market.

Japan's biggest bank, Nomura, has advised clients to slash financial exposure to the UK and brace for a possible collapse of the pound after polls showed the independence campaign running neck and neck, warning that the separation of England and Scotland after more than 300 years would be a "cataclysmic shock."

"The 'fast money' funds started moving a week ago but now we are seeing 'real money' clients acting," said Jordan Rochester, the bank's foreign exchange strategist. "The risks are suddenly seen as much greater for Japanese pension funds."

Nomura advised investors to take out protection on British banks, insurers and pension funds through the market for credit default swaps (CDS). ...

"We could see a lot of money being pulled out of UK investments. Sterling could fall at least 15 percent in a worst case scenario. These are scary times," Mr. Rochester added.

Equity prices linked closely to Scotland fell heavily in the first day of trading after a YouGov poll showed the "Yes" camp pulling ahead for the first time, but it is far from a rout. ...

Stephen Jen, head of SLJ Macro Partners and a Chinese-speaker from Taiwan, said Asian investors are flabbergasted by the sight of an ancient and successful union tearing itself apart for no obvious reason. "It is totally bizarre. They simply don't understand it, and nor do I. Until a week and half ago everybody thought there was a zero probability of Scotland voting 'Yes,'" he said.

"We have always assumed the United Kingdom would stay united, but now everything we thought about the UK has suddenly been tested, and will have to be repriced."

"Sterling could weaken a lot, though just how far it falls depends on complicated dynamics. If Scotland tries to keep all the oil and refuses to take on its share of the public debt, there could be a run on UK assets." ...

Mr. Derrick said a 15 percent plunge in sterling is "quite conservative" given the dangers of a messy divorce. ...

The risk now is that the world's superpower creditors take [flight] and start to dictate an outcome that neither Westminster [nor] Edinburgh will welcome. "Asia has suddenly come alive to this, and people are asking a lot of questions," said David Bloom, head of currencies at HSBC.

Lax Security at Nuclear Power Plant

DAILY CALLER | September 8

ABOUT 50 miles outside Washington, D.C., is a nuclear power plant that sits on the western shore of the Chesapeake Bay. It's the sort of place the government has warned is vulnerable to a terrorist attack.

But an investigation conducted by the *Daily Caller* found that anybody can enter the property of the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant, drive through the front gates, park not far from a nuclear reactor and have no contact of any kind with security. ...

The *Daily Caller* was able to proceed through an unmanned security checkpoint—the guard booth was empty and padlocked—and, minutes later, enter a parking lot about 550 feet away from one of the plant's two nuclear reactors.

On one visit, reporters did not see a single security guard anywhere. On a subsequent visit, a lone marked security car passed by without slowing down or asking questions.

At one point, a large civilian truck—roughly of the size of the trucks used in terror bombings around the world, including at the Oklahoma City federal building in 1995—rolled through the front gates and approached the

If Scotland Goes, Britain Could Exit European Union

NEW YORK TIMES | September 11

TREMORS OVER a possible breakup of the United Kingdom have been felt here in recent days, as markets gyrate and banks make contingency plans.

Yet as Scotland nears its vote on whether to be an independent nation, bankers here worry that a split might unintentionally set in motion a push for what could be a much uglier divorce: an exit of Britain from the European Union. ...

If an independent Scotland would be complicated, a Britain alone in Europe would be a complete mess, financial executives say.

"Certainly the more important of the two is the potential of Britain leaving the EU," said Brian Hilliard, the chief British economist at Société Générale in London.

Britain, for many businesses, particularly financial services, is a gateway to the rest of the 28-nation European Union, a market of 500 million people, more than the United States and Japan combined. For businesses like Citigroup or Goldman Sachs, having a London office means having a passport for nearly all of Europe. Without that unfettered access, the free flow of capital, talent and goods and services would have to be renegotiated.

"It is hard to be the gateway to the EU if you are not in the EU," Mr. Cummings said.

A diminished gateway status would hurt the financial

industry, which accounts for 7 percent of Britain's gross domestic product and nearly 4 percent of jobs. ... Bankers worry that without the promise of all of Europe behind it, London—rivaled only by New York as the world's leading financial center—would not attract the same interest, and neither would Britain. ...

The calculus behind how Scottish independence could drive an exit by Britain from the European Union—known as Brexit—is political. ...

Voters in Scotland have been more supportive of the European Union than those in the rest of Britain, meaning an independent Scotland removes a significant bloc of pro-Europe votes in a referendum.

"The absence of the Scottish voters in the referendum in 2017 would clearly shift the balance against Europe," said Graham Bishop, a consultant on European integration based in London.

Complicating matters is the composition of the Labour Party. Forty-one of the 59 Scottish members of Parliament are Labour, and if they leave upon independence, the balance of power tilts toward the Conservative Party. ...

Still, Mr. Hilliard of Société Générale says he believes there is a 20 percent chance that Britain will leave the European Union. If so, he predicts a triple whammy. ...

reactors without being stopped. ...

"Part of security is to have a visible defense so that it doesn't attract adversaries who might see this kind of weakness to exploit," observes Dr. Edwin Lyman, an expert in nuclear terrorism at the Union of Concerned Scientists. ...

Less Safe Than Any Time Since 9/11?

WASHINGTON TIMES | September 10

THE BRUTAL beheadings of journalists by the terrorist army known as the Islamic State has shaken America to its core, with more people saying the United States is less safe now than at any point since 9/11, said a new poll released Wednesday.

The NBC News/*Wall Street Journal* poll found that 47 percent of Americans believe the country is less safe now than before the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks on New York and Washington. That's more people feeling

unsafe than even a year after 9/11 when just 20 percent felt that way.

The fear has prompted more than 60 percent of Americans to back military action against the Islamic State ..., which has overrun large swaths of territory in Iraq and Syria and declared itself an Islamic caliphate.

The numbers underscore the challenges facing President [Barack] Obama when he addressed the nation Wednesday at 9 p.m. to outline a strategy for confronting the terrorists. ...

Breaking the Silence on the IRS Outrage

THE NEW YORK OBSERVER | September 9

THE OBSERVER's Sidney Powell has been breaking story after story on the IRS scandal involving former chief Lois Lerner and the mysterious inability of her office to produce emails that a judge has ordered. Her scoops have included the fact that Ms. Lerner's

BlackBerry appears to have been wiped clean after the Congressional inquiry into the politicization of the IRS had begun.

The scandal began when it appeared that the IRS was targeting conservative groups like the National Organization for Marriage and those with "tea party" in their names, subjecting them to extra scrutiny when applying for tax-exempt status. As Ms. Powell, a former federal prosecutor who has worked for U.S. attorneys from both parties, has pointed out, the scandal has mushroomed beyond the political targeting, and now seems to present a clear pattern of obstruction:

"This is the fourth announcement of an ever-expanding computer calamity connected to Lois Lerner to emerge from the IRS. ... First it was just Lerner's computer that was affected, then those of her closest co-conspirators, then 'no more than 20' computers, and now an ever-larger batch of burned out workstations."

Readers understand how toxic it is for a democracy even to appear to use

If Scotland Votes 'Yes,' It Will Be John Major's Fault

ARCHBISHOP CRANMER | September 10

"MORE THAN 20 years ago, I opposed devolution," writes Sir John Major in today's *Times*. "I did so not because I thought Scotland could not govern itself. Plainly it can. I did so because I believed devolution would be a high road to separation. So it has proved. The vote next week is about far more than the future of Scotland. It is about the future of every part of the United Kingdom."

And he goes on to talk about Labour's "deadly legacy," decrying their meddling with the political settlement and the constitutional dog's breakfast bequeathed. So, if Scotland votes next week to secede from the United Kingdom (which looks possible, if not likely), it will be Tony Blair's fault through New Labour's ignorance and delinquency.

Except that the separatist cause was given a significant boost in 1996 by the Conservatives, for it was John Major, egged on by Michael Forsyth, who suddenly announced apropos of nothing that the stone of destiny (aka the stone of scone; the coronation stone; Jacob's pillow/pillar) should be wrenched from the throne of the United Kingdom and returned to Scotland. In his Commons statement, Mr. Major explained: "The stone of destiny is the most ancient symbol of Scottish kingship. ... I wish to inform the House that, on the advice of Her Majesty's ministers, the Queen has agreed that the stone should be returned to Scotland. The stone will, of course, be taken to Westminster Abbey to play its traditional role in the coronation ceremonies of future sovereigns of the United Kingdom. ... [I]t is appropriate to return it to its historic homeland. ..."

In his response, leader of the opposition Tony Blair observed that the stone "is part of Scottish nationhood." David Steel M.P. added that "the majority of people in Scotland ... want not just the symbol, but the substance—the substance of the return of democratic control over our internal affairs in Scotland." But it was Margaret Ewing M.P. who hit the legendary nail squarely on the head: "[T]he stone of destiny is not the symbol of kingship but the symbol of the sovereignty of the people of Scotland Like others, I argue that, while we welcome the return of this symbol of power, we want the realities of power in Scotland. It may have taken this Parliament some 668 years ... to return stolen goods to Scotland, but in actuality the people of Scotland will return to themselves the power of having their own sovereign Parliament very soon."

It was a vacuous political gesture draped in the royal

command, but it was clearly expressed that the Queen was acting "on the advice of (her) ministers." What they dismissed as mere symbolism was, for many, a portent of nationalist power, for legend decreed that the return of the stone to Scotland would herald independence from the yoke of English oppression and tyranny (i.e. Edward II and Margaret Thatcher).

Stuff and nonsense, you say: mythical bluster; absolutely barking. Well, up to a point, maybe. But what secular-minded politicians tend to ignore are the spiritual, religious and theological foundations of the British Constitution, often treating them as anachronistic expressions of bigotry or of belonging to an age of unreason.

The stone of scone had resided in Westminster Abbey for 700 years But the prime minister had not even bothered to consult the dean and chapter over his intentions: It was as though the stone were nothing more than an historic artifact to be packed away and carted around like an Elgin Marble. The dean, the very Rev'd Michael Mayne, strained to explain to Mr. Major that the stone and coronation chair were a single integrity—the reliquary with the relic in it. And he asked what it said about the modern political view of monarchy that the stone was to be housed not in a Scottish church, on consecrated ground, but in a castle museum; a secular space. But Mr. Major had not even thought about this.

And so the coronation chair is empty of the historic throne upon which the kings and queens of Ireland, Scotland, England and the United Kingdom have long been crowned. Through political ignorance and religious indifference; through scheming subterfuge and sophistry, sovereignty has been removed; national independence compromised; the Protestant faith diminished. ...

The Royal Warrant for the stone's removal specifies that it should be returned for "all future sovereigns of the United Kingdom ... at their coronation." It is a sacred ceremony of religious anointing. But the next sovereign may not reign over a United Kingdom—at least one that includes Scotland. We are assured that the Union of Crowns will continue—and, yes, it preceded the Union of Parliaments by a century. But it will be a shadow of its former religio-political significance. And for that we can blame, successively, David Cameron, Gordon Brown, Tony Blair and John Major (and Michael Forsyth).

Or, if it helps, you can blame Margaret Thatcher for delivering her "Sermon on the Mound."

the tools of the state to punish dissenting opinion. ... It's not a surprise that these stories have turned into a hit series for the *Observer*.

What is a surprise is how little attention the rest of the media is paying to this issue.

All last summer, when the targeting

part of the story was first breaking, the big three networks issued a virtual blackout on coverage. High-wattage confrontations that would have made great TV—Darrell Issa accusing IRS Commissioner Danny Werfel of blocking the committee's investigation, CNN's report that Ms. Lerner

had lied when she blamed low-level employees, the revelation of her own e-mails in *The Wall Street Journal* (pre-destruction) that revealed a liberal agenda, *USA Today* and the *New York Times* both publishing front-page stories on the targeting of conservatives and the non-compliance from

END from page 1

Meanwhile the “No” campaign’s main argument has simply been, *You’ll get the same amount of money and goodies, or perhaps even more, if you stay in the union.*

Neither side has a vision of what a united Britain can do to help the world. Their views are completely insular and self-focused. What a horrible reason to end the most successful political union of separate states in history.

Such a separation will, in time, rank as one of the worst calamities ever to befall either nation.

The Catastrophe of Independence

An independent Scotland would cripple Britain’s military. Hundreds of years of history have shown that defending Britain without Scotland is all but impossible.

“From early in the 20th century, when the Royal Navy’s Grand Fleet assembled at Scapa Flow to defend our shores against the Kaiser, to more recent efforts to intercept rogue Russian warplanes and naval ships challenging British-controlled territory, Scotland has been our first line of defense,” the *Telegraph*’s defense expert Con Coughlin wrote earlier this year. He points out that three out of Britain’s five Typhoon combat squadrons are based in Scotland, as well as an early warning radar network and other vital defense assets. He continues: “Apart from forcing the Navy to find a new home for the Trident submarine fleet at a conservative cost of £20 billion (US\$32.2 billion), Scottish independence would require the RAF to relocate more than half of its combat squadrons south of the border. As for the Army, at a time when it is struggling to cope with the coalition’s demand to cut its standing strength by 20 percent to 82,000, the establishment of a separate Scottish defense force could force it to accept a further cut of around 10,000. As one senior officer remarked: ‘A British Army with around 70,000 would be laughable.’”

Meanwhile Britain’s First Sea Lord, Adm. Sir George Zambellas, said, “I believe that independence would fundamentally change maritime security for all of us in the United Kingdom and damage the very heart of the capabilities that are made up of the Royal Navy, the Royal Marines, the Royal Fleet Auxiliary and the Fleet Air Arm.”

The result would be a gutted British military. It would be the end of Britain as a first rate military power. For good or for evil, the UK would no longer be able to intervene in world events in any meaningful way.

A breakup would also have a huge effect on Britain’s foreign policy. Here’s another quote from Forsyth’s article:

“The rump that would be left behind after a Scottish yes vote would become a global laughingstock. Whenever the prime minister of what remained of the United Kingdom raised his voice in the international arena, he would be met by a chorus of ‘You couldn’t even keep your own country together!’ If even the British don’t believe in the British way of doing things any more, then why would anybody else?”

Later on in the article he notes: “After all, this would no longer be the same country that had fought on the winning side in two world wars and colored half the globe pink. It would, instead, just be the successor state to that great

nation.

Finally the breakup would also have major economic effects. Here’s what Jordan Rochester, foreign exchange strategist at Japan’s largest bank, Namura, said about an independent Scotland:

“We could see a lot of money being pulled out of UK investments. Sterling could fall at least 15 percent in a worst-case scenario. These are scary times.”

As the polls that put the “Yes” vote in the lead emerged, the pound immediately dropped to its lowest level against the dollar in 10 months. The value of two top Scottish banks tanked by over \$2.4 billion—each.

Just the thought of independence is starting to cause financial markets to panic.

A Kingdom Without Vision

Proverbs tells us that “where there is no vision, the people perish.” We see that in action today. Some vision—not perfect, but enough to provide the two nations with a sense of common purpose—existed in the past. The first stages of union with Scotland came at the time of “a rising consciousness among the English that they were a people somehow different to all others, called to a special destiny,” as historian Paul Johnson put it in his book *The Offshore Islanders*.

“The last factor was decisive—the keystone in the Reformation arch,” he wrote. “It takes enormous energy to change the entire course of world history, and such energy cannot be drawn exclusively from physical forces; something metaphysical is required too.”

Part of that “enough energy” came from what could be called vision. Britain—England and Scotland united—believed that it could change the world, and make it a better place.

That vision is gone. The nation does not even try to give its young people a sense of worth or purpose, so they turn to drink and fun. Young Muslims see no useful purpose in their home country, so they turn to an extremist ideology that seeks to destroy it. The forces of division, which have always existed in British politics, are no longer restrained by a sense of common purpose. Any charlatan who can convince the Scots that they could get more free money by leaving the union gets a large chunk of the vote.

Britain no longer gives Scots a reason to remain British. Apart from a vague sense of Scottishness, the nationalists don’t have much of a vision either. So the whole thing becomes a row over benefits. That’s all that’s left to argue about.

Scotland may ultimately vote “No” on September 18, but that hate and division will remain—a sense of vision and purpose will not. With a “No” vote, Britain will narrowly avoid catastrophe, but these faults will remain.

It’s a sad picture for Britain. However, there is hope for these underlying problems to be fixed. That hope is the only real way to fix England and Scotland’s problems.

For more on this hope, read our free book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*.

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