

Trumpet Weekly

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A group of U.S. soldiers wait in a staging area at Camp Adder as part of the last U.S. military convoys to leave Iraq.



America's Broken Will

Gerald Flurry | September 20

IRANIAN GEN. QASSEM SULEIMANI IS NOW FREE TO LEAVE HIS own country. As part of the worst foreign policy deal America ever made, the United States lifted sanctions that had confined him to Iran. This man killed 1,500 American soldiers, but now he can do as he pleases.

And what's the first thing he did after sanctions were lifted? He flew to Russia to buy intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs). Iran may now purchase icbms due to the nuclear deal that also gave the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism \$150 billion. Iran has already violated more than 20 agreements made with nuclear inspectors, yet somehow the negotiators of the nuclear deal believe it will delay the nations

acquisition of the bomb by 13 years.

But Iran is clearly in a *big hurry* to go nuclear. And America is making its journey to the bomb an easy one.

'I Will Break the Pride of Your Power'

God blames the people—not any political party—for what is happening in America, Britain and the Jewish state in the Middle East.

"And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you. And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more

for your sins. And I will break the pride of your power ..." (Leviticus 26:17-19).

General Suleimani said on September 1 that the collapse of American power in the Middle East has happened! That nuclear deal equates to an American surrender—our leaders didn't even demand the release of four Americans unjustly imprisoned in Iran. God has taken away America's will to use its unmatched might. As a result, unsolvable problems are crashing down upon this once great country.

An End-Time Warning

"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. ... And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end" (Daniel 12:4, 9). The book of Daniel is exclusively for this end time. We ought to pay special attention to what it says.

Daniel 9:10-14 gives proof that the punishment described in Leviticus is coming on our people today: "Neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him. And he hath confirmed his words, which he spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil: for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem. As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth. Therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for the Lord our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth: for we obeyed not his voice."

Jerusalem was the capital of ancient Israel and is a type of all Israel today. Notice the phrase "written in the law of Moses," which occurs twice in this passage. Moses wrote the Pentateuch, or the first five books of the Bible—including Leviticus and its curse against Israel. The blame for this indescribable suffering falls squarely on the people. But how many people believe their own Bibles?

'Full of Violence'

"Make a chain: for the land is full of bloody crimes, and the city is full of violence" (Ezekiel 7:23). Violence is exploding in America, and a big reason is our *drug addiction*. According to the *U.S. News and World Report*, the number of U.S. casualties caused by heroin increased 286 percent between 2002 and 2013. Drug cartels and gangs know this is a crippling weakness with a huge financial upside, and they are coming through America's southern border to fight for customers!

And that's not all. "Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers" (Isaiah 1:7). America prides itself on being a melting pot, where people of all languages, cultures, religions and practices can peacefully coexist. *No nation* can survive this way. Race riots will rip our nations apart, leaving them exposed and vulnerable to foreign takeover! God says this *will* happen.

Collision Course

There is no nuclear power like Iran. It believes it can hasten the return of its messiah by increasing violence. Despite the rise of the Islamic State, Iran is still the dominant power in the Middle East. Imagine the nightmare it will be with nuclear bombs. *The nuclear deal is a massive disaster!* America trusts Iran even though that nation lies as a way of life.

A senior Iranian military official recently vowed to set fire to all U.S. interests in the Middle East. He said Iran *welcomes war* with America! This is the thanks we get for giving it everything it wanted in the nuclear deal. How can we rejoice over a nuclear deal that has changed *nothing*?

Many foreign policy experts credit the ascension of the Islamic State to America's collapse in foreign policy. So Iran is publicly challenging America while the Islamic State snatches up more and more territory and assets—and it's all because of America's pathetic loss of will.

Nuclear powers absolutely would extinguish all life on the planet if Christ did not intervene (Matthew 24:21-22). The Islamic State is now trying to convince the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt to declare allegiance. This would make Egypt a destabilized tinderbox. The Islamic State is also popular in the Balochistan province of Pakistan, the epicenter of the nation's prolific nuclear production. What if it got its hands on a nuclear arsenal that currently grows *four times faster* than India's and could be the third-largest stockpile in the world in five or 10 years?

As the main threat to Iran, the Islamic State only makes Iran pursue the bomb more urgently. It will *not* allow the Islamic State to possess nukes first. The Islamic State already has mustard-gas agents, and Syria has chemical weapons. This volatile region—mainly Iran—will provide the spark for the explosion of World War III!

Many authorities also point to America's withdrawal from Iraq as the reason for the European refugee crisis. When America left, the Islamic State started a war in Syria and moved into Iraq, forcing millions to flee their homes for Europe. Most of them are Muslims, and they are heading to Germany. Germany is set to absorb 800,000 migrants and is quickly realizing that the flow of refugees can't be controlled. It is building up its military to stop smuggler ships from dropping off any more.

Germany is known for starting World War I and World War II, and it is prophesied to turn to the dark side one last time. As the seventh resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire, it will rise up and crush Iran (Daniel 11:40). The king of the north, led by Germany, and the king of the south, radical Islam led by Iran, are on a collision course for the war to end all wars! Presently, the German people only lack a strong man to lead them into battle (Daniel 8:23).

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book" (Daniel 12:1).

Nuclear war is imminent. But God says He will protect and deliver His people who are doing His work. "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (verse 3). What a wonderful promise! The plethora of bad news leads directly to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ!

IAEA Satisfied With Samples From Parchin Drawn by Iran

Times of Israel | September 21

THE CHIEF OF THE UN NUCLEAR AGENCY INSISTED MONDAY THAT a probe of a suspected nuclear weapons research site in Iran does meet strict agency standards, while acknowledging that Iranian experts provided samples from the site for analysis.

Such sampling is usually done by the International Atomic Energy Agency's own experts. But IAEA chief Yukiya Amano told reporters that Iranians carried out that part of the probe at Parchin, where the agency suspects that explosive triggers for nuclear weapons might have been tested.

The samples, on which no details were given, were taken under "established procedures," Amano said, noting that "significant progress" was being made in its long-running probe that Iran had sought to develop nuclear weapons in the past.

The arrangement was first revealed in confidential draft agreement between the sides seen last month by the Associated Press. The draft said that Iranian experts, monitored by video and still cameras, would gather environmental samples at the site and hand them over to the agency for analysis.

Iran's atomic energy agency spokesman, Behrouz Kalmandi, said IAEA experts were not physically present during the sampling. ...

The "environmental sampling from some specific parts within the Parchin complex" was conducted in the past week, according to the Kamalvandi said.

"It was done by Iranian experts, in the absence of IAEA inspectors," Kamalvandi told state media, referring to the UN agency's staff.

Amano spoke a day after he was taken on what Iranian media described as a ceremonial tour of the military site. He told reporters in Vienna that he was able to enter a building that the agency had been observing via satellite and saw signs of "recent renovation work."

He appeared to be referring to the building where the agency suspects that weapons experiments were conducted. The agency has frequently said that subsequent renovation work at and near the building could hamper the IAEA probe, a position Amano repeated on Monday.

Amano's one-day visit to Iran is part of an assessment due in December that will feed into the nuclear deal reached in July between Tehran and six world powers and will help to determine whether sanctions will be lifted. ...

Will the Palestinians Abolish the Oslo Accord?

Al-Monitor | September 20

THERE ARE GROWING EXPECTATIONS WITHIN THE PALESTINIAN Authority (pa) for President Mahmoud Abbas to make a game-changing decision, as it is now clearer than ever that the status quo of the occupation is intolerable and not about to change. Unlike other periods of growing crises, the sense in the Palestinian street is now that the ball is in the Palestinian court.

A senior PA and PLO [Palestinian Liberation Organization] official who has much insight into the thinking at the Muqata, the PA headquarters in Ramallah, spoke extensively and anonymously to *Al-Monitor* about the looming crisis: "This is the worst moment since the Oslo Accord. When it comes to the Israeli government, we lost hope a long time ago. We were assured time and again by U.S. State Department representatives that after the Iran deal debate in Congress, they would renew their peace process efforts for a two-state solution. [President Barack] Obama won on the Iran deal, but a Palestine deal seems to be the furthest thing from his mind. [French Foreign Minister Laurent] Fabius and others at the helm of the EU have assured us about passing a [UN] Security Council resolution with a timeline for the creation of a Palestinian state. All we hear now is about some weak measures on labeling goods from Israeli settlements. The Arab world is turning its back on us. The leaders are preoccupied with their own political survival. The only ally we have is Arab public opinion, but in the various dictatorships, it has little impact. Those leaders in the U.S., the EU and most Arab

states are indirectly giving a green light to [Israeli] Prime Minister [Benjamin] Netanyahu to continue the policies of gradual annexation through unrestrained settlement expansion. [Education Minister] Naftali Bennett has more impact on the Israeli-Palestinian issue than anyone else."

He said that he was more frustrated and disillusioned than ever before, and that his current mindset is shared by most Palestinian leaders. "Enough is enough," he said. "It's time for us to go on the offensive."

When asked by *Al-Monitor* what the plans of the leadership are, the senior Palestinian source replied with some caution. He said, "It is very likely that the Palestinian leadership in the months to come will announce the abolition of the Oslo Accord. This most probably will not mean the dissolving of the [PA] itself; that may come at a later stage."

He added that the purpose of such a move would be to galvanize Palestinian public opinion behind a prolonged struggle for statehood that, from now on, would be led by them, with little expectation of international intervention at this point. The only diplomatic move contemplated within this initiative is to seek the support and legitimacy of the Arab League for a new stage in the Palestinian struggle. ...

The separation (by the Oslo Accord) of the West Bank into three areas—Area A (the cities, which are under full Palestinian jurisdiction and comprise 3 percent of the West Bank); Area

B (the villages, which are under Palestinian civilian jurisdiction and Israeli security responsibility and comprise 36 percent of the West Bank); and Area C (Israeli civilian and security jurisdiction, 61 percent of the West Bank)—would be abolished, leading to a chaotic situation all over the West Bank. The Palestinian security forces and police would be legally free to move around all areas of the West Bank, including in the Israeli settlements, and Israel

could curb their movement only by force, not by agreement.

The passage to Jordan would no longer be under joint control, as it is today, which could create havoc at the most sensitive entry points into the PA. Security cooperation was a central part of the two Oslo pacts (the 1993 Document of Principles and the 1995 Interim Agreement), which speak extensively of cooperation on security and of each side's responsibility to prevent terror. ...

TW IN BRIEF

Egypt purchases French warships built for Russia: Egypt has agreed to buy two assault ships from France, French President François Hollande announced. The ships were originally intended to be sold to Russia, in what would have been the biggest arms sale ever by a NATO country to Russia. However, the deal fell through because of the Ukraine crisis. The assault ships

can each carry 16 helicopter gunships, 700 troops and up to 50 armored vehicles. Egypt also purchased 24 advanced fighter jets from France earlier this year for nearly \$6 billion. The purchases will dramatically increase Egypt's capabilities as the country tries to assume a more prominent role against Islamic State militants.

EUROPE

Pope Francis Appeases the Castros in Repressive Cuba

Washington Post | September 21

IN HIS VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES BEGINNING TUESDAY, POPE Francis will meet not just President Obama and Congress but also those marginalized by our society: homeless people, immigrants, refugees and even the inmates of a jail. He's expected to raise topics that many Americans will find challenging, such as his harsh critique of capitalism. His supporters say it's all part of the role the pope has embraced as an advocate for the powerless, one that has earned him admiration from both Catholics and some outside the church.

How, then, to explain Pope Francis's behavior in Cuba? The pope is spending four days in a country whose Communist dictatorship has remained unrelenting in its repression of free speech, political dissent and other human rights despite a warming of relations with the Vatican and the United States. Yet by the end of his third day, the pope had said or done absolutely nothing that might discomfit his official hosts.

Pope Francis met with 89-year-old Fidel Castro, who holds no office in Cuba, but not with any members of the dissident community—in or outside of prison. According to the website 14ymedio.com, two opposition activists were invited to greet

the pope at Havana's cathedral Sunday but were arrested on the way. ... They needn't have bothered: The pope said nothing in his homily about their cause, or even political freedom more generally. ...

Sadly, this appeasement of power is consistent with the Vatican's approach to Cuba ever since Raúl Castro replaced his brother in 2006. Led by Cuban Cardinal Jaime Ortega, the church committed to a strategy of working with the regime in the hope of encouraging its gradual moderation. ...

The Vatican's greatest success has been the adoption of its strategy by the Obama administration, which has also restored relations with the Castros while excluding the political opposition. Here, too, there have been disappointing results. U.S. exports to Cuba, controlled by Havana, have declined this year, while arrests of opponents have increased, along with refugees. ...

By now it is clear that the Castros won't be moved by quiet diplomacy or indirect hints. A direct campaign of words and acts, like that Pope Francis is planning for the United States, would surely have an impact. But then, it takes more fortitude to challenge a dictatorship than a democracy.

Pope Francis Addresses a Congress That's 30% Catholic

Fortune | September 24

POPE FRANCIS ON THURSDAY MORNING BECAME THE FIRST-EVER pontiff to address a joint session of Congress.

When he appeared before United States lawmakers in the Capitol, Francis was addressing 164 of his own.

That's how many Catholics are in the 114th Congress. They make up 30 percent of the legislature compared to 22 percent of American adults overall, according to the Pew Research Center. Catholics in Congress are outnumbered only by

Protestants—there are 306 such members.

A staggering 91.8 percent of Congress identifies as Christian, a figure that far surpasses the share of American adults who say they belong to the religion—73 percent. Just 0.2 percent of lawmakers are unaffiliated with a religion, versus 20

percent of the nation overall. Members of Congress have speculated that their high religiosity is related to what's expected of them. ...

Following Christianity, Judaism has the most members in Congress—28.

Exclusive: The Pentagon Is Preparing New War Plans for a Baltic Battle Against Russia

Julia Ioffe, Foreign Policy | Sept 18

FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE COLLAPSE OF THE SOVIET UNION, the U.S. Department of Defense is reviewing and updating its contingency plans for armed conflict with Russia. ...

The new plans, according to the senior defense official, have two tracks. One focuses on what the United States can do as part of NATO if Russia attacks one of NATO's member states; the other variant considers American action outside the NATO umbrella. Both versions of the updated contingency plans focus on Russian incursions into the Baltics, a scenario seen as the most likely front for new Russian aggression. They are also increasingly focusing not on traditional warfare, but on the hybrid tactics Russia used in Crimea and eastern Ukraine: "little green men," manufactured protests, and cyberwarfare...This is a significant departure from post-Cold War U.S. defense policy...on the whole, Russia was neither a danger nor a priority...

Ochmanek, for his part, hadn't thought about Russia for decades. "As a force planner, I can tell you that the prospect of Russian aggression was not on our radar," he told me when I met him in his office at the Rand Corp. in Northern Virginia, where he is now a senior defense analyst. ...

[I]n February 2014, Russian President Vladimir Putin caught Ochmanek and pretty much every Western official off guard by sending little green men into Crimea and eastern Ukraine. "We didn't plan for it because we didn't think Russia would change the borders in Europe," he says. Crimea, he says, was a "surprise."

In June 2014, a month after he had left his force-planning job at the Pentagon, the Air Force asked Ochmanek for advice on Russia's neighborhood ahead of Obama's September visit to Tallinn, Estonia. At the same time, the Army had approached another of

Ochmanek's colleagues at Rand, and the two teamed up to run a thought exercise called a "table top," a sort of war game between two teams: the red team (Russia) and the blue team (NATO). The scenario was similar to the one that played out in Crimea and eastern Ukraine: increasing Russian political pressure on Estonia and Latvia (two NATO countries that share borders with Russia and have sizable Russian-speaking minorities), followed by the appearance of provocateurs, demonstrations, and the seizure of government buildings. "Our question was: Would NATO be able to defend those countries?" Ochmanek recalls.

The results were dispiriting. Given the recent reductions in the defense budgets of NATO member countries and American pullback from the region, Ochmanek says the blue team was outnumbered 2-to-1 in terms of manpower, even if all the U.S. and NATO troops stationed in Europe were dispatched to the Baltics—including the 82nd Airborne, which is supposed to be ready to go on 24 hours' notice and is based at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

"We just don't have those forces in Europe," Ochmanek explains. Then there's the fact that the Russians have the world's best surface-to-air missiles and are not afraid to use heavy artillery.

After eight hours of gaming out various scenarios, the blue team went home depressed. "The conclusion," Ochmanek says, "was that we are unable to defend the Baltics." ...

Ochmanek has run the two-day table-top exercise eight times now, including at the Pentagon and at Ramstein Air Base, in Germany, with active-duty military officers. "We played it 16 different times with eight different teams," Ochmanek says, "always with the same conclusion." ...

Pulling Germany's Armed Forces Back From the Brink

Georg Löfflman, The National Interest | September 16

IN HIS RECENT ARTICLE "IS GERMANY'S MILITARY DYING?" KYLE Mizokami worries that massive underfunding might sound the death knell for the long-suffering German armed forces. But for the Bundeswehr, an old German saying might apply: Those declared dead live longer.

Embarrassing news in recent months about repeated equipment failures, grounded helicopters and units scrounging for equipment in order to deploy seem to have provoked a somber reassessment of the importance of military readiness among the German political and media elites. ...

The Bundeswehr's equipment problems come at a time when Germany seeks a greater role in international crisis management. Particularly, German defense minister Ursula von der Leyen seems willing to test the country's traditional postwar "military reticence." Shortly after taking office, von der Leyen

used a speech at the Munich Security Conference in January 2014 to advocate for greater German engagement. ...

But von der Leyen is not alone. In his opening remarks at the conference, German President Joachim Gauck declared: "When the last resort—sending in the Bundeswehr—comes to be discussed, Germany should not say 'no' on principle." Moreover, the German government is expected to release a new national security white paper in 2016 that will likely stress the nation's growing international role and increased security responsibilities.

The German government seems to be reassessing the so-called peace dividend that led to Germany's defense budget shrinking to just 1.2 percent of gross domestic product in 2015. In March 2015, the Merkel government announced a 6.2-percent increase in the defense budget over the next five years, which

provides for an additional €8 billion (\$8.5 billion) by 2019.

While a large portion of the money will be used to compensate for higher personnel costs, [a] substantial portion will go towards modernization, maintenance and improved training. As a result, this year the German military is expected to send 154,000 of its roughly 180,000 active soldiers abroad to participate in military exercises. That's a marked increase from 73,000 [sent] abroad in 2013.

But there are those who are calling for further budgetary plus ups for the Bundeswehr. Outgoing German army chief of staff Gen. Bruno Kasdorf has remarked that the military needs an additional €20 billion in funding until 2025 to complete its modernization efforts.

Other voices in Berlin concur, the new parliamentary ombudsman for the armed forces, Hans-Peter Bartel, has demanded that the Bundeswehr move away from "hollow structures" and "restore the capability for collective defense." This would cost additional "billions over the next years." ...

Von der Leyen's decision to maintain a full equipment complement for all units forced the German army to buy 100 additional Leopard 2 Main Battle Tanks (MBTs). The additional tanks brought the Bundeswehr panzer fleet back to its 2010 standard of six armor battalions with a total of 328 MBTs. All Leopard 2s in the German arsenal are expected to be brought up to the modern 2A7 standard.

In November 2014, the Federal Ministry of Defense also announced the acquisition of 131 additional Boxer armored personnel carriers for €620 million (\$691 million). Additional purchases and reactivations of mothballed equipment are expected for the PzH 2000 and Multiple Launch Rocket System artillery as well as the new Puma IFV.

Moreover, a 2010 decision to halt the acquisition of spare parts in order to lower costs has also been reversed. The

Bundeswehr is expected to invest up to €6 billion (\$6.7 billion) in repairing deficient weapon systems. Germany has also initiated a major reform of its weapons and equipment acquisition process, and aims to meet the NATO-target of 20 percent of defense expenditures for investments from 2016 onward.

On the operational side there have also been a series of encouraging developments.

Germany and Norway took a lead role in the setup of a new NATO task force to reassure the alliance's eastern member states vis-à-vis Russia, pledging 4,000 soldiers in support of the new measure. The Luftwaffe has dispatched additional Eurofighters for air policing duties in the Baltics. Meanwhile, German paratroopers and naval vessels have been involved in the largest NATO exercises since the end of the Cold War in Eastern Europe and the Baltic Sea.

While Germany has shown no inclination to join the United States, France and the UK in undertaking airstrikes against ISIS in Iraq and Syria, the decision to dispatch military advisers and substantial weapon shipments in support of Kurdish fighters in August 2014 was an unexpected break with the traditional German policy of noninterference in conflict areas.

The latest news from Berlin is that Germany also considers widening its participation in the UN mission in Northern Mali, which has an active combat mandate to fight Islamist insurgents.

The coming years will show if Germany is truly ready to underwrite its alliance commitment and a greater engagement abroad by raising the country's international security profile and boosting its military capabilities. This will take both political will and substantial financial investments.

For now however, the signals coming from Berlin seem to indicate that when it comes to the Bundeswehr, the glass is half full rather than half empty.

Germany Rethinks Its Response to the Refugee Crisis

Stratfor | September 18

THE EUROPEAN UNION IS CHANGING ITS APPROACH TO THE REFUGEE crisis. Only a few days ago, discussions among European leaders centered on how they might accommodate the influx of refugees; now their focus has shifted to stemming that flow and restricting entry into the Continental bloc. In the coming days, Europe will implement two kinds of immigration policies to manage the crisis—some that aim to fairly distribute migrants across EU member states, and others intended to reduce the number of asylum seekers making their way to Europe in the first place.

Germany is leading this shift in policy focus. From the start, there have been two elements to Berlin's immigration plan: The first is to fairly distribute asylum seekers across Europe. The second is to work with EU countries along the external borders of the union and with nations in Northern Africa and the Middle East to slow the flow of migrants into Europe. At the same time, Berlin has proposed creating mechanisms to speed up the deportation process for people who do not qualify for asylum.

Initially, Germany focused primarily on the first element, effective resettlement of asylum seekers. When the refugee

crisis first erupted, Berlin promised to host an unprecedented number of asylum seekers, and it asked its neighbors to accept mandatory quotas of refugees. Most Germans applauded this move. But Berlin had to reconsider once questions emerged about the financial, political and social viability of the plan. ...

These developments prompted a shift in Berlin's strategy. On Sept. 13, Germany temporarily closed its border with Austria in an attempt to force Central and Eastern European nations to cooperate with the plan to redistribute asylum seekers. ...

This week, Berlin refocused again, this time narrowing in on migrant transit routes. The German government announced it would work closely with Turkey to prevent asylum seekers from entering the European Union in the first place, and Merkel called for the creation of new migrant intake centers in Italy and Greece. Germany also threw its support behind a plan to provide financial assistance to countries in northern Africa and the Middle East to prevent people from leaving. Starting in October, German ships will also participate in the second phase of an EU naval operation in the Mediterranean that will seize and destroy ships used by human traffickers.

The justification for these plans echoes the predominant logic in the United Kingdom and in the many Central and Eastern European countries that advocate resolving the refugee crisis by addressing the situation in the countries of origin. ...

Europe's ultimate response to the refugee crisis will probably involve a combination of Germany's two strategies. On one hand, the European Union will eventually approve a plan to redistribute asylum seekers across the Continent, though officials will likely do away with any mandatory quotas. But Germany will also try to make resettlement in Europe less appealing by toughening its asylum policies. ...

European nations can hope for only moderate success in patrolling the Mediterranean, and the decision to seize boats

used by trafficking groups may lead to violent clashes between EU forces and traffickers. In addition, money will not be enough to keep migrants in countries such as Turkey or Lebanon, where asylum seekers looking for jobs encounter legal—and not just financial—barriers. ...

These actions will decrease the number of asylum seekers passing into Europe, but they will not stop the process altogether. Northern Europe will remain an attractive destination for migrants, whether they are families fleeing war or simply unemployed workers looking for jobs. War in the Middle East will continue to displace people in the region, and governments in northern Africa will continue to shelter human trafficking organizations. ...

TW IN BRIEF

Greeks switch to bartering system: Greeks are switching to the barter system since there is not enough currency in circulation to meet economic needs. Reports on Monday said many Greeks have made the switch in order to help combat the country's liquidity crisis. Olive oil is being traded for artwork, office supplies for accounting consultation. In one case, a butcher swapped a large quantity of meat for a new truck. Thousands of new users have signed up for the online bartering site Trade-now.com, and the number continues to rise.

Greek elections: Alexis Tsipras is set to receive the formal mandate later on Monday to form a government for the second time this year, after his left-wing Syriza party

unexpectedly won a decisive victory in Greek early national elections. Tsipras has been holding talks with the leader of the right-wing Independent Greeks on a coalition. The 41-year-old vowed to govern for a full four-year term, something few Greek governments have managed, particularly since the country became dependent on international bailouts five years ago. The country has seen six governments and four parliamentary elections since 2009. The final count of Sunday's votes gave Tsipras' Syriza 35.5 percent, while the center-right New Democracy trailed with 28.1 percent. But in a sign of widespread discontent, more than four in 10 Greeks didn't vote and the Nazi-inspired Golden Dawn remained the country's third-strongest party with 7 percent.

ASIA

Russia to Establish Air Base in Belarus

Financial Times | September 20

RUSSIA IS MOVING AHEAD WITH PLANS TO ESTABLISH A MILITARY air base in Belarus, fueling concerns over potential threats to Poland and the Baltic states.

The decision to build the base is the latest example of Moscow's determination to assert its influence beyond Russia's borders and rebuild its military capacities, which have been severely eroded since the collapse of the Soviet Union 24 years ago.

The announcement followed a meeting on Friday between presidents Vladimir Putin of Russia and Alexander Lukashenko of Belarus. ...

The Baltic states and Scandinavian countries have registered sharp increases in Russian fighter jets flying close to their borders, scrambling NATO fighter aircraft. Often, the Russian aircraft turn off their transponders, making it more difficult for other countries to detect them.

The repeated flights close to other countries' borders is being interpreted as posturing aimed at testing NATO. The Russian government has defended the activity as a reaction to the western military alliance's expansion towards its borders.

Belarus, which borders Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania and Latvia, would give Russia a new asset right on NATO's borders. The Russian military already has a radar station and some fighter aircraft stationed in Belarus, but the new base would be the first to be built there since the end of the Soviet Union.

News that the air base would be built comes after the U.S. and its allies were struggling to respond to what Washington says is a Russian military build-up in Syria. Russian involvement in Syria complicates existing international operations against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, the jihadi group known as ISIS.

"Russia's attack on Georgia in August marks the beginning of a dangerous new era in history. This was the first military strike of a rising Asian superpower—and there will be more! ... He is trying to resurrect the Soviet empire. He may not want to exercise the kind of brutality of some of his predecessors, but he certainly is intent on using whatever power is necessary to secure his country's resources!"

—Gerald Flurry, The Trumpet, October 2008

Plan in the Wings to Convert Chinese Passenger Jets for Military Missions

SCMP | September 20

THE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY IS LIKELY TO CONVERT CHINESE-made and designed passenger jets for military roles in a push to expand the armed forces' reach, observers said after a senior officer visited an aviation expo last week.

The trip by General Zhang Youxia, one of 10 military leaders on the Central Military Commission, to the biannual Beijing Aviation Expo on Thursday suggested that China could be ... converting civilian equipment for military use, the observers said. ...

Passenger jets have a much longer flying range, more space and a greater takeoff weight than China's military aircraft.

The 168-seat C919 was dubbed China's answer to Boeing's 737 and Airbus' A320, which could all be converted into an airborne command post, an electronic attack and intelligence platform, an aerial early warning and control system, and for anti-submarine warfare roles.

[Macau-based military observer Antony Wong Dong said,] "The C919's technology is much more mature and fuel-efficient

than the [Xian] Y-20 military carrier under development. I believe that in the next decade, the C919 and ARJ21 will become the main platforms for the air force's airborne warning system and other special military flying teams."

Wong said ARJ21s could be converted into anti-submarine aircraft as soon as China developed a reliable alternative to its existing American engine. ...

The development of the C919 and Y-20 are part of the PLA's [People's Liberation Army's] mission to become a real blue-water power.

That mission also apparently includes the construction of four airstrips with runways up to 3,300 meters long in the South China Sea—one on Woody Island, and one each on Fiery Cross, Subi and Mischief reefs. All kinds of civilian and military aircraft can take off and land on runways of those lengths. ...

The C919 is scheduled to complete assembly this year and make its maiden flight next year.

Russia Launches Drones in Syria

CNN | September 22

RUSSIA HAS STARTED TO FLY UNMANNED AIRCRAFT OVER SYRIA in what appears to be surveillance operations over the country, two U.S. officials told CNN.

The officials were not able to confirm whether the drones were armed, or how many missions have been flown to date. The development was first reported by Reuters.

The introduction of drones follows a buildup of Russian

military equipment and personnel into Syria.

To date, Russia has over 25 fighter and attack aircraft, 15 helicopters, nine tanks, three surface-to-air missile systems and at least 500 personnel on the ground in Syria, a U.S. official told CNN. ...

The U.S. opposes Russia's policy of bolstering Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, whom the U.S. has stated must leave office for the civil war to be resolved. ...

Russian Embassy in Damascus Came Under Mortar Fire on Sunday

Tass.Ru | September 21

THE RUSSIAN EMBASSY IN DAMASCUS CAME UNDER MORTAR FIRE ON Sunday, September 20, the Russian Foreign Ministry said Monday.

The ministry said Moscow condemns the "criminal attack" on the Russian diplomatic mission.

"At 9:00 a.m. on September 20, a mortar shell hit the territory of the Russian embassy in Damascus. The shell was driven deep into the earth and made no damage," the ministry said.

"A large labeled fragment of the shell was later extracted from the earth by Syrian mine clearance specialists. Efforts are now being taken to find out how this shell came across to militants."

"We condemn the criminal attack on the Russian diplomatic representation in Damascus," the ministry stressed. "We expect a clear position over this terrorist attack from all members of the international community, including regional parties." ...

Japan's Abe Puts Pacifism on Notice

Geopolitical Monitor | September 20

PRIME MINISTER SHINZO ABE HAS TAKEN A BIG STEP TOWARDS Japan's "normalization" in international relations. It took hundreds of hours of debate and even a few scuffles on the floor of parliament, but his landmark security law has passed, and Japanese forces can now be deployed overseas for the first time since World War II.

The law establishes three specific preconditions for such a deployment to take place: (1) in the event of an attack on Japan

or its close ally that threatens Japan's survival and poses a danger to its people; (2) when there are no other appropriate means available to repel the attack and ensure the survival and protection of Japan's people; and (3) the use of force must be kept to a necessary minimum.

The opposition's main contention with these three preconditions is immediately evident: They're incredibly vague. In particular, one could imagine the need to "protect Japan's people

from danger” being stretched to cover terrorism or even hypothetical threats that may arise in the future—the now familiar concept of a pre-emptive war. ...

The next big “X” on the combatants’ calendars will be upcoming upper house elections in 2016, when opposition groups will make a stand against Abe’s reinterpretation at the ballot box.

Those inclined towards skepticism could be forgiven for wondering whether the law was set up to fail a legal challenge on its constitutionality. This would frame the constitution itself as the problem, allowing Abe to target the golden goose of his rehabilitation project: an amendment of Article 9 of the Japanese constitution, which foregoes war as a tool for settling international disputes. Either way it’s possible that we’ll see a constitutional amendment appear as a central issue in next year’s elections. ...

It’s obvious at this point that Prime Minister Abe is willing to stake a great deal of his own political capital on “rehabilitating” Japan as a normal international actor, one that participates in peacekeeping operations and pursues its own national interests with a full political and military toolbox. He envisions a Japan that is able to take a more assertive role in regional

security matters such as the ongoing dispute in the South China Sea. ...

For those wondering how the new law would justify such a deployment, here’s a little taste of the semantic gymnastics coming soon to the floor of the Diet: Japan is an island, sea-faring nation that depends on the free flow of trade for its very *survival*. A small deterrent force would be the *minimum* response required to guarantee this free flow of strategic imports such as oil, food, etc. And voila, Japan can dive headfirst into tumultuous waters of the South China Sea.

Another key impact of the law pertains to the U.S.-Japan security treaty. ...[I]t’s no longer a one-sided relationship where it is only the United States’s job to offer assistance to Japan. The new law foresees scenarios like U.S. forces in Guam coming under attack which, though not occurring on Japanese territory, would still have direct repercussions on Japan’s security. It’s also a situation where Japanese military support—based as it is far more proximate to Guam than U.S. assets that are further afield—could have a timely and decisive impact on the outcome of the fight. ...

Moscow Says if Japan Wants Peace Deal, It Must ‘Recognize’ Postwar ‘Historic Realities’

Japan Times | September 22

RUSSIAN FOREIGN MINISTER SERGEI LAVROV INDICATED THAT there is no room for compromise over the disputed islands off Hokkaido and called on Tokyo to “recognize” post-World War II “historic realities.”

Lavrov met Monday with Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, who is in Russia on a three-day visit to address the dispute over the four islands that were seized by Soviet troops just after Japan surrendered.

The two countries have never officially struck a peace treaty for World War II and have had bitter disputes over the islands for

decades, hampering trade ties.

Kishida indicated in his remarks, which were translated into Russian, that the two countries should “create a mutually acceptable solution to the territorial issue” over the islands of Etorofu, Kunashiri, Shikotan and the Habomai islets.

“We had in-depth discussions about the territorial issue,” Kishida said at a joint news conference after meeting with Lavrov for almost three hours. “Minister Lavrov and I were able to share a view that our countries should find ways for a mutually acceptable solution.”

ANGLO AMERICA

The Left Has Its Pope

World Net Daily | September 21

POPE FRANCIS HAS CREATED POLITICAL CONTROVERSY, BOTH inside and outside the Catholic Church, by blaming capitalism for many of the problems of the poor. We can no doubt expect more of the same during his visit to the United States.

Pope Francis is part of a larger trend of the rise of the political left among Catholic intellectuals. He is, in a sense, the culmination of that trend.

There has long been a political left among Catholics, as among other Americans. Often they were part of the pragmatic left, as in the many old Irish-run, big city political machines that dispensed benefits to the poor in exchange for their votes, as somewhat romantically depicted in the movie classic, “The Last Hurrah.”

But there has also been a more ideological left. Where the Communists had their official newspaper, *The Daily Worker*, there was also *The Catholic Worker* published by Dorothy Day.

A landmark in the evolution of the ideological left among Catholics was a publication in the 1980s, by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, titled “Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy.” ...

Both the authors of the bishops’ Pastoral Letter in the 1980s and Pope Francis today blithely throw around the phrase “the poor,” and blame poverty on what other people are doing or not doing to or for “the poor.”

Any serious look at the history of human beings over the

millennia shows that the species began in poverty. It is not poverty, but prosperity, that needs explaining. Poverty is automatic, but prosperity requires many things—none of which is equally distributed around the world or even within a given society. ...

As distinguished economic historian David S. Landes put it, “The world has never been a level playing field.” But which has a better track record of helping the less fortunate—fighting for a bigger slice of the economic pie, or producing a bigger pie?

In 1900, only 3 percent of American homes had electric lights but more than 99 percent had them before the end of the century. Infant mortality rates were 165 per thousand in 1900 and 7

per thousand by 1997. By 2001, most Americans living below the official poverty line had central air conditioning, a motor vehicle, cable television with multiple TV sets and other amenities.

A scholar specializing in the study of Latin America said that the official poverty level in the United States is the upper middle class in Mexico. The much criticized market economy of the United States has done far more for the poor than the ideology of the left.

Pope Francis’s own native Argentina was once among the leading economies of the world, before it was ruined by the kind of ideological notions he is now promoting around the world.

Obama Nominates Openly Gay Man to Lead Army

CNN | September 18

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA ON FRIDAY NOMINATED ERIC K. FANNING to be secretary of the Army, which could make him the first openly gay secretary of a U.S. military branch.

The U.S. Senate must confirm Fanning before he can lead the Army. ...

This historic move is one of many steps the Obama administration has taken to advance the rights of the LGBT community in the armed forces. In 2010, the president signed a law ending the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy that prohibited gays and lesbians from serving openly in the military, and earlier this year, the president moved to allow those who identify as transgender to openly serve as well. ...

The American Military Partner Association, a support group for the families of LGBT service members, also praised Obama’s decision.

“We are thrilled to see Eric Fanning nominated to lead the

world’s greatest Army,” AMPA President Ashley Broadway-Mack said in a statement. “History continues to be written and equality marches forward with the nomination of an openly gay man to serve in this significantly important role. Fanning’s expertise and knowledge within the defense community together with his sensitivity to issues faced by LGBT service members and their families is why we urge the Senate to move quickly to confirm his appointment.”

“For, behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah ...The mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient, The captain of fifty, and the honourable man ...The shew of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not. Woe unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves.”—Isaiah 3:1-9

Europe’s Next Problem: U.S. Sanctions on China

Hans Kundnani, Real Clear Politics | September 21

DURING THE LAST TWO WEEKS, IT HAS BEEN WIDELY REPORTED that the U.S. government has been developing a package of unprecedented economic sanctions against Chinese companies and individuals it alleges have benefited from cybertheft by their government. There seems to be a consensus in the United States behind a tougher response to Chinese hackers—five of whom were already indicted in May 2014. But, according to several reports, there were differences within the administration about whether or not to announce the sanctions before Chinese President Xi Jinping’s visit to Washington, which begins on September 22. ...

If the United States does go ahead with this tough new approach, it may create a dilemma for Europeans analogous to the one they faced after the United States imposed economic sanctions in response to the Russian annexation of Crimea last year. Although the sanctions the United States is now considering imposing on Chinese companies and individuals are not as extensive as the sanctions imposed on Russia, they suggest that the U.S. government could be prepared to apply a hard

“geo-economic” approach to China despite the economic interdependence between them. ... In any case, although the United States may not expect EU member states to impose similar sanctions of their own, its sanctions will force banks operating in the United States to cease doing business with sanctioned companies and individuals and will therefore also affect European banks as sanctions against Iran did. Last July, for example, BNP Paribas was fined \$8.97 billion and banned from dollar clearing operations for a year for violating U.S. sanctions against Iranian companies and individuals.

In some ways, it could be even more difficult to maintain transatlantic unity over sanctions against China than it was to do so over sanctions against Russia. While the annexation of Crimea and destabilization of Ukraine was widely seen as a clear threat to the European security order, even in those countries such as Germany that were generally in favor of close co-operation with Russia, the European interest is much less clear in this case—not least because revelations about U.S. National Security

Agency surveillance have left some Europeans worried about U.S. cyberspying. Though European companies are also concerned about cybertheft, the temptation will be strong for European governments to stay out of what some may see as a bilateral dispute between China and the United States. ...

Thus the new U.S. sanctions illustrate once again the potential that the rise of China has to undermine the transatlantic relationship. In a conversation with Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd in 2009, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton famously

The Time Bomb Under Canada's Economy

Wolf Street | September 16

THE BANK OF CANADA HAS BEEN FRETTING ABOUT THE BALLOONING debt of Canadian households. Last year, it repeatedly called it a risk to “financial stability,” perhaps in preparation for raising its benchmark interest rate. Then Canada's economy tanked.

In July, when the freaked-out Bank of Canada cut its benchmark rate *for the second time this year*, it admitted that the rate cut comes at the price of “financial stability risks” which “remain elevated.” Governor Stephen Poloz added: “Of particular note are the vulnerabilities associated with household debt and rising housing prices.”

These rate cuts didn't do much to support Canada's resource economy that has been spiraling down in the wake of the commodities rout. But they made up for it by inflating the housing bubble even further.

The Teranet–National Bank house price index, released September 14, hit new records every month this year. In August, it was up 5.4 percent year-over-year. Note how the index has soared since the peak of the prior housing bubble that ended with the financial crisis

The index masks what Marc Pinsonneault, senior economist at NBF's Economics and Strategy, calls the “dichotomy” of Canada's housing market. In some cities, price increases are cooling, year over year: Victoria +3.2 percent, Edmonton +0.8 percent, Calgary +0.7 percent. In other cities, prices are actually falling year-over-year: Winnipeg -0.4 percent, Ottawa-Gatineau -0.4 percent, Montreal -0.5 percent, Quebec City -0.7 percent, and Halifax -1.4 percent.

But they're sizzling in Vancouver +9.7 percent, Hamilton +8.8 percent, and Toronto +8.7 percent. And prices for *non-condo* homes in Vancouver and Toronto—the two cities account for 54.1

asked: “How do you deal toughly with your banker?”... But Europeans now increasingly face their own version of Clinton's question. For some EU member states, particularly exporters like Germany, the question will be: How do you deal toughly with your customer? For other member states, particularly the countries of the eurozone “periphery,” it will be: How do you deal toughly with your investor? Unless EU member states can find answers to these questions, China could again divide the West as it did over the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

percent of the index—jumped over 10 percent!

On cue, total consumer debt rose 4.9 percent year-over-year in July to C\$1.86 trillion. A trend that has been picking up speed recently: On a monthly basis, consumer debt jumped in July at an annualized rate of 5.4 percent. Mortgage debt—over two-thirds of total consumer debt—soared at an annualized rate of 6.9 percent.

Yet disposable incomes only inched up 0.8 percent in the second quarter, Statistics Canada reported on September 11. So the household-debt-to-disposable-income ratio, a measure of household leverage, hit a record 164.6 percent, the largest jump in the ratio since 2011

But no problem. Despite increased debt loads, the 90-day-plus delinquency rate is down 1.6 percent and bankruptcies are down 9.4 percent, Equifax reported, as they should be, given the increasingly easy and cheap credit sloshing through the land: Borrowers aren't going to fall behind if they keep getting new money. It's when they can't get anymore new money. ...

This ballooning household debt “puts Canadian consumers in a precarious situation,” Scott Hannah, CEO of the non-profit Credit Counselling Society, told the *Toronto Star*. “If they're struggling to manage their increasing debt obligations now, a sudden change in external factors—like a rise in interest rates or the loss of a job—will leave many Canadians in greater financial difficulty.”

It's for a reason that the Bank of Canada called this enormous amount of household debt a “financial stability risk.” The fact that delinquencies have started to rise in the first subsectors—despite historically low interest rates and super-easy money—is the audible ticking of a time bomb under one of the most over-priced housing markets in the world. ...

U.S. Immigrant Population Hits Record High of 42.4 Million

National Review | September 22

THE U.S. IMMIGRANT POPULATION REACHED A RECORD HIGH OF 42.4 million according to a new analysis of census data—and the growth rate of the foreign-born population is accelerating.

A new Center for Immigration Studies (CIS) report shows the legal- and illegal-immigrant population grew by 2.4 million since 2010, with more than a million new arrivals in 2014. The dramatic increases in immigration are evident in both absolute numbers of the foreign born and as a share of the U.S. population. “Immigrants (legal and illegal) comprised 13.3 percent or about one out of eight U.S. residents in 2014, the highest

percentage in 104 years,” the report notes. And the growth in the immigrant population is accelerating rapidly, from an increase of a half million immigrants per year between 2010 and 2012 to over a million from 2013 to 2014.

The immigrant share of the population has more than doubled from what it was in 1980, when illegal and legal immigrants together made up just 6.2 percent of the country. Additionally, when the 16.2 million U.S.-born children of immigrant parents are included, one in six U.S. residents is an immigrant or the child of an immigrant—a total of 58.6 million people in 2014. ...

Half in U.S. Continue to Say Gov't Is an Immediate Threat

Gallup | September 21

ALMOST HALF OF AMERICANS, 49 PERCENT, SAY THE FEDERAL government poses “an immediate threat to the rights and freedoms of ordinary citizens” When this question was first asked in 2003, less than a third of Americans held this attitude.

The latest results are from Gallup’s Sept. 9-13 Governance poll. ... The remarkable finding about these attitudes is how much they reflect apparent antipathy toward the party controlling the White House, rather than being a purely fundamental or fixed philosophical attitude about government. ... Republican agreement with the “immediate threat” statement has been higher during the Obama administration than was Democratic agreement during the Bush administration, thus accounting for the overall rise in agreement across all national adults.

Overall, Americans who agree that the government is an immediate threat tend to respond with very general complaints echoing the theme that the federal government is too big and too powerful, and that it has too many laws. They also cite nonspecific allegations that the government violates freedoms and civil liberties, and that there is too much

government in people’s private lives.

The most frequently mentioned specific threats involve gun control laws and violations of the Second Amendment to the Constitution, mentioned by 12 percent who perceive the government to be an immediate threat.

Other general complaints enunciated by smaller numbers of those who think the government poses an immediate threat include perceptions that the government is “socialist,” that the government spends too much, that it picks winners and losers such as the wealthy or racial and ethnic minorities, that it is too involved in things it shouldn’t be and that it violates the separation of powers.

More specific complaints—again voiced by small numbers of those who agree with the threat statement—focus on freedom of speech, freedom of religion, the overuse of police and law enforcement, government surveillance of private citizens including emails and phone records, government involvement in gay marriage issues, overregulation of business, overtaking, the healthcare law and immigration. ...

California Drought Update: Sierra Nevada’s Snowpack at 500-Year Low

theTrumpet.com | September 23

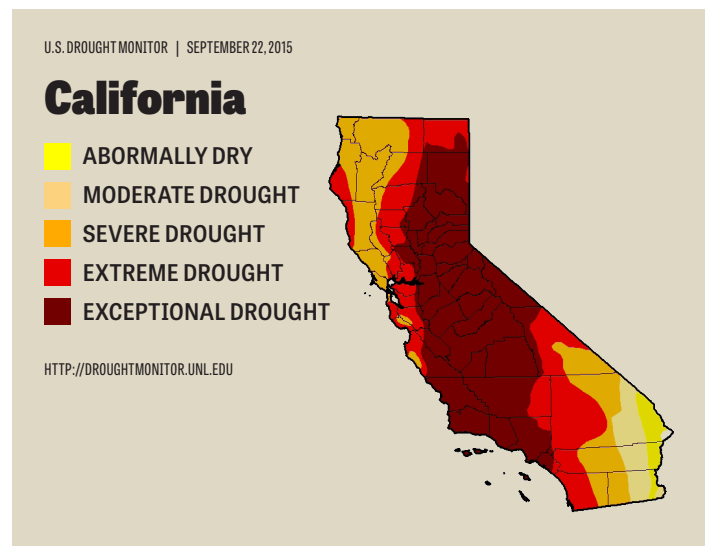
THE SIERRA NEVADA SNOWPACK, WHICH ACCOUNTS FOR MORE than one third of California’s water supply, has fallen to its lowest level since the Middle Ages, according to a new study released on September 14. Measured on April 1, when it generally has reached its greatest depths, the snowpack was found to be barely 5 percent of the 1950-2000 average, making it the smallest in 500 years.

This conclusion was a result of a study of 1,500 ancient blue oak trees in the Central Valley. Tree ring patterns reflect annual rainfall and temperatures of a region. Since the oaks run parallel to the Sierra Nevada, scientists say they serve as a good proxy for the snowpack level of the mountain range at any given year. The results, which were confirmed 10 times, showed that the low snowpack level is indeed unprecedented over 500 years.

Scientists had already mapped out thousands of years of California’s rainfall, putting the current drought into historical context. But the same hadn’t yet been done for the Sierra Nevada snowpack levels.

Although rainfall is obviously instrumental, snow is the indicator of how much water will be available later in the season. While water rushes downhill as soon as it falls, snow remains stationary through winter, before slowly releasing water as temperatures rise. Snowmelt feeds rivers and streams, which serves the water needs of the Californian population, supports fish and other wildlife, and replenishes soil moisture and reservoirs.

As rain is scarce during California’s spring and summer, Sierra Nevada’s snowpack is a critical source of water. The problem is: California’s last winter reached record-breaking temperatures that resulted in more precipitation falling as rain instead of snow. With less snowpack, the region’s agriculture sector, drinking water supplies and hydroelectric power, which



were already strained, are now under even more stress.

According to the authors of the study, things are only going to get worse. “We should be prepared for this type of snow drought to occur much more frequently because of rising temperatures,” said Valerie Trouet, who led the study.

California has been under a severe drought for four years, leaving more than 120 of the state’s reservoirs less than a fifth full. The lack of moisture has allowed rampant wildfires to destroy more than 100,000 acres, hundreds of homes, and businesses.

However, California used to be one of the most blessed locations on Earth. Why the drought now? Why the wildfires? Will California survive? To find out the answers to these questions and more, request our free booklet *Why ‘Natural’ Disasters?*

BEFORE THE END OF 2017, BRITAIN IS DUE TO VOTE IN A REFERENDUM on continuing its membership in the European Union. Until now, the conventional wisdom has been that the country will opt to stay in. But the landscape is changing. The prospect of a "Brexit," as a possible British exit is known, looks more likely now than it has for more than a generation.

The British never fell in love with the European project. As their neighbors moved toward closer union, Britain became known for its instinctive "euroskepticism." It was the awkward partner that had only reluctantly joined, neither fully embracing the broader vision that united Berlin, Paris and Rome, nor adopting the single currency that followed.

This approach was driven by pragmatism more than passion, true to Winston Churchill's 1953 description of Britain's relationship with Europe: "We are with them, but not of them."

Britons have often recoiled from what integration in Europe came to entail. After the union's 2004 enlargement, which brought in several former Warsaw Pact countries (including Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and the Baltics), surveys of British public opinion found disquiet at the arrival of hundreds of thousands of mainly low-skilled workers from Central and Eastern Europe.

Yet the prospect of a Brexit always felt remote; only rarely has there been mass support for quitting the union. ... When it came to Europe, the average voter acted like an unhappy spouse: dreaming of alternatives but reluctant to end the relationship. That picture is now changing.

Earlier this month, one poll put the Outers ahead, while another found only a negligible margin between the two camps. ... But below the surface, several trends are combining to push the country closer to a Brexit.

Those in favor of Britain's membership long assumed that the merits of the single market and economic integration would suffice, that appeals to the head over the heart would win any vote. This no longer seems true. Seen through the eyes of most voters, the stagnation and instability of the eurozone contrasts with Britain's economic recovery. ...

It's not only about economics; there is a cultural dimension, too. In the last election, nearly 4 million mainly white working-class retirees abandoned the mainstream in favor of the UK

Independence Party, a stridently euroskeptic populist party. The rise of UKIP, which campaigns as hard against an influx of European workers as it does for withdrawal from Europe, is a register of how immigration has moved to the forefront of Britain's debate.

Then came the refugee crisis. Combined with angst over migrant camps near Calais, France, where hundreds are trying to enter Britain, recent headlines have pushed public anxiety about immigration to the highest level ever recorded. It is now voters' top priority, with nearly twice as many voicing concern over immigration as the economy. ...

Such trends have dealt the euroskeptics—who earlier this year were writing off their chances of winning the referendum—a strong hand. ...

Europe's leaders are distracted from efforts to prevent a Brexit, and given Britain's stance on the refugee crisis, they are unlikely to feel sympathy for Mr. Cameron's requests to curb welfare benefits for migrant workers from the European Union. Unless he extracts something from the renegotiation that addresses public concern over the free movement of labor—long seen by other states as a pillar of the European project—a Brexit will start to look probable rather than merely possible.

The political context has also changed. Last weekend brought the shock election of the radical left-winger Jeremy Corbyn as leader of the Labor Party—ushering in a new ambivalence toward Europe among the parliamentary opposition. Mr. Corbyn has said that he cannot see himself campaigning for a Brexit, but he reiterated his desire for a "social Europe" that protects workers' rights and the environment, rather than a free-market one. Angered by the European Union's treatment of Greece and a perceived democratic deficit within its core institutions, and concerned that workers' rights might be watered down, other left-wingers and some trade unions have actually suggested that they could campaign for a Brexit.

So, gone are the days of New Labor's unequivocal support for the European Union. And the only other vigorously pro-union party, the Liberal Democrats, was all but obliterated in the last election. True, support for the union remains the dominant view in Westminster, but for the first time in decades, there is a split on both the left and the right. ...