

# Trumpet Weekly

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German Bundeswehr troops depart for NATO mission in the Middle East.



## No More Taboos for the German Army

Richard Palmer | February 25

THE YEAR 1993 WAS PIVOTAL FOR THE GERMAN MILITARY. Germany established its armed forces in 1956, but memories of two world wars meant that they were restricted to defensive operations within NATO territory.

In 1991, this slowly began to change. Thirty German soldiers deployed in Baghdad, Iraq, to help with airlift operations. The same year, 150 medics were sent with a United Nations mission to Cambodia.

The first substantial foreign mission came in 1993, with over 2,000 military personnel deploying to Somalia as UN peacekeepers. The same year, German soldiers joined in aerial operations over Yugoslavia.

The world had no problems with these operations. In fact, the

UN and United States desperately wanted the German Army to do more, but to many Germans, this was too much. Germany's main left-wing party, the Social Democratic Party (SPD), and the free-market Free Democratic Party complained to the German Constitutional Court that these deployments violated Germany's Basic Law—its constitution.

In July 1994, the court released its final conclusion. The German military could get involved in conflicts outside of Europe, but only on two important conditions: The missions must be approved by the German parliament; and they must be part of some kind of collective security arrangement—such as the UN or NATO. The argument was that the German Constitution allows the nation to take part in collective defense groups, therefore,

Germany must be able to meet the commitments that go with joining such an arrangement.

Since 1994, every German military deployment has complied with these conditions. That ruling provided the legal basis that allowed the German military to aid the breakup of Yugoslavia, fight in Afghanistan, and deploy in Africa. For 20 years, Germany has not been allowed to send in its army on its own initiative—it could only do so when called upon by the UN, NATO or the European Union. Until now.

The German parliament effectively dispensed with that condition on January 29, when it voted to deploy up to 100 soldiers to help train the Kurds in northern Iraq. There is no NATO, UN or EU mission in Kurdistan. It's a small beginning, but it sets an important precedent.

U.S. President Barack Obama recognized the significance of this decision. "In a significant milestone in its foreign policy, Germany has taken the important step of equipping Kurdish forces in Iraq, and Germany is preparing to lead the training mission of local forces in Erbil," he said at a press conference following a meeting with German Chancellor Angela Merkel on February 9.

The German Defense Ministry claims the decision complies with the 1994 court ruling, but if it's right, it stretches that ruling so far as to make it meaningless. The basis for this claim is that other nations are involved in combat operations in Iraq and that the UN has issued a resolution on the subject of Islamic terrorists in Iraq.

UN resolution 2170 (2014) does indeed discuss terrorists in Iraq, but it calls for nations to "act to suppress the flow of foreign fighters, financing and other support to Islamist extremist groups in Iraq and Syria." It does not *authorize* military force, nor is it a request to set up a UN mission. If all it takes for German military action is a UN resolution on vaguely the same subject as the country in question, and a few allies, then there are no real restrictions on the use of Germany's armed forces.

The Defense Ministry's argument is so tenuous that the research service of the German parliament rejected it. The experts point out that the current mission is not "within the framework and according to the rules" of the UN and that the group of nations involved are not a system of collective security.

The research service, however, put forward an alternative argument. The Basic Law allows the German military to be used for "defense." It does not say "for the defense of Germany"—so the research service argues that the new mission may be legal because it is for the purposes of defense—in this case, the defense of the Kurds.

Again, if this definition is allowed to stretch this far, it seems hard to imagine what military action it would not permit. Just about every war in the history of mankind could be construed as being in defense of someone.

Swen Schulz, a member of the SPD who broke with his party to vote against the deployment, reached the same conclusion. "The mandate is a further step to militarize German foreign policy," he warned.

"The fight against [the Islamic State] has a good purpose," he continued. "But, if the mandate goes through, a future government could justify quite different operations with a similar weak constitutional basis."

Outside of Germany, the removal of this last restraint on

German military deployments has received almost no attention. Britain and America have no interest in German military restraint—instead, like Mr. Obama, even those who have commented on this news welcome it.

Within Germany, it has been discussed more widely and, in some cases, criticized. But it is far less controversial than the last time a military taboo was broken back in 1993. This time the SPD won't be taking the case to the constitutional court—it supported it. Even the usually pacifist Greens merely abstained. The military mission was approved with 457 votes in favor, 79 against.

This broad support means that even if the court were to rule this unconstitutional, the genie would still be out of the bottle—the governing coalition has enough votes to simply change the Constitution.

Confirming the German government's dedication to forge a new path for military, Defense Minister Ursula von der Leyen announced that her ministry was working on a new white paper for the department—a paper that would outline a future for the German Army with "no taboos." These white papers, released every few years, set the overall policy for the German military. The last was published in 2006; this one will be released next year.

"Just last year our willingness to act concerning German security policy has changed substantially," von der Leyen said as she launched the white-paper discussions. "Our strategic culture is changing."

Germany's military policy "cannot be a rigid plan of action" or "a checklist of foreign missions," she announced. As for Germany's international commitments, there would be "no pressure to act, but also, no taboos."

There it is, in black and white. The last restraints imposed upon the German military after World War II are now being shaken off.

To the world outside Germany, it's no big deal. It's not even covered in the English-language press.

But Germany's history should at least cause us to pause and think about this. After all, in the grand scheme of things, World War II is still recent history.

Yes, it seems unfair to hold the actions of an earlier generation of people over the heads of modern Germans—actions that today's generation had no control over. Germany's geography alone naturally gives it a dominant position within Europe, and that geography has not changed.

We assume that history does not apply today, that wars and mass bloodshed are a thing of the past. *We're sophisticated now—those things are impossible*, we think.

The TV news service Tagesschau commented that we're moving into "uncharted territory" for Germany's Constitution. But we're also moving into uncharted territory for modern Germany. We've never seen modern Germany with a military free of taboos. One could argue that we need to move into this territory and that Germany deserves another chance. But in that case, surely we should enter this new territory with eyes wide open? Instead, this new Germany is emerging, and Britain and America couldn't care less.

The *Trumpet*, however, has been warning for years of what this new territory contains. To read more about this warning from history, read our free booklet [Germany and the Holy Roman Empire](#).

## U.S. Flexible as Iran Flexes

Israel Hayom | February 26

THE NEW YORK TIMES PUBLISHED AN ARTICLE ON WEDNESDAY about the emerging nuclear deal with Iran: “Negotiators in Geneva might be able to complete a framework by the end of March, with a final accord reached at the end of June,” the newspaper reported.

“This isn’t certain, but it offers hope that the protracted nuclear threat from Iran can be resolved peacefully.”

Meanwhile, in so-called pacifistic Iran, a slightly different atmosphere is afoot: Having heard the news of the progress in the talks, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard launched a large-scale drill. They seem to have not heard that the world is trying to give them a certificate of good conduct, and during the military exercise, they chose to sink a life-size replica of the U.S. Navy’s Nimitz aircraft carrier.

The Americans, of course, did not get bent out of shape about the navy ship’s sinking, which seemed to them to be nothing more than an attempt “to destroy the equivalent of a Hollywood movie set,” according to Cmdr. Kevin Stephens, the spokesman for the U.S. Navy’s 5th Fleet in Bahrain.

Washington too was forgiving of the Iranian drill, despite the

fact that it was done near the Strait of Hormuz, which three years ago made headlines after Iran threatened to shut down the strategic waterway, leading to tensions between the U.S. and Tehran.

But that is not our problem this time; the drill itself is not the issue, rather the meaning behind Iran’s symbolic act. As the United States paves the way for Iran to rejoin the international family, Iran chooses to “sink an American battleship,” as though nothing has changed since 1979.

This continued American habit [of] succumbing to Iran is concerning. It makes you wonder: Who here is behaving like the superpower and who is acting as though they have something to lose?

Instead of the Iranians being the ones with their tail between their legs, begging for a deal and for sanctions to be lifted, they are the ones doing the threatening and behaving like Iranian revolutionaries. ...

Tehran aspires to a deal that is good for Iran (and bad for us) in every way: a deal that ensure sanctions are lifted, preserves the honor and spirit of the revolution, and if possible, allows for a nuclear bomb. Once, the spirit of the Iranian Revolution could not have held a candle to America’s fighting spirit. ...

## T Mayor of Jerusalem Takes Down Terrorist

Brent Nagtegaal | February 25

JERUSALEM’S MAYOR NIR BARKAT SUBDUED A KNIFE-WIELDING terrorist who had just stabbed a Jewish victim on Sunday afternoon.

Surveillance footage showed Barkat disembarking his vehicle with his bodyguards and moving toward the scene a mere 17 seconds from the time of the knife attack.

“In moments like these, facing a terrorist, you act mainly by intuition and do what anyone would be expected to do—take out the terrorist,” wrote the mayor in *Israel Hayom* on Monday. Later, he wrote, “Anyone who tries to attack us will pay dearly. You can’t hesitate in the face of terrorism.”

Moments after neutralizing the attacker, Barkat scanned the environment to see if there were other threats in the area. Deeming it safe, he was the first to attend to the victim, who was attacked for no reason apart from his being a Jew. Putting his arms around him, Barkat brought him to the sidewalk and sat with him as they waited for the emergency services to arrive.

Certainly, Mayor Barkat’s six-year term in the Israel Defense Forces as a paratrooper educated him on *how* to take down terrorists, and even hardened him to the reality of death and war. However, this was a public servant who took his oath to serve the public of Jerusalem seriously, even putting himself in harm’s way.

Truly, the action of Jerusalem’s mayor on Sunday is one of the

most heroic achievements by a public servant in recent memory.

This was not the first time Nir Barkat was personally confronted with a terrorist attack. Eleven years ago, to the very day of Sunday’s attack, Barkat witnessed a Jerusalem bus explode on the street adjacent to Liberty Bell Park. In his words, “I stopped my car and ran like crazy toward it, among the dead and wounded.” He found a young lady losing a lot of blood and used his hands to stop the flow before emergency services arrived.

In an age when some Western officials promote a strategy of “leading from behind” or “strategic patience” in the face of evil, Mayor Barkat’s actions to protect and lead from the front are refreshing.

Certainly, every public official does not need to face down a terrorist to be considered a leader. But every leader should care more for those he governs than for himself. And this habitual selflessness should develop to the point that it becomes intuitive as it has with Nir Barkat.

Seldom do democratic elections in Israel result in the incumbent returning to power. However, with the Jerusalem municipal elections in 2013, it seems the public made the right choice. You may disagree with his politics, even his strategies, but when a leader puts his own life at risk to serve his people, he is [easy to follow](#).



## Israel Kept in the Dark During Nuclear Talks

Callum Wood | February 26

**B**ESIDES IRAN GAINING NUCLEAR WEAPONS, WHAT IS THE GREATEST threat to Israel's existence?

*Trumpet* columnist Stephen Flurry gave the answer in 2007: "Besides an Iranian bomb, the [greatest threat to Israel's existence](#) is diminished support from its long-time ally, the United States."

The U.S.'s ongoing efforts to make a deal with Iran so that it gives up its nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief has been a wedge driven deep into [U.S.-Israel relations](#).

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been one of the most vocal critics to a deal with Iran. This is understandable; Iran's leaders call for Israel's destruction on a near-daily basis. In the midst of nuclear negotiations in November 2014, Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei gave a nine-point plan for destroying Israel.

But Israel's opposition to a bad deal has only served to draw the ire and condemnation of the liberal government in Washington. U.S. President Barack Obama has been angered by Netanyahu's criticism, seeing it as a countermand to over a year of negotiations.

Netanyahu has been accused of jeopardizing peace and misconstruing the facts of the deal. These accusations have come from Mr. Obama, his spokespeople and various levels within the current administration. Last week those allegations turned into action.

The White House openly admitted that it was keeping Israel in the dark on key facts about the nuclear deal. This move is not only a slap in the face of a long-standing alliance, it compromises Israel's national security. This tiny nation in the Middle East has everything to lose if a deal is struck allowing Iran to continue its race for a nuclear weapon. Israel needs to know every minute detail so it can ascertain the threat posed by Iran.

Israel's Channel 10 cited unnamed officials who claim President Obama has already agreed to 80 percent of Iran's demands. American compromises could leave Iran with a breakout capacity—the time needed to create a nuke—of just a few months. The less [Israel](#) knows about the details of the deal, the less accurate it can be in judging that breakout time to gauge an appropriate response.

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## Iran's Aim Is Arab Fragmentation, But America Won't See It

NOW | February 23

**T**HERE HAS BEEN MUCH PARTISAN DISCUSSION IN WASHINGTON over the Obama administration's efforts to reach a nuclear deal with Iran. ... Reflecting this atmosphere, in December U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry [described](#) Iranian attacks against [the Islamic State] this way: "[T]he net effect is positive." Gen. Martin Dempsey, the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, also observed: "As long as the Iraqi government remains committed to inclusivity of all the various groups inside [Iraq], then I think Iranian influence will be positive."

Dempsey's caveat about inclusivity notwithstanding, both statements displayed a limited grasp of what Iran's strategy in the Middle East is all about, or how it only makes more likely the emergence and survival of groups such as [the Islamic State].

The reality is that during the last decade Iran has been actively pushing for fragmentation of the Arab world. Early on the Iranians encouraged their Iraqi Shiite allies to advance a divisive sectarian agenda, alienating Sunnis and making impossible the rebuilding of a unified Iraq under a national central government. ...

On the Palestinian front, too, the regime has played on the divisions in Palestinian ranks, exploiting the differences between Fatah and Hamas. Tehran's ability to exploit the contradictions in the Arab world, a policy pursued in Lebanon and Yemen as well, has been a recurring feature of Iran's behavior in the Middle East for some time.

What is the rationale? Quite simply that an Arab world deeply divided, shattered into sectarian entities, and weakened represents fertile ground for Iran to impose its hegemony regionally. In such a context one can understand better Iran's efforts lately

to open new fronts against Israel. In the broad Iranian vision, the only serious regional rival it has is a nuclear-armed Israel.

Turkey also represents a potential problem, but the efforts of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to transform his country into a Middle Eastern powerhouse have failed. ...

The Iranians are more than willing to allow the United States and the Arab states to bombard [the Islamic State], as the group represents an irritant in that it straddles vital Iranian supply lines between Iraq and Syria. But [the Islamic State] hardly represents a strategic threat to Iran; on the contrary, by drawing Western attention to the terrorist problem, it distracts Western governments from Iran's larger project in the Middle East.

It is ironic that in countries such as Iraq, Yemen and Lebanon, American interaction with governments or political forces is now filtered by Iran or its local allies. Even the pro-American Kurds in Iraq are careful not to cross Iran when making their decisions. The success of the Iraqi Kurds has been their ability to play Washington off against Tehran, without taking steps that might antagonize any side—for instance, by advancing toward independence. ...

But Iran is also ensuring that as wide spaces escape from government control due to the fragmentation of Arab states, they become more vulnerable to non-state actors such as [the Islamic State]. In other words, the American strategy of building consensus to reinforce governance institutions and prevent the emergence of vacuums in the region is precisely what Iran is systematically undermining.

Iran has benefited from the mistakes of the Bush

administration—namely its mismanagement of the postwar situation in Iraq—but above all from the Obama administration’s disengagement from the Middle East. Whereas the first created an opportunity for Tehran to enter Iraq and start pulling sectarian strings to its advantage, the second opened a highway for Iran to pursue its long-term ambitions.

### **Exiled Iranian Opposition: Tehran Hiding Secret Uranium Enrichment Site** **Jerusalem Post | February 25**

**I**RAN IS RUNNING A SECRET URANIUM ENRICHMENT SITE, AN exiled opposition group said on Wednesday, AFP reported.

Alireza Jafarzadeh, deputy director of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, said that there is a site hidden northeast of Tehran.

“Despite the Iranian regime’s claims that all of its enrichment activities are transparent ... it has in fact been engaged in research and development with advanced centrifuges at a secret nuclear site called Lavizan-3,” he said. ...

### **Muslim Brotherhood Turn to Terrorism Against Sisi Regime** **MEMRI | February 20**

**T**HE EGYPTIAN MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD (MB) HAS RECENTLY escalated its statements and activity against the Egyptian regime, to the extent of explicitly calling for using terrorism and violence against it, and even for assassinating President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi. These calls included an MB communique calling on movement activists to prepare for a lengthy and uncompromising jihad and to hunger for a martyr’s death; clear incitement to violence on MB TV channels broadcasting from Turkey; and an ultimatum also on a Turkey-based MB channel, to foreign workers to leave Egypt by February 20 and to foreign diplomats by February 28 or else be targeted for attack.

### **How the Islamic State Sprung Up in Libya** **Time | February 26**

**T**HE ISLAMIC STATE ... FLOURISHED IN THE VACUUM CREATED BY the civil war in Syria. More recently it has found a similarly fertile environment in Libya.

The elected government in Tripoli collapsed last August after a coalition of militias called Libya Dawn drove it out of the capital and took control. The deposed government fled to Tobruk, 800 miles to the east, close to the Egyptian border. The rival governments in Tobruk and Tripoli, supported by regional militias, have fought a civil war ever since.

Many veterans of Libya’s first civil war against the regime of Muammar Qadhafi traveled on to join the uprising against Bashar Assad in Syria in 2011. An estimated 1,000 and 3,000 Libyans fought with a variety of rebel groups, but many have since joined [the Islamic State].

Last year, a group of around 300 Libyan [Islamic State] veterans returned to Derna on the country’s Mediterranean coast as

The Obama administration should remember this as it **argues** that the United States and Iran have a common benefit in collaborating against [the Islamic State]. The fact is that [the Islamic State] is a direct consequence of Iranian policies in Iraq and Syria—policies Iran is still implementing. The Americans are deaf, but they don’t have to be dumb and blind.

“Since 2008, the Iranian regime has secretly engaged in research and uranium enrichment with advanced ... centrifuge machines at this site,” Jafarzadeh said.

**“Our number one problem today is that of human survival. The good tidings are that mankind will survive and flourish—after the worst suffering ever.”**  
*Trumpet, June-July 2006*

Furthermore, there is an upsurge in reports of violent movements in Egypt that could be tied to the MB, the most prominent of which is the Revolutionary Retribution Movement. This movement, which emerged in advance of the fourth anniversary of Egypt’s January 25 revolution and now has branches in provinces across Egypt, calls for armed revolution against the Sisi regime and has taken credit for a large number of attacks and violent incidents in Egypt carried out in the last week of January 2015; Egyptian authorities have attributed these attacks to the MB. While the MB has denied any connection to the movement, pro-MB television channels and social media indicate the existence of such a link. ...

the civil war continued. In October, [the Islamic State] took over most of the city and declared its allegiance to the [the Islamic State] leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. They were joined in their pledge by Ansar al-Sharia, the extremist group that killed U.S. ambassador Christopher Stevens on Sept. 11, 2012.

On February 15, [the Islamic State] released a video of its Libyan fighters beheading 21 Egyptian Christians who were kidnapped while working in Libya. The video showed the men’s blood coloring the waves of Mediterranean Sea red while the lead executioner said: “We will conquer Rome, by the will of Allah.”

Libya’s proximity to Europe is one of the major attractions for [the Islamic State], though hardly the only one. The country has Africa’s biggest proven oil reserves, with an estimated 48 billion barrels, according to U.S. Energy Information Administration—something sure to entice [the Islamic State], which has been selling oil from its conquered territory in Iraq and Syria. And Libya

also has giant stockpiles of weapons left over from the rule of former dictator Muammar Qadhafi, who was one of the world's major arms buyers in his final years in power. Much of that weaponry—including surface-to-air missiles—has been smuggled to Mali, Chad and Niger and seized by the militias who control large areas of Libya. ...

As long as there is civil war in Libya, [the Islamic State] will be able to maintain a foothold in the country. [Libyan managing director of a Dubai-based security risk consultancy, Bassam]

Ghella believes that unless talks—so far floundering—between Libya Dawn and the elected government succeed, tackling [the Islamic State]'s growth in Libya will be very difficult, for example through foreign intervention. “There are two options for Libya, and I don't believe there is a third one: To have two opposing governments work together. Right now, we are in a state of ‘my enemy's enemy is my friend.’ So that will allow these groups to thrive.”

**RELATED: “AN ISLAMIC TAKEOVER OF LIBYA AND ETHIOPIA IS IMMINENT”**

## EUROPE



### Germany's Secret Strategy to Destroy Iran

Gerald Flurry, *The Key of David* | February 27

THE BIBLE REVEALS THE DETAILS OF THE CONFLICT THAT WILL explode between what it calls the ‘king of the north’ and the ‘king of the south.’



### Army Considers Plan to Field More Tanks

The Local | February 26

GERMANY HAS BEEN REDUCING ITS NUMBER OF LEOPARD 2 BATTLE tanks from its Cold War height of 3,500, projected to fall to 225 under current plans.

But the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* reported on Thursday that that number may be revised upwards, along with numbers of other weapons systems.

A spokesman for Defense Minister Ursula von der Leyen confirmed to the paper that “modernization and supplementary steps are being considered.”

Enlarging existing armored capacity would entail taking Cold War-era tanks out of storage, rather than buying new ones.

The Bundeswehr (German Army) is currently only 75 percent equipped with tanks and other heavy weapons, with equipment shared between different units as and when they need it under a so-called “Dynamic availability management” system.

A Defense Ministry spokesman admitted this week that the

process was “in practice just as bad as it sounds” after it led last week to soldiers using broom handles as mock machine guns during a NATO exercise.

There are no plans to increase the actual size of the army, but rather to fill these supply gaps—fulfilling a long-held demand of soldiers and political defense specialists.

But von der Leyen's spokesman said that the changes were “not about a process for the coming months, but for the coming decade” and would not be included in the 2016 budget. ...

“If we want to present a credible allied defense for Europe, the troops have to be fully equipped,” defense committee chairman Hans-Peter Bartels said.

“A tank battalion without tanks is not a tank battalion.”

Bartels suggested that the country should aim to field around 300 battle tanks in future—something that could be achieved at little cost, as many of the vehicles are still in storage. ...

### German Domestic Security Agency Finds Russia Reverting to KGB Measures

EuroActiv | February 26

RUSSIA HAS BOLSTERED ITS ESPIONAGE ACTIVITIES IN EUROPEAN states during the course of the Ukraine crisis, according to findings of the German Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (BfV).

The tactics of Russia's former Soviet KGB intelligence agency have been employed again, said Hans-Georg Maaßen, president of the BfV, on Wednesday at the European Police Conference in Berlin.

Aside from espionage, this included targeted misinformation, influencing decisions and supporting extremist groups with the goal of destabilizing a state, Maaßen indicated. As Russia's neighbors, Eastern European states were especially affected by this, he said. ...

For years, Russia has viewed Germany and other European states as a target for espionage, Maaßen continued. ...

Maaßen also warned that alienation between Russia and the West threatens the security situation in Germany and Europe as a whole. Due to numerous conflicts and threats in the world, a cooperation is actually urgently needed, he said.

"It makes the fight against Islamic extremism and terrorism

more difficult at a time when we would need it the least," Maaßen pointed out.

According to the president of the BfV, Germany will not remain free from Islamist attacks in the long term.

"We must assume that we will also be the target of terrorist attacks and we should prepare for this," Maaßen said...

Organizations like the Islamic State and al Qaeda pursue the goal of destabilizing the West, spreading fear and horror by carrying out such attacks, Maaßen indicated.

In addition, they want to bring the ideology of the global jihad to German and European cities. But as of now, there is no indication of concrete plans for an attack, Maaßen said.

## Cyprus Praises Russia, Lets in Warships

Andrew Rettman, EU Observer | February 26

THE CYPRIOT PRESIDENT HAS, ON A VISIT TO MOSCOW, SHOWCASED his country's economic dependence on Russia and the emergence of an increasing threat to EU and U.S. unity on sanctions.

Nicos Anastasiades used the trip, on Wednesday, to formalize an accord for Russian warships to use Cypriot military bases, and to speak out against EU policy on Ukraine.

Referring to Russia as a "great country," the 68-year old politician said: "I think it's increasingly felt by our European counterparts that action against such a great country as Russia leads to countermeasures on the part of Russia which have negative results, not only for Cyprus, but also for a number of other European Union countries."

He noted that his own "small homeland" is "largely dependent on the Russian Federation, whether it's the economy, or services, or tourism, or defense, or solidarity on the Cyprus issue [it's frozen conflict with Turkey]." ...

For his part, Putin told press the naval treaty concerns counterpiracy and counterterrorism operations, adding: "I don't think this should worry anyone."

He noted that Russian investors and banks have a big presence in Cyprus—a relationship rooted in Cyprus's favorable taxation regime and a history of laxity on anti-money-laundering. ...

He added that Sberbank and VTB Bank—both under credit restrictions as part of the EU sanctions package—are "working

actively" in Cyprus.

He also said Russia brings in 80 percent of Cypriot foreign investment and 600,000 tourists a year, while reminding Anastasiades that Moscow recently extended the soft terms of a €2.5 billion (US\$2.8 billion) "stabilization loan."

Putin stopped short of publicly asking the Cypriot head of state to help dismantle EU sanctions.

But he said Cyprus, despite being "small," is an "equal member" of the EU and has the "same voice" as others on sanctions ...

**"It is important to note that formulating a Russian bailout of Cyprus—an event that would significantly increase Moscow's power over Cyprus—is not a minor or easy task. This reality is being widely overlooked by too many pundits. Russia and Germany are powerful countries, and lest we forget, historical competitors. Both possess enormous leverage. And both place a high value on Cyprus as a strategic asset. There is more at stake here than mere finances. Germany is not going to simply keel over and let Russia take control of Cyprus."**  
theTrumpet.com, March 20, 2013

## Over a Quarter of British Muslims Have Sympathy for the Charlie Hebdo Terrorists

Telegraph | February 25

THIS MORNING THE BBC PUBLISHED DETAILS OF A MAJOR POLL OF the attitudes of Britain's Muslims. The headline on the front of the BBC website linking to the research states: "Muslims 'oppose cartoon reprisals.'" This of course relates to attitudes within the Muslim community towards the recent *Charlie Hebdo* attacks.

It's a reassuring headline. It's also wrong. Many Muslims—a majority—do indeed utterly oppose the murderous killings in Paris. But a very, very large number of Muslims don't.

Presented with the statement "I have some sympathy for the motives behind the *Charlie Hebdo* attacks in Paris," 27 percent agreed with the statement. A further 2 percent refused to answer

the question. And an additional 8 percent said they were unsure whether they had some sympathy or not.

That is a shocking figure. And an utterly shaming one for Britain's Muslim community. If this poll is accurate, over a quarter of British Muslims overtly sympathize with the motives of those responsible for the coldblooded murder of 16 journalists, police officers and Jews.

Below the report is an article by BBC *Today* program reporter Sima Kotecha. It begins: "Islam is a religion of peace and love—not violence: sentiments that have been expressed numerous times here in Bradford. Out of the dozens of people I've spoken

to, an overwhelming majority have said they're angry that their interpretation of Islam has been eclipsed by an extreme ideology that is too often projected in the media."

That statement—and those sentiments—are simply not compatible with the BBC's own research. In a separate finding, the BBC found 68 percent of Muslims believed "acts of violence against those who published such images [of the prophet Mohammed] could never be justified." Which means 32 percent of those questioned take a different view. Another question asked respondents if they agreed with the statement "Muslim clerics who preach that violence against the West can be justified are out of touch with mainstream opinion." Forty-nine percent agreed. Meaning again, that a majority of Muslims either disagree or sit on the fence. ...

But a much [more] fundamental question relates to the poll's actual findings. There is no point continuing to stick our heads in the sand: a large number of British Muslims think the *Charlie Hebdo* attacks were in some way justified. People may not want to accept that. I don't want to accept it. But it's a fact.

We are going to have to start to reassess what we mean by

### **Lithuania to Reintroduce Military Conscription**

**Zivile Kropaite, EU Observer | February 25**

**I**N THE WAKE OF RUSSIA'S ACTIONS IN UKRAINE, LITHUANIA ON Tuesday said it would take steps to reinstate basic military conscription for the next five years.

"We must reinforce the country's defense capacities. Under new geopolitical circumstances, the army must be properly prepared for the country's armed defense even in times of peace," Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė said following a meeting of the state defense council.

The compulsory military service would apply to men ages 19-26 years, with the aim of drafting up to 3,500 a year. ...

Linus Kojala, an analyst at the Eastern Europe Studies Center, sees it as positive that Lithuanian politicians start paying attention to the country's military capabilities.

Talking to *EU Observer*, he points out that there are currently only about 12,000 battle-ready soldiers in the country, when double would be needed to form a functioning army. ...

With military conscription abolished only in 2008, the country has been discussing whether its reintroduction signals that there is a real danger from Russia which annexed Crimea last

### **Germany Ready to Assist Lithuania in Tank Deal**

**Deutsche Welle | February 23**

**G**ERMAN GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN STEFFEN SEIBERT AND THE German Defense Ministry rejected claims on Monday that Berlin had rejected any possibility of supplying wheeled Boxer tanks to Lithuania.

German representatives reacted to a report in the *Welt am Sonntag* newspaper over the weekend, which suggested that the German Army had rejected any possibility of supplying Boxer tanks to Lithuania.

A spokesman of the German Defense Ministry said that Berlin was willing to assist Lithuania in buying Boxer tanks. "We are

"moderate Islam." At the moment, we essentially define a moderate Muslim as any Muslim who doesn't go around blowing things up, or who doesn't go round overtly advocating other people should blow things up. It's ludicrously simplistic, sickeningly patronizing, and actually represents a form of inverted racism.

More importantly, it also has the practical effect of marginalizing and undermining the significant number of genuinely moderate Muslims who want nothing to do with the "I wouldn't have done it myself, but ..." *Charlie Hebdo* apologists within their community.

If you think the Paris killings were justified—in any way—then you're not a moderate. By definition, you're an extremist. Fine, you're not a terrorist. But just because you wouldn't personally walk into a Jewish supermarket and start indiscriminately murdering people does not of itself make you a case study in moderation. We set the bar a little higher than that.

Over a quarter of British Muslims have some sympathy with the *Charlie Hebdo* attacks. That is sickening, reprehensible and unacceptable. And we have to say so. ...

year and has soldiers in eastern Ukraine. ...

Jonas Vytautas Zukas, chief of defense, noted that training conscripts would cost only half of what it would cost to train professional forces of a similar size.

But critics have pointed out that a bigger number of conscripts does not necessarily equal a small group of professional soldiers. ...

**"The more bellicose and dangerous Russia grows, the more we must watch Europe. Europe's reaction to Russian ambition is more important than the growing power of Russia itself. ... Few things unite a nation or group of nations more than a mutual external threat. Logic informs us that Russia's spiral toward dictatorship will trigger a fear among Europeans that will accelerate the unification of the Continent." *Trumpet*, July 2007**

ready to do everything to support Lithuania with this deal," the spokesman said on Monday. However, the German Army could not afford to lend any of its present tanks, the spokesman said. ...

German weapons producer Krauss-Maffei Wegmann confirmed its participation in the Lithuanian tenders, news agency Reuters reported.

Lithuania, a member of NATO, has borrowed weapons from Germany's Bundeswehr in the past. Berlin supplied about 300 Type M113 armored transport vehicles to Vilnius from the German Army's stores some years ago. ...

## **Draghi to Parliament: Deeper Monetary Union Needed to Deal With Important Shocks** **European Parliament | February 26**

**D**EBATING THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ECB WITH MEPS, ECB PRESIDENT Mario Draghi pledged to work towards a genuine Economic Union. “Economic convergence has not been as sustainable as it was hoped for at the outset. This still puts at risk the long-term success of the monetary union when faced with an important shock,” he said.

According to Mr. Draghi, two complementary responses are

needed. Firstly, the economies of the euro area need to become more resilient through sound public finances and decisive reforms of their economic structures. ... “And secondly we need to move from a system of rules for national economic policymaking to a system of further sovereignty sharing within common institutions to strengthen our economic policy governance. A common rule is only as strong as the common institution that can enforce it,” he said. ...

## **ASIA**

### **Kremlin ‘Considered Plan to Split Ukraine Before President’s Overthrow’** **Telegraph | February 25**

**T**HE KREMLIN RECEIVED ADVICE TO BREAK UP UKRAINE AND absorb its pro-Russian regions even before the country’s president fled in the wake of street protests a year ago, according to an alleged strategy document obtained by a Russian newspaper.

*Novaya Gazeta* said the “plan” for annexing Crimea was passed to Vladimir Putin’s presidential administration between Feb. 4 and 12, 2014, at least 10 days before Viktor Yanukovich, Ukraine’s then leader, left the capital, Kiev.

The newspaper published parts of the document, which urged the Kremlin to “play on the centrifugal ambitions of different regions of the country with the aim, in one way or another, of initiating the joining of its eastern areas to Russia.”

Mr. Putin has argued that Russia was forced to absorb Crimea in March as a result of what he calls an “unconstitutional coup,” which ousted the pro-Russian Mr. Yanukovich and brought in what Moscow claimed was a nationalist Ukrainian government which threatened the peninsula’s largely Russophone population.

But the document, if genuine, suggests the Kremlin was already considering a plan to divide Ukraine as a means of strengthening

Russia’s economy and global status.

While taking on the financial support of Crimea and “several eastern regions” would be a burden, the unknown authors of the paper argue, “in a geopolitical sense the gain would be priceless: our country would receive access to new demographic resources, highly qualified cadres of industry and transport specialists would become available. ...”

The document argues that the European Union wanted to take over Ukraine, and Russia must “intervene in the geopolitical intrigue of the European community” in order to maintain some control of gas pipelines through Ukraine and avoid losing energy markets in central and south Europe, something “that would inflict huge economic damage to our country.” ...

The document recommends that referendums on autonomy are held in pro-Russian regions of Ukraine in order to strengthen their claims to self-determination, “and later to joining Russia.” A controversial pro-independence referendum result in Crimea was used by the Kremlin to endorse its annexation of the region. ...

### **China Creating a New Economic World Order Under West’s Nose** **The Nation | February 23**

**S**EEN FROM THE CHINESE CAPITAL AS THE YEAR OF THE SHEEP starts, the malaise affecting the West seems like a mirage in a galaxy far, far away. On the other hand, the China that surrounds you looks all too solid and nothing like the embattled nation you hear about in the Western media, with its falling industrial figures, its real estate bubble, and its looming environmental disasters. Prophecies of doom notwithstanding, as the dogs of austerity and war bark madly in the distance, the Chinese caravan passes by in what President Xi Jinping calls “new normal” mode.

“Slower” economic activity still means a staggeringly impressive annual growth rate of 7 percent in what is now the globe’s leading economy. Internally, an immensely complex economic restructuring is underway as consumption overtakes investment as the main driver of economic development. At 46.7 percent of the gross domestic product, the service economy has pulled ahead of manufacturing, which stands at 44 percent.

Geopolitically, Russia, India, and China have just sent a powerful message westward: they are busy fine-tuning a complex trilateral strategy for setting up a network of economic corridors the Chinese call “new silk roads” across Eurasia. Beijing is also organizing a maritime version of the same, modeled on the feats of Adm. Zheng He who, in the Ming dynasty, sailed the “western seas” seven times, commanding fleets of more than 200 vessels.

Meanwhile, Moscow and Beijing are at work planning a new high-speed rail remix of the fabled Trans-Siberian Railroad. And Beijing is committed to translating its growing strategic partnership with Russia into crucial financial and economic help, if a sanctions-besieged Moscow, facing a disastrous oil price war, asks for it. ...

And this is just part of the frenetic action shaping what the Beijing leadership defines as the New Silk Road Economic Belt and the Maritime Silk Road of the 21st century. We’re talking about

a vision of creating a potentially mind-boggling infrastructure, much of it from scratch, that will connect China to Central Asia, the Middle East and Western Europe. Such a development will include projects that range from upgrading the ancient silk road via Central Asia to developing a Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar economic corridor; a China-Pakistan corridor through Kashmir; and a new maritime silk road that will extend from southern China all the way, in reverse Marco Polo fashion, to Venice. ...

The Obama administration's new National Security Strategy affirms that "the United States has been and will remain a Pacific power" and states that "while there will be competition, we reject the inevitability of confrontation" with Beijing. The "major developing powers," intrigued as they are by China's extraordinary infrastructural push, both internally and across those New Silk Roads, wonder whether a solar system with two suns might not be a non-starter. The question then is: Which "sun" will shine on

Planet Earth? Might this, in fact, be the century of the dragon?

**"China's frenetic drive for resources is intensifying the global scramble for the planet's wealth. As Europe and other powers watch China devour a rapidly increasing proportion of resources, they are provoked to tighten the grip on their own supply channels. ... As China's global footprint grows, other nations, especially in Europe, will assume a more combative stance in securing resources for themselves. When more than one power aggressively pursues the world's wealth with such ferocity, intense competition results and eventually gives way to war."**  
*Trumpet, October-November 2010*

### **Russian Shipbuilder Sets Post-Soviet Record by Building Four Nuke Subs Simultaneously** **Moscow Times | February 17**

**O**NE OF RUSSIA'S MOST PROMINENT MILITARY SHIPBUILDERS, Sevmash in Severodvinsk, has set a post-Soviet production record for the most submarines built at one time, with four atomic-powered boats under construction in their yards.

Sevmash is now building two new Borei- and Yasen-class submarines each, a rate of production unheard of in modern Russian history, according to a statement published on the shipyard's website Tuesday.

The new vessels are key to Russia's two-pronged submarine modernization drive, begun under President Vladimir Putin as part of a general rearmament effort.

The Borei-class submarines are Russia's next-generation

"boomers"—large submarines packed with nuclear-tipped intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) that lurk in the safety of the ocean depths, ensuring that Russia will always have a reserve of missiles to fire at its enemies if its land-based strategic nuclear forces are obliterated. ...

Though design work on the Borei-class submarine began in the 1980s, the first ship was not laid down until 1996 and didn't enter service until 2013—making it the first new Russian nuclear missile submarine fielded since the Cold War.

The Russian Navy is expecting eight Borei-class submarines overall, with a possible addition of two more later on. ...

## **ANGLO-AMERICA**

### **The Fatal Flaw in the Iran Deal**

**Charles Krauthammer, Washington Post | February 26**

**T**HE NEWS FROM THE NUCLEAR TALKS WITH IRAN WAS ALREADY troubling. Iran was being granted the "right to enrich." It would be allowed to retain and spin thousands of centrifuges. It could continue construction of the Arak plutonium reactor. ...

Bad enough. Then it got worse: News leaked Monday of the elements of a "sunset clause." President Obama had accepted the Iranian demand that any restrictions on its program be time-limited. After which, the mullahs can crank up their nuclear program at will and produce as much enriched uranium as they want.

Sanctions lifted. Restrictions gone. Nuclear development legitimized. Iran would reenter the international community, as Obama suggested in an interview in December, as "a very successful regional power." A few years—probably around 10—of good behavior and Iran would be home free.

The agreement thus would provide a predictable path to an Iranian bomb. ...

Meanwhile, Iran's intercontinental ballistic missile program is subject to no restrictions at all. It's not even part of these negotiations.

Why is Iran building them? You don't build ICBMs in order to deliver sticks of dynamite. Their only purpose is to carry nuclear warheads. ...

Such an agreement also means the end of nonproliferation. When a rogue state defies the world, continues illegal enrichment and then gets the world to bless an eventual unrestricted industrial-level enrichment program, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is dead. And regional hyperproliferation becomes inevitable ....

Wasn't Obama's great international cause a nuclear-free world? Within months of his swearing-in, he went to Prague to so declare. He then led a 50-party Nuclear Security Summit, one of whose proclaimed achievements was having Canada give up

some enriched uranium.

Having disarmed the Canadian threat, Obama turned to Iran. The deal now on offer to the ayatollah would confer legitimacy on the nuclearization of the most rogue of rogue regimes .... In fact, the Iranian regime just this week, at the apex of these nuclear talks, staged a spectacular attack on a replica U.S. carrier near the Strait of Hormuz.

Well, say the administration apologists, what's your alternative? Do you want war?

It's Obama's usual, subtle false-choice maneuver: It's either appeasement or war.

It's not. True, there are no good choices, but Obama's prospective deal is the worst possible. Not only does Iran get a clear path to the bomb but it gets sanctions lifted, all pressure removed and international legitimacy.

### **A Feeble West Emboldens the Forces of Chaos**

**Melanie Phillips, Times | February 23**

**T**HE CRISIS OVER RUSSIAN AGGRESSION IN UKRAINE IS CAUSING deep anxiety among those whose principal concern is the defense of Britain and the West.

Michael Fallon, the defense secretary, has warned that Russia now threatens the Baltic states. NATO's deputy supreme commander in Europe, Gen. Sir Adrian Bradshaw, has said Russia poses an existential danger to humankind. ...

President Putin, a latter-day Russian tsar, not only observes NATO's deep reluctance to stop his aggression but almost certainly detects something deeper. This is the progressive fracturing of the very idea of the nation state and the prospective reversion to a condition of pre-modern global disorder.

It is only the nation state, introduced by the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, that gives rise to democracy through a national identity that binds citizens together. This guarantee of territorial integrity helps preserve international order.

In the Arab world, this model was imposed after the First World War when Britain and France carved up the Middle East and created artificial states such as Iraq, Syria and Lebanon. Now these are collapsing the Arab world has become a battleground, the most likely outcome of which is a reversion to warring tribal enclaves.

Syria is fragmenting. The Islamic State is squatting in a great swathe of Iraq, with the Kurds having all but set up their own independent province. Libya has disintegrated into rule by militias.

The chaos is being exploited by Iran, busily expanding its own Islamic empire by dominating Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Yemen.

This advance by Iran has been fueled by the abandonment under President Obama of America's historic role as policeman and guarantor of global freedom.

This is because, as Obama told last week's White House conference on countering violent extremism, America is hated by

### **Central Texas Drought Is Worst on Record**

**Circle of Blue | February 25**

**O**N FEBRUARY 18, THE LOWER COLORADO RIVER AUTHORITY (LCRA) in Texas, a water supplier to power plants and farms, and to Austin, the fast-growing capital, announced that the deep

There is a third choice. If you are not stopping Iran's program, don't give away the store. Keep the pressure, keep the sanctions. Indeed, increase them. After all, previous sanctions brought Iran to its knees and to the negotiating table in the first place. And that was before the collapse of oil prices, which would now vastly magnify the economic effect of heightened sanctions. ...

Consider where we began: six UN Security Council resolutions demanding an end to Iranian enrichment. Consider what we are now offering: an interim arrangement ending with a sunset clause that allows the mullahs a robust, industrial-strength, internationally sanctioned nuclear program.

Such a deal makes the Cuba normalization look good and the Ukrainian ceasefires positively brilliant. We are on the cusp of an epic capitulation. History will not be kind.

Muslim countries because of "historic grievances." Accordingly, he thinks that evening up the score by extending the hand of friendship to regimes such as Iran will turn scimitars into plowshares. ...

War in defense of the nation is seen as an atavistic throwback to a less enlightened age. Instead transnational institutions and conflict resolution have become the way to resolve global differences. Consequently even non-negotiable agendas, such as Iran's apocalyptic war against the West, have been redefined as causes with which compromises can be made.

This has had a catastrophic effect on cultures where compromise is viewed as weakness. Taking military action off the table has galvanized those who believe this signifies that the West is ripe for the taking.

Iran accordingly understands that Obama is not going to stop it from becoming a nuclear breakout state. Across the Muslim world, Islamists grasp that the West will not take the military action necessary to destroy them. The U.S. pointedly refused to back Egyptian airstrikes against [Islamic State] training camps in Libya last week after its decapitation of 21 Egyptian Coptic Christians there.

The erosion of the West's commitment to defend democracy and the nation is being closely observed by Russia and China. They believe they can fill this vacuum by expanding their spheres of influence to re-create Russian and Chinese empires.

This is the backdrop for Putin's land grabs in Crimea, Georgia and Ukraine. We are witnessing a global convulsion in which the nation state is steadily being eclipsed by the rise of empires and tribes—Russian, Chinese and Islamic—with baleful consequences for freedom and democracy across the world. ...

**RELATED: "WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A SUPERPOWER DIES?"**

drought that has gripped the state's Colorado River watershed since 2008 is the worst on record.

Along with California, which is grappling with its own water

crisis, the two largest states in the country face historic dry periods that are testing in new ways the ability of managers to provide adequate supplies to swelling populations in an era of scarce precipitation.

In Texas, two principles inform the state's response: use less water and find more. LCRA's announcement accelerates both responses, several observers said. The changes in water availability are sharply increasing competition among water users, according to Joe Beal, LCRA general manager from 1999 to 2007.

"The most fundamental change is that suppliers and users are beginning to understand that we are in a drought worse than the drought of record of the 1950s. A scramble for supplies is what is happening in much of Texas over the last three years," Beal, now a consultant, told Circle of Blue.

Old-timers in Texas, the sun-creased ranchers and the but-toned-down city folks, speak in biblical terms of that earlier calamity during the mid-20th century—of years of hardship when the bare earth cracked and cattle fell dead in the pastures.

The 1950s drought, they say, was a pulsing disaster, a touch-stone crisis for a generation of Texans. Like a sharp chest pain, the sudden lack of moisture shocked the body politic and stirred lawmakers from complacency. ...

Indeed, grim days are unfolding again in the Lone Star state. With each passing month, it is clear that the dry postwar decade pales in comparison to the hydrological emergency that Texas

now faces. ...

The latest evidence of the drought's severity came last week. According to LCRA data, the amount of water flowing into the authority's six Highland Lakes reservoirs during the last seven years is shockingly low: some 60 percent less than from 1950 to 1956, the worst period of that landmark drought. The LCRA reservoirs supply more than 1 million people and 91,500 acres of farmland, as well as the South Texas nuclear power plant in Matagorda County on the Gulf coast.

Across the state the pattern is the same: Historically hot and dry conditions are draining water supplies and pushing water users to respond. Reservoirs in the Panhandle, for example, are functionally empty, forcing Amarillo, Lubbock and San Angelo to rely on new groundwater pipelines. Big Springs and Wichita Falls, two smaller cities with reservoirs at the brink of failure, are among the first in the nation to purify sewer water and put it back into the drinking water system. Dallas and San Antonio recently approved long pipelines that will tap distant reservoirs and aquifers. El Paso and San Antonio are using pressurized membranes to turn salty water sweet. ...

**"This fundamental principle permeates the Bible: WEATHER IS A MEASURE OF GOD'S HAPPINESS WITH MANKIND!"**  
theTrumpet.com, July 17, 2008



### Use This Key to Unlock Bible Prophecy Stephen Flurry, Trumpet Daily | February 25

**I**DENTIFY ANCIENT ISRAEL'S MODERN IDENTITY, AND YOU'LL NEVER look at the Bible the same way again.

[Follow Stephen Flurry](#)



## OTHER NEWS

### Scientists Discover Black Hole So Big It Contradicts Growth Theory

Reuters | February 26

**S**CIENTISTS SAY THEY HAVE DISCOVERED A BLACK HOLE SO BIG that it challenges the theory about how they grow.

Scientists said this black hole was formed about 900 million years after the big bang. But with measurements indicating it is 12 billion times the size of the sun, the black hole challenges a widely accepted hypothesis of growth rates.

"Based on previous research, this is the largest black hole found for that period of time," Dr Fuyan Bian, Research School of Astronomy and Astrophysics, Australian National University,

told Reuters on Wednesday.

"Current theory is for a limit to how fast a black hole can grow, but this black hole is too large for that theory." ...

Black holes grow, scientific theory suggests, as they absorb mass. However, as mass is absorbed, it will be heated creating radiation pressure, which pushes the mass away from the black hole.

"Basically, you have two forces balanced together which sets up a limit for growth, which is much smaller than what we found," said Bian. ...