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THE TRUMPET WEEKLY

DECEMBER 19, 2014

First: U.S. troops battle the Islamic State 3

Secret talks in Vatican lead to Cuba breakthrough 4

Executive orders by another name 8

UN sending thousands of Muslims to America 9

Obama fights back 11

Sydney Terrorist Attack Proves Australia Is Radicalizing

BY CALLUM WOOD

AT 9:45 a.m. on December 15, a gunman walked into a Lindt chocolate cafe in downtown Sydney and initiated a 16-hour hostage situation that locked down the heart of the city and resulted in the deaths of two hostages.

Initial images of the attack showed Lindt staff and patrons pressed against the cafe windows with their arms raised. Two held aloft a black flag with white Arabic writing scrawled across it. Another woman appeared to gesture, sliding a finger along her neck. Behind them, a man wearing a bandana stalked back and forth.

Over 16 hours of tense negotiations ended when police resorted to a frontal assault into the shop after hearing gunfire within. The tragic finale was the end of Australia's most publicized terrorist attack since the wide-scale police

raids on potential Muslim terrorists in western Sydney earlier this year. Along with the publicity came the debating.

Denial

With the uncertainty and media-fueled hype, one commonality was peddled by the media and political elites alike. The assailant, Man Haron Monis, was a) insane and b) acting completely alone and independent of any religious or political group.

This denial constitutes the greatest flaw in Australia's handling of the situation. It also highlights just how bound up in politically correct behavior the nation is—to the point where a terrorist can no longer be called a terrorist.

It is understandable that the police commissioner, prime

see **TERRORIST** page 12



Police carry out a hostage from the Lindt Cafe, Martin Place following a 16-hour standoff on December 16 in Sydney, Australia.



STEPHEN FLURRY

Update: Sydney Hostages, Massacres in Pakistan and Iraq, Dresden Protest

THE TRUMPET DAILY | December 18

The thread that ties together this week's most dramatic news, and what it means for the future



Move at UN Will Lead to Hamas Takeover in West Bank

JERUSALEM POST | December 18

THE UNILATERAL move by the Palestinian's at the UN on Wednesday will lead to Hamas taking over the West Bank, [Israeli] Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Thursday evening while lighting candles for the third night of Hanukkah at his office.

"[Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud] Abbas thinks that by taking unilateral steps he threatens us; he doesn't understand that their result will be Hamas taking over the West Bank," Netanyahu said.

"We will never allow this and will never accept unilateral diktats. We will always protect our security."

Jordan formally submitted to the United Nations Security Council on Wednesday a draft resolution calling for peace between Israel and the Palestinians within one year and an Israeli

withdrawal from the West Bank by the end of 2017. ...

"Zechariah prophesies of a violent takeover of half of Jerusalem led by the Palestinians, which is why it is likely that Hamas will eventually grab hold of the West Bank. Its leadership there will most likely be needed to orchestrate an attempt of the takeover of East Jerusalem."

—Trumpet Daily, August 25

Hamas Ties Patched With Iran

REUTERS | December 17

HAMAS AND Iran have repaired a close political and military relationship frayed by the Syrian civil war, the Palestinian Islamist group's deputy leader said on Wednesday.

Patching up ties with Tehran could

ease Hamas's financial and political isolation. Israel has been blockading the Gaza Strip, while Egypt, battling Islamist militants in neighboring Sinai, has largely kept its Gaza frontier closed.

Speaking in his Gaza office, ... Moussa Abu Marzouk [a Palestinian senior member of Hamas] said: "I believe that bilateral relations between us and the Islamic Republic of Iran are back on track." ...

Last week, a Hamas delegation visited Iran, long a major supplier of military and financial aid to the group. Hamas has been hostile toward Syrian President Bashar Assad, who is backed by Tehran in the three-year-old Syrian war.

In a sign that weapons supplies from Iran may have slowed, Hamas used mostly locally-made long-range rockets to attack Israeli cities in the conflict five months ago. It launched Iranian-produced rockets in similar strikes in 2012.

"There are many indications that ... relations have been resumed in the proper way, as in the past," Abu Marzouk said, without elaborating. ...

On Sunday, a spokesman for Hamas's armed wing cautioned there could be a "new explosion" with Israel unless reconstruction [of Gaza houses destroyed during Israel's Operation Protective Edge] was speeded up. ...

"Iran has been designated a state sponsor of terrorism by the U.S. State Department since 1984. The State Department's archives of 'Country Reports on Terrorism' consistently condemn Iran as 'the most active state sponsor of terrorism.'"

—theTrumpet.com, August 8

141 Dead in Massacre at Pakistan School

USA TODAY | December 17

TALIBAN GUNMEN stormed a military-run school in Peshawar on Tuesday

American Troops Battle the Islamic State for the First Time

DAILY MAIL | December 18

A NUMBER of militants have been killed in Islamic State's very first battle with U.S. ground troops after the extremists attempted to overrun an Iraqi military base.

The militants attacked Ein al-Asad military base on Sunday where more than 100 U.S. military support troops are based.

Despite launching the surprise attack just after midnight, [the Islamic States's] offensive was swiftly repelled when U.S. troops and F-18 jets joined in the skirmish in support of the Iraqi Army.

Facing both Iraqi and U.S. troops supported by F-18 jets, an unknown number of [Islamic State] attackers were killed during the two-hour firefight before being forced to retreat.

Ein al-Asad came under repeated attack by [Islamic

State] troops in October, however, now bolstered by the U.S. assistance, it poses a much more formidable target.

Sheikh Mahmud Nimrawi, a tribal leader in the region, said, "U.S. forces intervened because [the Islamic State] started to come near the base, which they are stationed in, so (it was) out of self-defense," Shafaq News reported.

He added: "We have made progress in [the] al-Dolab area, in which [the Islamic State] has withdrawn from."

During the Iraq War, it was the largest airbase located within Iraq's Anbar province.

Although it scaled down in size following the conclusion of the war, it remains in use by the Iraqi Army and is located deep within the remote areas on the frontline against [the Islamic State]. ...

and massacred 141 people, nearly all children, an act of barbarism that left Pakistanis in shock as they mourned the loss of relatives and friends. ...

The attack on the Army Public School in the northwestern city near the Afghan border was one of the worst incidents of extremist violence in Pakistan since a 2007 suicide bombing in the port city of Karachi killed 150 people. Peshawar has been the target of frequent militant attacks—in September 2013, a twin suicide bomb blast in a church killed at least 85 people. ...

Bajwa said seven gunmen stormed the school wearing explosive vests. They did not take hostages but instead fired indiscriminately as they entered the school. ...

Pakistan's Taliban spokesman Mohammed Umar Khorasanin said the assault was "a revenge attack" for an Army offensive in North Waziristan in June that targeted militants. "We targeted the school because the Army targets our families," he said in a statement. "We want them to feel our pain." ...

[Fawas Gerges, a professor at the London School of Economics's Middle East Center] compared the brutality of the Taliban to that of the Islamic State: "two sides of the same coin that celebrate extremism and killing." The Taliban group in Pakistan is "an extreme Islamist faction that wants to create a similar Islamic state. ... The Pakistani Taliban has always been closer to al Qaeda than the Taliban

in Afghanistan," which had provided al Qaeda sanctuary. ...

We Have 'Run Out of Words' for Syria

CNN | December 16

A TOP UNITED Nations official on Monday told the Security Council she has "run out of words" to describe the worsening situation in Syria.

"Every time we use a new figure in relation to the Syrian crisis, we say that it is unprecedented. We have run out of words to fully explain the brutality, violence and callous disregard for human life, which is a hallmark of this crisis," Valerie Amos, the UN chief for humanitarian affairs, said.

Nearly 200,000 people have been killed in the three-year Syrian conflict and 1 million injured, Amos said, describing a war zone with three combative parties fighting each other with no regard for the thousands of civilians and children caught in the middle. ...

All parties involved in the conflict "continue to violate the most basic of laws with devastating consequences," she said. ...

Reports of children being publicly executed, crucified, beheaded and stoned to death—particularly by [the Islamic State]—has increased in recent months. Other children, sometimes as young as 5 years old, are being trained

at military camps, Amos said.

"This conflict is not only shattering Syria's present, it is also destroying its future," she added. ...

Related: "Syria Is Ready to Explode" and "How the Syrian Crisis Will End"

Hamas Taken Off EU Terror Blacklist

GUARDIAN | December 17

THE EUROPEAN Union's second highest court has ordered the removal of the Islamist group Hamas from a terrorist blacklist, citing procedural problems with the listing. It added, however, that the group's assets should remain frozen for three months pending an almost certain appeal.

The decision came as the European Parliament adopted a resolution supporting Palestinian statehood in principle in a compromise motion that did not follow some European national legislatures in backing immediate recognition of a Palestinian state. ...

Hamas official Izzat al-Rishq welcomed the decision, saying: "This is the correction of an error and an injustice that was caused to Hamas."

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he was not satisfied with the explanation that the delisting

was only technical, and called for Hamas's immediate re-designation. ...

According to some reports, the problem stemmed from the fact that intelligence agencies of European countries seeking to have Hamas listed as a terrorist group had been unwilling

to provide classified material as part of the evidence process for listing, so that the classification of Hamas ... had relied on open source material derived from the media and online sources. ...

The latest moves come as the Palestinian foreign minister confirmed that

an Arab-backed draft on ending Israel's occupation of lands captured in 1967 would be submitted later on Wednesday to the UN Security Council. ...

Related: ["The Counterfeit Peacemaker"](#)

EUROPE

Secret Talks in Vatican City Led to Cuba Breakthrough

REUTERS | December 17

THE HISTORIC breakthrough in U.S.-Cuban relations began in spring 2013, when President Barack Obama authorized secret talks with Havana, the same tactic he used to open nuclear negotiations with Iran.

Months of talks in Canada and at the Vatican, involving one of Obama's closest aides, culminated on Tuesday when Obama and Cuban President Raúl Castro spoke by phone for nearly an hour and gave final assent to steps that could end a half century of enmity and reshape Western Hemisphere relations.

Obama believed that "if there is any U.S. foreign policy that has passed its expiration date, it is the U.S.-Cuba policy," said a senior Obama administration official, briefing reporters on condition of anonymity.

The Vatican played a key role in the rapprochement, including facilitating talks on the release of Alan Gross, a former subcontractor for the U.S. Agency for International Development who returned from Cuba on Wednesday after five years' imprisonment, U.S. officials said.

In early summer 2014, Pope Francis—who is from Argentina—sent separate personal letters to Obama and Castro, urging them to exchange captives and improve relations.

When the pope received the U.S. president in Vatican City in late March, the secret Cuba talks were a central topic of discussion. Cuba "got as much attention as anything else," the official said.

The first face-to-face talks that eventually led to this week's deal took place in June 2013 in Canada, which has long maintained relations with Cuba.

Leading the U.S. delegation were Ben Rhodes, a close Obama aide who is a deputy national security adviser, and Ricardo Zuniga, the top Latin American specialist on the White House's National Security Council. The names of the Cuban participants in the talks could not immediately be learned. ...

The Vatican got involved as early as March 2012, when a group of U.S. lawmakers went to the papal ambassador's office in Washington's posh Embassy Row section and pleaded for help.

Since then, through a Vatican transition from Pope Benedict XVI to Pope Francis, "it has always stayed on the Vatican's radar," said Sen. Barbara Mikulski, from Gross's home state of Maryland. "They talk to higher powers. I don't know if it's radar or angels, cherubim, seraphim—they go for it."

In the talks, Washington also insisted on the release of a spy for the United States who had been languishing in a Cuban prison for nearly two decades.

The unidentified individual "was instrumental in the identification and disruption of several Cuban intelligence operatives in the United States," the office of Director of National Intelligence James Clapper said in a statement.

Among the Cuban operatives unmasked by the agent were a senior U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency analyst and members of a Florida-based spy ring known as the "Wasp Network."

Cuba insisted on the release of three members of the network, Cuban intelligence agents who had served 16 years in U.S. jails. ...

French Raids Target Jihadist Network

GUARDIAN | December 15

FRENCH POLICE launched raids across the country early on Monday targeting an alleged network sending jihadist fighters to Syria,

according to a police source.

Elite and anti-terror police units descended on around a dozen targets, mostly in the southern region of Toulouse, but also around Paris and in the northern region of Normandy, the source said on condition of anonymity.

It was not immediately clear how

many people were arrested.

In recent months, France, which has Europe's largest Muslim population, has been facing the fact that hundreds of its citizens have openly joined jihadist groups in Iraq and Syria, and have even called for attacks on their homeland.

Almost 1,000 French nationals

'Visible Rise' in Support for Far-Right

INDEPENDENT | December 15

THEIR LEADERS have been dismissed as “Nazis in pin-stripes,” they have been dismissed by Angela Merkel as having “no place in Germany”—but on Monday night, thousands will march through the city of Dresden in protest against the “Islamization of the West.”

Speaking to the Sunday newspaper *Welt am Sonntag*, Germany’s most senior police officer Holger Münch spoke of “a visible rise in xenophobic crime countrywide.”

Both anti-Muslim and anti-Semitic sentiment are reported as being on the increase in Germany, as right-wing activists join football hooligans in violent, racially- and religiously-motivated crime. ...

Monday’s march in Dresden has been organized at least in part by a group calling itself PEGIDA—an acronym for “Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the West.” ...

Greens leader Cem Oezdemir, who will join a counter-protest in Dresden, urged [Merkel] “to recognize clearly that Germany is a country for immigrants and benefits from them.”

But Ms. Merkel’s own Christian Democrats (CDU) have given a mixed response to PEGIDA—with some CDU officials urged understanding for the motivation of the marchers.

The marches have already spawned copycat protests in cities to the west like Düsseldorf, which have larger immigrant populations than Dresden, home to very few of Germany’s 4 million Muslims.

Hajo Funke, a Berlin professor, said many of the estimated 10,000 people who marched last week voiced vague “discontent with society and their own lives”

The march will also trigger fresh debate between the main parties on how to deal with the AfD, which the CDU has dismissed as a fringe group quietly recruiting right-wing extremists.

Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere said there was no risk Germany would be “Islamized,” adding that he believed there was an “overlap” between PEGIDA and the AfD.

The AfD has apparently not rejected such an association, and one of its leaders, Alexander Gauland, said he plans to be in Dresden on Monday.

“We are the natural allies of this movement,” Gauland said.

Related: “[German Hooligans Declare War on Islam](#)”

from a wide range of backgrounds are estimated to have left to join jihadists in Iraq and Syria, including some 400 thought to be currently fighting on

the ground and almost 50 who were killed.

According to figures published in the *Le Monde* newspaper in November,

about a quarter of those who left to join the jihadists were converts to Islam, with many coming from everyday French backgrounds.

ASIA

Putin Crowned 'Politician of the Year'

MOSCOW TIMES | December 16

RUSSIANS HAVE named **President Vladimir Putin** politician of the year for the 15th year running, a poll revealed Tuesday.

The survey, conducted by state-run pollster the Public Opinion Foundation, found that 68 percent of Russians chose to name the president as their “Person of the Year” in politics.

Putin has topped the poll every year since he first took the presidency in 2000. Last year, he accrued just 32 percent of the vote—meaning his support has more than doubled in the past 12 months, according to the poll.

Vladimir Zhirinovsky, the

flamboyant leader of the Liberal Democrat Party, finished in second place with 4 percent of this year’s vote, while Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov came in third with 3 percent. Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev finished fourth, earning 2 percent of the vote. ...

Last week, influential magazine *Time* named him “second runner-up” on its 2014 list of most influential people in the world. ...

Putin was described by *Time* as an isolated “imperialist,” whose aim was to restore the Russian empire and project its influence into the world by offering an alternative to liberal Western democracies. ...

Related: “[Putin Won’t Just Survive, He’ll Thrive](#)”

India’s \$19 Billion Weapons Blitz

BLOOMBERG | December 16

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi has cleared \$19 billion of arms procurement proposals since taking power in May, almost double India’s spending on weapons in the last fiscal year as he tries to modernize the country’s military.

The blitz of 41 approvals spans heavy guns to submarines as Modi seeks to counter China’s rising military heft and take a firmer stance on border disputes with Pakistan. The vice chief of the Indian Air Force, for one, has never seen anything like this pace from the nation’s Defense Acquisition Council.

Abe to Change Japan's Pacifist Constitution

GUARDIAN | December 16

JAPAN'S REELECTED prime minister, Shinzo Abe, has said he is determined to rewrite the country's pacifist constitution—drawing an immediate sour response from China.

A day after securing another four years in office with Sunday's landslide election victory, Abe signaled he would pursue his long-cherished goal of changing the U.S.-authored constitution.

Abe, a conservative, has made no secret of his desire to remove what he regards as unfair constraints on Japan's military, seven decades

after its surrender at the end of a war that saw it occupy neighbors including China and attack countries further afield in the Pacific.

"Revising the Constitution has always been an objective since the Liberal Democratic Party was launched," Abe told reporters.

"The most important thing is that we need the support of a majority of the people in a referendum. From that standpoint I will work hard to deepen people's understanding and receive wider support from the public." ...

Abe made the economy the focus of his election campaign, rather than any desire to end Japan's era of constitutional pacifism. Amid the lowest turnout since the end of the Second World War, his Liberal Democratic Party and its junior coalition partner Komeito retained their

two-thirds majority in the lower house, enabling them to push legislation through both houses of parliament with ease.

Amending Article 9 of the Constitution, which prohibits the use of force to settle disputes, would require a two-thirds majority in both houses and a simple majority in a nationwide referendum.

Early on in his term Abe appeared to have stepped back away from outright constitutional revision after polls

indicated he would struggle to win public support for it.

Instead he secured cabinet approval to introduce legislation, possibly in the next year, that would reinterpret the Constitution to end the postwar ban on collective self-defense. In practice, that would allow Japanese forces to fight alongside allies on foreign soil.

"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

Now he appears ready to go a step further. *The Asahi Shimbun* said pro-reformers in the [Liberal Democratic Party of Japan] were hoping to table a constitutional amendment in 2016 to pave the way for a referendum to coincide with upper house elections the same year.

While the subject has divided the public, Abe at least appears to have enough backing among M.P.s. A poll by Kyodo found that more than 80 percent of candidates elected on Sunday supported amending the Constitution. ...

"I don't recall the council clearing these many number of procurement proposals within six months and in four meetings," Air Marshal R.K. Sharma, who has served in the air force for four decades, said in an interview in New Delhi on December 4. "The indication from the government is that this trend in decision-making will continue." ...

Nuclear-armed India has approved 41 proposals at a cost of 1.2 trillion rupees (US\$19 billion) since June, Defense Minister Manohar Parrikar told parliament in New Delhi this month. Spending on defense equipment in the 12 months [that] ended March 2014 was 669 billion rupees, he said.

The proposals include 190 billion rupees for submarines, a 158

billion-rupee purchase of artillery—the first acquisition of large-caliber guns since the 1980s—and a 32 billion-rupee deal to buy 8,356 Spike antitank guided missiles and 321 launchers from Rafael Advanced Defense Systems Ltd. ...

Among pending deals is a contract for 126 Rafale combat planes from Dassault Aviation SA for about \$11 billion, the world's biggest order of fighter jets in about two decades. ...

"The government is seriously addressing defense procurement issues," Lars-Olof Lindgren, chairman and managing director of the Indian unit of Stockholm-based Saab AB, said in an e-mail interview. ...

Even so, Modi is "serious" about modernizing the armed forces, said

Nitin A. Gokhale, a New Delhi-based independent national security analyst. "This government is speeding up processes," he said.

China Offers Military Support to Iraq

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TIMES
AU | December 16

CHINA HAS offered military assistance to Iraq to help government forces fight [Islamic State] militants. Iraqi Foreign Minister Ibrahim Jafari has revealed that his Chinese counterpart, Wang Yi, has expressed Beijing's interest to assist in launching airstrikes but declined to join the

U.S. Era of Dominance Is Dwindling

David Oualaalou, **HUFFINGTON POST** | December 15

MOST AMERICANS might have not heard about the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) latest announcement: The U.S. is no longer the world's largest economy; China is. Be that as it may, I am not surprised that China took over the world economy as the era of American economic dominance and global leadership has been gradually declining in the last decade or so. ...

What's important to highlight is how the rise of China, which has been in the works for quite some time, should remind us, Americans, of the inevitable shift in world order. This new shift highlights two things: One, China's takeover of the world economy confirms the shift of wealth from the West to the East; and two, whether China's new economic ranking suggests the inevitable expansion of its military power. ...

In light of these dynamics, international security analysts on both sides of the Atlantic are questioning the wisdom of the U.S. government's decision to continue borrowing money from China. U.S. policymakers justify the borrowing in order to sustain our military presence and engagement in the Middle East. ... The cost of the invasion of Iraq, for instance, was estimated at \$3.9 trillion, most of it borrowed from China. ...

To put this within a strategic context, the United States' entanglement in the Middle East, extension of our military

presence in Afghanistan, lack of fiscal discipline, dysfunctional Congress and a sagging economy, all suggest the failure of the U.S. government to prevent China from taking over the world economy. ...

Given its current status as the world's leading economy, it is logical for China to seek access to economic resources in Middle East in addition to a more assertive posture in its regional territorial disputes. What is important to fathom is that the shift(s) in the balance of power and world order would certainly be felt as China will forge other means of dominance (soft power). ...

While the U.S. is enmeshed in its political squabbling as a result of the paralysis of Congress, China and Russia are strengthening their economic ties with military cooperation on the horizon. This cooperation provides China a historical opportunity to expand its sphere of influence; thus, compelling Washington to reconsider its geostrategic calculations for Asia. ...

Western politicians are asking: Can we still impose our will on the rest of the world including China? The answer might not be that simple now that China takes over the world economy; thus, suggesting the beginning of the end not only for the U.S. era of dominance, but also Western hegemony in its broader context. After all, the sleeping giant is awake and the world would soon be saying, good morning.

U.S.-led coalition forces.

The discussion between the two defense ministers took place in the UN antiterrorism meeting in New York in September, according to *Financial Times*. The offer of China may be a deviation from its official policy of non-involvement in the domestic affairs of other countries, despite the fact that it sells military weapons. Jafari said China's policy does not allow it to become a member of any international coalition. The Iraqi defense minister welcomed his Chinese counterpart's offer of help since Iraq is ready to cooperate with other countries not part of the U.S.-led coalition against [the Islamic State].

Hong Lei, a spokesperson for the Chinese Foreign Ministry, said China has expressed support for Iraq's effort to boost its ability to fight terrorism through intelligence information-sharing and personnel training. He refused to say anything about China providing airstrike assistance or supplying missiles to Iraq.

According to RT News, China will

lose billions if [Islamic State] militants can take control of all of Iraq's oil fields. China is the biggest investor in the oil industry of Iraq. In the earlier weeks of encounters between government forces and [Islamic State] fighters, China National Petroleum Corporation had no choice but to leave its oil fields in Syria. ...

North Korea Deep Into Cyberwarfare

CNN | December 18

NORTH KOREA is one of the world's poorest countries, seen as well behind most everyone when it comes to most technologies and much more.

Hacking may not be one of them.

Scant resources or not, a defector who once worked as a computer expert for the North Korean government says that it has a vast network of hackers devoted to cyberwarfare against perceived enemies of the Stalinist state.

Jang Se-yul, who defected from

North Korea seven years ago, told CNN that he thinks there are 1,800 cyberwarriors in the agency stationed around the world. But he says even the agents themselves don't know how many others work for the secretive group, called Bureau 121, whose mission is to "conduct cyberattacks against overseas and enemy states."

The South Korean government thinks Bureau 121 is the agency at the heart of numerous cyberattacks from North Korea against elements in foreign countries, a government official who requested to be anonymous told CNN on Thursday.

North Korea's hacking capabilities have become a global talking point recently, after a massive hack of Sony Pictures—the studio behind *The Interview*, a comedy depicting the assassination of Pyongyang's leader, Kim Jong-un. That was followed by warnings that the movie not be shown in theaters, something that's a nonissue, for now, after Sony called off its planned release Wednesday. ...

Raúl Castro: Victory Lap Speech

BREITBART | December 17

THE PEOPLE of Cuba received unprecedented news today, though they were unable to hear of the United States' reforms in diplomacy with Cuba from President Barack Obama. Instead, they were treated to an address by dictator Raúl Castro, in which he celebrated that the reforms will lead to "sustainable socialism" and urged President Obama to lift the embargo entirely through executive action.

Castro spoke simultaneously to the Cuban people as President Obama delivered his remarks, explaining the release of both U.S. Agency for International Development worker Alan Gross—who had been subjected to various abuses in Cuban prison for attempting to connect Cuban Jews to the Internet—and three Cuban spies convicted of crimes in the United States. He described the release of the three spies as a promise kept by "Comrade Fidel" and addressed them by their first names. ...

Castro noted that "this decision by President Obama deserves the respect and recognition of our people," without indicating any specific measure Cuba would take in removing its economic sanctions and limits on the American people. Instead, he placed the blame squarely on President Obama's shoulders, and urged unilateral executive action: "The economic, commercial and financial blockade that provokes enormous human and economic damage to our nation must cease. Even though the measures of the blockade have been made by law, the president of the United States can modify their application through his executive powers. We propose to the United States government to adopt mutual measures to improve the bilateral climate and advance towards normalization of links between our countries, based on the principles of the international rights and the UN Charter." ...

Boko Haram Kidnaps 185 Women and Children

CNN | December 18

BOKO HARAM insurgents kidnapped at least 185 women and children, and killed 32 people in a raid in northeastern Nigeria this week, local officials and residents said.

Gunmen in pickup trucks attacked the village of Gumsuri, just north of Chibok, on Sunday, shooting down men before herding women and children together. ...

News of the attack took four days to emerge because of a lack of communication. Telecommunications towers in the region had been disabled in previous attacks. ...

The group has targeted mainstream

Islam, saying that it does not represent the interests of Nigeria's 80 million Muslims and that it perverts Islam. ...

At least 5,000 people have died at Boko Haram's hands, according to a U.S. Congressional Research Service report, making it one of the world's deadliest terrorist organizations.

Related: ["Radical Islam Explodes in Nigeria"](#)

ANGLO-AMERICA

Obama Issues 'Executive Orders by Another Name'

USA TODAY | December 17

PRESIDENT OBAMA has issued a form of executive action known as the presidential memorandum more often than any other president in history—using it to take unilateral action even as he has signed fewer executive orders.

When these two forms of directives are taken together, Obama is on track to take more high-level executive actions than any president since Harry

Truman battled the "Do Nothing Congress" almost seven decades ago, according to a *USA Today* review of presidential documents.

Obama has issued executive orders to give federal employees the day after Christmas off, to impose economic sanctions, and to determine how national secrets are classified. He's used presidential memoranda to make policy on gun control, immigration and labor regulations. Tuesday, he used a memorandum to declare Bristol Bay, Alaska, off-limits to oil and gas exploration. ...

"The truth is, even with all the

actions I've taken this year, I'm issuing executive orders at the lowest rate in more than 100 years," Obama said in a speech in Austin last July. "So it's not clear how it is that Republicans didn't seem to mind when President Bush took more executive actions than I did."

Obama has issued 195 executive orders as of Tuesday. Published alongside them in the *Federal Register* are 198 presidential memoranda—all of which carry the same legal force as executive orders.

He's already signed 33 percent more presidential memoranda in less than six years than Bush did in eight. ...

The Failed 'War on Drugs'

Jeremiah Jacques | December 18

THE CENTER for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) made headlines this month after reporting that from 1999 to 2012, the number of drug overdose deaths in the United States more than doubled. That is a sobering statistic, but it doesn't reveal the *true scope* of the rising number of drug deaths or the true extent of America's failure in the war on drugs.

According to the report, the number of people who died from an overdose of painkillers, heroin or other drugs jumped from 16,849 in 1999 to 41,502 in 2012.

The U.S. government officially declared a war on drugs in 1971. By 1980, instead of falling, the number of overdose deaths nationwide rose dramatically. The stark increase prompted policymakers in 1980 to intensify efforts to curb the rising trend.

The figure that the new CDC report doesn't mention is the number of overdose deaths in 1980—when the U.S. began pumping billions of dollars into fighting drug abuse. That year, the number of overdose deaths was 6,100. That's about one seventh the size of the 2012 number. The U.S. population has grown since then, but not nearly in proportion to this soaring number of overdose deaths. Accounting for population growth, the increase is still fivefold.

America has spent around \$2.5 trillion fighting



America's drug problem—the overwhelming majority has been spent since 1980. That's more than the nation spent on World War I, the Vietnam War and the Korean War combined. Yet during this time, the number of drug deaths per year has soared *seven times higher*.

Despite a trillions-dollar effort by the U.S., illicit drugs are easier than ever to obtain, potencies are far greater, and drug overdose rates are soaring to unprecedented heights. In 2009, drug overdoses surpassed car accidents to become the *leading cause* of accidental deaths in the United States.

America's record in winning wars in recent decades has been abysmal, and the war on drugs may be the most glaring of its failures.

To learn about the cause of America's increasingly destructive drug addiction, and the solution, read our article "[The High Life.](#)" Follow Jeremiah Jacques: [Twitter](#)

Obama is not the first president to use memoranda to accomplish policy aims. But at this point in his presidency, he's the first to use them more often than executive orders. ...

UN Sending Thousands of Muslims to America

WORLD NET DAILY | December 12

THE FEDERAL government is preparing for another "surge" in refugees, and this time they won't be coming illegally from Central America.

The U.S. State Department announced this week that the first major contingent of Syrian refugees, 9,000 of them, have been hand-selected by the United Nations for resettlement into communities across the United States.

World Net Daily reported in September that Syrians would make up the next big wave of Muslim refugees coming to the U.S., as resettlement agencies were lobbying for the U.S. to accept at least 75,000 Syrian refugees

over the next five years.

Until now, the U.S. had accepted only 300 of the more than 3.2 million refugees created by the Syrian civil war in which [the Islamic State], El Nusra and other Sunni Muslim jihadist rebels are locked in a protracted battle with the Shiite regime of Bashar Assad.

But the U.S. government has been the most active of all nations in accepting Islamic refugees from other war-torn countries, such as Iraq, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Now, the Syrians will be added to the mix. They are cleared for refugee status by the UN high commissioner on refugees (UNHCR), who assigns them to various countries. Once granted refugee status by the UN, they are screened by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for any ties to terrorist organizations.

The State Department announcement makes it clear that the 9,000 refugees represent just the beginning of an extended program to accept more Syrians.

"The United States accepts the majority of all UNHCR referrals from

around the world. Last year, we reached our goal of resettling nearly 70,000 refugees from nearly 70 countries. And we plan to lead in resettling Syrians as well," the statement reads. "We are reviewing some 9,000 recent UNHCR referrals from Syria. We are receiving roughly a thousand new ones each month, and we expect admissions from Syria to surge in 2015 and beyond."

The United States, with its commitment to accepting 70,000 displaced people a year, absorbs more refugees than all other countries combined. This number is understated, however, as once refugees get to the United States they are placed on a fast track to citizenship and are able to get their extended families to join them in the states under the government's Refugee Family Reunification program.

The State Department works to place refugees in 180 cities across 49 states. ...

Muslim countries in the Middle East have so far not stepped up to permanently take in their Islamic brothers and sisters although the temporary refugee camps to which the Syrians

Minneapolis Principals Not Allowed to Suspend Black Students

THE MINNEAPOLIS, Minnesota, school system has a big problem. According to Superintendent Bernadeia Johnson and the Justice Department, the vast majority of its 2,300 teachers are racists.

To solve this problem, Johnson says the district must implement *racism* against white and Asian students. It is part of President Barack Obama and the Justice Department's new protocols to combat racism.

Here's what is happening: Black students in Minneapolis schools are 10 times more likely than white and Asian students to be suspended.

According to the Justice Department and Bernadeia Johnson, there is no explanation for this except blatant racism even though Asian students are suspended at lower rates than whites.

The Justice Department says that either the school district remedies the situation or it will be targeted for legal prosecution.

Thus Bernadeia Johnson's announcement on November 7 that black students will no longer be suspended or expelled for the same violations as whites and Asians. Instead, she will personally decide if the student really should be suspended. "This will begin with a 25 percent reduction in disproportionality by the end of this school year ... and 100 percent by 2018," she said. This will be done by keeping black students in the classes where they belong.

How absolutely ridiculous.

Bernadeia Johnson argues that suspending black students from schools lowers their graduation rates, and predisposes them to a life of crime, increasing the chance that they will go to jail. She sincerely thinks allowing students to get away with infractions will help them.

Sadly, she is actually making it more likely these students will have problems later in life.

Consider: Does removing students from the consequences of their actions make them more or less likely to think they are special and that the law doesn't apply to them? Would it make them more or less likely to refuse to get out of the road and walk on the sidewalk when asked by



ROBERT MORLEY

an officer? Would it make them more or less likely to think they can rob a convenience store for kicks? That they can shoplift and then accuse law enforcement officers of trying to "Michael Brown" them when simply asked to produce a receipt ([see video](#)).

Does teaching students that the law doesn't apply to them make them more or less likely to be the next Michael Brown or Eric Garner?

Implementing racism will never solve a racism problem. But it can make it worse.

If we want to solve the problem in America's schools, we need to get to the *cause* of the problem.

Seventy-three percent of all black children are born into broken families.

So instead of arguing that tests like the S.A.T. and standardized testing in general are racist because black students perform worse on them than whites or Asians, we need to focus on fixing families.

Instead of trying to force universities to reject qualified white students in favor of unqualified black students just to meet race-based enrollment quotas, why not actually help black students succeed in schools by addressing our pandemic of broken families?

If we don't, the racial insanity will continue until it tears this country apart.

Maybe there are some few racists among Minneapolis teachers—but even if there are, that is not the main problem in that school district. The greater problem *by far* is the actual reason why so many black students are struggling in school. *More than three out of four come from broken families.*

Broken homes, broken students, broken schools—broken lives—it really is as simple as that.

Until America's families are fixed, all of America's students will continue to suffer. Pretending that behavior problems don't exist and are simply in the imaginations of a bunch of racist teachers will only make things worse.

Watch this situation closely because the Bible's prophecies speak plainly of racial discord gripping America in our day. They are explained in editor in chief Gerald Flurry's recent *Trumpet* article "[Where America's Race Riots Are Leading](#)."

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have fled are in Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon. ...

The United States has accepted nearly 2 million refugees from Muslim countries since 1992, WND previously reported. The authority for the resettlement program is the Refugee Act of 1980, signed into law by President Jimmy Carter. ...

The cost of resettling 70,000 refugees comes to just over \$1 billion per year to the U.S. government, according to a State Department report for fiscal

2015. ... The \$1 billion figure does not include the cost of the unaccompanied alien children program, supplying food stamps, subsidized housing, interpreters, Medicaid, WIC, temporary assistance to needy families and educating the children, much of which falls to states and localities.

[Refugee Resettlement Watch's Ann] Corcoran estimates that, taken in total, the cost of the U.S. refugee resettlement program could run as high as \$10 billion per year. ...

New Threat to Global Economy

Ted Baumann, SOVEREIGN INVESTOR | December 9

THE INTERNATIONAL financial system is based on the U.S. dollar. The greenback is both the world's "reserve currency"—the one everyone wants to hold when things go bad—and the principal means of exchange. The vast majority of transactions between



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Revelation 17:10

THE KEY OF DAVID | December 19

Why God's Church has watched for the resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire for more than 50 years



companies, countries and people are denominated in dollars. ...

[T]he dollar's dominance isn't unchallenged. The Chinese yuan, in particular, has pretensions to become a second global currency, one so widely used that transactions unrelated to China could be conducted in yuan.

But there's another challenge on the horizon ... a new international interbank system that could create important opportunities—or chaos—for the world economy, depending on how the proverbial ball bounces.

You probably know the SWIFT (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication) system as that little jumble of letters and numbers you need every time you send money to a foreign bank account. It's the global banking system's address book and postal system. SWIFT has more than 10,000 members in more than 200 countries, and handles more than 15 million messages daily.

But even though SWIFT is based in Belgium, and subject to EU law, the U.S. government claims legal authority over all SWIFT transactions denominated in U.S. dollars—even if those dollars never enter a U.S. bank account—because they are ultimately “backstopped” by the Federal Reserve.

So when European banks used SWIFT to facilitate dollar-dominated transactions between Iran and third parties, the U.S. fined those banks billions of dollars for violating U.S. sanctions against Iran, even though no money passed through the United States. They eventually got Iran kicked off the SWIFT system altogether.

Iran isn't in a position to challenge the United States. But when the U.S.'s most loyal ally in Europe, the United Kingdom, called for Russian banks to be ejected from SWIFT during the height of the Ukraine crisis, the two Anglo countries met their match.

A few weeks ago, Russia announced its intention to launch an alternative to SWIFT by May 2015. Russia's new interbank system would dominate transactions in rubles, with conversion to and from U.S. dollars at either end. For example, an Iranian government agency could use dollars to buy rubles, transmit them via the Russian system, and have them paid to a supplier in Europe who then converted them back to dollars.

Short of hacking into the Russian system, the U.S. would have no way of knowing who was paying what to whom or for what reason. ...

[A] Russian interbank system would also be an important part of the

framework for an alternative global economic and financial system that rejects U.S. rules. Indeed, Russia has already joined the New Development Bank, an alternative to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

The participating countries (Russia, South Africa, China, India and Brazil) comprise more than 3 billion people, 41.4 percent of the world's population, and account for more than 25 percent of global GDP. It's not hard to imagine them constituting an alternative trading bloc similar to the old Soviet-aligned countries of the Cold War. ...

If the Russian system actually comes into being ... I'm not sure the cost will be worth it.

Obama Fights Back

NBC | December 18

A MONTH after the shellacking his party took in the midterm elections, President Obama has demonstrated over the past 30 days that he's not going to be your ordinary lame duck heading into his final two years in office. Instead, call him the active-duck president.

On November 20, he announced his executive action on immigration, and has since seen his approval rating among Latinos increase to 57 percent, per our new NBC/WSJ/Telemundo oversample of American Latinos.

A week ago, the Obama White House worked the phones and twisted just enough arms to ensure that Congress passed its spending bill.

And yesterday, the president announced an historic normalizing of relations with Cuba.

Now this all isn't to say that the immigration and Cuba actions aren't producing political blowback—Republicans have retreated to early next year to fight the immigration action via the appropriations process, and plenty howled at normalizing relations with Cuba. Despite the controversy and gridlock, however, Obama is getting stuff done. And he's got other good news to tout (321,000 jobs created in November, enrollment on healthcare.gov has reached nearly 2.5 million). Now it remains to be seen how long this lasts or just how popular Obama's actions will ultimately be. ...

TERRORIST from page 1

minister and other authorities would not state the political motivations behind the attack until it was resolved, but now that the dust has settled the only thing we hear is denial.

The media is quick to portray Monis as a deranged lunatic with nothing to lose. The government has quickly fallen back on the “lone wolf” statement. Monis was apparently not affiliated with any particular group, though it is confirmed that he was Muslim.

Following the initial reports, statements were issued by Australia’s police commissioner, the prime minister, the governor general and even the United States ambassador. All the statements had similar themes. There were expressions of concern and sympathy for the hostages, confidence in Australian police forces, and firm reassurance that the assailant was likely—and later confirmed to be—acting alone.

Immigration

No doubt the government is dreading any mention of the “I” word. But looking at the simple facts, there is no way to deny that this attack is anything but bound to Australia and its immigration crisis.

Let’s look at the facts of the situation, starting with what we saw in the attack itself. Monis was easily able to walk into Martin Place—the very heart of Sydney—and take hostages in a district surrounded by banks, media headquarters and government buildings. This was a terrorist attack orchestrated by a Muslim that has been living in the country since 1996.

The simple fact that he held up the black and white shahada flag—the statement of belief of *all Muslims*—would prove the political motivations behind the attack. There is no denying that religion—the Muslim religion—was involved. Monis was a Muslim. More than that, he was a cleric and self-proclaimed healer. He was well known to the police. He was known for sending hate-soaked letters to the families of servicemen who had died in the line of duty in Afghanistan. He was also apparently an accomplice in the murder of his own wife! He and a friend stabbed her to death and burned her in an apartment block.

It is shocking that this man was able to walk freely in Australia’s largest city; more shocking yet, he was allowed to live here for years!

Monis came to Australia from Iran as a refugee in 1996. Yet in the last 18 years, the man failed utterly to assimilate or become part of the Australian society. Instead, he became radicalized.

What about other scenarios—when young, born-and-reared Australians go off to fight for terrorist groups like the Islamic State? Evidence suggests that immigrant communities are growing that refuse to meld into Australian society. They are not assimilating, but rather establishing entrenched foreign-thinking and even hostile enclaves right within Australia’s borders.

Intensifying Extremism

From these communities, greater numbers of Australian

Muslims are heading to Syria to join the Islamic State. Only weeks ago we saw the first girls running away to become the wives of jihadists. As we saw with Monis, some Muslims don’t leave to fight, but remain and take on a more radical mindset. Try as the media do to label Monis a lone wolf, he is neither more nor less radical than those who go to fight overseas. And just because his flag didn’t say “Islamic State” or “Jabat al Nusra” doesn’t make him a solo act.

Monis is merely the thin edge of a wedge driving deep into the heart of Australian society. Anyone who walks through Sydney can see it. Mosques are rising on the cityscape. On the street, hijabs and Muslim paraphernalia abound. While few Muslims would act as Monis did, it is from this demographic that Australia’s terrorist threats stem.

And that pool is big. As the Muslim population increases in Australia, and immigrants refuse to assimilate, how many others are willing to bring terror to Australia?

Strangers Within the Gates

When the mainstream media reported this situation, their analyses were atrocious. No one was willing to address the problems associated with immigration.

Australia’s open-door policies to immigrants have been going on for decades, and now we must face the consequences. And it will hurt—not only Australia, but it will hurt all nations dealing with similar issues: Britain, America, Canada, Israel. All these have their own battles with immigration. All have seen terrorist attacks carried out in the past year by citizens.

Australia faces a very dangerous situation. Here is a quote from late *Trumpet* columnist Ron Fraser, taken from our free e-book *Australia—Where to Now?*:

“Australia’s greatest challenge is not so much keeping extremist imams and their terrorist protégés from migrating into the country. The most significant terrorist potential lies within the hearts of extremist Islamic Australian citizens already embedded within that continent—the sons of earlier migrants, who speak with an Aussie twang but who will never assimilate into Australian society. Of such is the stranger within Australia’s gates mentioned in Deuteronomy 28:43!

“Match that prophecy with Deuteronomy 32:25, and it is clear to those with a perspective on the biblical identity of Australia, and on the prophecies for these times in which we now live, that the future does not bode well for Australia in respect of this terrorist threat. If you want to know why, turn to Leviticus 26 and read verses 14-16. That’s not a message for the faint-hearted. Nevertheless, it’s the binding reality of our day.”

Australia has historically suffered from the “she’ll be right” attitude. A distinct lack of concern when the issue at hand is somewhere out of sight and out of mind. Well now the issue has exploded in our faces. Assimilation of immigrants is failing and we have radicals in our community—whether we choose to acknowledge it or not.

Keep watching, because immigration will not be dealt with as quickly as a hostage scenario. And if we aren’t careful, it will prove more deadly yet.