

# Trumpet Weekly

OCTOBER 9, 2015



Republican presidential candidates (from left) Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker, Donald Trump and Jeb Bush participate in the first prime-time presidential debate hosted by FOX News and Facebook on August 6.

## How Much Confidence Do You Have in America's Political Process?

Joel Hilliker | October 9

**S**EVENTY-ONE PERCENT OF AMERICANS ARE UNHAPPY WITH THE country's direction. People are frustrated, and their frustration is revealing itself on the political scene.

It wasn't even a year ago—November last year—when Republicans scored a historic election victory. They gained control of the Senate; they increased their majority in the House to its largest since 1928; they even picked up two governors' seats. Many viewed that result as dissatisfaction over President Barack Obama's unpopular policies. Republicans were jubilant, **confident** in their power to begin reversing the nation's direction. Sen. Mitch McConnell called it "a chance to begin to save this country."

So much for that.

Republicans promised to defund Obamacare or repeal it. They promised to stop the flow of illegal immigrants and stand up to unlawful executive orders. They promised to reduce trillion-dollar deficits and to check America's runaway debt.

They have done none of these things. Republican control of Congress has done virtually nothing to stop or even slow the Obama administration from doing whatever it wants.

And it's not just that the president will do anything necessary, even outside the law, to fulfill his agenda. Congressional Republicans have shown a stunning lack of will. They are not using even those tools they *do* have to stop him. The most recent stunner was their failure to mount any real opposition to the Iran nuclear deal, what *Trumpet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry called "the **worst foreign policy deal** ever made by America."

All the optimism surrounding last year's election has proved



JOEL HILLIKER

CHP SOMDEVILLA/GETTY IMAGES

completely ill founded.

Now we are in the midst of another presidential election cycle—and it is wild. In many ways it reflects Americans' frustration.

The top Republican contender is a man who would likely never be considered a serious candidate under normal circumstances. But people appreciate him because he is everything that the Republican establishment is not. He presents himself as a tough negotiator. He says he can't be bought. He won't be walked on—if you attack him, he attacks you back. He's not politically correct. He puts the media in their place. And he continually talks about the fact that he's a winner. He sells optimism, and leads people to think he can actually get things done. When he says he will strengthen the military, build a wall, make America a respected nation again—it doesn't sound like mere political rhetoric: People believe it. And they are so disenchanted with politics as usual that they're willing to overlook this man's considerable flaws—his arrogance, his narcissism, his public, petty, childish insults.

The next top two Republican candidates are also political outsiders—a brain surgeon and a former business executive. After two elections lost by middle-of-the-road, mainstream Republican establishment candidates, voters are clearly fed up.

On the Democrat side, the top two candidates are a woman whom a large majority of Americans don't trust—thanks to years of scandals and a current FBI investigation—and an avowed socialist. The *Wall Street Journal* did an analysis of this man's proposals—government-run health care for every American; large sums to rebuild roads and bridges; expanded Social Security; free tuition at public colleges—and found that they would cost \$18 trillion in government spending.

How confident are you that the person who emerges from this next presidential election will actually be able to *solve* the problems plaguing the United States?

I watched a fair amount of the Republican debate a few weeks back: 11 people on stage, all trying to make a witty comment, giving the sound bite that will bump up their poll numbers a few points, jabbing at and accusing each other, boasting about themselves, contradicting each other over supposed facts. CNN was in the middle, goading the candidates into arguments with questions like, *What did you think when he said you couldn't be elected with a face like yours?*

It was a bizarre mix of arrogance and distractions and nonsense. And CNN snagged *the biggest ratings in its history*. That is what CNN cares about—not about whether the event truly reveals the candidates' leadership credentials.

This is supposed to help us know who will make the best president?

I find some of these individuals impressive in some ways. But judging by the shifts in poll numbers after the debate, my personal opinion about what might benefit the country differed considerably from what apparently impressed many other people.

Do Americans really know how to elect a leader?

"An election is not a popularity contest, or an award for showmanship," Thomas Sowell recently wrote. "If you want to fulfill your duty as a citizen, then you need to become an informed voter. And if you are not informed, then the most patriotic thing you can do on election day is stay home. Otherwise your vote, based on whims or emotions, is playing Russian roulette with the fate of this nation."

Here's an important question: Are the qualities that cause someone to stand out among a sea of other candidates really the same qualities that qualify someone to lead? How important, for example, is the ability to deliver a solid one-liner attacking an opponent?

Are arrogance and narcissism good qualities in a leader? I would argue that we have tremendous evidence to the contrary in America's government today. Yet the polls suggest that many Americans still believe it is a tremendous political virtue.

How much do Americans really know about the candidates?

Two presidential elections ago, Americans chose a man whom Tom Brokaw admitted the media hadn't really vetted. People bought into an idea of what they thought or hoped he would be, while ignoring several realities. For example, seven in 10 Americans thought he would improve race relations in the U.S. Was that belief based on truth?

How confident are you that you know the truth about these current candidates? The political process is distorted by lies peddled by the candidates about themselves and about each other. It is distorted by money, which brings candidates to the front who have it and steamrolls those who don't, regardless of their qualifications. It is also heavily distorted by media reporting.

And in the end, even if you do get the victories you think will benefit the country, you may still end up with a feckless Congress like the one America has now.

In his book *The Wonderful World Tomorrow—What It Will Be Like*, Herbert W. Armstrong wrote this: "[T]oo often what we find is selfish, greedy men of excessive vanity, ambitious in their lust for rule, scheming to get their hands on the throttle of power for personal aggrandizement and monetary gain. We find secret deals, graft, immorality, deception, dishonesty, running rampant in high places.

"Governments promise peace—but bring wars. They promise benefits for the people, and then extract from the people the cost of the benefits plus excessive costs of government. Government promises are empty. The people are the pawns who fork over the money, in order to get a part of it back. We fail to find in human government any knowledge of life's purpose, or dissemination of the true values."

How much confidence do you have in America's political process?

America's form of government is doubtless among the best, if not the best, on Earth. It is unparalleled in its design to constrain tyranny, to protect against corruption, to prevent leaders from becoming too authoritarian, to preserve accountability to the people. And its political process is far better than those under which the vast majority of people on Earth live. Alexis de Tocqueville once wrote, "If there be a country in the world where the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people can be fairly appreciated ... and where its dangers and its advantages may be judged, that country is assuredly America."

However, recent years have witnessed more and more abuses of power that *undermine* the benefits of America's government, including the trampling of constitutionally prescribed checks on power, and rank lawlessness by the judiciary and the executive branch. In many ways, the election process itself is being hijacked by factors that undermine its effectiveness and turn it into a farce.

In a recent *Key of David* program, *Trumpet* editor in

chief Gerald Flurry talked about the curse revealed in Leviticus 26:19: “I will break the pride of your power.” That America is suffering from that curse today is evident in its collapse in the Iran deal, its economic problems that undermine its standing in world, its feckless foreign policy that emboldens foreign enemies and tyrants.

But as he brought out, *God doesn't blame the leaders.* HE SAYS THE REAL PROBLEM IS WITH THE PEOPLE. It is OUR SINS that brought these curses!

This is a crucial point. Americans want to blame all our problems on the politicians—but the fact is, WE PUT THEM IN OFFICE.

The boilerplate campaign refrain is, *If we can just get these*

*bums out, we'll solve everything!* When will we acknowledge that the problems are bigger than that?

And when will we accept responsibility for *our part* in the problems?

America is suffering from a host of curses: a broken will, lack of competent statesmen, lawless leaders, social breakdown, racial strife, economic problems. These are curses that God is bringing upon us—not because we haven't exploited the full potential of our wonderful political process well enough, but because *we have turned our backs on Him.*

How well do you suppose a politician today would fare who brought a message like that?  Follow Joel Hilliker

## MIDDLE EAST

# Trumpet Daily

RADIO SHOW

RUSSIA'S RISING INTERVENTION IN SYRIA, TERROR IN ISRAEL, GERMANY'S TURN AGAINST IMMIGRANTS, U.S. PRESS LOVE FOR THE POPE, AND MORE | OCTOBER 9

THE 1,000-YEAR REIGN OF CHRIST | OCTOBER 8

## NATO Denounces 'Troubling' Russian Escalation in Syria

Washington Post | October 8

### WE TALKED ABOUT THIS



NATO LEADERS THURSDAY CONDEMNED RUSSIA'S MILITARY intervention in Syria and vowed to sharpen their eastern defenses from the Baltics to Turkey, but stopped short of taking concrete action to parry Moscow's moves in the Middle East.

At a meeting of NATO defense ministers at its headquarters here, Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg decried a “troubling escalation” by Russian forces in Syria and the use of “some of their most modern weapons” near NATO's borders. At the same time, alliance leaders appeared to have scant appetite for a confrontation with their longtime adversary and limited their response to minor or symbolic military countermeasures.

Meanwhile, Russia intensified its attacks on Syrian rebels. The Russian Defense Ministry said its warships in the Caspian Sea fired four more cruise missiles at Islamic State targets from nearly 1,000 miles away, a potent exhibition of Moscow's firepower. ...

Shortly after [U.S. Defense Secretary Ashton Carter warned Russia that “tethering itself to a sinking ship is a losing strategy”], reports surfaced that Russian missile attacks had gone badly awry.

A senior U.S. defense official who spoke on condition of anonymity said the Pentagon had tracked Russian cruise missiles, fired from ships in the Caspian Sea, that had crashed onto Iranian territory. It was unclear whether there were any casualties. Officials in Moscow and Tehran did not immediately respond to the reports. [Russia later denied the claims of any mishap.] ...

As the fighting continued, NATO leaders sought to reassure

Turkey that the alliance would take any necessary steps to help defend Turkish territory from a Syrian spillover. Russian fighter jets have violated Turkish airspace on at least two occasions in the past week, prompting protests from Ankara and Brussels.

“NATO is able and ready to defend all allies, including Turkey, against any threat,” Stoltenberg, the NATO secretary general, said from alliance headquarters as defense ministers gathered for a meeting. ...

“You have to remember that Turkey is a strong ally,” he said, noting that Turkey has the second-largest army in NATO. “The important thing for Turkey is that they know they are a part of NATO, that the security guarantees are 100 percent rock-solid.”

NATO leaders said they were revisiting previously laid plans to withdraw Patriot missile batteries that have been deployed to Turkey for the past two years.

The alliance originally stationed three batteries in Turkey to deter cross-border rocket and missile attacks from the Syrian government. Two of the batteries—manned by Germany and the United States—are scheduled to be removed this fall, leaving a single unit operated by the Spanish military. ...

NATO also finalized long-standing plans to expand a joint-response force to 40,000 troops, double the current number. It also said it would establish small regional headquarters in Hungary and Slovakia, adding to six other new headquarters operations in Eastern European countries. ...

Those plans have accelerated since Russia seized control

of Crimea and began supporting separatist rebels in eastern Ukraine last year.

“NATO has to respond when we see a more assertive Russia

behaving the way it has behaved,” Stoltenberg said.

**RELATED:** [“HOW THE SYRIAN CRISIS WILL END”](#)

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## Israel and the Palestinians Slide Deeper Into Conflict

**Times of Israel | October 9**

**WE TALKED ABOUT THIS**



**T**HE EVENTS OF THE LAST FEW DAYS SHOW A DEEPLY ALARMING trend: Three or more Palestinians, mostly East Jerusalemites, are daily attacking Israelis—knowing that they are likely to die in the attempt. These are a kind of suicide attacks. They are far less devastating than the bus and restaurant and market bombings of the Second Intifada, but they are motivated by the assailants’ desire to become martyrs. The upsurge of these kinds of attacks is all the more disquieting given that the overwhelming majority of them are not organized by a terror group or known orchestrator, but rather are carried out by “lone wolf” terrorists.

This simply didn’t happen at this kind of rate during the Second Intifada. At its height, in the spring of 2002, that strategic onslaught of terrorism was producing horrific suicide bombings every few days. But today, we have entered an almost surreal reality of attack after attack every day, mostly carried out by young Palestinians (mostly, but not only, male) with no known previous involvement in terrorism, willing to kill and to die “for Jerusalem” and “for al-Aqsa.” ...

Hamas does not want to declare all-out war against Israel, and to completely destroy its relations with the Palestinian Authority. Therefore, it apparently will not initiate this kind of attack. The same can be said of Fatah’s well-armed Tanzim forces. But it may well be that within Islamic Jihad, with the encouragement of the Iranians, there may be those who will—if only to “steal the show” and show up the “paralysis” of the rival terror groups.

Even without these kinds of bombings, the relentless daily attacks are sowing fear and deep disquiet among Israelis. This is a kind of assault not previously encountered. The closest precedent was a rash of knifings in 1990, on a much smaller scale, also motivated by concern for ostensible threats to the al-Aqsa Mosque. ...

[I]t is not impossible that this new wave of terror will be calmed for a while. But the fundamental causes will remain. The coals will keep burning unless or until there is a substantive diplomatic process—even in the highly unlikely event that the specific issue of al-Aqsa is effectively addressed.

For now, the cycle of violence is well and truly in motion:

## EU Seeks to Accelerate Turkey’s Stalled Accession Process

**Hürriyet Daily News | October 9**

**T**HE EUROPEAN UNION IS SEEKING TO ACCELERATE TURKEY’S almost stalled accession negotiation process by annexing a set of priorities and concrete recommendations to its soon-to-be released progress report, seen as a short-term road map for the

Palestinian attacks, in some cases bringing Jewish “revenge” attacks, and more Palestinian attacks, and wider Palestinian demonstrations, with a rising insistence by Fatah that it play a role. The PA security forces shrink away. The IDF has to intervene more directly—as in this week’s operation by undercover forces near Beit El. And the deterioration accelerates.

Last weekend, after the terror attack near Itamar in which Naama and Eitam Henkin were gunned down in front of their children, some 40 incidents of Jewish attacks on Palestinians were reported. That constitutes a portent of what could unfold during the olive-picking season, which is now getting underway. Each week’s Friday prayers constitute another event that potentially widens Palestinian participation in protest and violence in Jerusalem and the West Bank.

In a classic Catch-22, each new Palestinian terror attack prompts pressure on the government to cancel work permits for tens of thousands of West Bank Palestinians in Israel and for the imposition of a closure on the territories—as Zionist Union’s Isaac Herzog, of all people, urged on Thursday. Such a step would likely be disastrous, and would probably mean that rather than 3,000 Palestinians participating in West Bank protests against the IDF, we would see 30,000 or more.

At which point, any attempt to halt a popular uprising would become almost impossible.

**“Looking at the ongoing violence in Jerusalem today—the absolute inability of the involved parties to solve things by peaceful means—we can easily see HOW one half of Jerusalem shall be taken captive in the very near future. THE PRESENT VIOLENCE IS AN EMBRYO THAT IS ABOUT TO GROW INTO MUCH GREATER VIOLENCE. That is the critical event prophesied in Zechariah 14:2. We will see this prophecy in Zechariah 14:1-2 fulfilled very soon. And while it will involve some sickening atrocities and bloodshed, it is directly connected to the greatest news this world has ever heard!”**

Gerald Flurry, *Jerusalem in Prophecy*

next government to be formed after November 1 elections.

These concrete recommendations cover an implementation period of 12 to 18 months so that more negotiation chapters can be opened as part of Turkey’s accession process, started in 2005.

Turkey opened only 14 chapters out of 35 and closed only one of them. Croatia, which began negotiations on the same day as Turkey, joined the EU in mid-2013. ...

According to sources, a growing number of issues to the concern of Turkey and the EU have the potential to create a new momentum in Ankara-Brussels relations, as well as Turkey's accessions process. Turkey and the EU are currently talking about ways to cooperate in dealing with the refugee crisis, security problems concerning Syria, counterterrorism and energy. Describing

### **Mistakes Don't Invalidate Just Wars** **Commentary | October 8**

**O**N WEDNESDAY, THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT APOLOGIZED for the bombing of a hospital in Kunduz, Afghanistan, that took the lives of 19 patients and staff members by American forces prosecuting the war against the Taliban. While the White House waited a couple of days before issuing the apology while investigations of the incident proceeded, once it was clear what had happened, President Obama ordered that an apology be issued to the Doctors Without Borders group that operated the facility. As our Max Boot noted earlier this week, a bombing must be viewed in the context of a red-hot conflict with an enemy. The fact that the tragic event got far more attention than a Saudi strike in Yemen that reportedly killed 130 people at a wedding party speaks to the hypocrisy of the international press. But, as one intrepid Associated Press reporter pointed out on Monday, the hypocrisy extends to the U.S. government in its attitude toward not dissimilar actions by Israel in its attempts to defend itself against Hamas terrorists.

The AP's Matthew Lee gave State Department deputy spokesperson Mark Toner a very hard time when he pointed out that in August of 2014, the U.S. didn't wait for an investigation before it condemned the Israel Defense Forces for the shelling of a United Nations-run school in Gaza. At that time, the U.S. cut Israel no slack when it said, "The suspicion that militants are operating nearby does not justify strikes that put at risk the lives of so many innocent civilians."

The similarities of the two incidents are striking in that in both cases, the respective militaries had good reason to believe

### **Iran's Supreme Leader Bans Negotiations With the United States** **Reuters | October 6**

**I**RAN'S SUPREME LEADER AYATOLLAH ALI KHAMENEI ON WEDNESDAY banned any further negotiations between Iran and the United States, putting the brakes on moderates hoping to end Iran's isolation after reaching a nuclear deal with world powers in July.

Khamenei, the highest authority in the Islamic Republic, already said last month there would be no more talks with the United States after the nuclear deal, but has not previously declared an outright ban.

His statements directly contradict those of moderate Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, who says his government is ready to hold talks with the United States on how to resolve the conflict in Syria, where the two countries back opposing sides.

Turkey as a partner of the EU in dealing with these common problems, sources highlighted the EU's willingness to establish solid mutual ground with Turkey in countering refugee issues.

The draft plan on dealing with the refugee crisis to be negotiated between two parties will also help Turkey's efforts to fulfill the required criteria of securing its borders as part of visa liberalization process with the EU. Turkey hopes to accomplish the process by 2017 and allow its citizens to travel in the Schengen area without visas.

armed enemy combatants were in the immediate vicinity of a building that was being treated as off-limits for retaliatory fire. There are well-documented incidents of Hamas using UN schools to store weapons and as staging points for terrorists. The difference is that unlike the United Nations Relief Works Administration in Gaza, there is no indication that Doctors Without [Borders] actively cooperates with the Taliban. But, though the U.S. was on shakier ground than the Israelis, there is no indication that anyone in the administration is prepared to use the kind of strong language used at the time by the U.S. government about the Israelis—"disgraceful" and "appalling"—about the mistake by U.S. Special Operations Forces.

That Israel is treated in a discriminatory fashion by the international community is a given. ... [I]nternational forums treat any actions in which Palestinians die, no matter what the provocation by their side or the circumstances, as proof of the Jewish state's supposedly genocidal intentions. This is a lie. As even the chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Martin Dempsey pointed out, Israel's behavior during the last Gaza War was a model of humane conduct that Americans ought to emulate. ...

Previous generations understood that whatever one may think about the air bombing of Germany (in which huge numbers of civilians died), that didn't mean total war on the Nazis was a bad idea. Unfortunately, many on the left are willing to let Hamas, the Taliban or even ISIS off the hook simply because they are being fought by an imperfect Israel or Western nations. ...

"Negotiations with the United States open gates to their economic, cultural, political and security influence. Even during the nuclear negotiations they tried to harm our national interests," Khamenei was quoted as saying on his website.

"Our negotiators were vigilant but the Americans took advantage of a few chances," he said.

Although he supported the last 18 months of negotiations, Khamenei has not publicly endorsed the nuclear agreement with the United States, Germany, France, Britain, China and Russia that settled a standoff of more than a decade. ...

In his address to Revolutionary Guards Navy commanders, Khamenei said talks with the United States brought only disadvantages to Iran.

“Through negotiations Americans seek to influence Iran ... but there are naive people in Iran who don’t understand this,” Khamenei was quoted as saying to the IRGC commanders, who are also running much of Iran’s military involvement in Syria. ...

“We are in a critical situation now as the enemies are trying to change the mentality of our officials and our people on the revolution and our national interests,” Khamenei told the Guards. ...

[Khamenei’s] comments might invigorate the hardline lawmakers seeking the impeachment of Foreign Minister

Mohammad Javad Zarif over shaking hands with U.S. President Barack Obama on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly.

“On and off the record, it was an accident,” Zarif said in an interview with *New Yorker* on Tuesday.

“It has already cost me at home. But everything I do costs me at home, so this is not an aberration.”

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## EUROPE

# Trumpet Hour

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AMERICA’S CURIOUS POLITICAL PROCESS, LESSONS FROM A PERSIAN KING, THE ORIGINS OF THE UNIVERSE AND MORE | OCTOBER 7



## Germany’s Secret Strategy to Destroy Iran

**Gerald Flurry,**  
**The Key of David | October 11**

The Bible reveals the details of the conflict that will explode between the king of the north and the king of the south.



## Bavarian Ally Proves a Thorn in Merkel’s Side on Refugees

**Stefan Wagstyl, Financial Times | October 7**

### WE TALKED ABOUT THIS



IF ANGELA MERKEL IS THE GOOD COP OF GERMAN REFUGEE POLITICS, then the bad cop is undoubtedly Horst Seehofer.

As the prime minister of the southern region of Bavaria, where most migrants first arrive, he is on the front line of the refugee crisis. As the veteran leader of the region’s Conservative Social Union, the long-term partner of Ms. Merkel’s Conservative Democratic Union, he is her natural ally—and rival.

When she welcomed the unprecedented flow of refugees this summer, he immediately condemned this as “a mistake” suggesting she could lose control of the inflow: “I see no possibility of putting the genie back into the bottle.”

With the influx showing no sign of abating, Mr. Seehofer’s warning goes to the heart of the crisis. ... Despite ... denials, the official prediction of 800,000 looks increasingly like an underestimate. Nearly 577,000 arrived in the first nine months. Unofficially, political leaders have forecast as many as 1.5 million could come this year.

As the crisis intensifies, Ms. Merkel’s popularity has sunk in

opinion polls, whilst the Bavarian leader’s has risen. With his calls for tougher asylum rules, he is trying to push Ms. Merkel closer to the conservative mainstream .... As one observer puts it: “Merkel has leant a long way out of the window and he trying to pull her back to safety.”

Under pressure from Mr. Seehofer, Ms. Merkel has restricted cash benefits for refugees and added Kosovo, Albania and Montenegro to the list of “safe” countries to which migrants can be returned. ...

Still Mr. Seehofer wants the chancellor to send “a clear signal” that Germany is at the limit of its capacity, as he said in a weekend television interview. ...

The Bavaria-based *Süddeutsche* newspaper said recently that the Seehofer-Merkel argument is really about “how much change can be expected of a society.” ...

The 66-year-old lorry driver’s son also has a personal agenda. ...

The refugee crisis gives him a chance to restore his reputation—either for legacy purposes or, conceivably, for another

term in power. Prof. Werner Patzelt, a politics professor at Dresden's Technical University, says: "[With this crisis] he could

perhaps demonstrate that Bavaria needs a strong leader and that he is the right man for the job."

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### **Christian Social Union: 'Guttenberg Is Back—At Least a Little Bit'**

**Wolfgang Wittl, Süddeutsche Zeitung | October 1**

**E**X-ECONOMIC AND EX-DEFENSE MINISTER KARL-THEODOR ZU Guttenberg is going to operate again in the CSU namely in Horst Seehofer's advisory team. ...

This step back into politics seems comparatively small for a man who was minister for economic affairs and defense and even considered as a chancellor candidate. But apparently this is just the right entry level Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg wants. The 43-year-old will once again play a more active role in the CSU. He will join the advisory team, which party leader Horst Seehofer is going to consult in regards to the upcoming elections. ...

What impact this relationship will have on the inner parts of the CSU is likely to be exciting to watch. After his departure from

politics in 2011 (giving up all his offices because of his copied doctoral thesis) Guttenberg gradually withdrew from Germany. Along with his family, he relocated the center of his life to the U.S. East Coast and as head of a consulting firm he traveled around the world, even on behalf of the European Union.

Guttenberg will provide the CSU "topic-related support" in foreign and security policy and in technology. ... A first meeting [between Guttenberg and the CSU] might take place in a few days when the CSU debates its foreign policy about a rapprochement with Russia. ...

[TRANSLATION BY THETRUMPET.COM]

### **The Next Phase of European Power Politics**

**Adriano Bosoni, Stratfor | September 29**

**T**HE RECENT BATTLE OVER A PLAN TO RELOCATE ASYLUM SEEKERS across the European Union did little to appease the already deep fault lines among member states. The proposal was eventually approved, but only after a succession of threats, unilateral moves and violations of EU rules. During the negotiations Berlin was unusually uncompromising—an attitude it also showed during the discussions over Greece's third bailout program. ...

In recent months, Berlin has decided to take a more visible role in decision-making in the European Union, increasing frictions with other member states.

Changing power relationships and polarities have defined Europe's geopolitical history; the Continent traditionally has had multiple power centers competing and sometimes cooperating with each other. Situations where a single power controls the rest are very rare. Berlin's recent behavior therefore raises questions about the future of the distribution of power in Europe. ...

Germany faced new problems when the left-wing Syriza Party won Greek elections on a campaign to end austerity measures and restructure the country's debt. The first weeks of Syriza's government were defined by a strong anti-German rhetoric and constant references to the country's Nazi past.

Germany eventually won the battle with Greece, as Athens accepted a third bailout package and the formerly rebellious Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras rebranded himself as the custodian of Greece's agreement with the creditors. But before an agreement was reached, things got very nasty for everyone involved. ...

Berlin may have won the battle with Athens over economic reforms, but it certainly lost the public relations war. The dispute between the two governments resurrected old stereotypes of "the ugly Germans" and their alleged attempt to impose their views on Europe.

If Germany thought the second half of the year would be

calmer, it was wrong. Shortly after Athens accepted the third bailout, a new crisis erupted—a massive increase in the arrival of asylum seekers in Europe. Germany's first reaction was to announce it would take an unlimited number of Syrians, allowing Berlin to show the world a friendly face after the Greek negotiations. But it soon led to significant problems, including an increase in the number of people trying to reach northern Europe. ...

As with the Greek crisis, things had to get ugly before new policy could be decided. In the weeks leading to the meeting to debate the immigration crisis, German officials suggested EU structural funds should be suspended for countries not participating in a plan to distribute asylum seekers across the bloc. It was mostly an empty threat, because Berlin does not control the EU budget or the allocation of structural funds. But, just like during the negotiations with Athens, Berlin suddenly found itself making public threats to its EU partners.

The strategy worked, at least in the immediate term. Countries such as Spain and France, which were originally skeptical of introducing mandatory quotas of asylum seekers, eventually supported the idea. Most notably, Poland, which held several meetings with Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia to define a common strategy against the plan, decided at the last minute to approve it as well. ...

These developments are noteworthy because they suggest a change in Germany's behavior. ... If Germany decides it's time for more unilateral leadership in Europe, it will open a new era in the Continent's balance of power.

Since the consolidation of nation-states at the end of the 17th century, Europe has had several different power structures, most of which were based on a balance between multiple states. ... The reunification of Germany in the early 1990s led to a brief period of European bipolarity, combining France's political and

military leadership with Germany's economic might, as the European Union originally intended. However, the financial crisis put an abrupt end to this balance of power, for two reasons. First, France's economic decline reduced its political influence and made Germany the most powerful nation in Europe. Second, the financial crisis forced Berlin to protect the unity of the European Union while also defending its national wealth.

Germany did not react immediately. Berlin sought to

preserve the image of a co-leadership structure with Paris .... This structure did not hold for long, however, and in recent years Berlin has been alone at the top of the European political process. ...

Before the crisis, the promise of economic prosperity was the glue keeping the bloc together. To a certain extent, fear of the unknown and threats of retaliation have replaced prosperity as the force maintaining cohesion in Europe. ...

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## **Back an Integrated EU or Quit, François Hollande Warns Britain**

**Matthew Holehouse, Telegraph | October 7**

**B**RITAIN MUST BACK DEEPER INTEGRATION OF THE EUROPEAN Union or quit altogether, François Hollande, the French president, declared on Wednesday night.

During furious exchanges with Nigel Farage, the UKIP leader, Mr. Hollande said British voters who do not like the idea of a "strengthened" EU must take the "logical path" of Brexit.

It came as he spelled out France's support for a series of radical new institutions to cope with the Continent's multiple crises, including a common defense policy, a share asylum system, a coast guard and powerful new eurozone institutions. ...

It is a direct clash with Prime Minister David Cameron's insistence that Europe can be a "flexible network" with some countries playing a far less integrated role than others. ...

"I heard what Mr. Farage say that the only road is for those who are not convinced of Europe is to leave Europe," Mr. Hollande said.

"There is no other way. It's a horrible path, but it's a logical path. Leave Europe, leave Schengen and leave democracy. Do you

really want to participate in a common state? That's the question."

The outburst is the first time a European leader has acknowledged, albeit grudgingly, that there is a "logical" case for Britain quitting the bloc, with governments and Brussels institutions sticking to the line that an EU without the UK would be a disaster.

It reflects mounting frustration in Paris at Mr. Cameron's determination to get an increasingly "a la Carte" Europe. Many French government officials think Britain already holds more than enough opt-outs on key pieces of policy and are exasperated for its demands for more.

Mr. Hollande was speaking alongside Angela Merkel, the German chancellor, in a rare joint appearance designed to reaffirm the Franco-German core that has held the crisis-riven block together for 60 years.

"We need to keep our eyes on the long term, for the federation of nation states, which must remain our horizon," he said. ...

## **Has Pope Francis Just Cast the First Vote in the U.S. Presidential Race?**

**Paul Vallely, Guardian | September 28**

**T**HE POPE HAS BEEN AT HIS MOST SKILLFUL YET AS A POLITICAL operator in the U.S. As ever, he spoke through actions as much as words. He balanced every event on the grand stage—the White House, Congress, the UN general assembly—with a visit to the homeless, immigrants or prisoners. The little black Fiat he used there was more than a symbol of humility. ...

But his words were masterful. He gently but firmly reprimanded the U.S. bishops for their "harsh and divisive" approach on the culture war issues of abortion and gay marriage. ...

He embodied, in his own approach, the softer style he was advocating, but, for all that, was uncompromising in presenting messages the American right did not want to hear. ...

He could speak softly because he carried a big stick; he had fiercely denounced unfettered capitalism in his documents *Evangeliu Gaudium* and *Laudato Si'*, which both identified common causes in the rich world's indifference to the planet and to the poor. ...

The need to welcome refugees and economic migrants alike was hammered home repeatedly, as he boldly asserted: "We must not be taken aback by their numbers, but rather view them as persons." And his words were stark on those who profit from

the arms trade—the U.S. is the world's biggest arms exporter—in pursuit of "money that is drenched in blood, often innocent blood." ...

[C]limate change was virtually the first thing he mentioned when he got off the plane. It hit the poor first and worst, he told the UN. The cry of the poor and the cry of the planet are one and the same. And he pushed beyond the approach of previous popes by drilling down into detail to an unprecedented level. The sustainable development goals would be "an important sign of hope." There was a need for UN reform, especially the Security Council and the international financial agencies, to ensure that poor nations "are not subjected to oppressive lending systems." The U.S.-Iran nuclear deal was to be applauded. And he focused specifically on the coming climate negotiations in Paris.

This pope is a tactician as well as a moralist. All this could have a significant impact in the U.S. Politically, there has been a shift that could prove pivotal in terms of the quarter of the electorate that identifies as Catholic. ...

### **Eurozone ‘will not rest until our monetary union is complete’:**

European Central Bank (ECB) President Mario Draghi said economic growth is returning to Europe. Draghi made those remarks yesterday at an Atlantic Council event in New York, where he received the 2015 Global Citizen Award. The ECB president said that

“the way forward is well identified” for the eurozone. In his speech, Draghi highlighted the global implications of both the EU and its monetary union. The eurozone accounts for 17 percent of global gross domestic product and 16 percent of global trade. Draghi said Europe “will not rest” until its “monetary union is complete.”

## ASIA

### **Japan’s PM Accused of Echoing Wartime Propaganda With New Slogan**

**Telegraph | October 6**

**A** NEW SLOGAN ADOPTED BY THE JAPANESE PRIME MINISTER TO promote economic growth has prompted criticism among those who claim it eerily echoes of wartime propaganda.

Shinzo Abe, the prime minister, recently unveiled his new goal of building a “Society in which all 100 million people can be active” as part of his wider mission to fuel economic growth.

Mr. Abe plans to create a new post to oversee this vision—which apparently refers to a society in which everyone can achieve their potential—which is due to be announced in Wednesday’s cabinet reshuffle.

The reference to 100 million reportedly refers to the level at which the government hopes to halt and stabilize its now 126-million-but-rapidly-shrinking population within the next five decades.

However, the PM’s shiny new slogan for the future of Japan

faced an instant backlash on social media, with eyebrows being raised over its apparent echoes of wartime propaganda.

A number of bloggers and historians claimed that the slogan recalls rhetoric used by leaders during the Second World War, including the nation’s call for all “100 million” civilians spanning Japan’s then-colonies of Korea and Taiwan to be ready to die rather than accept defeat. ...

“Whether he chose this slogan consciously or as a result of a mind-set that doesn’t think it is somehow problematic, I don’t know,” Sven Saaler, a history professor at Sophia University in Tokyo, told Reuters. “But it comes from a basic sympathy he has for prewar and wartime Japan.”

He added: “It’s not only pre-war nostalgia. He needed to step up the rhetoric for the election. But I don’t think it’s coincidental that something related to wartime propaganda came up.”

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### **China to Join Russia in Syria War**

**ValueWalk | October 6**

#### WE TALKED ABOUT THIS



**W**HILE RUSSIA SUCCESSFULLY BOMBS UNIDENTIFIED TARGETS—either ISIS or U.S.-trained rebels—in Syria, China is planning to join Russia’s own emerging coalition by deploying Shenyang J-15, a carrier-based fighter aircraft.

Numerous reports have indicated that China is joining Russia’s airstrike campaign in Syria, which has killed at least 39 civilians, including eight children and eight women. ...

Russian and Chinese joint airstrikes plan to bomb CIA’s proxy jihadists, including ISIS militants in Syria. ...

The Shenyang J-15 warplanes “will take off from the Chinese Liaoning-CV-16 aircraft carrier, which reached Syrian shores on 26 September,” according to the Israeli military and intelligence news website DEBKAFle with news that Beijing is joining Moscow’s venture in Syria. ...

China’s sudden involvement might also have something to do with U.S. President Barack Obama’s recent UN speech, in which

he confronted China’s growing threat in the South China Sea.

In case of a possible military conflict in the disputed South China Sea, China would hope for Russia’s military assistance, creating a new alliance to allegedly protect the region from the U.S. influence and its regional allies, who have claims on the disputed islands. ...

By providing the Assad regime with its troops and military equipment, Russia has acquired a number of friends in the region, largely thanks to showing its reliability as a partner.

ValueWalk reported in August that there are indications of the emergence of the world’s new superpower axis between China, Russia and Pakistan. ...

What we see now is that Russian and U.S. officials have so far failed to coordinate their actions in Syria, while the Kremlin has admitted targeting groups other than ISIS militants in coordination with the Assad regime, all of which raises concerns that we

might be standing on the verge of the World War III. ...

The ground combat operation with Iran, Hezbollah and the Syrian Army will go hand in hand with Russian airstrikes, which will likely get other Middle Eastern states involved into the war in Syria.

And maybe not just Middle Eastern countries, but also Western states, which raises concerns about unleashing of the World War III, accidentally or otherwise.

And with senior UK officials urging NATO to prepare for a war with Russia, and UK Prime Minister David Cameron announcing

two days ago that he is prepared to use nuclear weapons, the World War III is likely to include the use of nuclear arsenals.

**“The Russia-China axis is no longer merely a forecast. It is here, and it is changing the world. The world now faces the most serious crisis since World War II, and it is thanks in part to America's broken will and mismanaged power.”**

“The Russia-China Axis Is Here, and It's Changing the World,” theTrumpet.com, Nov. 19, 2014

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## 19 Dead, 4 Missing After Typhoon Mujigae Hits China, Setting Off Tornadoes

CNN | October 6

**A**T LEAST 19 PEOPLE HAVE BEEN KILLED AND FOUR OTHERS ARE missing after an unexpectedly strong typhoon slammed into the southern coast of China, unleashing deadly tornadoes in the region, authorities said.

Typhoon Mujigae gained power quickly before it made landfall in densely populated Guangdong province on Sunday,

wielding winds as strong as 216 kph (134 mph). ...

Twisters aren't common in southern China, but “sometimes you'll see tornadoes spawned by the landfall of tropical systems,” Sater said. ...

Authorities said they had evacuated more than 200,000 people from vulnerable areas as the storm approached.

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## Iraq Leans Toward Russia in War on Islamic State

Reuters | October 7

**I**RAQ MAY REQUEST RUSSIAN AIRSTRIKES AGAINST ISLAMIC STATE on its soil soon and wants Moscow to have a bigger role than the United States in the war against the militant group, the head of parliament's defense and security committee said on Wednesday.

“In the upcoming few days or weeks, I think Iraq will be forced to ask Russia to launch airstrikes, and that depends on their success in Syria,” Hakim al-Zamili, a leading Shiite politician, told Reuters in an interview. ...

Russian military action in Iraq would deepen U.S. fears that it is losing more strategic ground to rivals in one of the world's most critical regions.

Russia is weighing in behind President Bashar al-Assad with airstrikes in Syria while its ally Iran holds deep sway in Iraq, including military advisers who help direct the battle against Islamic State. ...

“We are seeking to see Russia have a bigger role in Iraq. ... Yes, definitely a bigger role than the Americans,” Zamili said. ...

Russia's drive for more clout in the Middle East includes a new security and intelligence-sharing agreement with Iran, Iraq and Syria with a command center in Baghdad.

“We believe that this center will develop in the near future to be a joint operation command to lead the war against Daesh in Iraq,” said Zamili, using a derogatory Arabic acronym for

Islamic State, which is also known as ISIS or ISIL. ...

Abadi was frustrated by the U.S.-led coalition's performance against Islamic State .... Abadi was incensed by tough accusations by U.S. officials that Iraqi government troops lacked the will to fight the militants, government sources said. ...

Baghdad-based analyst and former army general Jasim al-Bahadli said tensions with the United States were one of the reasons why Abadi turned to Moscow for help.

“Abadi, it seems, succeeded in sending a clear message to the American administration, which repeatedly blamed Abadi's forces for recent setbacks, that there is another alternative for Iraq to resort to in the fight against Daesh if you are not willing to show real support,” he said.

“The United States has been worried by the growing influence of Iran in Iraq and worries should be doubled after the Russians took the lead in Iraq and Syria.” ...

**“The stage is being set for an Islamic group of nations, almost certainly to be led by Iran as the prophesied king of the south, to push at the king of the north, the European Union. ... [P]rophecy indicates that, in pursuit of its goal, Iran will probably take over Iraq. At least, it will have a heavy influence over the Iraqi people.”**

Gerald Flurry, “Is Iraq About to Fall to Iran?,” *Trumpet*, June 2003

## Trade Deficit Balloons to \$48.3 Billion

**Business Insider | October 6**

THE TRADE DEFICIT SWELLED TO \$48.3 BILLION IN AUGUST, according to the Department of Commerce.

Economists had estimated that the trade deficit, or the excess of imports over exports, increased to \$48 billion from \$41.81 in the prior month. Core imports rose 2.6 percent, driven by consumer goods.

“In one line: Horrible; trade is set to be a significant drag on Q3

GDP growth,” wrote Pantheon Macroeconomics’ Ian Shepherdson in a client note.

Shepherdson added that exports have not yet recovered from the West Coast port disruptions earlier this year.

The goods and services deficit has increased 5.2 percent, or \$17.6 billion year-to-date.

## 11 Trillion Gallons of Water Fell in the Carolinas in the Past Week

**USA Today | October 7**

THE UNRELENTING HEAVY RAINFALL THAT SOAKED THE CAROLINAS in the past week amounted to roughly 11 trillion gallons—enough to end the drought in California.

The rain caused catastrophic flooding in North Carolina and South Carolina, which received 5.2 trillion gallons and 5.8 trillion gallons, respectively, according an estimate by WeatherBell meteorologist Ryan Maue. ...

[A]mazingly, it’s the exact amount needed to end the drought in parts of California, according to NASA calculations in December.

However, getting all 11 trillion gallons in a few days wouldn’t be the way to get it.

“It takes years to get into a drought of this severity, and it will likely take many more big storms, and years, to crawl out of it,” Jay Famiglietti, a scientist with NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory, said in December.

So far, the flooding in the Carolinas has killed more than a dozen people and caused over \$1 billion in damages.

## September Sees Record Gun Sales

**Washington Free Beacon | October 7**

THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION PROCESSED A record number of background checks in the month of September, indicating that gun sales were at an all-time high for the month.

The FBI’s National Instant Background Check System processed 1,795,102 firearms-related applications in September. That represents a new record: 335,739 more checks than the previous September high set in 2012, or a 23 percent increase.

The number of checks done in a particular month is considered a reliable gauge of how many gun sales have occurred

since background checks are required on all sales made through licensed firearms dealers. The actual number of sales is likely higher since multiple firearms can be sold to the same person by a dealer under a single background check. The numbers also do not account for sales between private parties that do not require a background check.

September is the fifth month in a row to set a record for background checks. May, June, July and August all produced record numbers. The summer of 2015 has seen the most gun sales on record.

## Imams Will Have to Register and Face Security Vetting Under Home Office Plans

**Telegraph | September 12**

IMAMS, PRIESTS, RABBIS AND OTHER RELIGIOUS FIGURES WILL have to enroll in a “national register of faith leaders” and be subject to government-specified training and security checks in the Home Office’s latest action on extremism.

The highly controversial proposal appears in a leaked draft of the Government’s new counter-extremism strategy, seen by the *Telegraph*, which goes substantially further than previous versions of the document.

The strategy, due to be published this autumn, says that Whitehall will “require all faiths to maintain a national register of faith leaders” and the government will “set out the minimum

level of training and checks” faith leaders must have to join the new register. ...

The move marks a significant deepening of the state’s involvement in religion and is likely to be resisted by many religious representatives. ...

A spokesman for the Catholic Church said it had not been consulted on the proposals. Other senior Catholic sources said any plan for state supervision of priests would be “firmly resisted.” ...

The strategy, which was supposed to be published in spring this year, has been delayed for months amid deep concern in

some parts of government and most of the counter-extremism community about its most radical measure, to ban individuals whose behavior “falls below the thresholds in counterterrorism legislation” but which “undermines British values.”

Mr. Cameron has said: “For far too long, we have been a passively tolerant society, saying to our citizens that as long as you obey the law, we will leave you alone. This government will conclusively turn the page on this failed approach.”

In May, Haras Rafiq, director of the counter-extremism think tank Quilliam, described this proposal as “Orwellian and

totalitarian,” saying it would “play into the hands” of extremists. He added: “It is very noticeable that the main Islamist groups are not really up in arms about this. They want it, because it will feed the narrative of grievance and victimhood they love. They will be able to use it to say, ‘look, we told you so.’”

The document defines extremism as “the vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs,” or as calling for the death of members of the British Armed Forces.

## **Houston Transgender Bathroom Bill Debate Centers on Differing Definitions of ‘Men’**

**Washington Times | October 5**

**T**HE NOISY DEBATE OVER THIS CITY’S PROPOSITION 1 HAS CENTERED on whether it would allow men to use women’s public restrooms, which boils down to how you define “men” and “women.” ...

Proposition 1 would ban discrimination in public

accommodations such as restrooms based on 15 characteristics, including gender identity.

In other words, anyone who tries to stop a biological man who identifies as a woman from using a women’s room would be in violation and could face fines of up to \$5,000, if the measure succeeds. ...

## **Is Google Rotting Your Brain?**

**Daily Mail | October 7**

**T**HERE ARE FEARS IMPATIENCE IS TRIGGERING “DIGITAL AMNESIA,” which means we rely on the Internet for answers but easily forget the information we quickly look up online.

A new study suggests that when faced with a question, over a third of people automatically Google the answer quickly, without trying to come up with the answer themselves.

It also warns that a quarter of people immediately forget the information they have googled—a process which can mean the dissolution of memories and useful information.

The international study, which involved 6,000 international consumers age 16 and over, was conducted by digital security firm Kaspersky Lab.

It reveals 36 percent of people said they Google information before trying to recall the answer themselves, with the percentage rising to 40 percent for those age 45 and over. ...

Similarly, 24 percent admitted they would forget the online answer after they had used it and this figure rose to 27 percent among over 45s surveyed, with 12 percent assuming the information will always be out there somewhere so there is little point in trying to memorize it.

This urge for the fastest possible access to information, combined with a reluctance to remember it afterwards, has far-reaching implications for both our long-term memories, because a failure to make use of the information stored in our memories can ultimately result in us forgetting it.

“Our brain appears to strengthen a memory each time we recall it and at the same time forget irrelevant memories that are distracting us,” said Dr. Maria Wimber of the University of Birmingham’s School of Psychology, who was involved with the report.

“Past research has repeatedly demonstrated that actively recalling information is a very efficient way to create a permanent memory.

“In contrast, passively repeating information (e.g. by repeatedly looking it up on the Internet) does not create a solid, lasting memory trace in the same way.

“Based on this research, it can be argued that the trend to look up information before even trying to recall it prevents the build-up of long-term memories.”

## **TW IN BRIEF**

**N**umber of sanctuary cities growing in U.S.: The number of sanctuary cities in the United States has grown to more than 340, according to a report released on Thursday by the Center of Immigration Studies. These cities shielded on average 1,000 immigrants a month from deportation last year. More than 2,000 of those released have already been arrested for yet more crimes, according to the report. Illegal immigrants accused of murders and brutal assaults are among those released. Sanctuary cities refuse to cooperate to some extent

with federal deportation requests. U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson said that from January to June of this year cities released 16,000 illegal immigrants wanted by his agency. Sanctuary cities entered news headlines in July, when a released illegal immigrant was charged for shooting and killing Kathryn Steinle while walking with her father in San Francisco. A bill to crack down on sanctuary cities has already passed the House. GOP senators introduced their own version this week.