

Trumpet Weekly

DECEMBER 9, 2016

Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi announces his resignation on December 5 following the election results for a referendum on constitutional reforms.



Italian Referendum: Is This the Big One?

Richard Palmer | December 7

ITALY TOOK ANOTHER STEP TOWARD TRIGGERING A MASSIVE EUROPEAN economic crisis.

On Sunday, the country held a referendum on constitutional reform. It was rejected—nearly 60 percent voted no.

Prime Minister Matteo Renzi staked his political future on the vote. When the exit polls showed the reform was rejected, Renzi stuck to his word and resigned shortly after polls closed.

At first glance, the situation has nothing to do with the euro. The trouble is, Italy's economy is a disaster waiting to happen. Any time there is an unusual political or economic event, everyone wonders, *Is this the one that will make the whole thing explode?*

Italy's unemployment rate is at 12.4 percent, more than double Germany's 4.2 percent. Youth unemployment in Italy is a staggering 40 percent. Its economy is barely growing and is nearly 10

percent smaller than it was before the 2008 economic crisis. Its industrial output is the same level that it was 35 years ago.

All this is causing massive debt trouble. Around 17 percent of loans by Italian banks—amounting to \$385 billion—is not being paid back.

All of these longer-term problems became more immediate after Donald Trump's electoral victory. Due to Trump's promise of massive spending, investors have been selling government bonds from a variety of nations. The total value of government bonds around the world has fallen by over a trillion dollars—the biggest bond sell-off in over three years. Italy's already shaky banks have lost a huge amount of money on the \$428 billion of Italian government bonds they owe. Money has been pouring out of Italy—a trend that has accelerated in recent months.

“The contours are worse than the 1930s,” wrote the *Telegraph’s* international business editor, Ambrose Evans-Pritchard. “It is a lost decade turning into a second lost decade. No large developed country in modern times has ever suffered such a fate.”

It’s no wonder markets are nervous. Shares in major Italian banks dropped around 5 percent on Monday morning. The euro hit its lowest level since March 2015.

But an immediate crisis seems unlikely, which is why the euro quickly rebounded (though expectations of an intervention from the European Central Bank certainly helped). Italy’s electoral law is stuck halfway through reform. Parts of it were changed—in the assumption of a “Yes” victory. That needs to be straightened out before the country can hold new elections. In addition, Italy also needs to set its budget for 2017. The general consensus is that Italy’s parliament will approve a caretaker government to manage these immediate needs, and then hold an election in several months.

Even so, there is still the risk that the additional uncertainty could upset the already shaky banks.

Beyond that, once the elections hit again, the favorite to win is Beppe Grillo and his euroskeptic Five Star Movement, an upstart party founded in 2009 that managed to take third place last election. This time, polls put them neck and neck with Renzi’s ruling Democratic Party for the lead.

This crisis puts Italy at real risk of leaving the eurozone. And Italy is not Greece. It is a G-7 economy, a founding member, and part of Europe’s cultural heart. A QuItaly would shake Europe many times harder than a Grexit or even a Brexit.

But QuItaly may be the only way out. The European Central Bank’s (ECB) quantitative easing (QE) is the only thing keeping Italy’s banks afloat. Europe’s QE has become even larger than America’s. It has bought €1.4 trillion (US\$1.5 trillion) of eurozone bonds worth 14 percent of the eurozone’s economy.

Germany never wholeheartedly endorsed QE, and now it looks like it has had enough. “ECB policy is threatening the European project as a whole for the sake of short-term financial stability,” said David Folkerts-Landau, the chief economist of Deutsche Bank. Germany may not get its way immediately, but it will be looking to end QE any chance it gets.

Furthermore, the ECB is limited in the number of Italian government bonds it can buy. It just bought a large amount to stabilize the economy after the vote. It doesn’t have much ammunition left.

Whatever happens, QE cannot last forever. Without a rescue program, Italy’s banking sector will sink. “There is no plausible way out for Italy within the current contractionary structure of monetary union,” wrote Evans-Pritchard. “Only ECB bond purchases forever can keep the lid on this pressure cooker.”

These, then, are the options Italy faces. Without European help—and even possibly with—Italy is heading for a banking crisis. Unlike the Greek crisis, Italy’s would be far too expensive for Germany to easily contain. It would threaten the survival of the euro and the German economy itself.

Another option sees Italy revolt against the euro. Outside the euro, with its own exchange rate, Italy certainly had many problems, but it was able to sell its goods at much cheaper prices than it can now. Its trade and economy did far better. But QuItaly would be traumatic, both for Italy and the rest of the eurozone.

The only other option makes Italy forever dependent on help from the ECB and, ultimately, Germany. This cannot go on forever. Germany would not tolerate it for long without concessions, and Italy would not tolerate those concessions for long.

Thus Italy is heading for a crisis. Each of these major pieces of news leads us to question: *Is this the big one?*

This could be that big one.

The troubled Banca Monti dei Paschi di Siena—the world’s oldest bank—needs to raise more money this week. A failure could easily trigger trouble.

The euro crisis has been going for eight years. We’ve seen crises flare up in Greece, Portugal, Italy, Spain, Ireland, Greece and Greece again. With each crisis, European leaders have found a way to get around the immediate problem without fixing the root causes. How much longer can they avoid those causes?

Italy, because it is much more central to Europe and far bigger than Greece, Portugal or Ireland, could be the one to provide the final, definitive crisis.

Such a crisis would shake Europe, Germany and, ultimately, the world. It would force Europe to either set aside the EU, the foundation of so much of its modern politics and economy, or complete the journey to a superstate.

This is why the *Trumpet* has been [watching the crisis](#) right from the start. A [European superstate](#) has been one of our longest-standing forecasts. An [economic crisis](#) could bring this about quickly.

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MIDDLE EAST

TrumpetDaily

RADIO SHOW

THE OBAMA DOCTRINE—IT WON THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE, BUT LOST THE PEACE | DECEMBER 9

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THE DEATHS OF CASTRO, MOZART, MARIO AND TOSCA | DECEMBER 5

ALGERIAN PRESIDENT ABDELAZIZ BOUTEFLIKA HAS ALMOST VANISHED from the public eye. Ever since a stroke in 2013 left the president wheelchair-bound and battling numerous health issues, observers have been wondering what a soon-coming, post-Bouteflika Algeria will be like.

The ramifications extend far beyond Algeria's porous borders. The *Trumpet* believes that the removal of this strongman will foster confrontation between two regional powers—one from the Middle East and one from Europe.

The catalyst for this impending showdown is national instability. The loss of 79-year-old Bouteflika may revert Algeria back to anarchy—fertile ground for radical Islam. The nation has not always had the tightly controlled society we see today. Recent statistics from the Department of Homeland Security's START center reveal that from 1970 to 2014, Algeria had the second-highest percentage (12 percent) of terrorist attacks among Arab countries.

Bouteflika played an instrumental role in ending the “black decade”—the civil war that raged from 1991 to 2002. During this conflict, the majority of the fighting was between the government and radical Islamists. The “black decade” led to the deaths of over 150,000 people. More than a million were internally displaced, and thousands were raped, abducted and tortured.

It is easy to see why the ailing president has worked so hard to keep Islamists in check, even though it meant wielding a heavy hand.

In early February, the Algerian government made constitutional reforms to ensure that the transition of power from Bouteflika to his successor would be peaceful.

But even if the transition goes smoothly, Bouteflika's successor will be inheriting a volatile nation. The porous borders to the south and east need constant military attention.

Algeria is a tinderbox for civil unrest. All it needs are the radicals to light the match.

The UN's Arab Human Development Report 2016 points to the possibility of another uprising, similar to the 2011 Arab Spring. It highlights the growing discomfort of youths in the Middle East. Remember, it was the youths who began some elements of the Arab Spring before it was hijacked by extremists.

Commenting on the UN report, the *Jerusalem Post* stated, “The age of a deceptive calm in the stagnating Arab world has passed.” The *Jerusalem Post*, other media outlets and the UN can see trouble

brewing among those disenfranchised with the first Arab Spring.

Europe is watching these events in the Arab world—and preparing.

Already swamped with migrants, the last thing Europe needs is more refugees fleeing the war-torn Middle East and North Africa. But even if it is *just* Algeria that collapses into violence, the chaos could still prove catastrophic.

British author and journalist Stephen Pollard recently published an article for the *Spectator* titled “How Algeria Could Destroy the EU.” Pollard suggested that when Bouteflika leaves office, Algeria will “implode.” “The Islamists who have been kept at bay by [Bouteflika's] iron hand will exploit the vacuum,” he wrote. “And then Europe could be overwhelmed by another great wave of refugees from North Africa.”

In a December 2015 report, the *New York Times* referred to Algeria's relative stability as a “critical bulwark against the jihadist movements encroaching in the region.” It was a fair assessment. With the U.S. aiding in the removal of strongmen in Libya and Egypt, Algeria suddenly became the outer edge of radical Islam's grasp.

It is here that European countries are attempting to curtail the radical influence. One nation that stands out in this effort is Germany.

In “[Watch Algeria!](#)” from the April 2013 issue of the *Trumpet* magazine, editor in chief Gerald Flurry wrote:

Germany is already preparing for this confrontation. In recent years, its arms trade with Algeria has exploded. In 2010, Germany sold less than €20 million (US\$27 million) in military equipment to Algeria. In 2011 and 2012, it sold €400 million worth (\$537 million)—over 20 times as much! It also underwrote the sale of two warships worth €2.13 billion (\$2.86 billion).

Germany is looking to prop up Algeria in the face of Iranian-backed extremist infiltration.

The aforementioned article focused on the 2013 terrorist attack at the natural gas facility in Algeria. Mr. Flurry highlighted how Algeria was becoming a pivotal battleground between Europe and the Middle East. If you haven't already, be sure to read his article [here](#).

Rebels' Chances to Unseat Assad About to Fall With Aleppo

WE TALKED ABOUT THIS



“WITH REBEL DEFENSES CRUMBLING IN EASTERN ALEPPO, President Bashar Assad is on the brink of regaining full control of Syria's largest city and one time commercial center.” Thus began the Associated Press's description of success of Assad's offensive on Aleppo, the last major city held by rebels located in north central Syria.

Last week, the rebel-held areas of Aleppo began to fall because of incessant bombing by Russian and Syrian forces. The barrage took out all the remaining hospitals and safe havens for the rebels, who started to retreat out of the city toward the north. Although the rebels will likely receive protection from Turkish forces in northern Syria, their chances of unseating Assad from

power look to be all but dashed.

The [Associated Press](#) wrote Thursday:

If the city's rebel-held sector falls, many see a domino effect across the country. And with the rebels losing one ravaged stronghold after another, attacked from the skies and abandoned by allies, it's a scenario that looks ever more plausible.

A rebel defeat in Aleppo ... would reverberate across the country where opposition forces continue to hold out in smaller, scattered areas. It would cap a string of government successes over the past year and provide a turning point in a war that has killed more than a quarter of a million people, displaced more than half of the country's

population, and defied all international efforts for a political solution.

It is generally believed that with the fall of Aleppo, the rebels must negotiate a settlement with the Assad government, and thus possibly conclude the civil war. While the Islamic state continues to be a factor in the war in Syria, Assad, as well as his state supporters in Russia and Iran, used the main thrust of their energies to defeat the rebels first. Now with Aleppo falling, watch for Russia, Iran, Turkey and the United States to push for a settlement at the negotiating table. With the rebels all but defeated, it's likely that we are about to witness a fracturing within in the Assad alliance, as both Iran and Russia vie for dominance over Syria's future.

Libya After Islamic State

LOCAL MILITIAS BACKED BY UNITED STATES AIRPOWER HAVE FINALLY routed Islamic State from its northern Libyan stronghold of Sirte. The announcement made Tuesday resulted in celebration by the pro-government forces involved in the fighting, yet brought little fanfare outside of Sirte. It was hoped that the fight against Islamic State would unite the other warring parties within Libya behind a common goal. However, that hasn't happened, and now that Islamic State has been removed many fear the hope of Libyan unification has gone too. Reporting on the victory, in a piece titled, "[Libya Could Become Even More Chaotic After the Islamic State Loses Its Stronghold](#)," Sudarsan Raghavan for the *Washington Post* wrote:

The Islamic State's hopes of extending its self-proclaimed "caliphate" beyond Syria and Iraq into Libya have been dashed, at least for now. But while their propaganda war and recruiting efforts have also been weakened, analysts said, the group remains active in other parts of the country.

Libya faces the specter of clandestine cells staging terrorist attacks, much like they've done recently in Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan after battlefield reverses in those countries. ...

The fall of Sirte arrives at a tense moment for Libya. Rival militias have been battling for territory and economic gain in recent days in the worst eruption of fighting in the capital in more than a year. Clashes are also underway in Benghazi, Libya's second-largest city, pitting Islamists against forces loyal to Gen. Khalifa Haftar, a powerful commander who recently seized control of key oil terminals, while his rivals were focused on besieging Sirte.

The fact that not all of Libya's factions were involved in the taking of Sirte indicates that rivalries are likely to continue. Looking toward the day of the Islamic State's demise in Sirte, *Foreign Policy* ran a story last week titled "[Libya's Hollow Victory Over the Islamic State](#)." Writer Tarek Megerisi wasn't too optimistic of Libya's post-Islamic State world.

You'd think that Libyans and their friends in the international community would be thrilled. Actually, though, there's little sense of triumph to be detected anywhere.

The reason is simple: Victory in Sirte, however welcome, will have little positive effect on the country's power vacuum.

When the Islamic State first conquered the city in June 2015, many observers hoped that the threat would serve as a rallying point for Libya's myriad warring factions. The need to strike a resounding blow against the Islamic State, it was thought, would finally provide the catalyst for unity.

It didn't work out that way. Instead, Libya's competing power centers—from Field Marshal Haftar and his government in the east to its rival internationally-backed government in Tripoli to the country's extremist Grand Mufti Sadiq al-Gheriani—have tried to exploit the threat of the Islamic State to advance their own agendas. Each group knew full well that merely appearing to engage the Islamic State would garner international support and strengthen its claims to legitimacy. So far, none have proved willing to redeploy serious resources and manpower to combat a threat they perceive as secondary to their domestic opponents. ...

Sirte's liberation, and the emancipation of its 80,000 inhabitants from Islamic State rule, is undoubtedly a welcome development in a land where positive news is in short supply. But we should guard against premature euphoria.

As with the main battle in the Levant, many of the militias fighting the Islamic State are extremely unsavory groups and have used the fight as a way to gain legitimacy in the international arena. The fight against the Islamic State has made many bad actors look like good actors. Megerisi continued:

Even as the battle has raged on in Sirte, Libya's factions have been preparing for what they see as the truly decisive battle in the war to claim control over the country. In the near future, we may see an evolution of the civil war from a constellation of local conflicts to an all-out war for control between two alliances that have heavy artillery and airpower at their disposal.

Though Islamic State may have been removed from Sirte, the *Trumpet* also envisions more turmoil and upheaval for Libya. However, instead of devolving into a further fractured state, watch for foreign powers to get more and more involved. Daniel 11:40-43 indicate that chief in this will be a German-led Europe and an Iranian-led alliance.

Iranian-made drone targets Turkish military: On November 24, an unmanned drone attacked a Turkish military base by the town of al-Bab in northern Syria, killing four soldiers and wounding 10 others. On Wednesday, after two weeks of analysis and fact-finding, Turkey revealed the drone didn't belong to either Russia or Syria but was Iranian-made and guided by one of its proxies fighting in the war. While Iran and Turkey have been involved in bilateral discussions about bringing a conclusion to the war, this latest episode highlights the growing tension between the two massive nations with competing interests in the future of Syria and Iraq. As the Islamic State gets pushed further and further into a smaller area, Turkey and Iran will look to assert their own interests in the void.

Foiled Iranian terror plot in Kenya?: Two Iranians are facing terrorism charges after they were arrested at the Israeli Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya. The two worked for the Iranian Embassy in Nairobi and, together with their Kenyan driver, were charged December 1. They had been arrested two days earlier. Prosecutors say the two Iranians had just recently visited Kenya and were making video recordings "for the use in the commission of a terrorist act."

Saudis to kill accused Iranian spies: A Saudi Arabian court on Tuesday sentenced 15 people to death for spying on behalf

of the nation's archenemy, Iran. Fifteen other defendants received prison sentences ranging from six months to 25 years. Two more were acquitted of all charges. Tuesday's court rulings are subject to appeal. The death sentences must gain the king's approval. The 32 total defendants consisted of 30 Saudi Shiite Muslims, one Iranian and an Afghan. They were detained in 2013. Many of them were former employees of the Saudi Defense and Interior Ministries with access to sensitive government information. The trials are the latest cause of tension between the Sunni Muslim powerhouse of Saudi Arabia and the Shiite theocracy of Iran. In January, Saudi Arabia executed a Shiite cleric allegedly involved in the killing of policemen. The execution led rioters to storm the Saudi Embassy in Iran.

Different interpretations of nuke deal: The head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization has advised the United Nations nuclear watchdog to be neutral when verifying Iran's commitment to the nuclear deal. The Iranian official spoke on Monday after a meeting with the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency. He said that Iran and other parties have different interpretations of some provisions of the deal. He said the UN agency should avoid reflecting interpretations of other parties in their report on how the deal is being implemented.

EUROPE

Trumpet Hour

GERMAN BURKA BAN, RECLAIMING SIRTE, A PHONECALL FROM TAIWAN, UNDERMINING PARENTS AND MUCH MORE | DECEMBER 9

ITALY'S REFERENDUM IS EUROPE'S PROBLEM, ALGERIA IN CRISIS, SOUTH AFRICA'S CASTRO-LOVING LEADER, AND MORE | DECEMBER 7

Germany Hardens on Immigrants and Islam

Richard Palmer | December 12

WE TALKED ABOUT THIS



GERMAN CHANCELLOR ANGELA MERKEL'S DECISION TO OPEN THE door to thousands of immigrants has proved the most significant of her long chancellorship. Every bit as important is her repeated refusal to backtrack. The pragmatist who defined her chancellorship by following public opinion stood firm.

Or, rather, stood *firmish*. While she has not abandoned her position completely, she has certainly shuffled away from it. German attitudes to both Islam and immigration are hardening in a way that not even Ms. Merkel can resist.

On December 6, Ms. Tolerance herself declared that she wanted Germany to ban the burka, the Muslim full-face covering. "The full-face veil is not acceptable in our country," she said at the Christian Democratic Union's (CDU) convention, to great applause. "It should be banned wherever it is legally possible." This would

probably see it banned from schools, government buildings and when driving.

This is a revolutionary step—the moment Germany joins Europe's cultural clash with Islam.

Until five years ago, with the exception of Yugoslavia, no country in Europe had a ban on the burka. The Netherlands has been talking about it for the last decade, but still has not managed to make it law. When France instituted a ban, it received international condemnation—not just from Muslims, but even from Amnesty International, a nongovernmental organization focused on human rights. The France police union complained that the law would be "extremely difficult ... if not almost impossible" to enforce.

But the move was popular with the French, and the left has grown used to it. Now that Germany is heading toward a ban, the

most remarked upon aspect of the story is not that Europe's leading nation is embracing something that was once seen as controversial and Islamophobic. Instead, the main discussion revolves around German politics.

Conservative critics say that this law is little more than a token gesture—that it does not go far enough in confronting the problems of radical Islam. That is true. But it is still a major step. Thus far Germany has fought the war on terror by focusing on individual terrorists—by raiding houses and cracking down on incitement to violence. For the first time, its target is a cultural symbol—this time a symbol of a more radical and repressive strain of Islam. Germany is starting to accept that it is involved in a clash with a religious movement, not just a few individuals.

During the same speech, Ms. Merkel did not quite admit that she was wrong to open Germany's doors in 2015. But she did say it would never happen again. "A situation like the one in the late summer of 2015 cannot, should not, and must not be repeated," she declared.

At the same time, her government is hardening its stance on migrants. *Foreign Policy* contributing editor James Traub wrote:

After spending several days in Dresden last month, what became clear to me is that Germany is trying very hard to get rid of many of the refugees to whom it opened its arms. After a change in policy by the Interior Ministry last spring, Syrians now receive only one year of asylum, which must be renewed, rather than the three years they routinely got before. During the same period, the Bundestag, Germany's parliament, passed a law putting an end to "family reunification" for those who only receive these one-year grants. And Germany has increased the pace of deportations for those who do not receive any form of protection. ...

There have been more than 250 recorded incidents of violence against refugees in Dresden alone this year; many involve attacks on their housing. Ali Moradi, the managing director of the Refugee Council of Saxony, says in years past the state government simply turned a blind eye to racist and far-right activism, but now it sees the Nazis—a word that Germans apply broadly to violent far-right groups—as potential allies in its own campaign to persuade refugees that they are not welcome. The government has largely stood aside, Moradi says, as violent youths have terrorized refugees, especially in the state's small towns and villages.

At times, federal prosecutors have had to step in when local authorities failed to act in the face of attacks on immigrants.

The combination of national legal changes, local restrictions, and growing public intolerance has convinced some of the refugees I met that they made a terrible mistake seeking asylum in Germany.

On October 2, the European Union signed an agreement with Afghanistan to send back Afghan migrants. Now, in general, Germany is deporting migrants that arrived from North Africa, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Of course, not everything has changed overnight. The federal government pays up to \$750 for accommodations and living expenses per migrant. But this simply means that costs to the government continue to spiral.

It's clear why Ms. Merkel is making these changes. While she can still command significant personal approval, many Germans disagree with her when it comes to immigrants and Islam. The strength of popular opinion is forcing her to change course.

During the same convention, Ms. Merkel's own party voted against her, voting to repeal legalization she passed allowing German citizens to have dual citizenship. Previously, Germans with dual citizenship had to choose which citizenship they wished to keep once they turned 23. The change was mainly designed to allow young Turks who had grown up in Germany to retain both their German and Turkish citizenship. Now her party wants that reversed.

"[T]hey overruled Ms. Merkel on a central, symbolic question. The signal is clear. You can be German or Turkish," wrote the *Financial Times*. "You cannot be both."

The same principle is at the heart of the burka law—there are certain strains of Islam that are not German.

There's much to like in these changes in Germany. A more common-sense migration policy and better recognition of the danger posed by radical Islam. But other elements—like the blind eye state governments are reportedly turning to anti-migrant violence—are more disturbing. Mass migration and radical Islam have done major damage to Germany. But there are already indications that Germany's response will be just as dangerous.

Europe is building to a clash with radical Islam. The hardening mood in Germany is a sign of this coming clash. To learn more about how this clash is building, read our article "[Will Europe Rediscover Its Christian Identity?](#)" from the November-December *Trumpet*.

Far-Right Falls Short of Victory in Austria

EUROPE REJOICED THIS WEEK AFTER THE FAR-RIGHT FREEDOM Party of Austria (FPÖ) failed to win the December 4 election. Former Green Party contender Alexander Van der Bellen won 53 percent to 47. Yet the fact that a far-right leader came so close to victory is remarkable. The Freedom Party will remain a major force, as [Dalibor Rohac pointed out on CapX9](#):

[T]he current respite is temporary. Austria's legislative election is scheduled for 2018. By then, it is unlikely that the grievances that have led Austrians to flock behind FPÖ will

disappear. The party has, after all, seen a steady increase in support since Mr. Haider's days, boosted further by the EU's refugee crisis in 2015. And nor does one presidential election in a country of 8 million reverse a decade of Europe's dysfunctions and increasingly radicalized politics.

Furthermore, even the winner shows the crisis in Austrian politics. No candidate from either of Austria's two major parties even made it to this stage in the election. Six years ago, those two parties had a combined vote of 80 percent. Europe's political crises continue.

Germany's 'Flirtation' With Nuclear Weapons

IN 2009, GERMANY'S RULING COALITION STATED THAT REMOVING American-owned nuclear weapons from German soil was one of its goals. Now, the debate has moved on, and some want Germany to build its own nukes. Ulrich Kühn a fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace wrote an article titled "[The Sudden German Nuke Flirtation](#)," published December 6. He noted:

Spurred by [United States President-elect Donald] Trump's warm words for Russian President Vladimir Putin, his implicit threat that Washington could scale back U.S. defense commitments to Europe if NATO members do not pay more for their own security, and his lax remarks that certain U.S. allies should perhaps be allowed to go nuclear, some prominent voices in Germany are suddenly openly flirting with the nuclear option.

Given the country's long-term support of nuclear disarmament, a debate about a possible German nuclear deterrent is virtually unprecedented. So far, these voices represent an extreme minority view—currently, neither the government nor the vast majority of German experts is even considering the possibility of acquiring nuclear weapons—but with continued uncertainty about Trump's commitment to Europe, this could change during the coming years.

Just three days before the U.S. elections, an op-ed in Germany's largest left-leaning news outlet, Spiegel Online, mused about the possibility of Germany pursuing its own nuclear weapons if NATO were to break up in the aftermath of a Trump administration's withdrawal from the alliance.

Two weeks later, Reuters quoted Roderich Kiesewetter, a senior member of Chancellor Angela Merkel's Christian Democratic Union and a high-ranking member of the Bundestag (national parliament), saying that "if the United States no longer wants to provide this [nuclear] guarantee, Europe still needs nuclear protection for deterrent purposes." Given Trump's earlier statements, Kiesewetter continued, "Europe must start planning for its own security in case the Americans sharply raise the cost of defending the Continent, or if they decide to leave completely." His suggestion: a Franco-British nuclear umbrella for Europe, financed through a joint European military budget. Under such a scheme, Germany would have to contribute a large amount to the overall costs of such a European deterrent. Further clarifying his remarks, Kiesewetter later pointed

out that Europe does not need additional nuclear powers.

On November 28, Germany's most influential conservative newspaper, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, opened with an op-ed by one of its publishers, Berthold Kohler, preparing Germans for "the unthinkable." Continued Russian and Chinese attempts to expand their spheres of influence, coupled with a possible retreat of the United States, would amount to a "continental shift," the author argued. According to Kohler, the stern implications for Berlin, which for many years relied on the approach of "Frieden schaffen ohne Waffen" ("build peace without weapons"), would be obvious: If Germany wants to successfully bargain with the Kremlin, he implies, it has to be able to credibly defend its allies (which is an interesting hint at the changed power relations in Europe). Kohler concludes that this could mean increased defense spending, a return to conscription, the drawing of red lines, and an indigenous nuclear deterrent. He is quick to insinuate that the French and British arsenals are currently "too weak" to take on Russia and China. ...

Obviously, current German nuclear flirtations represent a fringe view, but they are an important early warning sign. These flirtations were carried by Germany's biggest left-leaning and conservative media outlets. In addition, Kiesewetter is not a backbencher or low-ranking politician from a small party. As a former Bundeswehr (armed forces) general staff officer; former chairman of the Subcommittee for Disarmament, Arms Control and Non-Proliferation of the Bundestag; and current spokesperson of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, he is well versed in foreign- and security-policy matters. That a person of his stature would raise such a view is reason enough for concern.

Further, extreme views on nuclear matters do not always remain at the fringes. As the case of South Korea demonstrates, external shocks, such as the repeated nuclear tests by North Korea in 2013, can quickly move formerly fringe positions to the center stage of public attention. Once in the mainstream, it can be difficult to put such sentiments to rest, particularly when the underlying security concerns remain.

Trumpet editor in chief Gerald Flurry has warned of the danger of allowing Germany access to American nuclear bombs. Now Germans are talking about getting their own. For more on this danger, read his article "[Europe's Nuclear Secret](#)."

TW IN BRIEF

German companies boost weapons sales: The total value of arms sold by the world's top 100 weapons manufacturers dropped by 0.6 percent in 2015, according to a report published December 5 by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. But German companies did well, boosting their sales by 7.4 percent. The year before, they rose 9.4 percent. Despite this increase, German sales continued to be dwarfed by the United States. American firms made up 56.6 percent of all sales by the top 100 companies. German firms only made up 1.5 percent.

Lithuanian president on Trump: Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė urged United States President-elect Donald Trump to uphold America's security commitment to Europe. President Grybauskaitė made those comments on December 2 and said the U.S. remained "the guarantor of peace after the Second World War in Europe." She said she expected the understanding to remain. Lithuania has been hosting major NATO war games, which ended December 2. Over 4,000 troops from 11 NATO allies took part in the annual Iron Sword exercises. They were

part of the alliance's effort to reassure member countries bordering Russia.

Turkey and the EU's 'double standards': Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan accused the European Union of “double standards” in its handling of his country's efforts to join the bloc. He made the comments December 1 in an address to local

administrators in Ankara. Erdoğan said Turkey was “not a guest but a host in Europe.” He also mentioned the situation in Iraq and Syria, saying that Turkey's military action in Syria was only aimed at tackling “terror organizations.” Turkey launched its incursion into Syria in August called Operation Euphrates Shield. Its aim is to back Syrian rebels in their fight to push Islamic State terrorists out of the town of Jarabulus.

ASIA

One Taiwanese Phone Call to Cut Through the Diplomatic Fog

WE TALKED ABOUT THIS



ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2, PRESIDENT-ELECT DONALD TRUMP received a phone call from Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen. Innocuous, right? Wrong. According to China, Taiwan isn't a real country, and that means a phone call with the next American president shouldn't happen.

In 10 minutes of nondescript congratulations and thanks, Mr. Trump and Taiwan incited claims of ignorance by the left, adulation on the right, and howls of complaints from the Chinese.

In a [statement](#) on Saturday from China's Foreign Ministry spokesman, Geng Shuang, China responded:

We have noticed relevant reports and lodged solemn representation with the relevant side in the United States. ...

I must point out that there is only one China in the world, and Taiwan is an inseparable part of the Chinese territory. ... The “one China” principle is the political foundation of China-U.S. relations.

We urge the relevant side in the U.S. to adhere to the “one China” policy, abide by the pledges in the three joint China-U.S. communiqués, and handle issues related to Taiwan carefully and properly to avoid causing unnecessary interference to the overall China-U.S. relationship.

George Friedman, founder of Geopolitical Futures, wrote in an article “[Trump, Taiwan and an Uproar](#)” about how Mr. Trump is trying to put China on the defensive:

Trump signaled to China that he can take away what

Nixon gave them. By doing what Nixon did—using volatility and unpredictability to intimidate—Trump set the stage for a negotiation that China can't refuse. China must have access to American markets even if the terms become less favorable. Previous presidents were prepared to posture but did nothing substantial about China. With a single phone call, Trump did what he seems to do best—baffle and unnerve a negotiating partner. Is he crafty or is he crazy? Trump has shifted the issue from what China is willing to do, to how far Trump is prepared to go.

Yet China is not likely to give in to the mere rhetoric of Donald Trump. The president-elect has made it clear that his decisions are based on “America-first” thinking. Everything, including his own statements, points to a policy of isolationism. What's more likely than America getting involved in the dispute with Taiwan is China using it as an excuse to reel Taiwan in further.

“It is possible the DPP [Taiwan's Democratic Progressive Party] may acknowledge that the new reality of a broken-willed America requires that Taiwan continue on the path Ma [Yin-jeou] was taking—the path of submission to China. Or if the DPP decides to stay tough against China it could prompt Beijing to react with force and swallow Taiwan. If that happens, as Mr. Flurry said, ‘it is going to happen for one reason: because of a pitifully weak-willed America.’ This is certainly a prophecy worth continuing to watch.”

—Russia and China in Prophecy

Australia Trade Eyes Turn to China as Trump Retreats

ONE OF THE MAJOR REASONS AUSTRALIA WAS ABLE TO SAIL *relatively* unharmed through the storm of the 2008 global financial crisis was China's heavy reliance on Australian mining. Yet despite the close economic ties between China and Australia, the historic and security relationship of the United States has taken precedence.

U.S. President-elect Donald Trump, seemingly having an influence on every major decision in the world right now, is again upsetting historic ties by planning to end the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). With this move, John Power, from the *Asia Times*, sees Australia looking to Communist China instead of the U.S. In

an article titled [“In Trump’s Shadow, Australia Sees China Pave Path on Trade,”](#) Power wrote:

Australia, one of the United States’ closest allies, is looking nominally to Communist China to lead the drive for open markets in the Asia-Pacific, following Donald Trump’s election on a platform critical of free trade and globalization.

Trump has vowed to pull the U.S. out of the 12-nation Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement on his first day in office, sounding the death knell for the economic plank of President Barack Obama’s so-called “Asian pivot.”

Australia has been one of the most ardent supporters of the pact, which would reduce tariffs, standardize patent rules, and establish procedures to resolve disputes between governments and foreign corporations.

But instead of being able to act on its “ardent” support of the trade deal, Australia has had to look elsewhere:

With U.S. appearing ambivalent about carrying the torch for free trade in the region, China, which was not included in the TPP, has stepped into the vacuum. It has proposed two distinct trade pacts of its own, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership and the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific, both of which would include Australia.

Within days of Trump’s upset win, Australian Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment Steve Ciobo said his government would support the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific. This would involve the 21 Pacific Rim nations of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation grouping.

Australian politicians are trying to avoid the appearance of complications with the upcoming president, but former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd said at a recent World Chinese Economic Summit in Malaysia that there was a growing sense that China seemed a more reliable champion of trade.

Bob Carr, the former minister for foreign affairs, deplored Mr. Trump’s move in an article [“Australia, China and the Lunacy of Trump’s Talk of a Trade War”](#):

The truth is Donald Trump represents a break in the strategic American leadership the world has had since 1945. ...

Most explosive of all, the new U.S. president has planted a trade war at the heart of his policies: a 45 percent tariff on imports from China and a repudiation of the Trans-Pacific Partnership which was supposed to have been proof positive of America’s pivot to Asia.

“Put America first!” was Trump’s catch cry, unconsciously plagiarizing Charles A. Lindbergh, the Nazi-sympathizing aviator who was the front man for isolationism before the Second World War.

In short, this is not business as usual. It’s a historic shift. The trauma is not about to repair.

Shinzo Abe Will Visit Pearl Harbor—But Won’t Be Apologizing

ON DECEMBER 5, JAPANESE PRIME MINISTER SHINZO ABE INDICATED to reporters that he would reciprocate President Barack Obama’s visit to Hiroshima by visiting Pearl Harbor a few weeks after the 75th anniversary of its bombing.

Abe will be the first incumbent Japanese prime minister to visit the sight, just as Mr. Obama was the first American president to visit Hiroshima. Jake Adelstein, an investigative journalist in Japan who writes for the Daily Beast, wrote about Abe’s vague language in his article [“Why Shinzo Abe Is Really Going to Visit Pearl Harbor”](#):

Speaking to reporters at the prime minister’s office, Abe said his visit was intended “to console the souls of the victims (*giseisha*)” in Pearl Harbor. His use of the word *giseisha* is wonderfully vague—it not only refers to the U.S. soldiers killed, but also the Japanese soldiers that died in the battle. NHK, the public broadcaster that has become the propaganda machine of the Abe administration, reported that he would mourn “those killed in the battle, who were centrally American.” In other words, Abe will get to have his cake and eat it too. There will be a non-apology apology in which Abe will probably intone that the tragedy of war should never be repeated. Will he specifically acknowledge Japan started the war? Judging by his 70th-anniversary speech, probably not. NHK also referred to the attack on Pearl Harbor obliquely as “the incident which became the origin of the war (against the Allies).”

“We must never repeat the horrors of war,” Abe said at the press conference Monday evening. “I want future generations

to understand this. I also want to make this an opportunity to communicate the value of the reconciliation between Japan and the United States.” He also said he wants his meeting with Obama to be a chance to show to the world his resolve to maintain and strengthen the Japan-U.S. alliance.

A few days later, Abe confirmed that it would not even be a “non-apology apology.” “The purpose of the upcoming visit is to pay respects to the war dead, not to offer an apology,” Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said Tuesday in Tokyo.

This approach is contrasted with President Barack Obama’s visit to Hiroshima in May. As we wrote in an article [“Hiroshima and America’s Dangerous Amnesia”](#):

Mr. Obama stayed away from explicit statements like, *I’m sorry the U.S. bombed Hiroshima*. But the tone of the speech was certainly apologetic—saying, for example, that the bombing shows “[h]ow easily we learn to justify violence in the name of some higher cause.”

Mr. Obama and those like him have forgotten, or are ignoring, the key facts surrounding America’s use of the atomic bomb. This historical amnesia has serious implications.

That historical amnesia works both ways: For the U.S. it has meant apologies and appeasement, but for Japan it means purposely eschewing the reasons their Constitution was designed to be pacifist after World War II.

Russia and China block another UNSC resolution: Russia and China used their veto power in the United Nations Security Council to block a draft resolution on Monday. The resolution called for a seven-day humanitarian truce in the besieged Syrian city of Aleppo. It was sponsored by New Zealand, Egypt and Spain and sought to allow for the removal of the sick and wounded. They hoped to provide humanitarian aid workers enough time to get food aid and medicine into the besieged city. The resolution had 11 votes in favor, three against and one abstention. But because Russia and China are permanent members of the 15-seat council and have veto powers, the resolution did not pass. Venezuela, a non-permanent member, cast the other “no” vote.

Chinese ‘skeptical and vigilant’ of Trump: A Chinese expert on the United States says President-elect Donald Trump broke protocol by receiving a call from Taiwan’s president earlier in the week. Dr. Shi Yinhong, professor of International Relations and Director of American Studies of the Renmin University in Beijing, told the Associated Press that Trump’s move has definitely made the Chinese leadership more skeptical and vigilant against the president-elect. “Signs are not good,” said Shi, referring to America’s policy on Taiwan in the next administration. Trump talked with the Taiwanese president last Friday. It was the first time an American president or president-elect had spoken to Taiwan’s leader since former U.S. President Jimmy Carter broke off formal diplomatic relations in 1979.

Humanitarian organizations clean up Indonesia’s earthquake: Humanitarian organizations descended on Indonesia’s Aceh province on Thursday as the government in Jakarta promised tons of emergency aid and officials raced to assess the full extent of damage from an earthquake that killed more than 100 people. Search efforts were underway in Tringgading in Pidie Jaya district near the epicenter of the magnitude-6.5 quake that hit before dawn on Wednesday, where many buildings collapsed. Thousands of people are homeless or afraid to return to their homes. Aceh officials said more than 8,000 people spent Wednesday night in shelters in Pidie Jaya district alone.

Cyberwar and rumors of cyberwar: China has appealed to Washington and Berlin to avoid introducing politics into the proposed takeover of a German maker of semiconductor manufacturing equipment. The appeal follows a report that United States President Barack Obama plans to oppose it as a security risk. A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman said the proposed \$740 million-acquisition of Aixtron SE by Fujian Grand Chip is “normal business activity.” Bloomberg News reported that President Obama was preparing to veto the deal. It would be the third time Washington has blocked a Chinese corporate takeover on security grounds. A leading German business newspaper reported that Germany was warned by U.S. intelligence that Aixtron’s technology could be used for military purposes.

ANGLO-AMERICA



Enemy of God

Gerald Flurry,

The Key of David | December 11

The Prophet Micah wrote about God’s own Church rebelling and becoming His enemy. How did this tragic betrayal happen? And how can you remain loyal to God?



Cuba Rushes to Sign Accords With U.S. Before Trump Presidency

WE TALKED ABOUT THIS



WITH PRESIDENT-ELECT DONALD TRUMP WARNING THAT HE may undo President Barack Obama’s landmark Cuba deal, Cuban officials are hoping to sign at least half a dozen agreements with the U.S. before Mr. Obama leaves office.

According to an article by Sarah Marsh in [Reuters](#):

Cuban and U.S. officials held talks in Havana [on Wednesday] to discuss what more could be accomplished during President Barack Obama’s remaining weeks in office, agreeing to arrange more high-level visits and technical meetings.

The more Cuba and the United States deepen their détente, the more irreversible it will become, analysts said.

“At the moment we are negotiating 12 more (accords) with the aim to be able to conclude and sign a majority of them,” Josefina Vidal, the Cuban Foreign Ministry’s director of U.S. affairs, told a news conference.

The accords would be in areas such as seismology and meteorology, she said, adding that Cuba and the United States had already signed a dozen accords in the two years since they agreed to normalize relations, ending decades of hostility.

They have also opened embassies, restored commercial flights and opened travel options.

The more integrated the Cuban economy becomes with the U.S. economy, the harder it will be for a Trump presidency to reverse this integration—even if the Communist dictatorship continues oppressing its people and financing terrorism. In the November-December 2015 issue of the *Trumpet*, editor in chief Gerald Flurry wrote about the grave danger of appeasing an

enemy that is camped right on America's doorstep.

"You need to *beware* of what is happening in Cuba," he wrote. "This is a dangerous world. America is like a silly dove walking right into a deadly trap. Cuba isn't dead. Communism isn't dead. And [Cuba is reemerging as a clear and present danger](#) to the very existence of the United States!"

President Obama's deal was a bad deal—for the Cuban people, yes—but *especially* for the United States of America.

More Unsurprisingly Average U.S. Schooling Results Kieren Underwood | December 8

EVERY FOUR YEARS SINCE 1995, A "TRENDS IN INTERNATIONAL Mathematics and Science Study" (TIMSS) is released, ranking a number of countries' academic achievements over a number of grades. For its 2015 study, TIMSS looked at 57 countries, including more than 580,000 students.

The top-ranked countries were from East Asia: Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea, Taiwan and Japan. Following the 20-year TIMSS trend, the United States and England sat well below the top nations, even though their scores were still above the international average.

TIMSS tested students from Grade 4 (ages 9-10) to Grade 8 (ages 13-14) on both math and science, and set the average score as 500 out of 1,000. In the Grade 4 math bracket, Singapore topped the charts with a score of 618, while England and the United States ranked 10th and 14th respectively, with scores of 546 and 539.

In the Grade 4 science section, England and the U.S. fared the same, although the East Asians did not beat them by such a drastic margin. Singapore again ranked first with a score of 590, and the U.S. and England ranked 10th and 15th respectively, with results of 546 and 536.

American commentators took the results to mean different things. The *Wall Street Journal* had a piece titled "U.S. Students Score Higher Than Average on International Math Test," while the *Washington Post* had one titled "U.S. Students Still Lag Many

Asian Peers on International Math and Science Exam."

In contrast to America's debates over the results, Malaysia's educators have little arguments about the direction they need to take. Poor results in previous TIMSS have led Malaysia to take a hard-line approach to education reform. A few days before TIMSS was released, Malaysian students received the results of their Primary School Evaluation Test. Astro Awani reported that "school halls and courtyards were described as eerie morgues and zombie-like funeral homes" when the poor results were announced. The Malaysian broadcaster showed pictures of girls sobbing in response.

Meanwhile, three days before America received its average TIMSS results, one of its most prestigious magazines, the *Atlantic*, posted an article titled "The Push to Diversify Gifted-and-Talented Programs." It lamented the fact that selective, advanced schools didn't have enough low-income and Hispanic students filling their seats.

The attitude that results don't matter, that standardized tests are useless, and that school is a place safe from opposing ideas doesn't create students who perform well. Read editor in chief Gerald Flurry's article "[The Deadly Path of Higher Education](#)" for an in-depth look at that trend. Since the United States has remained consistently behind the East Asians for 20 years, don't expect the new path of education to turn anything around.

Ontario Law Erases Moms and Dads From Official Documents

NOBODY HAS A MOTHER OR A FATHER IN ONTARIO, CANADA, ACCORDING to a new law passed on November 29. Before the passage of Bill 28, known as the "*All Families Are Equal Act*," the previous law stated that "for all purposes of the law of Ontario, a person is the child of his or her natural parents," with the exception of adoption. Now, the terms "mother," "father" and "natural parents" are being purged from all Ontario statutes, and replaced with the neutered term "parent." The new law makes it possible for a child to have up to four "parents."

The purpose of this law is to make it easier for same-sex couples that use a sperm or egg donor to get legal custody of the resulting children without having to initiate adoption proceedings. The underreported consequence of this law, however, is that Ontario no longer has to legally recognize the natural origins of any of its citizens.

According to an article by Stella Morabito in the [Federalist](#):

Laws such as Bill 28 put children and their biological parents on notice that they have no legal right to exist in a family without special permission from the state. This law lays the groundwork for legally separating all children from their biological mothers and fathers. Like it or not, the reality of a biological mother and father is essential to satisfying the answer to every child's first transcendental question: "Where did I come from?"

If we forbid the very words "mother" and "father" at school, at work, in daily life, we must plead guilty to hacking the child's mind and soul. This law essentially tells children to shut up about any question about their origins. It abusively gags them and prods them to bottle up their natural curiosity about who they are and where they came from.

Instead, with up to four generic "parents" recognized by a bureaucratic state, the child is legally a product designed and manufactured by contractual agreement. No more

than that. The biological mother and father are legally non-existent, and are well on the way to being erased as parents recognized by default. By erasing mothers and fathers from law, Ontario has essentially defined parents as interchangeable parts to be torn asunder from the child at the will of the state. So, obviously, this so-called “All Families Are Equal Act” is really about destroying all families.

In the midst of the sexual revolution—as Communist, feminist and homosexual activists were working to redefine family—renowned educator Herbert W. Armstrong wrote in the July 1976 *Plain Truth*: “A solid family structure is the very foundation of any stable and permanent society. But today in the affluent countries a conspiracy is developing which seeks to destroy marriage as an institution, as well as the family.”

He further elaborated with this shocking revelation: “The conspiracy consists of a two-pronged attack: 1) a well-organized

movement to subtly influence college students to prefer *alternatives* to marriage, and 2) an attempt to influence the general public by newspaper and magazine articles, television programs, the lecture platform, the women’s lib movement, and student or former student rebels of the ‘New Left.’ How much of all this propaganda has been planted in the minds of the psychologists, professors, writers, publishers, women’s lib crusaders and others by trained Communist propagandists can only be estimated.”

At the time Mr. Armstrong wrote these words, there wasn’t yet any sensational redefinition of the traditional family structure. Yet today, 60 years later, marriage is being redefined as any sexual relationship between consenting partners; and parenthood is being redefined to any caretaker relationship recognized by a bureaucratic state. It is no exaggeration to say that the traditional family—as defined in the Holy Bible—is already halfway down the path toward extinction.

TW IN BRIEF

Person of the Year: *Time* magazine named Donald Trump its Person of the Year. Hillary Clinton came in second place, and *Time*’s foreign editor said they chose her because she came closer to the office of the United States president than any other woman has before. The editor said they chose Trump because of his influence as a representative of a global “populist anti-elitist, anti-globalist movement.” The Associated Press reported that Trump won in part by bluntly articulating factors that divide Americans such as race and the economy, in populist terms. *Time*’s cover line referred to Trump as the “President of the Divided States of America.”

Illegal immigrants aren’t being caught: A new report completed for the Department of Homeland Security found that only 54 percent of illegal immigrants crossing the U.S.-Mexico border are actually caught. That figure runs contrary to claims that up to 81 percent of the illegals are apprehended. Since President Barack Obama took office and loosened immigration requirements, the number of asylum demands has jumped from 17,000 to 170,000. The report, titled “Assessing Southern Border Security,” also highlights the low numbers of illegal aliens caught at points of entry into the U.S. These illegals often use fake IDs or hide in vehicles. Twenty-nine percent were captured in 2014, and 39 percent in 2015.

New Zealand’s new prime minister: Bill English will be the next prime minister of New Zealand following the resignation of John Key on Monday. The other two challengers for the position dropped out on Thursday and acknowledged Mr. English had secured a majority of the parties support. Bill English has been the former prime minister’s trusted deputy prime minister for the past eight years and has been praised for his handling of the economy in his role as finance minister.

Brexit timetable: Britain will set in motion the Brexit timetable toward the end of March next year, according to a vote by the British Parliament Wednesday night. The Parliament discussed for seven hours the Labor Party’s motion that the government should publish negotiation terms and specific text prior to starting the Brexit talks. Some Conservative M.P.s endorsed the motion.

Pearl Harbor Memorial: Hundreds of well-wishers applauded World War II veterans during a commemoration marking the 75th anniversary of the Pearl Harbor attack at Washington, D.C.’s National World War II Memorial. The participating veterans, who served in different wartime roles, were sharing their stories at the event on Wednesday. There were 2,403 men and women killed and 1,178 wounded at Pearl Harbor 75 years ago. The Washington commemoration was one of over 60 ceremonies around the country.



Have We Forgotten God?

Stephen Flurry,
Trumpet Daily | December 9

The two most blessed nations in history have rejected the source of their prosperity and wealth.

[Follow Stephen Flurry](#)

