

Trumpet Weekly

SEPTEMBER 23, 2016

German Chancellor Angela Merkel gives a press conference on September 19, the day after regional election polls in Berlin.



The Inevitable Decline of Merkel's Popularity

Kieren Underwood | September 20

FOR THE “QUIET GERMAN,” WHO IS THE MOST POWERFUL WOMAN in the world, politics has long been a game of matching public opinion. “I’m going to be all things to all people,” Angela Merkel said after winning the German chancellorship in 2005. When Green leader Katrin Göring-Eckardt was asked by George Packer whether Merkel had any principles, she hesitated before saying, “She has a strong value of freedom, and everything else is negotiable.”

For 11 years, Merkel’s methods have worked. Even now many of her critics won’t deny that the economic picture is the best Germany has seen.

But a fault has recently [appeared in the Merkel machine](#): She has gone against public opinion.

The Mecklenburg-Vorpommern state elections on September 4 proved that. The state makes up only 2 percent of the German population. Yet Spiegel called the elections a “vote about the

chancellor,” the “Merkel-vote.” Her Christian Democratic Union (CDU) placed third, with a mere 19 percent of the vote. Ahead of it were the Social Democrats (SPD) with 30.6 percent and Alternative for Germany (AfD) with 20.8 percent.

The AfD certainly addressed the concerns of the conservative citizens in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, and, as Edmond Stoiber suggests, the CDU seems to have lost sight of the democratic right. However, as the *Trumpet* wrote in April, “People don’t really trust the AfD, but they don’t see an alternative—the [Christian Social Union] is only present in Bavaria.”

Two weeks after the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern state elections, on September 18, the scenario nearly repeated itself in Berlin. Merkel’s CDU recorded its worst result ever, picking up only 17.6 percent of the vote. The AfD rocketed, entering parliament for the first time with 14 percent of the vote.

Going Against Public Opinion

Russia’s annexation of Crimea in March 2014 was a turning point for Merkel’s approach to public opinion. Russian President Vladimir Putin had quickly and effectively gained territory, and the West was horrified. Although Merkel did not want to use military force, she promised that Russia would “not get away” with the annexation. She wanted a serious response.

Public opinion was against her. Spiegel reported that 54 percent of Germans believed the European Union and United States should accept Russia’s actions. A Pew poll revealed only 19 percent of Germans supported NATO sending arms to Ukraine—the lowest percentage of the NATO nations surveyed.

Since then, the chancellor’s popularity has taken a beating. The Syrian civil war, which began in 2011, finally wreaked its consequences in Germany in 2014. Spiegel identified Syria as Merkel’s “biggest problem.” Merkel’s only guiding principle, as Katrin Göring-Eckardt said, has been “a strong value of freedom.” For the chancellor, that means allowing millions of migrants into Germany.

Two million migrants entered Germany in 2015. Around 860,000 of them departed at the same time, leaving Germany with 1.1 million more residents. In comparison, net immigration in the United States—where immigration has dominated political debates—was 1.7 million. America’s population is four times the size of Germany’s, with 27 times the land area. To match the magnitude of Germany’s issue, the U.S. would have to have immigration rates 2½ times greater than it has now.

To cap off the year of immigration, an estimated 2,000 “Arab” or “North African” men working in groups sexually assaulted around 1,200 women on New Year’s Eve in Cologne. The assaults were one of Germany’s biggest scandals in recent years, made worse by the “failure of national newspapers and public broadcasters to report on them until days after the event.”

Those who had reservations about the impact of Muslim immigration were swept over the edge with floods of outrage. That small minority of genuinely racist Germans now had a reason to scream. Arsons and crimes against refugee shelters increased 15-fold and fivefold respectively from 2014 to 2015.

And yet, Chancellor Merkel stood by her migrant policy. Before the immigrants arrived, her popularity was at 75 percent. Halfway into 2016, it had dropped below 50.

Then came the Böhmermann scandal. It was underreported

by international media—hardly anyone outside of Europe would know of the TV moderator and satirist, Jan Böhmermann, who works for German public broadcaster ZDF. But his poem insulting Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan sparked a huge debate in Germany.

The German chancellor had been working overtime to broker a deal with Turkey to seal off migrants flowing in from the Middle East. The deal itself was controversial, and arranging it meant pandering to the Turks who have been trying to gain entry into the EU for years. In short, Merkel wanted to please Erdoğan.

President Erdoğan saw the poem as an offensive attack on a foreign head of state and demanded Germany prosecute Böhmermann. Merkel jumped to Erdoğan’s aid, prohibited the publication of the poem, and allowed Böhmermann’s prosecution.

“We just experienced the beginning of the end of chancellorship #Merkel,” Oliver Kalkofe wrote on Twitter concerning the Böhmermann affair. “I am ashamed by the lack of spine.”

As the scandal’s effects kicked in, we wrote, “At the beginning of April, 56 percent of the population was satisfied with Merkel’s policy But after Böhmermann’s poem, her popularity dropped by 11 percent—a big shift in German politics.”

Notwithstanding the loud criticism of her migrant policies from supposed party allies such as Horst Seehofer, Edmund Stoiber and Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg, prior to July, Merkel could point to the fact that no serious terrorist attacks had yet occurred on German soil.

July changed that when Germany suffered four high-profile killings in the space of only a week by men of Middle Eastern origins. The attacks were not on the scale that occurred in Paris and Nice, France. Nevertheless, after Merkel’s popularity experienced a brief bounce-back after Brexit, it declined drastically again. The popularity of Horst Seehofer, state premier of Bavaria and CSU leader, experienced the inverse of Merkel’s decline.

In all this, no single politician stands out as the successor to Merkel’s long reign. To the public, Horst Seehofer is not up to the job. He has done well when he criticizes Merkel, but you can’t base policy on accusations. Frauke Petry, of the rising AfD, is barely even trusted by supporters of her own party—most see the popularity of the AfD as protest votes. Veteran politician Edmund Stoiber has rejected a comeback—he says he’s too old—and is comfortable to continue “Merkel-bashing” in the beer halls instead.

Angela Merkel won’t go down easily because she’s a brilliant politician—possibly one of the greatest of our time. CDU politician Rainer Eppelmann, who became close to Merkel after the fall of the Berlin Wall, said, “I have the impression that she thinks things over more carefully and is always a few moves ahead of her competitor.”

The chancellor isn’t oblivious to Germany’s problems. One senior official in her government described her as the “best analyst of any given situation that I could imagine.” But this time, she has decided to act contrary to public opinion.

We are witnessing the decline of Merkel’s popularity. Next we will see someone who can give the public what it wants; a man for emergencies. Germany wants a man who will speak “plain-text” to the public. For years, the *Trumpet* has been watching for such a man. Read [“A Strong German Leader Is Imminent”](#) for more details. Chancellor Angela Merkel’s decline is inevitable. But what comes next will be more dramatic and is equally inevitable.

TrumpetDaily

RADIO SHOW

BLACK VICTIM, BLACK OFFICER, BLACK POLICE CHIEF, BLACK RIOTERS—
WHITE 'DEVILS' | SEPTEMBER 22

GERMANY'S POLITICAL CRISIS—WHERE IT IS LEADING | SEPTEMBER 21

GERMANY'S TRANSFORMATION AND THE DISGRACEFUL GITMO EXODUS |
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'SUDDENLY' EUROPE READY FOR JOINT EU ARMY | SEPTEMBER 19

Syria: Ceasefire, What Ceasefire?

ON SUNDAY, AN AIR STRIKE OVER SYRIA STRUCK AN AID CONVOY killing 20 civilians and destroying 18 aid trucks—the first such attack since the war began in 2011. Shortly before the attack, residents of the besieged city of Aleppo reported at least 25 barrel bombs. According to residents, two of the bombs were described as being as large as dumpsters and filled with explosives and shrapnel. The attacks come as a ceasefire—albeit in name only—was in effect.

According to the [original report](#) by the *New York Times*, “Witnesses and rescuers said the convoy appeared to have been hit by multiple air strikes, first destroying trucks and then two more hitting the rescue workers as they helped the wounded. The tactic, known as a “double-tap” strike, has been used by Syrian and Russian aircraft.” Later, the United States government confirmed that they believed the Russians were behind the attack.

[Commenting on the attack](#), Tom Rogin wrote in the *National Review*:

The Russians are denying that their aircraft were operating above Aleppo during the strike, but they know the U.S. government quickly figured out that they were responsible. After all, every time the Russians or Syrians launch jets,

U.S. radar and intelligence assets carefully monitor them, warning U.S. forces of any deliberate Russian or Syrian air strike. The monitoring also provided valuable intelligence on where Russian military attention is focused. Regardless, Putin knows the U.S. employs these capabilities and that we would have been focused on Russia's heavy air coverage of Aleppo. And that leads to the key takeaway: Putin just doesn't care that he's been caught. On the contrary, his strategy is actually served by his lack of concern. ...

In destroying the humanitarian convoy, Putin has simply reinforced his long-standing message to the West. In many ways, it is pitch-perfect. An aid convoy is not off-limits, Putin is telling President Obama—which means that we should expect worse to come. In other words, unless the United States accepts keeping Bashar Assad in power, Putin will continue to burn Syria. And Assad—totally undeterred by the pathetic weakness of U.S. deterrent power—revels in this long-standing slaughter strategy. Russia might hint that this attack is retaliation for the accidental U.S. bombing of Syrian soldiers, but it wasn't. Instead, it was pure Putin: deliberate and brutal application of force in the service of a long-term strategy.

Iran the Cause of the Syrian Civil War?

WE TALKED ABOUT THIS



SAAD HARIRI, SON OF MURDERED FORMER LEBANESE PRIME MINISTER Rafik Hariri, penned an opinion piece in the *New York Times* on Thursday titled “[Iran Must Stop Meddling in Arab Affairs](#).” Although Hariri is head of the pro-Saudi block in Lebanon, he nevertheless details a number of arenas where Iran uses its proxies to destabilize Arab states.

On Feb. 14, 2005, a massive bomb killed the former prime

minister of Lebanon, Rafik Hariri, my father, along with 22 other Lebanese. The Special Tribunal for Lebanon at The Hague identified five Hezbollah operatives as suspected collaborators in the murder. If proved, that would mean his assassination was carried out by Iran's allies in Lebanon, who are financed and controlled by the regime in Tehran.

Three years later, in 2008, Hezbollah moved to occupy Beirut, and after many years of promising that its vast,

Iranian-supplied arsenal was intended only to protect Lebanon from Israel, turned its weapons against the Lebanese people.

More recently, Hezbollah has prevented Lebanon from electing a new president and has imposed a devastating gridlock on the country's government in order to blackmail the citizenry into accepting its demands.

Meanwhile, Hezbollah has sent thousands of young Lebanese men to fight and die in Syria to defend the odious regime of Bashar Assad, the brutal dictator condemned in the United Nations and around the world for presiding over the deaths of at least a quarter million of his own people. Mr. Assad—with the help of Iran, its Revolutionary Guards and its proxies, Hezbollah and militias in Iraq and Afghanistan—has created the worst refugee problem since World War II, ruthlessly displacing millions of people into neighboring countries and Europe.

Hariri then blames Iran for what has befallen Syria and the cascade of crises following the 2011 uprising.

In Syria, the disaster that has befallen its people began when Iran and its allies intervened to prop up the brutal dictatorship of Mr. Assad against a popular, and originally nonviolent and nonsectarian, pro-democracy uprising. The Syrian people were merely asking for the reform of a vicious and corrupt system by a government that rules by brute force. Now Lebanon is overwhelmed by some 1.3

million Syrian refugees driven from their homes by this remorseless regime.

The tragedy in Yemen, too, began when the Iranian-backed Houthi rebel militia began its battle against its own people in a coup condemned by the United Nations Security Council. They did this simply to menace and threaten the stability of Saudi Arabia and the other Persian Gulf Arab states.

In Iraq, Iran has promoted and funded brutal proxy militias that have spread sectarian hate in the country and are now undermining efforts to defeat the Islamic State.

Iranian officials brazenly boast that their country is now in control of four Arab capitals—Beirut, Baghdad, Sana and Damascus—and gloat over their hegemony. Such bluster is an obvious threat, which we in Lebanon know to take very seriously, that Iran wants to expand its influence in the Middle East by sowing discord, promoting terrorism and sectarian hatred, and destabilizing the region through proxies, while pretending to be bystanders. ...

Iran has a unique opportunity to help those who are really fighting extremism in the Arab world. But to do that, it must stop meddling in Arab affairs, from Yemen and Bahrain to Iraq, Syria and Lebanon. It must stop feeding Sunni resentment, which only encourages a fringe minority to think terrorism is the answer. And Iran can force militias from Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon and Iran to leave Syria. That would be a great first step to clear the last tactical hurdle facing those who are really fighting extremism in the Muslim world.

Libyan People Protest Against UN-Backed Government

“A CROSS LIBYA, PEOPLE TOOK TO THE STREETS THIS WEEKEND to protest against the United Nations-backed Government of National Accord (GNA) and the UN's Libya mission,” wrote Tom Westcott for Middle East Eye this week. He continued:

Hundreds turned out in Benghazi on Friday in a rally calling for the dismissal of the head of the UN's Libya mission, Martin Kobler, and GNA head Faye al-Seraj. A bomb that exploded near the protest merely increased the number of people taking to the streets. ...

“There were hundreds and hundreds of people at the protest yesterday against Kobler and Serraj,” Salem, 23, told Middle East Eye. High-ranking attendees included Libya's eastern government's Interior Minister, Mohammed al-Mahdani al-Fahri, and the head of the Benghazi Security Directorate, Saleh Huwaidi.

Despite a helicopter and low-flying aircraft securing the protest, someone still managed to place a bomb beside an ambulance, although he was arrested shortly after it exploded, Salem said.

“Hundreds more people came and joined the protest after the explosion,” he said. “They were saying, ‘We are going to die today or tomorrow anyway, so we are not afraid, and we are not going to leave.’”

Smaller protests against the GNA took place in other

towns across Libya, some of which condemned the international community for its stance on the recent takeover of four of Libya's central oil ports by forces loyal to the eastern government.

The UK, U.S., Spain, Germany, Italy and France last week released a joint statement condemning the largely peaceful takeover of the oil ports, saying the GNA's presidential council was “the sole steward” of the country's oil. “Oil infrastructure, production and export must remain under the exclusive control of the National Oil Corporation (NOC) acting under the GNA's authority,” the statement said.

“We call for all military forces that have moved into the oil crescent to withdraw immediately, without preconditions.”

The ill-thought-out statement provoked a wave of anger across Libya, and at some protests photocopies of the flags of the countries that made the statement were burned.

The military takeover of the ports had been welcomed by many Libyans, who saw the move as a much-awaited chance for Libya's oil exports, the country's main source of income, to resume.

Having virtually installed the GNA as the sole legitimate leadership of Libya, the international community and especially Europe is poised to get more involved in Libya, even as the Libyan public refuses to submit to what they see as a imposed government.

Latest Dead Sea Scroll Deciphered

THE CHARRED LUMP OF A 2,000-YEAR-OLD SCROLL SAT IN AN Israeli archaeologist's storeroom for decades, too brittle to open," wrote Daniel Estrin for the Associated Press on Thursday.

Now, new imaging technology has revealed what was written inside: the earliest evidence of a biblical text in its standardized form. The passages from the book of Leviticus, scholars say, offer the first physical evidence of what has long been believed: that the version of the Hebrew Bible used today goes back 2,000 years. ...

Researchers say it is the first time they have been able to read the text of an ancient scroll without having to physically open it. "You can't imagine the joy in the lab," said Pnina Shor of the Israel Antiquities Authority, who participated in the study. ...

The biblical scroll examined in the study was first discovered by archaeologists in 1970 at Ein Gedi, the site of an ancient Jewish community near the Dead Sea. Inside the ancient synagogue's ark, archaeologists found lumps of scroll fragments. The synagogue was destroyed in an ancient fire, charring the scrolls. The dry climate of the area kept them preserved, but when archaeologists touched them, the scrolls would begin to disintegrate. So the charred logs were shelved for nearly half a century, with no one knowing what was written inside.

Last year, Yosef Porath, the archaeologist who excavated at Ein Gedi in 1970, walked into the Israel Antiquities Authority's Dead Sea Scrolls preservation lab in Jerusalem with boxes of the charcoal chunks. The lab has been creating hi-resolution images of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the earliest copies of biblical texts ever discovered, and he asked

researchers to scan the burned scrolls. "I looked at him and said, 'You must be joking,'" said Shor, who heads the lab. She agreed, and a number of burned scrolls were scanned using X-ray-based micro-computed tomography, a 3D version of the CT scans hospitals use to create images of internal body parts. The images were then sent to William Brent Seales, a researcher in the computer science department of the University of Kentucky. Only one of the scrolls could be deciphered.

Using the "virtual unwrapping" technology, he and his team painstakingly captured the three dimensional shape of the scroll's layers, using a digital triangulated surface mesh to make a virtual rendering of the parts they suspected contained text. They then searched for pixels that could signify ink made with a dense material like iron or lead. The researchers then used computer modeling to virtually flatten the scroll, to be able to read a few columns of text inside. "Not only were you seeing writing, but it was readable," said Seales. "At that point we were absolutely jubilant."

Scholars have believed the Hebrew Bible in its standard form first came about some 2,000 years ago, but never had physical proof, until now, according to the study. Previously the oldest known fragments of the modern biblical text dated back to the eighth century. The text discovered in the charred Ein Gedi scroll is "100 percent identical" to the version of the book of Leviticus that has been in use for centuries, said Dead Sea Scroll scholar Emmanuel Tov from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, who participated in the study. "This is quite amazing for us," he said. "In 2,000 years, this text has not changed."

EUROPE

Trumpet Hour

CHARLOTTE UNREST, IMPENDING WORLD FINANCIAL CRISIS, U.S. TERROR ATTACKS, PUTIN PRESIDENT FOR LIFE? AND MUCH MORE | SEPTEMBER 23

GERMANY'S LEADERSHIP CRISIS, RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE IN THE MILITARY, THYROID HEALTH, AND MORE | SEPTEMBER 21

T Another Merkel Defeat Points to an Ungovernable Germany

Richard Palmer | September 26

GERMAN CHANCELLOR ANGELA MERKEL SUFFERED YET ANOTHER defeat, this time in regional elections in Berlin on September 18. But the results point to far more than trouble for Ms. Merkel—they point to the wholesale rejection of Germany's mainstream political parties.

Ms. Merkel's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) received its lowest ever share of the vote in Berlin, with 17.6 percent. Most strikingly, fringe right-wing party Alternative for Germany (AfD) received 14.2

percent of the vote and the Left Party won 15.6 percent.

The AfD is well known for its anti-immigration rhetoric; it is often smeared as being far right. Regardless of the accuracy of that label, it is outside the mainstream German political system. The vast majority of Germany's establishment considers AfD beyond the pale and refuses to work with it in any way.

But what has been lost in the panic of the AfD's popularity is the rise of the Left. The Left is probably more extreme left than

the AfD is right. Some of its members—in Bavaria, the entire party—is under government surveillance over fears that it wants to overthrow the state. It is the successor of the Communist party, the Socialist Unity Party, that ruled East Germany during the Cold War.

The Socialist Unity Party ran the infamous Stasi secret police and backed the Soviet Union—the empire that slips just behind Mao Zedong’s China in the list of most murderous regimes of all time. In like manner, the Left Party wants to end NATO and big businesses. It takes busts of Karl Marx on the campaign trail. After an interview with one of its leaders, even the Charlemagne columnist for the left-leaning *Economist* magazine wrote, “I found myself praying that these people never get anywhere near power.”

Until 2014, no mainstream party would form a coalition with the Left. Eventually, the surge in its popularity tempted the center-left Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the Green Party into a coalition, but the SPD has promised not to work with them on a government level.

Combined, these extreme-left- and right-wing parties received nearly a third of the vote. The fact that one in three Germans is so fed up with the current administration that he is willing to vote for these parties shows the extreme lack of faith Germans hold in the traditional established parties.

Meanwhile, the two mainstream parties, the CDU and SPD, received less than 40 percent of the vote. Most people voted for parties outside of the traditional mainstream—albeit many voted for parties less extreme than the AfD and the Left.

“Berlin does not represent all of Germany, but it is the capital,” wrote [Geopolitical Futures](#) founder [George Friedman](#). “Therefore, the fact that the mainstream parties were together repudiated by the majority of voters is significant. In Berlin at least, the German political system has shattered.” He continued:

If the Berlin results are replicated on a national level, Germany is going to become ungovernable. This assumes that Berlin is a leading indicator of party support, that in a national election the establishment parties wouldn’t get more votes to avoid this outcome, and that Germany’s political and economic conditions won’t improve. Having said all that, this result, taken at face value, indicates that the European foundation, Germany, is moving toward a major political crisis that will resonate.

Friedman pointed to conservable evidence that Germany is heading toward a financial crisis.

“When you consider the fact that the results of the Berlin election look like someone smashed a plate on the floor—with support for the various parties fragmenting into pieces—it is clear that something is being felt on the ground,” he warned. “The strength of the left-wing parties is not that they are pro-migration. That doesn’t help them much, if at all. Their strength comes from their anti-austerity stance. Voters believe that anti-austerity parties know the current situation can’t continue. They also believe that, at the very least, these parties can’t be worse than the mainstream ones.”

These elections certainly point to the difficulties Ms. Merkel faces in continuing as Germany’s chancellor. But this is about much more than one individual’s career. A crisis is building, and as Friedman wrote, Germany is, right now, “the pivot of the world.”

“If Germany weakens or destabilizes, Europe destabilizes, and it is not too extreme to say that if Europe destabilizes, the world can as well,” he wrote. The local elections in Berlin could have global consequences.

For more on the challenges facing Germany’s political system, read *Trumpet* columnist Brad Macdonald’s recent article, [“Germany, Political Crisis and Superman.”](#)

Is a Global Financial Crisis Brewing?

WE TALKED ABOUT THIS



TWO MAJOR, RESPECTED FINANCIAL ORGANIZATIONS HAVE warned that a financial crisis is building. The Bank of International Settlements (BIS) warned in its quarterly report, September 18, of growing instability in financial markets, especially in China.

There are signs that both the United States and China are cutting down on imports. This could have a huge impact on Germany, whose economy depends on exports.

“As Europe has weakened, Germany has shifted its export focus to the United States and, to a lesser extent, China,” wrote [George Friedman](#). He warned that: “[I]f the U.S. is cutting imports from Germany, Germany’s economy will be affected rapidly and we think dramatically.”

This is why the BIS’s report is so significant. The instability that it warns of “does not seem to be cataclysmic,” wrote Friedman,

“but given that Germany is at the heart of the earthquake, even a moderate shaking will bring it down.”

The annual report of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), published on September 22, is more ominous.

In an article titled [“UN Fears Third Leg of the Global Financial Crisis—With Prospect of Epic Debt Defaults,”](#) *Telegraph* international business editor Ambrose Evans-Pritchard warned that the coming crisis could “prove to be the definitive crisis of globalized capitalism, the demise of the liberal free-market orthodoxies promoted for almost 40 years by the Bretton Woods institutions, the OECD, and the Davos fraternity.” In other words, it could completely overturn the financial system that the U.S. has dominated for 60 years.

“Alarm bells have been ringing over the explosion of corporate debt levels in emerging economies, which now exceed \$25

trillion. Damaging deflationary spirals cannot be ruled out,” states UNCTAD’s report.

“We know already that the poisonous side-effect of zero rates and quantitative easing in the U.S., Europe and Japan was to flood developing nations with cheap credit, upsetting their internal chemistry and drawing them into a snare,” wrote Evans-Pritchard. “What is less understood is just how destructive this has been.”

Corporate debt lies at the core of the problem. In 2008, companies in emerging markets had borrowed 57 percent of the size of their economies. Now that figure is 104 percent. “If the global economy were to slow down more sharply, a significant share of developing-country debt incurred since 2008 could become unpayable and exert considerable pressure on the financial system,” warns the report.

“As capital begins to flow out, there is now a real danger of entering a third phase of the financial crisis which began in the U.S. housing market in late 2007 before spreading to the

European bond market,” it says. As Evans-Pritchard pointed out, this is talking about a crisis dramatically large than 2008.

“We are left with a world in a state of leaderless policy inertia, unable to escape slow suffocation,” he wrote. “Trade is stagnant. Deflation is still knocking at the door a full 7½ years into the economic cycle, even with the monetary pedal pushed to the floor. The next downturn will test this regime to destruction.”

He places the blame on free-market economic system, and calls for a major overhaul of the very foundations of the way the international economy functions.

In 1984, Herbert Armstrong wrote that a *massive banking crisis in America* “could suddenly result in triggering European nations to **UNITE AS A NEW WORLD POWER** larger than either the Soviet Union or the U.S.”

The EU remains extremely vulnerable to this kind of crisis, which could easily force radical change. For more on possible fallout from a global banking crisis, read our article [“A Bold Warning: America’s Economic Collapse.”](#)

EU Agrees on Roadmap to Common Military

EUROPEAN UNION LEADERS, MINUS BRITAIN, AGREED ON A TIME-line for developing military cooperation, at a meeting in Bratislava, September 16. The European Commission will put forward concrete proposals in December, and governments will aim to form an agreement by June.

Federica Mogherini, the EU’s de facto foreign minister, said earlier in the month that this time the push for a shared military is “the real stuff.” The push had moved beyond general discussions, she said, and would have the “first operational results” by spring.

Times of London reported on the plans, writing:

The EU army timetable, drafted by Jean-Claude Juncker, president of the European Commission, commits Brussels to agreeing a three-point plan. All three measures have been vetoed by Britain over the past five years.

Mr. Juncker’s proposals call on the EU to “establish permanent, structured cooperation in defense, including the creation of common battle groups to carry out military intervention in crises.”

The document, seen by the *Times*, also calls for the establishment of a “single operational headquarters for all EU civilian and military missions to be more efficient and quicker to act” and a “defense fund to boost investment in shared military capabilities.” ...

The new defense fund means that the EU will compete with NATO for cash for an **embryonic European air force and navy** through the Brussels budget for drones, cyberdefense, air transport and naval vessels.

Europe’s defense ministers will meet on September 27, to continue discussing proposals. They will also discuss military operations in North Africa.

“Whenever I present the plan to ambassadors, ministers ... my last slide is that all of this requires political commitment,” Mogherini said. “At the moment I don’t see resistance, at the moment I see readiness.”

In 1978, Herbert W. Armstrong wrote:

The Europeans are far more disturbed about their safety in relying on United States military power to protect them than Americans realize! ...

Europeans want their own united military power! They know that a political union of Europe would produce a third major world power, as strong as either the U.S. or the USSR—possibly stronger!

For more on how they are beginning to make that happen, read our article [“Is Europe Finally Ready for an Army?”](#)

Germany, the New Normal Power

GERMANY’S RAPID MILITARY TRANSFORMATION IS THE SUBJECT of an article titled [“Germany Embraces Realpolitik Once More”](#) by United States Army War College’s John Deni.

“The recently released German defense white paper, or *weissbuch*, represents a significant step forward in Germany’s ongoing transformation to a ‘normal’ power,” he wrote. “Although it has

received limited attention in the Anglophone media, the *weissbuch* marks a fundamental shift in several respects.”

Germany’s last white paper was published in 2006. At the time, that was a major change, opening up Germany to engage in foreign missions alongside organizations like NATO and the United Nations. But the 2016 paper contains even more significant changes.

The paper calls for Germany to join “ad hoc” coalitions. “What is perhaps most significant is the declaration that Germany will be willing to not simply participate in but also to *initiate* such coalitions,” wrote Deni. “This is a major departure from the past, in which Germany consistently sought to exercise hard power solely through established multilateral institutions. In some ways, we have already seen this change put into practice.”

He also noted an important shift in what appears to be a minor change in language. The 2006 paper says that Germany’s policy is driven by its value, with the “goal of safeguarding the interests.” The 2016 paper states that Germany’s policy is merely “tied” to values, while it is “guided” by interests. Deni wrote:

There is a constant tension in many liberal Western democracies between interests and values. ... For the United States, as for many countries, protecting interests often means checking values at the door. The 2016 *weissbuch* makes it clear that Germany is now joining that club, committing itself to a more pragmatic role in the world.

Just as Germany is becoming a more “normal” country, it is also confirming its role as the European Union’s prime mover and indispensable country. Whether these two entities can fulfill their usually complementary and often shared ambitions remains unclear.

For more on these shifts in Germany, read “[A Radical Shift in German Policy](#)” from the September *Trumpet* magazine.

ASIA

Report: Beijing’s Man-made Islands ‘Bigger (and a Bigger Deal) Than You Think’

WE TALKED ABOUT THIS



LAST YEAR, WHEN NEWS FIRST BROKE OF CHINA DREDGING UP sand in the South China Sea to build artificial islands, it made quite a splash. But before long, onlookers began losing interest and viewing it as small and fairly inconsequential to the world of geopolitics.

But a new analysis in [War on the Rocks](#) said the ongoing project should not be dismissed or downplayed. The September 21 article, “China’s Artificial Islands Are Bigger (and a Bigger Deal) Than You Think,” stated:

“[T]he potential combination of China’s premier antiship and anti-air capabilities—along with the sheer, breathtaking scale of China’s island-building—call for serious consideration of the faux islands’ potential impact to U.S. diplomacy and contingency planning, as well as the need to take all possible measures to prevent their full militarization.

While the Chinese government has consistently claimed that its land reclamation projects are intended for non-military purposes, ... recent imagery shows large-scale construction of airfields and base facilities. The most significant base-building has been concentrated at what I term the “big three”: Fiery Cross, Subi and Mischief Reef. All three of these new islands will have approximately 10,000-foot runways, deep-water harbors, and enough reinforced hangars to house 24 fighters as well as bombers, tankers and airborne early-warning aircraft. Just as significant are the other airfield support facilities China appears to be constructing.

War on the Rocks made a powerful case that the main purpose of these bases is not to counter China’s local rivals, but to prepare it to challenge America:

One might think that China, surely, does not plan to base aircraft on these islands with the intent of using them to counter a U.S. intervention. ... But if that is *not* the intent,

then *why build three?* Even before building the islands, China could easily have overwhelmed its regional competitors with naval surface action groups, an aircraft carrier and land-based aircraft. If China had built just *one* island base with dozens of aircraft, it would have enjoyed an even greater overmatch against local rivals. But instead, China built *three* islands, each with facilities that appear large enough to host a fighter regiment (or brigade) and support aircraft. To put that in perspective, three such air regiments on the three islands would add up to a fighter *division*, a formation consisting of about 17,000 personnel, and a commitment indicating that China perhaps has a larger foe in mind. ...

Some China-watchers have said that China plays Go (a game of position), while America tends to be a poker player—daring its opponents to call its bets. By staking out its bold new positions in the South China Sea, China’s goal may be to up the ante to a point where the United States is faced with a tough choice: put a pile of chips on the table and risk huge losses or fold up its cards and go home. The United States should do what it takes now to ensure that the game doesn’t get to that point.

In the July issue of the *Trumpet*, editor in chief Gerald Flurry explained that with its increasingly belligerent behavior, China is “[Steering the World Toward War](#).” He wrote:

These militarized islands now function as forward bases for Beijing to challenge seven decades of American naval dominance in the Pacific Rim. This should alarm the world! ...

Each year, \$5.3 trillion of trade passes through the South China Sea. That is roughly one third of the world’s maritime commerce! Since Japan’s defeat in World War II, America has protected this vital trade route and brought peace to this part of the world. Now the American military is retreating, and other great powers are coming in to fill the

vacuum. This is going to dramatically affect trade around the world, and U.S. trade especially. A trade war often precedes a shooting war. That is what happened just before World War II—especially so in Asia. ...

The Bible contains many prophecies of that European power attacking America. This is where China and the other giants of Asia enter the picture. Considering that China now possesses most of the world's strategic sea gates ... the

German-led Holy Roman Empire will need to form a brief alliance with the Asian powers identified in Isaiah 23 (Russia, China, Japan—the “kings of the east”). If Europe finds a way to take advantage of key resources and strategic holdings of China, Russia and Japan—even for a short period—then it would have more than enough power to besiege the Anglo-Saxon nations. This is why China's moves to militarize the South China Sea should be so concerning. ...

Vladimir Putin: President for Life?

ON SUNDAY, RUSSIAN PRESIDENT VLADIMIR PUTIN'S UNITED Russia party enjoyed a massive victory in the nation's parliamentary elections. The win allows Putin to tighten his grip on power, paves the way for him to change the Russian Constitution at his will, and gives more weight to the belief that he will be Russia's ruler for as long as he lives.

The *Atlantic* wrote about the victory in a September 19 article:

More than 90 percent of votes were counted by Monday morning, and Putin's party had won 54 percent of the vote in elections for the Duma, the lower house of parliament. Both the Communist Party and the nationalist LDPR secured about 13 percent, while the social democratic party, A Just Russia, won 6 percent. It was widely expected that Putin's party would win. The results mean United Russia will take 343 of the 450 seats in the Duma. In the 2011 elections, the party won 238 seats. Sunday's outcome means Putin's party holds the largest-ever majority of seats. That, Reuters points out, is enough to allow the party to unilaterally change the country's Constitution. The weekend election was also the first time the people of Crimea, which Russia annexed from Ukraine two years ago, voted in a Russian election as Russian citizens.

BBC reported that Crimean voters overwhelmingly supported Putin's party, giving it all of their region's constituency seats.

In keeping with Russian democratic tradition, there was no shortage of vote rigging in the election. The *Atlantic* wrote:

[T]his year the Kremlin sought to avoid allegations of tampering. Still, some stations did report vote rigging. One video showed an election worker cramming ballots into a

box, and in one part of Siberia, there were reports of “carousel voting,” in which a group of people are bussed to different voting stations to cast ballots more than once.

With each passing vote, Putin's grip on power becomes firmer. It looks more likely with each one that he will go the route of such heads of state as Kim Jung-un, Robert Mugabe, Alexander Lukashenko—deciding to leave office only when his heart stops beating.

This ever tightening grip on power lends credence to the forecasts about Putin made by *Trumpet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry. In 2008, Mr. Flurry said Russia's attack on Georgia signaled a “[dangerous new era](#).” He wrote:

This was the first military strike of a rising Asian superpower—and there will be more! ... Vladimir Putin ... really is the dictator of Russia. He called the breakup of the Soviet Union “the greatest geopolitical disaster of the 20th century.” That gives you some insight into his thinking. **He is trying to resurrect the Soviet empire.** He may not want to exercise the kind of brutality of some of his predecessors, but he certainly is intent on using whatever power is necessary to secure his country's resources! When this former KGB agent calls the Soviet collapse a “disaster,” you have to believe he is going to do something about it! Remember how Adolf Hitler told the world exactly what he was going to do in his book *Mein Kampf*, years before he did it? Why will we never heed such warnings?”

To understand the dangers of our failure to “heed such warnings,” read Mr. Flurry's article “[Russia's Attack on Georgia Signals Dangerous New Era](#).”

Friedman: The World Hasn't Looked Like This Since Before World War II

GEORGE FRIEDMAN, THE FOUNDER OF STRATFOR AND CEO OF Geopolitical Futures, is warning that global instability has not been so primed for conflict since just before the outbreak of World War II.

In a September 22 Mauldin Economics article, he wrote:

Europe and Asia, taken together, are the heart of

humanity. That's where 5 billion out of the 7 billion people in the world live. When instability comes to this part of the world, it shakes humanity.

That's why [the geopolitical pattern developing in Eurasia is so ominous](#). It is like a hurricane—absorbing huge amounts of energy from the ocean, using that energy to build a vast, integrated structure, and then destroying

whatever it touches.

The Eurasian landmass is the main source of that kind of energy in the world. When the various regions start to destabilize and then join together, it creates a geopolitical storm. We are now watching to see whether a hurricane will form.

This is not a phenomenon we see often. The last time we

saw it was before World War II when every region in Eurasia started to destabilize. The destabilized areas then merged into one single integrated conflict, and it caused devastation throughout the region. ... What we see now is each region (India excepted) destabilizing, and the storms beginning to touch. The issue is, of course, what happens next.

TW IN BRIEF

Kashmir still in tumult: Indian troops on Wednesday continued patrolling the terrain near the de facto border that divides Kashmir between Pakistan and India. A spokesman for the army said two groups of militants had infiltrated the Indian-controlled part of Kashmir from locations in the Pakistani portion. Gun battles between soldiers and the rebels raged for half a day, with at least one Indian soldier dying in the violence. This follows a rebel attack on Sunday that killed 17 soldiers. Locals in the villages say the sound of gunfire has become a constant in their lives.

Russia blamed for striking aid convoy: The United States claimed that two Russian aircraft targeted an aid convoy near Aleppo, Syria, on Monday during a ceasefire. U.S. officials blamed Russia for the incident on Tuesday, but Russia denied

the accusation. Eighteen trucks and a 31-vehicle convoy were destroyed in the attack. Two Russian warplanes had been in the area at the time of the attack, U.S. officials said. A Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman said Russia had “nothing to do with this situation.”

North Korea rocket test success: North Korea has declared a “successful” ground test of a new rocket engine designed to launch satellites. The claims, like most from North Korea, are difficult to independently verify but illustrate the country’s continuing advancements in missile and rocket technology, along with nuclear weapon development. The rocket engine test follows what is understood to be North Korea’s most powerful underground nuclear test earlier this month. Kim Jong-un has made it a priority to put a North Korean satellite into space as soon as possible.

ANGLO-AMERICA



The Real Star Wars

Gerald Flurry,

The Key of David | September 25

Learn about the spiritual warfare that began before mankind was created and continues to this day.



President Obama: U.S. Must ‘Accept Constraints’ on Sovereignty

IN A SPEECH THAT IS LIKELY TO BE HIS FINAL ADDRESS TO THE United Nations General Assembly as president of the United States, Barack Obama told his audience on Tuesday that he believes global security can be achieved only if nations give up autonomy and freedom to international bodies like the UN General Assembly.

According to an article in the [Washington Free Beacon](#):

Obama told the audience that he believes global security can be achieved with the help of international institutions like the UN. In his remarks, Obama said “powerful nations” like the United States will have to accept constraints and give up some of their freedom. The president acknowledged that he has been criticized by his own citizens for this belief, but that he remains convinced he is right. Obama also stated that, while countries will have to accept some limits on their freedom, they should not give up the right to defend themselves.

“We can only realize the promise of this institution’s founding to replace the ravages of war with cooperation if powerful nations like my own accept constraints,” Obama said. “I’m convinced in the long run giving up some freedom of action, not giving up our ability to protect ourselves or pursue our core interests but binding ourselves to international rules, over the long-term, enhances our security.”

As President Obama nears the end of his second term, he is becoming more honest about his radical worldview. In the president’s mind, the greatest threat to the world doesn’t come from Islamic terrorist or Third World dictators; he believes this threat come from “Anglo-American imperialist domination.” By opposing those he considers to be allies of American expansionism and supporting those he sees as fellow freedom fighters against imperialist domination, he furthers his goal of making the world an equitable place.

North Carolina's State of Emergency

WE TALKED ABOUT THIS



VIOLENT PROTESTS ERUPTED IN CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA, on Tuesday after an African-American police officer fatally shot a black man who allegedly refused to lay down his gun. People began to protest the shooting after contradictory reports from witnesses emerged over whether or not Keith Lamont Scott was carrying a gun or a book. These protests turned violent Tuesday night, prompting Gov. Pat McCrory to declare a state of emergency and call out the National Guard.

According to an article in the [Charlotte Observer](#):

Protests turned violent for a second night in Charlotte after Tuesday's fatal police shooting of a black man. Late Wednesday, Gov. Pat McCrory declared a state of emergency for the city and deployed the National Guard and State Highway Patrol troopers to assist local police.

One person was shot at the protest and was taken to the hospital with life-threatening injuries, Medic said. The city initially reported that he died, but later retracted that, saying he was on life-support.

City leaders appealed for calm and promised a thorough investigation of the shooting that triggered hours of violent protest and shut down Interstate 85 on Tuesday.

But the unrest continued Wednesday night, with police using tear gas to disperse hundreds of protesters who blocked the intersection of Trade and Tryon streets in the

heart of uptown, then occupied the EpiCentre entertainment complex.

Pockets of the city were on edge late Wednesday afternoon, with some uptown businesses apparently sending workers home early over uncertainty about further protests. The Charlotte Chamber urged businesses in uptown and University City to "remove or chain down all tables, chairs, signs or planters."

At about 4:30 Wednesday, a group of two dozen protesters stood in front of the Bank of America Tower at Trade and Tryon streets. They silently stood and held signs reading "Black Lives Matter" and "Stop Killing Us."

Tensions remain high in Charlotte as video footage has emerged of a group of black men dragging a white man through a parking garage during the riots, beating him as he begged for mercy.

While it would be overstating it to say there is no racism among America's law enforcement officers, there are many who are scrutinizing and magnifying this issue for evil purposes. They are using it dishonestly to explain or excuse some terrifyingly dangerous behavior.

A November 2014 NBC poll said that only 20 percent of Americans think race relations have improved under President Barack Obama, while 38 percent say they have gotten worse. Among black Americans, it's even higher, with 43 percent saying race relations are now worse.

Three Terrorist Attacks in 12 Hours

A MALL IN MINNESOTA, A STREET IN NEW YORK CITY AND A charity race in New Jersey were attacked within 12 hours of each other last Saturday. Authorities are still investigating each act of terrorism.

According to a Daily Beast article titled "[ISIS Claims Credit for Minnesota Attack](#)":

The so-called Islamic State widely known as ISIS claimed credit for a knife-attack that wounded nine people at a Minnesota mall. The terrorist group called the attacker, Dahir A. Adan—a Somali immigrant to the United States—a "soldier of the Islamic State," through its Amaq propaganda channel. ISIS said Adan answered its calls to attack civilians in countries targeting ISIS in Iraq and Syria. But the generic claim of responsibility does not clarify the relationship between the attacker and ISIS in Iraq and Syria, and does not immediately indicate that the attack was coordinated from abroad. The attack began a little after 8 p.m. on Saturday at the Crossroads Center Mall in St. Cloud. Police said the attacker was wearing a private security uniform and mentioned Allah during the attacks. He injured eight people before being shot by an off-duty police officer.

Less than two hours after Dahir Adan went on his stabbing rampage, a pressure cooker bomb exploded on West 23rd Street in Manhattan. This was less than 12 hours after a pipe bomb exploded in a trash can along the route of a charity run in Seaside Park, New Jersey. The Federal Bureau of Investigation has identified Afghan immigrant Ahmad Khan Rahami as the suspected terrorist in both incidents.

According to a *New York Times* article titled "[Ahmad Khan Rahami Was Inspired by Bin Laden, Charges Say](#)":

The man who the authorities say set off powerful bombs in Manhattan and on the Jersey Shore over the weekend planned the attacks for months, conducted a dry run just days before unleashing his assault, and took inspiration from "Brother Osama bin Laden" and other international terrorists, according to a criminal complaint filed in federal court on Tuesday.

The man, Ahmad Khan Rahami, 28, was charged with several crimes, including use of weapons of mass destruction and bombing a place of public use, and the criminal complaint against him outlines how close the attacks came to causing death and even more destruction.

The bomb in Manhattan's Chelsea neighborhood on Saturday night was powerful enough to vault a heavy steel dumpster more than 120 feet through the air, according to the complaint. Windows shattered 400 feet from where the explosion went off, and pieces of the bomb were recovered 650 feet away. Among the 31 victims—two more than first reported—one had to have multiple ball bearings removed from her body as well as bits of metal from an ear and wood shards from her neck, the complaint says.

The charges came on a day when it was revealed that Mr.

Rahami's father told the authorities two years ago that he feared his son was a terrorist, prompting a review by the Federal Bureau of Investigation that did not find any basis for a fuller inquiry.

The death toll of terrorism has increased nearly 800 percent around the world in the past five years, according to the Investigative Project on Terrorism. While most of these attacks have been executed in the Middle East and Africa, the number of terrorist attacks perpetrated on U.S. soil is increasing as well.

TW IN BRIEF

Navy transgender training: A message sent to the entire Navy last week says that all sailors must undergo transgender behavioral education by July 2017. The deadline coincides with the time that transgenders will be allowed to join the Navy. The course begins on November 1 and will teach sailors about the Navy's new transgender inclusion policy. Sailors deployed in remote areas will still receive training through videos. The Navy already allows transgenders to use the restroom that corresponds with their preferred gender identity.

Chicago police to add 1,000 jobs to stop crime: The Chicago Police Department announced on Wednesday it would be adding nearly 1,000 positions to its ranks as a major part of trying to combat huge increases in crime—including the city's worst homicide rates in decades. The hires, which will take place over two years, will include more than 500 new patrol officers and 92 field training officers to help train the new recruits, Superintendent Eddie Johnson told reporters Wednesday. "The violence in Chicago is not a police-driven problem, and it's not just for the police to resolve," Johnson said Wednesday. "We need the police, the community, elected officials, clergy—everybody has a vested interest in resolving the crime issue in Chicago."

Brexit has had 'no major effect' on economy: The United Kingdom's Office for National Statistics announced its findings of Brexit's impact on the economy on Wednesday, saying "the referendum results appear, so far, not to have had a major effect." The office warned that it has not tabulated the results of the service sector, which accounts for one third of the economy,

and are due next week. There were stark warnings during the referendum campaign of the short-term effects of a vote to leave the European Union. After an initial drop, manufacturing and service sectors bounced back.

Cyberattacks on satellites could ignite worldwide conflagration: Experts warned Thursday that global powers are dangerously unprepared for worldwide catastrophe that could be sparked by cyberattacks on satellites. Many of the world's defense systems and businesses depend on space infrastructure. If such infrastructure were hacked, it could devastate the societies that depend on it. The Chatham House warned that governments are unaware of how vulnerable such technologies are. The think tank cautioned that as more and more countries launch satellites into orbit, such technology will be an increasingly attractive target for cyberattacks.

Half of Aussies support Muslim immigration ban: According to a poll of over 1,000 participants released on Wednesday, almost half of Australians would support a proposal to ban Muslim immigration. Forty-nine percent of Australians polled said they were supportive of a Muslim ban, while 40 percent said they were against a ban. The leader of the One Nation party, Pauline Hanson, outlined the policy in a speech last week, where she warned that Australia was becoming "swamped" with Muslims. Australian authorities fear the threat of radical Islamist attacks in the country and have implemented stronger anti-extremism legislation in response to several plots, either foiled or carried out, in recent months.



A Cultural Collapse of Historic Proportions

Stephen Flurry,

Trumpet Daily | September 24

This is what happens to a nation when the family collapses.

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