

Trumpet Weekly

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Why Is Germany Eliminating Paper Money?

Robert Morley | February 11

GERMANY IS CONSIDERING ABOLISHING THE €500 NOTE AND introducing a €5,000 (US\$5,600) limit on cash transactions. It is part of a plan proposed by Chancellor Angela Merkel's partners in the Social Democratic Party to cut off terrorist financing in Europe. Banning the bills will supposedly help make people safer. In reality, it will do the exact opposite.

German Deputy Finance Minister Michael Meister told Deutsche Welle on February 3 that Germany would *push these reforms at the European level*. "Since money laundering and terrorism financing are cross-border threats," it

makes sense to adopt a European Union-wide "solution," he said. But "if a European solution isn't possible, *Germany will move ahead on its own*" (emphasis added throughout).

The €500 note may be a favorite among criminals, but it is also popular among another *large* group of individuals: *those who don't trust the banks or the government!*

For these people, physical money represents freedom: freedom to hold cash outside the banking system; freedom to conduct business without notifying others; and freedom from government surveillance and overreach.

Yet Germany and Europe appear to be moving toward banning cash, even though many people are strongly against it. They are doing this for two reasons.



ROBERT MORLEY

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First, it is an effort to cut the “comfort for criminals,” as European Central Bank President Mario Draghi told the European Parliament on February 1. Changes are needed, and abolishing the €500 note is under consideration, he said.

Authorities want to force people to conduct transactions electronically—where suspicious activity can be detected and monitored. By forcing all transactions to go electronic, it will create a permanent paper trail. Theoretically, a record of every transaction you ever make could be kept and stored—forever. It is a treasure trove for authorities *looking for evidence of crime*. And when evidence is found, potentially decades of financial transactions could be searched to ferret out financial connections, relationships and any other potential misdeeds.

If politicians have their way, eliminating the €500 note would remove one third of all euros in circulation.

German opposition Green Party lawmaker Konstantin von Notz railed against the Social Democrats’ proposal. She said the plan to ban the €500 is “a new fundamental attack on data

protection and privacy.”

Alternative for Germany’s monetary policy spokeswoman Alice Weidel called the cash ban an attack on freedom. “This measure ... is a direct attack on the property rights of citizens,” she said. “If we give this up ... citizens will lose an elementary right to their freedom and *the way is paved to TOTAL SURVEILLANCE of all areas of life*” (*Bundesdeutsche Zeitung*, February 4; *Trumpet* translation).

Do politicians really think that laws like this will stop the terrorists? A handbag can still carry over €1 million in €100 notes. Laws like this only stop the petty criminals. Organized crime will find another way. Terrorists will find another way. And politicians know this.

What is the real reason for these new proposed rules?

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MIDDLE EAST

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Stabbings Continue in Jerusalem Brent Nagtegaal | February 9

JERUSALEM—LAST WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON, FOR THE FIRST time after two years’ absence, my wife and I enjoyed a walk through the Jerusalem city center. We took a look inside the newest five-star hotel in the city, the Waldorf Astoria. When we stepped back outside, we were greeted by a screaming police vehicle flying down Agron Street toward the Old City. Three Arabs were stabbing and shooting two young female police officers just half a mile away.

Officers quickly shot and killed all three attackers. They discovered that the men were armed with guns, knives and pipe bombs; the terrorists apparently had been waiting for a large group of Israeli civilians to pass by in order to murder a large number of people.

While being so close to this bloodshed was a new experience for me, stabbings like these have become commonplace among

residents of Jerusalem; they still occur nearly every day inside Israel, and mostly in the capital city.

Our latest visit was the first time we had traveled to Jerusalem during a period of sustained violence. We expected fewer tourists, fewer people on the streets, fewer interactions between Jews and Arabs. Most of all, we expected to feel a new tension as we walked through the city.

But other than extra police motorbikes and posters advertising self-defense lessons, we found the tone of Jerusalem about the same as it has been during times of relative peace.

Apparently the Jerusalem folk are doing just as they have been instructed: Carry on with your “normal” lives as best you can.

When ancient Israel sustained deaths at the hands of its enemy, it was not time to “continue with our lives, with our plans.”

When the Israelites went to battle at Ai (Joshua 7:1-13), they

not only failed to conquer it, but 36 Israelite men died. Joshua realized that losing even one life was a *sign*. It was a red alert that God was not supporting the nation and that something needed to be done. Joshua didn't tell the Israelites to carry on with their lives and their plans. He stopped everything and led the Israelites to *examine themselves*, obey God and remove the sin. After that, Israel defeated Ai without losing a single warrior (Joshua 8).

Although Joshua lived around 3,500 years ago, the passing of time does not invalidate the lesson. If it was true then, it is true now. God loves the nation of Israel and longs to heal its people if only they would turn to Him. To understand both where Israel's current policies in dealing with the Palestinian issue are leading, as well as the hope-filled future of the Jewish state, please read *Jerusalem in Prophecy* by Gerald Flurry.

Iran Infiltrates the West Bank

Jerusalem Post | February 9

WE TALKED ABOUT THIS



IRAN'S CAPACITY FOR INTRUSIONS HAS BEEN STARVED BY YEARS OF sanctions. Now, with the lifting of sanctions, Tehran's appetite for encroachment has been newly whetted—and its bull's-eye is the West Bank. ...

Until recently, Iran held pride of place as Hamas's primary patron in the Gaza Strip. It was thanks to Iran's support that Palestinian Islamist movement, Hamas, held hostage nearly 2 million Palestinians living in the Strip. Moreover, this backing enabled Hamas to smuggle all manner of weapons into the Gaza Strip, including rockets and missiles that were aimed and fired at Israel.

But the honeymoon between Iran and Hamas ended a few years ago, when Hamas refused to support the regime of Syrian President Bashar Assad—Tehran's major ally in the Middle East—against the Syrian opposition. Since then, the Iranians, who have lost confidence in their erstwhile Hamas allies, have been searching among the Palestinians for more loyal friends. And they seem to have found them: al-Sabireen ("the Patient Ones").

Al-Sabireen, Iran's new ally, first popped up in the Gaza Strip, where they recruited hundreds of Palestinians, many of them former members of Hamas and Islamic Jihad. ...

The Iranian-backed al-Sabireen is already a headache for Hamas. The two terror groups share a radical ideology and both seek to destroy Israel. Nonetheless, al-Sabireen considers Hamas "soft" on Israel because it does not wage daily terror attacks against its citizens. The "Patient Ones" are seeking Palestinians as a group to become an Iranian proxy in the region. ...

According to Palestinian Authority security sources,

al-Sabireen has already located some West Bank Palestinians who were more than happy to join the group's jihad against Jews and Israel. ...

Al-Sabireen is not the only Iranian proxy whose eye is on the West Bank. Last month, in the West Bank city of Tulkarm, Israeli security forces uncovered and broke up a terrorist cell commanded by Hezbollah, which was planning suicide bombings and shooting attacks. The Palestinian members of the cell had been taught by Jawed Nasrallah, the son of Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah, how to carry out suicide bombings, assemble bomb vests, gather intelligence, and set up training camps. ...

Iran's infiltration of the West Bank should serve as a red flag not only for Israel, but also for the U.S. and other Western powers. ...

The future of the Middle East and Europe would be shockingly different if any Palestinian state were to fall into the hands of Iran's Islamic extremists and their allies.

The Palestinians and all interested parties might remember that al-Sabireen is—if nothing else—patient.

"Today the Arabs live in roughly one half of Jerusalem. They just don't control it—yet. ... Looking at the ongoing violence in Jerusalem today ... we can easily see HOW one half of Jerusalem shall be taken captive in the very near future. THE PRESIDENT VIOLENCE IS AN EMBRYO THAT IS ABOUT TO GROW INTO MUCH GREATER VIOLENCE. That is the critical event prophesied in Zechariah 14:2."

Gerald Flurry, *Jerusalem in Prophecy*

Enough Is Enough. The Era of U.S. Abdication on Syria Must End.

Michael Ignatieff and Leon Wieseltier, *Washington Post* | February 9

AS RUSSIAN PLANES DECIMATE ALEPPO, AND HUNDREDS OF thousands of civilians in Syria's largest city prepare for encirclement, blockade and siege—and for the starvation and the barbarity that will inevitably follow—it is time to proclaim the moral

bankruptcy of American and Western policy in Syria.

Actually, it is past time. The moral bankruptcy has been long in the making: five years of empty declarations that Syrian President Bashar Assad must go, of halfhearted arming of rebel groups,

of allowing the red line on chemical weapons to be crossed, and of failing adequately to share Europe's refugee burden as it buckles under the strain of the consequences of Western inaction. In the meantime, a quarter-million Syrians have died, 7 million have been displaced, and nearly 5 million are refugees. Two million of the refugees are children.

This downward path leads to the truly incredible possibility that as the Syrian dictator and his ruthless backers close in on Aleppo,

the government of the United States, in the name of the struggle against the Islamic State, will simply stand by while Russia, Assad and Iran destroy their opponents at whatever human cost. ...

The era of our Syrian abdication must end now. If we do not come to the rescue of Aleppo, if we do not do everything we can to put a stop to the suffering that is the defining and most damaging abomination of our time, Aleppo will be a stain on our conscience forever.

Saudi Arabia Prepared for Ground War in Syria, Military Spokesman Says **Jerusalem Post | February 9**

SAUDI MILITARY SPOKESMAN BRIG. GEN. AHMED AL-ASIRI SAID his country is prepared for a land war in Syria, the Saudi-backed *Asharq al-Awsat* reported on Tuesday.

Asiri's statement to the London-based paper comes after his country announced last week it's willing to send ground troops as part of the international coalition to fight Islamic State.

The Senior Saudi defense official said that his country wants to defeat Islamic State.

He also announced Saudi Arabia would hold a large-scale military exercise called "Thunder of the North" with the participation of 21 Arab and Muslim countries. The exercise would enhance coordination and information sharing between the countries,

Asiri said.

He added, according to the report, that "when participating countries feel that there are coordinated and interdependent efforts, the results of the exercise will be positive. We have models based on real experience of being in the Arab coalition in Yemen where operations are running excellently and positively." ...

On Monday, Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir held out the possibility of sending Saudi special forces into Syria as part of a U.S.-led coalition against the Islamic State. ...

RELATED: "HOW THE SYRIAN CRISIS WILL END"

Senior Iranian Military Official: U.S. Is Subordinate to Iran in Middle East **Jerusalem Post | February 10**

THE COMMANDER OF THE BASIJ PARAMILITARY FORCE OF THE Islamic Republic of Iran, Mohammed Reza Naqdi, vowed that Tehran "will not make any compromises with our enemies in the Middle East."

Speaking in a press conference in honor of the anniversary of the 1979 Iranian Revolution, Naqdi emphasized that "the hundreds of Revolutionary Guards generals fighting in Syria will never repeat the mistake of the Shiite Caliph Hassan bin Ali who surrendered leadership of the Muslim world to Muawiyah bin Abi Sufyan."

Naqdi added that "it is impossible to compare Iran to Iran under the shah's rule, since back then, Iran was subordinate to the American administration, while today, the United States subordinates to Iran's dominance in the Middle East and it cannot act in the region without getting the approval of the supreme leader

of Iran."

In addition, Naqdi argued that while senior "American officials visit the Middle East secretly, images of Qassem Suleimani, the commander of Iran's Quds Force, spread across the streets in Yemen, Lebanon, Iraq and Syria."

Naqdi also attacked the nuclear deal with the great powers, blaming Iranian President Hassan Rouhani for concealing secret paragraphs of the agreement and making big concessions to the U.S. in exchange for an agreement. ...

"The United States has crowned a new king of the Middle East. Not a liberal democracy. Not a stable ally. Not a respected hegemon. A nuclear-pursuing terrorist threat whose slogan is, 'Death to America.'"

"Crowning the King of the Middle East," Trumpet, September 2015

Iran Mocks Capture of U.S. Sailors at Islamic Revolution Parade **Washington Free Beacon | February 11**

PARTICIPANTS IN A RALLY CELEBRATING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1979 Islamic Revolution [on Thursday] recreated scenes of Iran's capture of 10 U.S. sailors last month.

Photos of the celebration in Tehran have been circulated on social media, showing several participants dressed like the U.S. sailors kneeling with their hands on their heads. They were surrounded by individuals, who appear to be armed, mimicking

the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) personnel who arrested the sailors at gunpoint on January 12. ...

Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei has praised the IRGC unit that took the sailors into custody, awarding five commanders medals for their "excellent job" detaining the Americans. IRGC naval commander Adm. Ali Fadavi, one of the medal recipients, has claimed that his men took extensive information from the

sailors' laptops and cell phones. ...

The rally re-creating the sailors' captivity Thursday took place

just after Iran published images of one of the captured American sailors crying.

EUROPE

Trumpet Hour

IRAN IN WEST BANK, SELLING OIL IN EUROS, EUROZONE TREASURY, ARMY DRILLS IN UKRAINE, AND MORE | FEBRUARY 12

WELCOME TO THE 21ST CENTURY, CASHLESS EUROPE, DESIGNER BABIES AND MORE | FEBRUARY 10

Welcome to the Twenty-first Century

Joschka Fischer, Project Syndicate | February 1

THE START OF 2016 HAS BEEN ANYTHING BUT CALM. FALLING equity prices in China have destabilized markets worldwide. Emerging economies seem to have stalled. The price of oil has plunged, pushing petroleum producers into crisis. North Korea is flexing its nuclear muscles. And in Europe, the ongoing refugee crisis is fomenting a toxic tide of nationalism, which threatens to tear the European Union apart. Add to this Russia's neo-imperial ambitions and the threat of Islamic terrorism, and comets streaking across the sky may be the only thing missing from a picture of a year shaping up to be one of prophetic doom.

Wherever one looks, chaos seems to be ascendant. The international order forged in the fires of the 20th century seems to be disappearing, and we have not had even the faintest glimpse of what will replace it.

It is not difficult to put names to the challenges we face ... What is not clear is the context in which the response will come—if at all. In which political structures, by whose initiative, and under which rules will these questions be negotiated—or, if negotiation proves impossible, fought over?

Political and economic order—particularly on a global scale—does not simply arise from peaceful consensus or an unchallenged claim by the most powerful. It has always been the result of a struggle for domination—often brutal, bloody and long—between or among rival powers. Only through

conflict are the new pillars, institutions and players of a new order established. ...

Today, the *Pax Americana* that ensured a large degree of global stability [since the end of World War II] has begun to fray—most notably in the Middle East and on the Korean Peninsula. ...

[T]he main challenge of the coming years is likely to be managing America's declining influence. ... While a dominant power can be brought down through a struggle for domination, voluntary retreat is not an option, because the resulting power vacuum would endanger the stability of the entire system. Indeed, overseeing the end of *Pax Americana* is likely to dominate the tenure of America's next president—whoever that might be.

For Europe, this raises an equally difficult question. Will the decline of *Pax Americana*, which has served for seven decades as a guarantor of Europe's internal liberal order, unavoidably lead to crisis, if not conflict? Rising neo-nationalism across the Continent seems to point toward such a scenario, with appalling implications.

The bleak prospect of European suicide is no longer unthinkable. What will happen if German Chancellor Angela Merkel is brought down by her refugee policy, if the United Kingdom leaves the European Union, or if the French populist Marine Le Pen captures the presidency? A plunge into the abyss is the most dangerous outcome imaginable, if not the likeliest. ...

Franco-German Central Bankers Call for Creation of Eurozone Treasury

Mehreen Khan, Telegraph | February 8

TWO OF EUROPE'S MOST POWERFUL CENTRAL BANKERS HAVE called on the eurozone to form its own treasury and push forward with a quantum leap in integration to secure the single currency's future.

Germany's Jens Weidmann and France's newly appointed

François Villeroy de Galhau urged member states to move toward a "comprehensive sharing of sovereignty" which would include a common 19-member treasury and an "independent fiscal council" with a eurozone parliament.

More integration appears to be the most straightforward

solution to restore confidence in the euro area

“While monetary policy has delivered a lot of support for the euro-area economy, it cannot bring about long-lasting economic growth,” they wrote in Germany’s *Süddeutschen Zeitung* newspaper. “More integration appears to be the most straightforward solution to restore confidence in the euro area.”

Their comments are a rare sign of unity from the EU’s most powerful founding member states, which have often diverged on their visions for the future of the eurozone. ...

Europe’s ‘Doom-Loop’ Returns as Credit Markets Seize Up Ambrose Evans-Pritchard, Telegraph | February 9

CREDIT STRESS IN THE EUROPEAN BANKING SYSTEM HAS SUDDENLY turned virulent and begun spreading to Italian, Spanish and Portuguese government debt, reviving fears of the sovereign “doom-loop” that ravaged the region four years ago.

“People are scared. This is very close to a potentially self-fulfilling credit crisis,” said Antonio Guglielmi, head of European banking research at Italy’s Mediobanca. ...

Marc Ostwald, a credit expert at ADM [Investor Services International], said the ominous new development is that bank stress has suddenly begun to drive up yields in the former crisis states of southern Europe.

“The doom-loop is rearing its ugly head again,” he said, referring to the vicious cycle in 2011 and 2012 when eurozone banks and states engulfed in each other in a destructive vortex.

It comes just as sovereign wealth funds from the commodity bloc and emerging markets are forced to liquidate foreign assets on a grand scale, either to defend their currencies or to cover spending crises at home. ...

Yield spreads on Italian and Spanish 10-year bonds have jumped to almost 150 basis points over German Bunds, up from 90 last year. Portuguese spreads have surged to 235 as the country’s left-wing government clashes with Brussels on austerity policies.

While these levels are low by crisis standards, they are rising even though the European Central Bank (ECB) is buying the debt of these countries in large volumes under quantitative easing. The yield spike is a foretaste of what could happen if and when the ECB ever steps back.

Mr. Guglielmi said a key cause of the latest credit seizure is the imposition of a tough new “bail-in” regime for eurozone bank bonds without the crucial elements of an EMU banking union needed make it viable. ...

Mr. Guglielmi said there is a gnawing fear among global investors that these draconian “bail-ins” may be crystallized

The central bankers’ support for powerful new euro institutions go even further than visions for eurozone reform laid out in the EU’s Five President’s Report.

However, recognizing the lack of political will in many countries to transfer more sovereignty to Brussels, Mr. Weidmann and Mr. Villeroy de Galhau said the only alternative was for countries to move toward a more decentralized single currency “based on individual responsibility and even stronger rules.” ...

as European banks grapple with €1 trillion (US\$1.13 trillion) of non-performing loans. Declared bad debts make up 6.4 percent of total loans, compared with 3 percent in the U.S. and 2.8 percent in the UK.

The bail-in rules were first imposed in Cyprus after the island’s debt crisis, stripping European bank debt of its hallowed status as a pillar of financial stability, and of its implicit guarantee by states. The regime came into force for the whole currency bloc in January. Both senior and junior debt must now face wipe-out before taxpayers have to contribute money.

While this makes sense on one level, the eurozone banking structure is now dangerously deformed. Individual eurozone states cannot easily recapitalize their own banking systems because that breaches EU state-aid rules, but there is no functioning European body to replace them.

“The root cause of this debacle is the way the eurozone is designed. We don’t have a mutualization of the risks. That is why this is escalating,” said Mr. Guglielmi. ...

Peter Schaffrik, from RBC Capital Markets, said there is a nagging concern among investors that the ECB is running low on ammunition. ... “How much further can the ECB go before it becomes outright harmful?” he asked. ...

Mr. Guglielmi said the mood is starting to feel like the panic in the summer of 2012, just before Mario Draghi vowed to do “whatever it takes” to save the euro—a shift made possible when Berlin lifted its veto on emergency action to backstop Italian and Spanish bonds.

Mr. Draghi is running out of tricks for an encore but there is still scope for “QE2” at the next ECB meeting in March, if he can secure German acquiescence. ...

“We all know that QE2 is not really going to work, but the feeling in the market is ‘I’m a smoker, I know it kills me, but so long as I can get cigarettes, I’m happy,’” he said.

The Anti-Migrant ‘Eastern European Union’ With Orbán as Emperor Manuel Bewarder and Boris Kalnoky, World Crunch | February 9

WE TALKED ABOUT THIS



EUROPE’S MIGRATION SITUATION IS ABOUT TO ESCALATE—AND IT’S taking the whole Continent with it.

The recent influx of would-be refugees [is] putting pressure

on governments in Eastern and southeastern Europe in a way not seen since the end of communism. ...

Eastern leaders increasingly complain about the functional

failure of the public-policy machine in Brussels, as well as Germany's indecisiveness over policies to limit the entry of refugees.

And so the conditions are ripe for a strongman like Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orbán to take on the role as a sort of "European anti-emperor." Neither Slovenia nor Poland share Orbán's sympathy with Vladimir Putin's Russia, but they are united in wanting to push back on the migrant flow coming in from the east.

Over the last year, more than a million people from the Middle East have arrived in Europe, mainly Syrian civil war refugees. ... Germany accepted all of them, which attracted even more. ...

Everywhere border controls are being intensified, fences are going up. Only Afghans, Syrians and Iraqis will pass, if they promise that Germany is their ultimate destination. So that leaves East Europeans distancing themselves from what they say is a weak-minded EU and building their own higher walls and fences. ...

[Asylum Protection Center Director] Radoš Đurović drinks hot tea, against the same Serbian cold. What happens if Germany closes its borders? "[T]hat's what will happen. Then our whole country will become one big refugees asylum center. The government can't

handle this. And they can't tell that the population either."

Frankly speaking, there aren't many options anyway. The refugees' journey is like a desperate version of musical chairs. It goes on and on, but once the music stops, everybody needs to quickly find a place to stay. If Germany rejects refugees, so will Croatia. ...

Now the barbed wire stretches as far as the eye can see along Hungary's border with Serbia. Except for the occasional patrol, there is not a single human being in sight, especially no refugee. Nobody even dares to think about passing through Hungary's border fence. Those who get caught go straight to prison. Only approximately 10 migrants per day enter the country illegally. ...

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's popularity ratings prove him right. And in Europe too, he feels like a winner. He calls Austria's new border regime a "victory of reason."

"If a Schengen state doesn't meet its obligations and won't accept any help either, there must not be any thought control," says Austria's minister of the interior, Johanna Milk-Leitner. "The patience of most Europeans is coming to an end. Much has been said, now there is need for action. It's about securing Europe's stability, order and safety."

Berlin Extends Border Checks as NATO Launches Sea Patrol **The Local | February 11**

NATO CONFIRMED IT WOULD SEND SHIPS TO THE AEGEAN SEA between Turkey and Greece to combat people-smugglers bringing refugees into the EU.

NATO "is now directing the standing maritime group to move into the Aegean without delay and start maritime surveillance activities," Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg told a press conference after alliance defense ministers backed the move.

NATO Standing Maritime Group 2, currently under German command, comprises three ships, and allies had promised more so it can carry out "reconnaissance, monitoring and surveillance in the Aegean Sea," he said.

The military alliance had debated the move in response to a joint request from Germany, Turkey and Greece to step in. ...

[German Defense Minister Ursula] von der Leyen added that she did not believe a parliamentary mandate would be necessary—as is usual with military deployments—for German ships to take part.

She argued that the deployment was a simple maritime monitoring mission within NATO territory.

But the NATO plan is likely to face vocal opposition within Germany. ...

'Germany Must Take Fewer Refugees'—Catholic Church **Agence France-Presse | February 6**

GERMANY HAS BEEN STRUGGLING TO COPE WITH 1.1 MILLION ASYLUM seekers that arrived in 2015, and Berlin has not yet given an official estimate for how many it expects this year.

"As a church, we say that we need a reduction in the number of refugees," Cardinal Reinhard Marx, chairman of the German Bishops' Conference, told the *Passauer Neue Presse* daily.

Germany cannot "take in all the world's needy," Marx added.

The question of how to respond to the migrant crisis, he asserted, should not solely be a matter of "charity, but also reason."

However, Marx also expressed concern at a rise in xenophobia in Germany amid the worst refugee crisis that Europe has known since World War II. ...

TW IN BRIEF

Greece protests again: Greek youths clashed with police in Athens on Thursday, throwing firebombs and stones as tens of thousands of people marched through the capital protesting against planned pension reforms. No injuries or arrests have been reported so far. The clashes came as Greek unions organized a nationwide general strike that canceled flights, ferries and public transportation, shut down schools, courts and pharmacies, and

left public hospitals with emergency staff only. Police said some 40,000 people joined the demonstrations, which were mostly peaceful before sporadic clashes between anarchist protesters and police outside Parliament and in other parts of the city center. Police used tear gas and stun grenades against the dozens of hooded anarchists. Thursday's general strike is the most significant the government of Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras has faced

since coming to power a little more than a year ago.

German police thwart planned terror attack in Berlin: German police prevented Islamists in Berlin from carrying out a terrorist attack on the capital city. Reports on Thursday said the target of the planned attack may have either been the iconic

center of Alexanderplatz, or “Checkpoint Charlie”—which was once the most famous Berlin Wall crossing point. Among those arrested was a 35-year-old Algerian man who is said to have connections to the Islamic State terrorist group. The man was living in Germany as an asylum seeker and was residing in refugee accommodations.

ASIA

How President Putin Is Getting What He Wants in Syria

Jonathan Marcus, BBC News | February 11

VIEWED FROM THE WEST, RUSSIA’S PRESIDENT, VLADIMIR PUTIN, is in the diplomatic doghouse.

His annexation of Crimea and military involvement in eastern Ukraine broke the settled pattern of post-Cold War relations in Europe.

The Russian military’s increasingly aggressive patrolling and exercises on the margins of NATO have raised genuine concerns—even in a country such as Sweden—that a conflict with Russia can no longer be regarded as impossible. ...

Curiously then, the prevailing Western response to Russia’s engagement alongside President Bashar Assad’s government in Syria has been to argue Russia and the West potentially share some common ground. ...

Russia—at least up to a week or so ago—was seen as a cosponsor of the diplomatic effort to bring peace to Syria and a vital element in any solution. ...

To the Western view there is no military solution in Syria, Moscow has effectively begged to differ. ...

It chose a side—a side credible militarily in the sense it had too much to lose if defeated.

That side had reasonably effective allies, such as the Hezbollah fighters and various militias recruited by Iran and guided by Iranian commanders. ...

Russia set for itself an achievable goal—to bolster the Syrian

government and ensure it retained control over a significant part of the country.

In so doing, it has unleashed its air force largely against militia fighters backed by Turkey, the Gulf Arabs and the West, and it is winning. ...

His success threatens to reduce the country to two enclaves—a coastal rump dominated by the Syrian government and the rest broadly in the hands of [the Islamic State]. ...

Mr. Putin has shown Russia remains a force to be reckoned with in the Middle East, just at a time when the Americans seem best characterized by vacillation.

He has shown Russia has a limited but nonetheless impressive expeditionary military capability, and he has given a runout to much of Russia’s latest hardware. ...

In unifying ends and means, Mr. Putin knows what he wants. And, for now, he seems to be getting it.

“Putin’s power play in Syria will not last but, in fact, will be short-lived. According to a prophecy found in Psalm 83, the Syrian people won’t look to Russia as an ally, nor to Iran. Ultimately they will look to a German-led Europe!”

“Russia Outmaneuvers the United States in Syria,”

Trumpet, November-December 2015

Putin Launches Surprise Military Drills Near Ukraine Border

Vladimir Isachenkov, Associated Press | February 8

WE TALKED ABOUT THIS



PRESIDENT VLADIMIR PUTIN HAS SCRAMBLED TROOPS ACROSS southwestern Russia for large-scale military drills intended to test the troops’ readiness amid continuing tensions with the West.

Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said that military units were put on combat alert early Monday, marking the launch of the exercise that involves troops of the Southern Military District.

The district includes troops stationed in Crimea, the Black Sea

peninsula that Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014, as well as forces in the North Caucasus and southwestern regions near the border with Ukraine. ...

Even though a drop in global oil prices has drained the government’s coffers and helped drive the economy into recession, the Kremlin has continued to spend big on the military, funding the purchase of hundreds of new aircraft, tanks and missiles.

Russia has demonstrated its resurgent military might with its

air campaign in Syria, which helped President Bashar Assad's military win a series of victories in recent weeks. The military used the Syrian operation to test new types of weapons in actual combat for the first time, including long-range air- and sea-launched cruise missiles.

The air blitz in Syria has badly strained Russia's relations with Turkey, which shot down a Russian warplane at the border with Syria in November. The latest drills could be part of muscle flexing amid the tensions with Ankara.

They also come at a time when a peace deal intended to end fighting between Ukrainian government troops and Russia-backed rebels in eastern Ukraine appears to be in jeopardy

amid increasingly frequent clashes in recent weeks.

"Putin knows the West is weak! He doesn't fear other nations. He is totally undeterred in his quest to destabilize Ukraine. He is single-handedly preventing that former Soviet republic from aligning itself with Europe. This year he redrew the map of Europe by making Crimea—what was a semi-autonomous part of Ukraine—officially part of Russia. He is steadily rebuilding the Soviet Empire."

Gerald Flurry, "Vladimir Putin Is the Prophesied Prince of Russia," *Trumpet*, September 2014

China's Military Might, Now for Africa to See **Claude Arpi, Daily Pioneer | February 11**

WAS IT A COINCIDENCE THAT, AS CHINA PREPARED TO CELEBRATE its Spring Festival, the Foreign Ministry in Beijing announced that China's first overseas naval logistics support outpost is going to be constructed in Djibouti, in the Horn of Africa? A few days earlier, Djibouti's foreign minister, Mahamoud Ali Youssouf, told Reuters, "We understand that some Western countries have worries about China's willingness to have military outposts outside of China," and added that they should not be too concerned.

Beijing asserted that the outpost was "essential to implement highly efficient logistical support," as China needs to regularly send escort fleets to the Gulf of Aden and Somalia. In December, the Ministry of National Defense had already announced that China and Djibouti had reached a general agreement. ...

Another development shows this new trend of foreign intervention: On February 5, China Military Online reported that after completing "tough winter training in the Gobi Desert of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, the PLA [People's Liberation Army] Navy's Marine Corps and a special operation regiment began to embark on the journey returning to their stationed areas."

Thousands of marines belonging to the PLA Navy carried out "a cross-region long distance maneuver covering over 5,900 kilometers [3,700 miles] from southern province of Guangdong to northwest China's Xinjiang." According to the military website, "The marines engaged in independent confrontational exercises, round-the-clock confrontational exercises lasting 72 hours."

Why should marines belonging to the PLA Navy get training in

the desert (and arctic) conditions in the Gobi Desert? The answer is that China has decided to extend its tentacles abroad, and Djibouti is among the first spots selected. Last year, the *China Daily* explained: "Djibouti is a pivotal country in the Horn of Africa standing between the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. It is a key transfer stop for international humanitarian missions, including those of the United Nations." The former French colony's peaceful environment makes it an ideal place for a naval "outpost." ...

Today, not only is China constructing a \$3 billion railroad from Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital, to Djibouti, but it has also invested \$400 million to modernize a port. The U.S. seems unable to follow this rhythm. This has raised serious concerns in Washington, "given the prospect that 10,000 Chinese troops will occupy a base neighboring the main U.S. base in Africa," noted *Duowei News*.

The London-based *Daily Telegraph* remarked that the move may prompt the U.S. "to relocate sensitive intelligence-gathering operations to more secure locations."

"The main battle over resources is primed to occur among three giants: the U.S., the EU and China. ... Already we see the EU and China undermining the U.S.—even positioning themselves to be able to choke off supplies when the opportunity is right—and working to redirect those commodities to fuel their own needs."

"The Battleground," *Trumpet*, March 2006

The Game of Thrones in the South China Sea May Have a New Player: India **Manu Balachandran, Quartz | February 11**

THE ALREADY HOT WATERS OF THE SOUTH CHINA SEA SEEM TO BE heading for boiling point.

The U.S. and India have held talks to conduct joint naval patrols in the Indian Ocean and in the South China Sea by the end of the year, Reuters reported. Joint naval patrols involve two countries working together to secure maritime interests, a maneuver that the Indian Navy has so far never undertaken.

A strategically vital and reportedly oil rich 3.5 million-square-kilometer body of water, the South China Sea is ensconced between the Asian mainland and a whole host of east Asian island nations. And almost every country touched by it—China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, Brunei and Malaysia, among others—claim some right or the other over it, or at least over some part of it.

China, of course, is the most assertive. The dominant military and economic power in the region, Beijing has been building man-made islands to use as bases for supporting air and sea patrols. The idea is also perceived to be part of its strategy to legitimize its claims over the region in the long run.

India's apparent decision to partner Washington in patrolling the region comes a year after U.S. President Barack Obama and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi agreed to "identify specific areas for expanding maritime cooperation" and "ensuring freedom of navigation" in the South China Sea. When they met in New Delhi in January 2015, the two leaders had expressed concerns about "rising tensions over maritime territorial disputes" in the region. ...

Since coming to power in 2014, Modi has spent much time

and effort on foreign policy. Closer home, his trips to Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Myanmar have been largely aimed at rebuilding India's influence in the region. Modi has also actively engaged with China, hosting president Xi Jinping in September 2014 before making a trip to Beijing in May 2015.

"Now, Vladimir Putin could very well become the leader of a 200 million-soldier army talked about in Revelation 9:16 because that great army is going to be led by Russia God is telling us that this great 200 million-soldier army is going to be allied with our nations, probably Japan and India, and have all of the mechanized warfare of this modern age."

Gerald Flurry, "Russia in Prophecy," The Key of David, Nov. 24, 2013

TW IN BRIEF

South Korea denounces North Korea's missile launch: The South Korean Parliament on Wednesday passed a resolution denouncing North Korea's latest long-range missile launch. The resolution made clear the launch was in violation of United Nations Security Council resolutions, which ban Pyongyang from developing a nuclear program or ballistic missiles. The South Korean resolution defined the missile launch as a "reckless provocation" that has increased tensions between the two Koreas. Meanwhile, Japan said on Wednesday it would impose sanctions on North Korea in response to the rocket launch. Sanctions

include a ban on North Koreans visiting Japan and a cap on money transfers to the North. The step virtually restores the measures that had been in place before Japan's partial lifting of sanctions in 2014, in return for North Korea's pledge to reinvestigate the fate of some Japanese nationals believed to have been abducted to that country decades ago. Experts say the mild sanctions underscore Tokyo's fear of damaging its fragile chance of resolving the abduction issue. Japan's sanctions make little impact since the country has no diplomatic ties with North Korea, plus minimal trade or other exchanges.

ANGLO-AMERICA



The Mystery That Would Be Finished (Rev. 10:7)

Gerald Flurry,

The Key of David | February 14

Revelation 10 discusses two end-time messages. The first is the most important book since the Bible. The second describes how God's people rebelled against the message of that book.



Exclusive: Iran Wants Euro Payment for New and Outstanding Oil Sales

Reuters | February 8

WE TALKED ABOUT THIS



IRAN WANTS TO RECOVER TENS OF BILLIONS OF DOLLARS IT IS owed by India and other buyers of its oil in euros and is billing new crude sales in euros, too, looking to reduce its dependence on the U.S. dollar following last month's sanctions relief.

A source at state-owned National Iranian Oil Co. (NIOC) told Reuters that Iran will charge in euros for its recently signed oil

contracts with firms including French oil and gas major Total, Spanish refiner Cepsa, and Litasco, the trading arm of Russia's Lukoil.

"In our invoices, we mention a clause that buyers of our oil will have to pay in euros, considering the exchange rate versus the dollar around the time of delivery," the NIOC source said. ...

Iran has also told its trading partners who owe it billions of dollars that it wants to be paid in euros rather than U.S. dollars, said the person, who has direct knowledge of the matter. ...

Switching oil sales to euros makes sense as Europe is now one of Iran's biggest trading partners.

"Many European companies are rushing to Iran for business opportunities, so it makes sense to have revenue in euros," said Robin Mills, chief executive of Dubai-based Qamar Energy.

Iran has pushed for years to have the euro replace the dollar as the currency for international oil trade. In 2007, Tehran failed to persuade OPEC members to switch away from the dollar, which its then-President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad called a "worthless

piece of paper."

The NIOC source said Iran's central bank instituted a policy while the country was under sanctions over its disputed nuclear program to carry out foreign trade in euros. ...

Iran has the world's fourth-largest proved reserves of crude oil and expects to quickly increase production, which could lead to tens of billions of euros worth of new oil trade. ...

With Iran now again linking to international lenders through SWIFT (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication), the NIOC source said it was easy for Tehran to be paid in any currency it wants, adding: "And we want euros."

Through the Looking Glass on Rates

John Brown, Euro Pacific Capital | February 10

ON JANUARY 29, JAPAN'S CENTRAL BANK GOVERNOR, HARUHIKO Kuroda, announced that the Bank of Japan would introduce a Negative Interest Rate Policy The European Central Bank, and central banks in Switzerland, Denmark and Sweden have already partially blazed this mysterious trail. The banks have done so in order to weaken their respective currencies and to light a fire under inflation. Swiss national bonds now carry negative rates out to maturities of 11 years, meaning investors must lock up funds for 11 years to receive even a small positive nominal return!

There are economists and investors to whom these policies seem logical. After all, if low interest rates are good, wouldn't negative rates be better? Many have argued that the "zero bound," or the point past which rates can go no lower, is simply the same type of archaic thinking that brought us the gold standard and moral hazard.

These contemporary economists like to suggest that markets should become comfortable with negative rates and accept that they have an important role to play in the "science" of modern finance. But this analysis ignores the fundamental absurdity of the concept. ...

Paying for the privilege of not spending one's money is a completely new development in human history, and one that I believe is at odds with fundamental concepts of economics and psychology. ...

Only eight days before taking the dramatic and highly debatable step to trigger negative rates, Bank of Japan President Haruhiko Kuroda had assured his parliament in Tokyo that such a policy was not even being considered (Reuters, January 21). But less than six days later, after attending the World Economic

Forum in Davos, his position had changed. Did private discussions with world leaders in Davos convince him that a serious international recession and credit crisis would unfold unless all central bankers could fire all available weaponry? ...

Negative interest rates mean that borrowers are paid to borrow. This serves as a powerful inducement for companies to borrow up to the hilt to buy other companies, to pay dividends that are unjustified by earnings levels and to invest in financial assets. Often this includes buying back their own corporate shares thereby increasing earnings per share, the share price and linked executive bonuses.

For savers, negative rates discourage savings, stifling future business investment and consumer demand. However, central banks hope that discouraged savers will instead be lured into spending on consumer products and create short-term economic growth albeit at the price of future growth.

Negative interest rates mean that lenders have to pay borrowers and that depositors have to pay banks to keep and use their money. One does not require a Ph.D. in economics to recognize this as an unnatural distortion that will create more problems than it solves. ...

Since the financial crisis of 2008, over \$50 trillion of new debt have been added globally to the levels that precipitated the banking crisis in the first place.

Readers know that we have felt for many months that the U.S. is far from ready for interest rate increases. We are of the opinion, now echoed by others, that the U.S. will see zero and possibly even negative interest rates before it experiences a 1 percent Fed rate. This does not bode well for our future.

Interest Costs Will Make Up Entire Deficit in Five Years, White House Projects

MarketWatch | February 9

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AMASSED A TON OF DEBT TO HELP PULL the country through the financial crisis. The bill for all that borrowing is about to swell.

According to the latest White House budget projections, the government's interest costs are expected to more than triple to \$787 billion by 2026, as interest rates rise, from \$223 billion in 2015.

By 2025 and 2026, the government will spend more on interest costs than all non-defense discretionary outlays.

By 2021, White House forecasters see interest costs making up the entire deficit of \$552 billion. ...

Under the White House budget, the national debt will increase from \$19 trillion to more than \$27 trillion over the next decade. ...

70 Percent of U.S. Spending Is Writing Checks to Individuals

Investor's Business Daily | February 10

BURIED DEEP IN A SECTION OF PRESIDENT OBAMA'S BUDGET, released this week, is an eye-opening fact: This year, 70 percent of all the money the federal government spends will be in the form of direct payments to individuals, an all-time high.

In effect, the government has become primarily a massive money-transfer machine, taking \$2.6 trillion from some and handing it back out to others. These government transfers now account for 15 percent of GDP, another all-time high. In 1991, direct payments accounted for less than half the budget and 10 percent of GDP.

What's more, the cost of these direct payments is exploding. Even after adjusting for inflation, they've shot up 29 percent under Obama.

Where do these checks go? The biggest chunk, 38.6 percent, goes to pay health bills, either through Medicare, Medicaid or Obamacare. A third goes out in the form of Social Security checks.

Only 21 percent goes toward poverty programs—or "income security" as it's labeled in the budget—and a mere 5 percent ends up in the hands of veterans. ...

Here's another way to look at it: If all these federal direct payments went only to the poor, every person living in poverty today would receive an annual check worth \$55,900. ...

[Obamacare], in fact, adds a new spending category to the budget—called "health insurance assistance"—which will total \$456 billion through 2019, with annual spending levels topping \$100 billion in the years after that.

What's more, overall federal health spending in 2019 will be nearly twice as high as it was in 2008 and will account for 30 percent of all federal outlays (up from 25 percent in 2008).

Another overlooked item in Obama's budget: He expects immigration reform to cost hundreds of billions of dollars. ...

TW IN BRIEF

Nevada rancher Cliven Bundy arrested: Nevada rancher Cliven Bundy was arrested in Portland, Oregon, Wednesday, according to jail records. The 74-year-old was reportedly on his way to the Malheur National Wildlife refuge to support four protesters calling for the removal of all federal policing agents from Harney County, Oregon. Bundy's son Ammon, who is now facing a felony charge on conspiracy to impede a federal official, organized the protest. Now that both Bundys have been arrested, the four remaining protesters have said they will turn themselves over to the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Illegals receive driver's licenses: Roughly 605,000 driver's licenses were issued to illegal immigrants in California last year after the implementation of Assembly Bill 60 at the start of 2015. The bill grants people who are in the country illegally the right to obtain a driver's license in California. The California Department of Motor Vehicles said the licenses issued to illegals accounted for nearly half of all new licenses for 2015. Licenses granted under the law have the term "federal limits apply" printed on them. That means only California law officials are obligated to recognize the licenses as valid identification. California is among 12 states that

now allow illegal immigrants to obtain driver's licenses.

Annual report on global threats: The United States Office of National Intelligence released its annual report on Tuesday on global threat assessments. Among the threats that Director of National Intelligence James Clapper submitted to Congress was that Iran might attempt to use any additional U.S. citizens held in Iran as bargaining chips for U.S. concessions. Clapper's report maintained that Iran was the "foremost state sponsor of terrorism." He also warned that the Islamic State is likely to attack the United States directly this year. The intelligence report stated that North Korea is expanding its uranium and plutonium reactors and that it is pursuing nuclear-armed missiles that can reach the United States.

Farrakhan visits Tehran: The controversial leader of the Nation of Islam movement, Louis Farrakhan, accepted an invitation to visit Iran. Farrakhan spoke at a ceremony in Tehran on Thursday marking the 37th anniversary of the Islamic Revolution. Iran will be parading one of its homemade drones at the event. Farrakhan is known for his racist and anti-Semitic rhetoric.



Tap Into God's Spiritual Power

Stephen Flurry,

Trumpet Daily | February 12

Break through to God—and fill up on His awesome power!

