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Addressing basic questions on a hot issue.

AUGUST 2006

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AFP/Getty Images

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Gerald Flury



A Clash of Civilizations Is Imminent

FERVOR

Shiite Muslims worship at the Jamkaran Mosque, where they wait for the return of the Mahdi before the end of the world.

AMIR TAHIRI, AN IRANIAN JOURNALIST FORMERLY stationed in Iran, wrote in the *Weekly Telegraph*, “Tehran’s Shia regime believes that its nuclear weapons will speed the second coming of the Mahdi”—speaking of their messianic figure (April 25).

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad believes the Mahdi will return in two to three years—or even sooner if somehow he can create an international crisis. He believes he was given his presidency to *provoke* a clash between civilizations!

This should alarm all of us. Imagine: Iran is the world’s top terrorist-sponsoring nation. It is about to get nuclear bombs, and its leaders believe a nuclear war will *speed* the return of their version of the Messiah. That means they are *eager* for a nuclear war. And once you start a nuclear war, how do you stop it?

Could any statement be more explosive?

That is one of the most shocking statements ever made—yet at the same time, it is a sign of the best news you could ever hear! Why?

Any Christian ought to recognize Ahmadinejad’s belief as a twisted counterfeit of one of Jesus Christ’s prophecies.

This is what Christ said in His famous Olivet prophecy: “For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved [saved *alive*—Moffat translation] but for the elect’s sake *those days shall be shortened*” (Matthew 24:21-22).

This is a prophecy about the worst suffering ever in human

history. Jesus Christ said He would speed up His Second Coming in order to cut these terrible days short.

That sounds quite close to what Ahmadinejad is talking about, except that he puts an ugly twist on it that you don’t find in Christ’s prophecy. Nuclear warfare will indeed hasten the return of Jesus Christ—not the 12th Imam, or the Mahdi.

Christ is not eager for a nuclear war and for suffering to afflict billions of people. God does not *want* to see a clash of civilizations! That is why He *warns* through biblical prophecy about what is coming—to help us recognize the horror as it approaches and turn to Him in repentance so we don’t have to experience it!

The Bible shows that if we heed God’s message, He will protect us individually. If the *world* heeded it, *the catastrophe could be avoided altogether!*

Right in the same context, here is a prophecy about that warning from God: “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a WITNESS unto all nations; and then shall the end come” (verse 14).

God calls the message “a witness” because He knows most people are going to reject it. But He sends it for a witness against them so they cannot come back and say, “Why didn’t you warn us?” If they have that approach, He will say, *I did warn you. Why were you asleep? Why didn’t you respond?*

The God of love warns us, hoping to *prevent* a nuclear clash. He does not want to see anybody suffer. But He allows it—and even *causes* it, in some cases—if we won’t heed His message.

See **CLASH** page 11 ▶



The Dawning of

With the World Cup in progress, Germany has captured the world's attention. The tournament will end, but here is why you should keep your eyes glued to this nation. BY BRAD MACDONALD

THE CUMULATIVE viewership of this year's World Cup is estimated to be 32 billion people. That

is an average of every man, woman and child on Earth watching roughly five of its soccer matches. As the host nation, Germany has the world eating from the palm of its hand. The publicity value to this "reformed and democratized" Germany is priceless. For an entire month, Germany is the center of attention.

The World Cup will pass, but we must not turn our attention from Germany.

Earth-shattering changes are taking place in this nation. Germany is moving into its new, and final, glory days; the World Cup is simply the beginning. Time will prove the significance of the trends emerging in the Fatherland.

Cataclysmic events always have small beginnings. World War I was sparked by a single assassination. World War II was conceived in the mind of one man more than a decade before it erupted. September 11 began as an idea.

Most Westerners, including Western leaders, underestimated events occurring within Germany during the 1930s. World War II was the end result.

Germany's history demands that we not trivialize two trends presently taking root in the nation. It is within these developments that we can see the seeds of a global crisis.

The Revival of German Nationalism

The first important trend is *the resuscitation of German nationalism*. This trend is particularly evident in the growing popularity of nationalist political parties in Germany. With debate over Muslims and immigration raging (see sidebar, page 4), the ranks of Germany's right-wing parties are swelling.

About a year before Angela Merkel became Germany's chancellor, she gave a strong speech against multiculturalism and ethnic integration. Think tank Stratfor made this telling comparison: "Merkel's statements echo the sentiments of a certain earlier German government [that of Adolf Hitler], and *the re-emergence of right-wing parties there could portend another shift in the country's policies toward foreigners*" (emphasis mine throughout). The world should beware when Germans embrace nationalist political parties.

Stratfor continued, "... Merkel's statements, combined with the *increasing sup-*

port enjoyed by other nationalistic, right-wing parties, are ominous" (Dec. 7, 2004). Why is this ominous? Because Germans are shifting toward political parties that are "reminiscent of Hitler's."

Earlier this year, a German politician ignited controversy when he said there are "no-go" areas in Germany that non-whites visiting for the World Cup should avoid because they would "possibly not leave these areas alive." *Spiegel Online* wrote that the resulting tornado of media coverage and public attention "merely served to strengthen the right-wing thinking of many eastern Germans" (May 30). Stickers reading "No-Go Area" now sell

a New Germany

GETTY IMAGES



GLORY DAYS

The World Cup signifies the trend in Germany toward reviving nationalism and increased national pride.

litical parties with more conservative and nationalistic values and beliefs, the nation's larger political parties are taking on a more conservative and nationalistic slant. Watch for politicians such as Edmund Stoiber, leader of the conservative Christian Social Union, to become more popular.

German nationalism is steadily reviving. A review of history tells us that, in times past, this seemingly small trend has had global ramifications.

Embarrassed by its central role in two world wars, Germany has tended to de-emphasize its own history. German historians now believe this educational void has precipitated an identity crisis, especially with the young. Too many Germans, they believe, simply don't know "who they are."

This is why a new permanent exhibition in Berlin is considered important. Opened on June 2, the first national historical exhibition since World War II "aims to plug gaping holes

on the Internet and are being purchased by Germans seeking to send a message to dark-skinned folk in their suburbs.

As sentiment against immigrants sours, Germans are turning toward right-wing political parties trumpeting stricter immigration policies, such as the far-right National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD). These parties are attracting many poorer, uneducated Germans, particularly former East Germans. The NPD has "quietly but consistently made itself indispensable to reunification's victims—to welfare recipients and even to the frustrated middle class" (ibid.). It has established neighborhood groups,

cultural clubs and information centers across the nation to inject its right-wing messages into the minds of the populace.

This information comes from a respected *German* news source.

Unlike pre-World War II times, the right-wing recruiters today, according to political scientist Dierk Bostel, wear suits and dress shoes rather than leather jackets and combat boots: "The wolf is presenting itself in sheep's clothing," he says (ibid.). True, Germany's far-right parties are still small; but their growing popularity highlights a change occurring in the German mindset.

As Germans increasingly desire po-

in the nation's memory of its 2,000-year past with a treasure trove of relics that include Hitler's globe and Napoleon's hat" (ibid., May 26). Organizers of the exhibition hope it will stir the German people to tap their historical roots and rediscover their identity. Hans Ottomeyer, director of the German Historical Museum in Berlin, says the exhibition will provide the German people with a "visual memory" that will help restore the country's lost sense of national identity. The history of the 12 years of the Third Reich (1933-1945) makes up the largest single part of the exhibition.

Note that it is Germany at its most

gruesome and horrific that is being given the most attention.

One of the highlights of the show is the 5-foot, 7-inch-high globe that stood in Hitler's office during World War II and symbolized his plans for global domination. Hitler's charred desk, dragged from the rubble of Nazi headquarters more than 60 years ago, is also on show, as well as numerous other Nazi artifacts. The exhibition capitalized on an interesting trend: As *Spiegel* noted, "In the last few years, German interest in World War II and its aftermath has

been growing" (ibid.).

Given the evils perpetrated the last time German nationalism waxed strong, it is naive to ignore the serious implications of this trend in Germany today.

Leader of Europe

The second trend is that Germany is emerging as the clear leader of Europe.

To many respected analysts, the proj-

ect for European unity is failing. The evidence seems, on the surface, to be copious: French and Dutch voters rejected the constitution in national referenda; the European Union's leading nations are unable to conform to a common economic policy as defined by the Stability and Growth Pact; agreement has not been reached on the integration of new countries. At the heart of the problem,

Getting Fed Up

FUELING THE INTENSIFICATION of German nationalism is the rise of Islam. Germans are growing fed up with Muslims. This development promises to have serious repercussions. In fact, Germany and Islam are traveling a path that can only end in an unparalleled clash of civilizations.

A survey performed in Germany earlier this year substantiates this argument. Commissioned by Germany's *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and performed by researchers from the Allensbach Institute for Public Opinion Research, the study disclosed an alarming trend. Deutsche Welle reported, "Experts fear new conflicts after a study published this week showed *most* Germans doubt the Western and Islamic worlds can peacefully coexist. Mistrust of the 3 million Muslims living in Germany appears to be growing" (May 20, emphasis mine throughout).

Of the 1,076 Germans interviewed in early May, 83 percent associated Islam with "fanaticism." Over 71 percent believed Islam to be "intolerant"; 62 percent saw Islam as "backward"; 60 percent saw it as "undemocratic" (*Jerusalem Post*, May 24). Only 8 percent of respondents characterized Islam as *peaceful*.

Perhaps most striking: 61 percent of Germans said they believe a "clash of cultures" *already exists*; 65 percent said they *counted on such conflicts to worsen in the future*. These results are astonishing: According to this survey, *most Germans expect a future clash with Islam!*

Should the government ban the building of Islamic mosques in Germany as long as the building of churches in some Islamic states remains forbidden? Fifty-six percent of Germans say yes. Survey results even indicated that there is growing support for *ending Germany's constitutional right of freedom of religion* with regard to Islam. Many Germans are so disgusted with the Islamic onslaught, they are prepared to *alter their constitution* in order to curb Muslim ambition!

Germans are mulling over increasingly extreme measures to solve the Islamic crisis in their midst. Four out of 10 Germans say "strict limits should be imposed on the practice of Islam in Germany to protect the country" (Expatica, May 18).



CLASH

Muslim demonstrators in Germany contribute to the majority belief among Germans that Islam and the West cannot peacefully coexist.

Although intolerance of Muslims in Germany has steadily risen since the 9/11 attacks in America, it has grown much stronger recently amid a torrent of high-profile stories in the German press. "Concerns over an 'honor killing' in Berlin, demands that schoolgirls be permitted to wear burkas, a surge in schoolyard violence involving Muslim immigrants, and the failure of Germany's 3 million Muslim immigrants to assimilate have deepened a 'crisis of cultures'" (*Jerusalem Post*, op. cit.).

As these events unfold, leading politicians are suggesting bold initiatives to solve the problem. A set of proposed tests mandatory for incoming immigrants plainly aims at Muslims: The test put forward by one German state asks about a person's views on forced marriage, homosexuality and women's rights; a 100-question test in another state asks whether "the applicant believes in Israel's right to exist and whether a woman should be allowed in public without the accompaniment of a male relative" (Deutsche Welle, March 16).

That a contingent of Germany's population is intolerant of Islam is not startling; sectors of the population in many nations espouse such sentiment. What is startling is that the results of the Allensbach survey suggest that anti-Islamic sentiment isn't confined to a narrow segment of German society. The *majority* of the German people believe a clash of civilizations is already underway.

This trend will only intensify; European-Islamic hostility is bound to escalate in the coming months and years. The entire Continent is being primed for conflict.

REUTERS

as Chancellor Merkel put it, “Europe is not very popular among Europeans” (Deutsche Welle, May 11).

However, like any institution of significance, the EU will find the solution to its problems *in its leadership*. And it is Germany that has historically filled Europe’s leadership void.

In January 2007, Germany, under Merkel’s stewardship, will assume the EU presidency. On May 11 this year, in her first speech on European policy to the Bundestag (Germany’s parliament) since becoming chancellor, Merkel talked about a *vision for Europe*.

She confirmed her unconditional support for the troubled EU constitution: “We absolutely need the constitution to ensure the European Union is effective and capable of action. ... We must reflect how we can bring the constitution project to a successful conclusion” (ibid.). The EU Commission president, Jose Manuel Barroso, has asked that no decision be made on the constitution until 2008, but for the German government, it is not a question of *if* the constitution will take effect, but *how* it will be done. Merkel said it is simply a matter of “finding the correct time to act.” Never mind the millions of EU citizens who rejected the constitution.

Merkel also addressed European enlargement. Contrary to other prominent politicians, her comments echoed those of her Bavarian counterpart Stoiber, who has always maintained that Europe needs clearly defined borders. She pointed out that a “body that does not have any borders cannot act cohesively” (ibid.). The real issues are whether or not Muslim Turkey should be accepted into the EU, and just where the EU’s borders should be. Whether the arguments that German politicians make involve borders, cultural unity or absorption capacity, the end result will always be the same: No Muslim nation will be allowed to join the EU, with its decidedly Roman Catholic roots.

In perhaps the most striking statement by a leading European politician to date, she added: “Europe has to show that it can *mold world policy according to its own values*.” This is not simply a statement of European unity, nor a revealing of European economic and social policy under German leadership. It is an articulation of a breathtaking ambition: that European values—more specifically, German values—should shape the world.

Few international politicians have raised a peep in protest. A revived German ambition to shape the globe should

have students of World War II shouting from the rooftops. German militarism has been destroyed twice in the last hundred years; after World War II, the Allied powers resolved to “ensure that Germany will never again be able to disturb the peace of the world.” Now, just 60 years later, will a German-led Europe be allowed—even invited—to reshape the world?

Merkel’s drive to lead Europe out of its problems and set the pace of discussion for its future has caught the attention of Britain’s minister for Europe, Geoff Hoon. In a May 17 speech delivered at Humboldt University in Berlin, Hoon called for the implementation of Germany’s vision for Europe and a new alliance between the two countries.

Merkel’s cogent policy statement appears to be magnetically drawing together disparate voices on the future of Europe. Hoon, representing Britain, can be included among them. His Humboldt speech was the political shadow of

reasserting its “traditional” influence over Europe.

From the end of World War II to the chancellorship of Gerhard Schröder, Germany was in a “geopolitical deep-freeze,” according to Stratfor. “[E]verything Schröder did was couched in terms of the *European* interest (which meant mostly French interest). Europeanism was the only approved outlet for German nationalism.

“But now there has been a *clean break*.”

“Angela Merkel is now in charge of Germany, and despite presiding over an unwieldy and uncomfortable coalition government ... she already has emerged as the center-point of European affairs” (ibid.).

Europe is beginning to once again revolve around *German* leadership. Berlin is “RETURNING TO ITS TRADITIONAL ROLE AS THE CORE EUROPEAN POWER.”

This is one of the most significant

Given the **EVILS** perpetrated the last time **GERMAN NATIONALISM** waxed strong, it is naive to ignore the **SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS** of this trend in Germany today.

Merkel’s policy statement, as he echoed her nearly every major policy point. EUpolitix.com commented on Hoon’s discussion of “Britain and Germany’s shared views on energy, the WTO trade talks and foreign policy,” as well as his praise for Merkel: “While we may not always agree on all of the solutions,” he said, “we need her kind of vision and leadership in Europe” (May 19).

What makes Hoon’s speech remarkable is that it signals *the UK acknowledging who the lead horse in European affairs is: Germany*.

For years, Europe was led by a Franco-German alliance. That failed with the French public voting down the federal project in last year’s referendum on the European Constitution. Germany, separated from its partner, now comfortably leads the charge, and Britain is willing to seek an alliance. But note: Germany is leading—Britain is following.

In its January 16 forecast, Stratfor told us that there is a “new trend” to watch in Europe as “TRADITIONAL EUROPEAN POWER BALANCES BEGIN TO REASSERT after a 60-year absence.” These analysts are telling us to watch Germany: It is

trends you could watch. Historically, the geopolitical structure of Europe has depended upon Germany’s strength or weakness. As Stratfor put it, “When Germany is weak ... other powers are able to rise and assert their interests. But *when Germany is strong*, IT DOMINATES THE HEART OF THE CONTINENT and relegates its neighbors to *powerlessness*—until such time as they ally to crush it” (ibid.).

History followed this pattern at three major points—periods known as the three German “Reichs.” Charlemagne’s Holy Roman Empire (the first iteration of what is now ‘Germany’) dominated Europe until it fell in Europe’s religious wars. Its death is what allowed Britain, France and Russia to rise as major powers. Imperial Germany played a similar dominating role from its rise in 1870 until its fall in World War I, when Weimar Germany’s weakness allowed a French and Russian renaissance. And of course Nazi Germany’s rise again put all eyes on Berlin, and its destruction led to the superpower standoff—and, *eventually*, to the rise of a ‘united’ Europe” (ibid.).

German aggrandizement should make our hearts beat faster. Stratfor pre-

dicted that “2006 will mark a new turning point as Germany begins to ascend for a FOURTH TIME”!

These analysts see that the Fourth Reich is rising before our eyes!

As has happened before, a strong Germany will drive Europe’s unification. But make no mistake: This superfederalist Europe will predominantly serve Germany’s interests.



FREE UPON REQUEST

over Ratzinger’s election, *despite the fact all of them are Protestants*” (ibid.). Germans are falling in love with the new pope.

Relations between Germany and the Vatican are blossoming. This is a trend of gigantic proportions. This church-state combine has historically been a ruthless and formidable force. To learn more about this history, please request our free booklet *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire*.

A prophecy in Daniel 8 specifically foretells the rise of a German leader in our time who is deeply influenced by the Catholic Church: “And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up” (Daniel 8:23). Other prophecies show this almost certainly must be a German leader. He doesn’t lead just one nation. He leads a 10-nation superpower (Revelation 13 and 17). This political combine shall “destroy wonderfully,” or *mightily* (Daniel 8:24).

“And through his policy also he shall cause *craft* to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many ...” (verse 25). This man is a master deceiver and swindler. He will know how to unite a modern Europe with many differing views. Though he is a dangerous bully, Europeans won’t see him as he truly is.

Any political or economic crisis could strongly unite the 10 nations very quickly. The final prophesied version of the Holy Roman Empire could be here in a few short years—even months.

Watch Germany. As Germany goes, so goes the European Union.

But look at the good news—the best news we could ever receive! Verse 25 of Daniel 8 concludes: “he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.” This evil and profoundly deceitful superpower will attempt to fight the returning Jesus Christ, and Christ and His army will win. They will usher in a new civilization that will last forever. There will be peace, joy and abundance forever.

This is the most important news we could ever hear! ■

Germany’s Ally

It is imperative that we watch these two trends in Germany. First, watch for the revival of German nationalism. Second, watch for Germany to become the definitive leader of Europe. Both are trends unfolding right now, *and they will only intensify*.

The Bible tells us that there is another hugely significant trend we should monitor: *Watch for relations between Germany and the Vatican to flourish*.

Both history and Bible prophecy tell us this is inevitable. The seeds of this relationship are already germinating.

In May this year, for the first time ever, the German government spoke out in favor of a reference to God in the EU constitution. “We live in a world in which we want to understand and communicate with other religions and cultures,” EUobserver.com quoted Angela Merkel as saying. “This includes knowing your own roots and being aware of them, which is WHY GOD and THE CHRISTIAN BELIEF SHOULD BE INCLUDED INTO THE EU CONSTITUTION, she indicated. ... It is the first time Berlin has spoken out in favor of a Christian reference in the EU constitution and could potentially REOPEN ONE OF THE MOST BITTER DEBATES surrounding the drawing up of the document four years ago” (May 26).

A German pope now heads the Roman Catholic Church. This has stirred a revival of Catholicism throughout Germany. Earlier this year the news agency Zenit reported that there “seems to be a rebirth of the faith in Germany” and that the “number of students of theology and of adult baptisms is increasing, as is that of Catholics returning to the church” (May 4). The number of Germans leaving the church is also decreasing.

Deutsche Presse-Agentur pointed out that “the most important politicians of the country, from Merkel to President Horst Köhler and the former Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, spoke of their ‘pride’



POPE BENEDICT XVI

Together, the growing presence of Islam and a pervasive spirit of secularism threaten Europe’s cultural, political and religious landscape. Facing these two crises, Europe will once again look to the Vatican for solutions.

BY BRAD MACDONALD

WANTED:

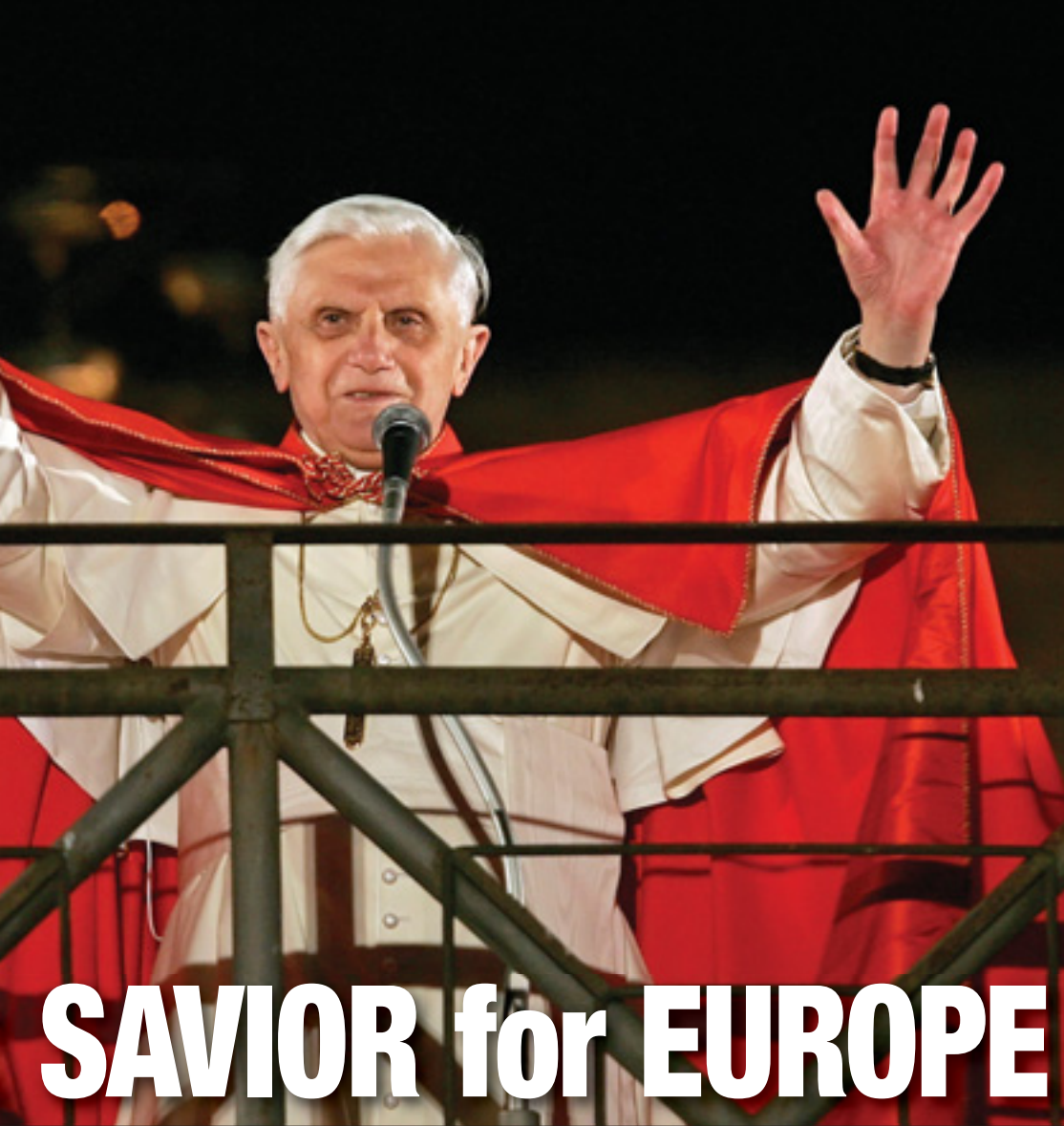
WEAK LEADERS BECOME discouraged and overwhelmed in crisis. Strong, ambitious leaders become motivated and see *opportunity* in crisis. Pope

Benedict xvi falls into the latter category.

Islamic terrorist networks span the Continent. Two of Europe’s largest cities, Madrid and London, have suffered bombings. A filmmaker in Amsterdam was shot eight times and repeatedly stabbed by an Islamist. As Muslim populations expand, they are becoming demanding and audacious. Tension between native Europeans and Muslim immigrants is thickening.

At the same time, Europe is being ransacked by moral relativism and secularism. Though the Continent was once defined by its Christian (Catholic) values and beliefs, since the days of the French Revolution these have been shoved aside by fervent anti-religious sentiment and politics.

For the most up-to-date information, visit theTrumpet.com/Germany



REUTERS

publicly delineated that he wants the restoration of Europe to its Christian roots to be the *defining theme* of his papacy.

Culture War A: Secularism

Analyst and author George Weigel wrote a prescient article titled “Europe’s Two Culture Wars” for the May issue of *Commentary*. In it, he makes a thorough, convincing argument that Europe is in the midst of two interrelated “culture wars”—wars that threaten to redefine the Continent.

The first of these, Culture War A, is “a war between the postmodern forces of *moral relativism* and the defenders of *traditional moral conviction*.” The second, Culture War B, is “the struggle to define the nature of civil society, the meaning of tolerance and pluralism, and the limits of multiculturalism in an aging Europe whose below-replacement-level fertility rates have opened the door to *rapidly growing and assertive Muslim populations*.” To state it simply, Mr. Weigel believes Europe is under attack from two enemies: secularism and Islam.

The aggressors in Culture War A are “radical secularists” seeking to jostle Europe from its Christian underpinnings, while the aggressors in Culture War B are “radical and jihadist Muslims who detest the West” and seek to impose “Islamic taboos” on Western society; they see their assertive, even violent protest as simply “the first stage toward the Islamification of Europe.”

In Culture War A, secularism and moral relativism have waged an especially strong campaign in the affluent states of Western Europe.

During John Paul II’s papacy, Roman Catholics in eastern and southern Europe were galvanized. In Western Europe, however, secularism is clamoring to stem the tide of the rising influence of Rome. Secularists are aghast at the early indications that the present pope, Benedict XVI, has a deliberate agenda to turn back the clock to pre-revolutionary days and impose Rome’s will (meaning its *religion*)

SAVIOR for EUROPE

Europe faces a crisis. If allowed to persist, the combined forces of Islam and secularism threaten to redefine Europe’s political, cultural and religious landscape. Europe’s failure to curb these trends highlights its greatest flaw: Economically, politically, socially, morally—*Europe lacks leadership*. Many European leaders are allowing themselves to be shoved around by these two foes.

The pope is not. To the contrary, he views these crises as an *opportunity* to augment Vatican influence over the whole of Europe.

As he surveys Europe’s landscape, the pope surely ponders the greatness of the Continent’s history, when it was *heavily* influenced and even dominated by the Roman Catholic Church. By contrasting today’s Europe with Europe of yesteryear, the solution to the Continent’s problems must ring clear in the pontiff’s mind: *Europe needs a dominant Vatican!*

In Europe’s crises, Benedict XVI sees a light in the gloom. The spirit of secu-

larism and the rise of Islam present the Vatican with a *tremendous opportunity*.

Europe is groaning for a force that will restore European identity and wage war against the forces that erode its strength. Benedict XVI intends to make *the Vatican* that force! History tells him that if Europe is to withstand the threats of Islam and secularism, then the Vatican must once again become the primary guiding influence. In Europe’s most powerful periods, the Vatican has been the single greatest constant. Europe excels when it is influenced by a strong Vatican.

This is why restoring Europe to its Catholic roots lies at the top of the pope’s to-do list. No issue is more important. Read his books; read the lines and between the lines of his speeches; watch where he travels, track who he talks to: Pope Benedict XVI is on a quest. He seeks to fill the gaping religious, moral and spiritual void in Europe.

Pope Benedict XVI is not playing down or hiding this fact; he has clearly,

on the whole European continent and beyond. As a result, they have rushed to enact liberal laws that counteract all that the Vatican is seeking to do in Europe.

Earlier this year, for example, the Spanish government, having already legalized same-sex marriage and adoption by homosexual partners, announced that the words “father” and “mother” would no longer appear on Spanish birth certificates. Rather, as announced in the *Official Bulletin of State*, “The expression ‘father’ will be replaced with ‘Progenitor A,’ and ‘mother’ will be replaced with ‘Progenitor B.’”

This ludicrous decision had to have spurred angry rumblings in Rome. The Vatican vehemently opposes same-sex unions; we can only imagine Pope Benedict XVI’s consternation over this decision to essentially reduce the traditional family to a mere breeding unit, common on your average animal husbandry farm.

Last October, legislators came up with a new ruling for the Netherlands stipulating that, beginning in August 2006, the Dutch word for “Christ” must be written

demned as “homophobic” those states “which do not recognize same-sex marriage and referring to religious freedom as a ‘source of discrimination’” (*Commentary*, op. cit.). While debating the resolution, a member of European Parliament from Britain even suggested suspending EU membership to nations that opposed the resolution.

As Mr. Weigel noted, these anti-religion politicians and intellectuals are “using both national and EU regulatory machinery to marginalize the public presence and impact of Europe’s dwindling numbers of practicing Christians” (ibid.). In reality, their efforts illustrate the tussle between secularist bureaucrats and Vatican-endorsed political leaders. With the hot breath of Catholic conservatives on their necks, liberals are dashing to fend off the groundswell of support the pope and his predecessor have ignited among the masses in their efforts to return Europe to its traditional, Catholic roots.

The secularists are already in trouble. Their “dwindling numbers of practicing Christians” claim is a myth. Attendance

This situation is exacerbated by declining birthrates among European natives. No European nation has a replacement-level fertility rate; in fact, 11 EU countries display a *negative* natural increase, meaning there are more annual deaths than births. *Europe is literally dying off*. Thus, these nations *need* immigrants in order to replenish their populations.

Most attractively, Europe’s deep-seated multiculturalism means Muslims can set up shop, enjoying the benefits of living in France, Germany or the Netherlands, without pressure to concede their religion, ideologies or cultural practices. They never have to become *European*, embrace European religion, culture—or even, in many instances, European law.

Islamic immigrants have exploited European tolerance for decades. Only recently have some people in Europe really explored the ramifications of this decades-long Islamic tidal wave. With Islamists exciting crises across the Continent, many Europeans are beginning to sit up and take note of the potent force stirring in their midst.

In December 2004, Stratfor wrote that a clash between white Europeans and Muslim immigrants will likely be Europe’s next great conflict. “Europe’s growing Muslim population and a recent spate of events involving Islamist radicals are bringing tensions between the Continent and its largest minority to the fore. Clashes between a traditionally white, Christian Europe and the increasing tide of Arabs and Muslims are heating up, with several countries becoming veritable powder kegs. ...

“In Western Europe especially, tensions between established Europeans and Muslim communities are threatening to escalate, and it is likely the next major conflict Europe experiences will be ideological rather than political” (Dec. 2, 2004). Some of Europe’s largest cities have Muslim ghettos so dangerous that policemen will not even enter. It is in these poor, deprived communities that radical Islamist sentiment takes root and thrives.

France in particular has dozens of Muslim-dominated areas that are un-governable. In these suburbs, French law is non-existent and French police are afraid to enter. In a sense, these Muslim immigrants have established quasi-Islamic states within the borders of Western European nations.

In the last few years, as the war between Islam and the West has heated up globally, many Islamist groups have ex-

POPE BENEDICT XVI has clearly and publicly delineated that he wants the restoration of Europe to its **CHRISTIAN ROOTS** to be the **DEFINING THEME** of his papacy.

with a lowercase “c.” As one of the most secular nations in Europe, the Netherlands has long been known for its liberal drug and prostitution laws; but it also led the way in legalizing same-sex unions and euthanasia. Earlier this year, a political party with an agenda to legalize pedophilia registered to take part in elections.

Secularist thinking increasingly permeates the laws and policies of many Western European nations. A French law passed in December 2004 banned “hate speech” against homosexuals. Soon after the law was enacted, a French parliamentarian was fined for making comments in parliament essentially saying that heterosexuality is morally superior to homosexuality. *The Vatican has made comments about homosexuality that make this French politician’s comments seem extremely mild.*

The anti-religion trend has also affected the EU at the federal level. In January this year, for example, European Parliament conceived a resolution that con-

at Sunday mass is rising in Western Europe, especially within Germany, as the public responds to the appeal of a German pope. European youth are undergoing a revival of faith in the papacy. But the numbers are skewed because of two phenomena: Europe’s inability to replace its native population, and the increase in Muslim immigration.

Culture War B: Islam

Multiculturalism is a by-product of secularism and political correctness. Renowned for its ethnic diversity and casual acceptance of immigrants, Western Europe is perhaps the most multicultural region on Earth.

Muslim immigrants have been burrowing themselves into Europe’s landscape for decades. Western Europe—with its known tolerance, its seemingly boundless opportunities and extremely generous and easily manipulated welfare systems—has been prime real estate for poor Muslims seeking shelter.

panded their ideological battles. Groups in Europe that once had specific, issue-based goals—agitating for Palestinian statehood, for example—have evolved into more “broad-based, ideologically-oriented groups centered around radical interpretations of the Koran and perceived Western expansion into the Muslim world” (ibid.). Rather than simply wage war on Israel, these groups have expanded their operation to wage war on the West—particularly Europe.

The effects of the estimated 15 million Muslims in Europe are being felt. In France, which has the most Muslim immigrants, the visitors have refused to assimilate into French culture and society. This attitude has butted heads with the government’s insistence on secular-

(‘honor’ killings in cases of adultery and rape—the rape victim being the one killed)” (*Commentary*, op. cit.). These immigrants flagrantly break European law, and the *governments do nothing!*

Consider two examples. In Belgium, the government recently sued a manufacturer of security gates because he kept his Moroccan employees working only in the factory and would not send them out to install the gates in Belgian homes. By contrast, the same government “explicitly decided not to prosecute” a Muslim who had started an anti-Semitic cartoon series “so as not to inflame the situation” (*Brussels Journal*, February 21).

Some experts assert that “21st-century Europe’s appeasement of Islamists amounts to a self-inflicted *dhimmitude*:

being firebombed, and attacks against Muslims and their religious leaders are becoming more common. The growing popularity of far-right political parties also illustrates that anti-Islamic sentiment among native Europeans is increasing.

Europe is in a precarious position: These incendiary elements could explode into far more serious violence between the two cultures. The situation is nearing a crisis point; still, Europe’s politicians have no definitive, comprehensive answers!

Enter the Vatican

With Europeans waking up to the cultural and religious transformation occurring before their eyes, an increasing number believe this trend must be reversed. Prominent Vatican officials, including Pope Benedict, top the list.

The Vatican lies at the heart of Europe’s historic status as a luminary of Western civilization. Historically, when the Vatican dominated, Europe prevailed. *The Catholic Church has been Europe’s single greatest constant.*

Don’t think for a moment this history has slipped the mind of the pope. Benedict knows that the only way Europe will ever defeat secularist and Islamic uprisings and regain its position at the helm of world affairs is if the Vatican resumes its leading role! With serious crises looming, the Vatican sees a pressing leadership void that it believes only it can fill.

Meanwhile, a conservative, pro-Vatican political force is emerging that is already joining forces with the Vatican to “save” Europe.

Pope Benedict’s book *Without Roots: The West, Relativism, Christianity, Islam*, published in early 2005, is a compilation of essays cowritten with Italian Senate leader Marcello Pera. In it these men explore the ramifications of secularism and Islam within Europe. Both men are aware of the destruction these two ideologies are inflicting.

Pera has been candid in his statements about Europe’s unwillingness to defend itself against Islam. Do Europeans understand, he asks, “that their very existence is at stake, their civilization has been targeted, their culture is under attack? Do they understand that what they are being called on to defend is their own identity? Through culture, education, diplomatic negotiations, political relations, economic exchange, dialogue, preaching, but also, if necessary, through force?” This call to arms comes from a high-ranking, agnostic politician!



REUTERS

DEVOUT

Attendance is rising at Catholic churches throughout Western Europe.

ism and deepened the schism between Muslim communities and the rest of the country. In the riots in France last year, for example, a majority of the rioters were young Muslim immigrants.

Europe’s Muslim immigrants are the greatest beneficiaries of the widespread political correctness in Europe’s politics and media. European governments have essentially handcuffed themselves with their own secular, liberal and politically correct policies. This has created a situation where “European authorities pay little or no attention to practices among their Muslim populations that range from the physically cruel (female circumcision) through the morally cruel (arranged and forced marriages) to the socially disruptive ... and the illegal

In an attempt to slow the advance of a rising Islamist tide, many of Europe’s national and transnational political leaders are surrendering core aspects of sovereignty and turning Europe’s native populations into second- and third-class citizens in their own countries” (*Commentary*, op. cit.). It is not difficult to see how such policies would rankle native Europeans. In fact, the inability of European leaders to deal decisively with Muslim immigration is developing into a grave problem. Europeans are beginning to take the law into their own hands.

Rhetorical, political and even physical clashes are erupting between Muslims and native Europeans across the Continent. Witness the cartoon crisis earlier this year. In other instances, mosques are

On March 30 this year, the EU's largest and most influential conservative group, the European People's Party (EPP), sponsored a conference in Rome at which the pope took center stage. The EPP is comprised of 38 political parties from all over Europe, including several Christian Democrat parties. With such European heavyweights as German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Italy's then-Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi and European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso in attendance, the summit was not only a "reminder that the center-right dominates the EU agenda," but that it also has the support of the Vatican (*Financial Times*, March 30).

The conference clearly sweetened the courtship between Europe's conservative parties and the Vatican. The *Times* reported the pope had joined forces with leading European Union conservatives "to call for a restoration of Christian values at the heart of the EU" (*ibid.*). "Your support for Christian heritage," he told the politicians, "can contribute significantly to the defeat of a culture that is now fairly widespread in Europe, which relegates [religion] to the private and subjective sphere" (Reuters, March 30). Put simply, Benedict wants Europe's leaders to help purge society of moral relativism.

At the same time, the pope reminded EPP attendees that the Catholic leadership has the right to join public policy debates "in order to educate people's consciences and uphold justice" (Catholic News Service, March 30). According to Benedict, Catholic leaders should

have a voice in European politics, and those voices must be amplified.

It is important in surveying Europe that we note this connection between the Vatican and the majority of Europe's leaders: They are overwhelmingly center-right in their politics and Roman Catholic by religion. In other words, they are unified in their purpose in a way the secularists are not. The secularist dash to legislate Europe's traditional god out of the picture will fail. In fact, it will provide the catalyst that will lead to their demise! Already the pope, supported by the vast majority of Europe's political leaders, is shaping a powerful backlash against the secularists.

In a series of Good Friday meditations during Easter this year, the pope publicly lambasted the state of today's Western society and the destruction of Christian values. The London *Times* called it "a blistering attack on the 'satanic' mores of modern society" (April 14). The tone of the prayers and meditations in both content and delivery was stern—and, as the *Times* put it, striking in its contrast to the "contemporary fashion for feel-good religion."

In one prayer, Benedict stated, "Lord, we have lost our sense of sin! Today a slick campaign of propaganda is spreading an inane apologia of evil, a senseless cult of Satan, a mindless desire for transgression, a dishonest and frivolous freedom, exalting impulsiveness, immorality and selfishness as if they were new heights of sophistication. Lord Jesus, open our eyes: Let us see the filth

around us and recognize it for what it is ..." (Catholic World News, April 14).

The pope attacked the various routes by which the traditional family unit is being maligned and destroyed. His staunch stance against homosexuality is widely known, but in his Good Friday meditations he also condemned "scientific advances in the field of genetic manipulation." Benedict warned "against the move to 'modify the very grammar of life as planned and willed by God,'" and led prayers "against 'insane, risky and dangerous' ventures in attempting 'to take God's place without being God'" (*Times*, *op. cit.*).

There is no mistaking that the most powerful religious leader on Earth seeks to once again cement Catholic values into the core of European society and culture.

It is clear that the pope is also turning his attention to the Muslim problem in Europe. The *Los Angeles Times* reported, "Another shift in this papacy is Benedict's focus on Europe and his much harder line on Islam" (April 16). Zenit news agency reported that stories of persecution against Catholics in Islamic countries make the news almost daily, and that the "Vatican is concerned" (May 27).

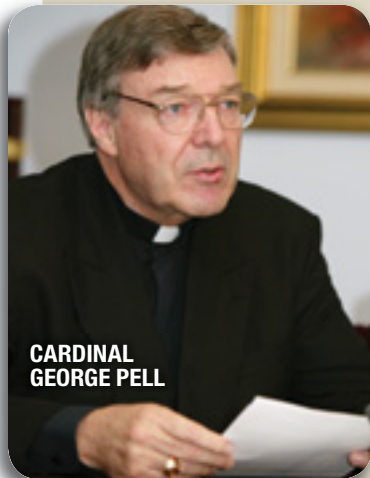
A Nov. 9, 2004, article on FrontPageMagazine.com titled "The Vatican (Slowly) Awakens to Jihad" highlighted the growing concern over Islam even at that time. "Rome's stance goes beyond a resigned acceptance of uncomfortable facts or the determination to influence the issue. It reflects a gradual yet increased awareness—and fear—of jihadism's growing influence. ...

"Rome also appears more willing to advocate a more assertive military presence against jihadist terror, within limits governed by international law. ...

"[Cesare] Mazzolari [bishop of Rumbek in Sudan] stated what many Vatican officials are afraid to admit: The 'clash of civilizations' is here. 'This is just the beginning,' he said. 'The church has defeated communism, but is just starting to understand its next challenge—Islamism, which is much worse. The holy father [John Paul II] has not been able to take up this challenge due to his old age. But the next pope will find himself having to face it.'" This bishop was right; Pope Benedict XVI is facing up to Islam!

The article said that many bishops, even from Muslim countries, viewed the problem just as Mazzolari did. "[Vatican Secretary of State Angelo] Sodano, the Vatican's second-most powerful cardi-

Top Cardinal Slams Muslims



CARDINAL GEORGE PELL

Australia's top Catholic cardinal, George Pell, archbishop of Sydney, recently spoke out against Muslims, declaring that Islam is more warlike than Christianity.

In an interview with the *National Catholic Reporter*, Pell said that "'the million-dollar question' was whether intolerance was a modern distortion of Islam or arose out of internal logic. 'It's difficult to find periods of tolerance in Islam'" (Australian Associated Press, June 6).

Earlier this year, Pell said the Koran contained "invocations to violence" and that Islam was "not a tolerant religion" (*World Today*, May 5). These remarks provoked a strong reaction in Australia's Muslim community.

Pell, who unapologetically supports strict adherence to Catholic orthodoxy, was favored by the late Pope John Paul II, resulting in his rapid promotion to the highest position in the Australian church. Pell hopes to bring the Australian church back under the strict au-

thority of Rome. He is close to the current pope both politically and ideologically.

The vocalization of such views by high-ranking Catholic officials is a precursor to a time coming soon when these two universal religions will come to blows.

nal, has been listening. “The big problem of the future will be our relationship with the Islamic world,” he told the Italian daily *La Repubblica* on October 15 [2004]. “It is a challenge that does not only concern the church.”

The article concluded, “Given the horrifying nature of jihadist imperialism, perhaps Rome is starting to realize that it doesn’t have centuries to act.”

Despite their **SAVAGE HISTORY**, Germany and the Vatican are beginning to be **ENCOURAGED** to **LEAD EUROPE**.

Islam threatens to redefine Europe and marginalize the Vatican’s influence over its beloved Continent. Rome is becoming urgent. A great clash of civilizations looms.

The Beast of Revelation

Though only recently are many observers recognizing the likelihood of a renewed muscularity emerging from the Vatican, Herbert W. Armstrong warned about it for decades. As early as 1947, with much of the Continent still buried in the rubble of the Second World War, he prophesied that Germany and the Vatican would once again rise to dominate Europe.

This prophecy is coming to fruition today.

What is intriguing is the way it is unfolding. Despite their savage history, *Germany and the Vatican are being encouraged to lead Europe*.

Europeans increasingly acknowledge the reality of these two very serious and interrelated wars. With hardships mounting around them, people and governments alike are starting to look to the Vatican for answers. Watch for European nations to increasingly realign themselves with Vatican leadership.

History warns us of the dangers in this trend. Conspiracy, betrayal, bloodshed, intolerance, execution—these words best describe the “Holy” Roman Empire of the Middle Ages. The Roman and Spanish inquisitions virtually eliminated Protestantism in Italy and Spain! The world has probably never seen a more vile period than those dark and miserable centuries. Many millions must be counted as victims of the Holy Roman Empire throughout its thousand-year history.

This is why the world should be alarmed when it hears the Vatican talk-

ing about its next great adversary being Islam. It is true: This Middle Eastern power is rising and becoming a serious threat. But for the Catholic Church to speak out about the problem is to bring the specter of the Crusades to life!

The *Trumpet* and its predecessor, the *Plain Truth*, have warned for decades that Europe will unite under German and Vatican leadership. This warning

comes directly from the Bible. Passages in Daniel 2 and 7, and Revelation 13, 17 and 18, discuss specifically the rise of a German-led and Vatican-influenced European superpower in this end time.

Called a *beast* by the Apostle John in Revelation 13, this German-led federation of European states is clearly motivated and guided by the Catholic Church. Revelation 17 shows this beast being ridden by a woman, the biblical symbol of a church. For a more thorough understanding of the link between Germany and the Vatican, please read our free booklet *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire*.

Very soon now, 10 nations, or groups of nations, in Europe will band together in a union influenced by a great church. Everything about the union will seem right: the religion, the prosperity, the military might. But the final fruits of this union will be horrifying.

The historical fruits of this union between a powerful political beast and a great false church certainly have not been holy. To the contrary, they have been powerfully unholy. And when those rotten fruits are revealed one last time, the world will be shocked. How could something which seems so right—so religious—be so evil? That answer is written upon thousands of pages of history. More importantly, God prophesied it long ago in the pages of the book almost no one reads and studies: the Holy Bible. Perhaps it is time to grab that book from the shelf, blow off the dust and crack it open. You will be shocked at how accurately God predicts the future. ■

For the most up-to-date information, visit
theTrumpet.com/Vatican

Ahmadinejad has said before the whole world that he is going to wipe Israel off the map in one storm, implying a nuclear storm. Is that coming from God? Not even close.

On May 5, columnist Charles Krauthammer wrote in the *Washington Post*: “Last week Bernard Lewis, America’s dean of Islamic studies, who just turned 90 and remembers the 20th century well, confessed that for the first time he feels it is 1938 again”—that is, when Hitler was about to start World War II. “He did not need to add that in 1938, in the face of the gathering storm—a fanatical, aggressive, openly declared enemy of the West, and most determinedly of the Jews—the world did nothing.

“When Iran’s mullahs acquire their coveted nukes in the next few years, the number of Jews in Israel will just be reaching 6 million”—the same number of Jews that were exterminated during World War II. Then he ends by saying, “Never again?”—implying that what happened to the Jews very possibly could happen again.

Many people would disagree with this, but I CAN TELL YOU ABSOLUTELY THAT IRAN IS NOT GOING TO CONQUER ISRAEL. It will *not* succeed in wiping Israel from the map.

How could I possibly know that? Because I know, based on a number of biblical prophecies, that this is simply not God’s plan.

The Bible shows that Iran, “the king of the south,” before achieving its ambition, will be attacked by another “king” in a spectacular clash! (Daniel 11:40-41). Ahmadinejad is looking for a clash of civilizations—and biblical prophecy shows that HE IS GOING TO GET IT! But Iran and its allies are not going to win, and they will not wipe Jerusalem off the map. In fact, *they* will be wiped off the map if they don’t also wake up and listen to God’s prophecies. These are spelled out in our free booklet *The King of the South*.

These events are described in your Bible, and they are happening right now in the news! Anyone can see it. These prophecies are absolutely astounding! Remember, God gives them to us for one reason: to demonstrate His power over world events in order to drive us to repentance.

I guarantee your life will take on a new dimension of excitement if you respond to God! ■

Care Package From Rome

Europhiles expect the election of Romano Prodi as Italy's new prime minister to help energize the EU.

NEW ERA

Romano Prodi, a long-time EU politician, took over as Italy's new prime minister May 17.

BY RYAN MALONE

ITALY, ONE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION'S largest and founding countries, now has an unrelenting Europhile at its helm. After Italy's supreme court ruled on the much-disputed election results in April, Romano Prodi, former president of the European Commission, took office as prime minister on May 17.

Narrow victory aside, he is widely expected to provide new impetus to EU integration and reform.

Prodi told the *Sunday Times* his dual priorities were to forge an alliance among the EU's leading members and re-open discussions concerning the European Constitution (April 16).

Core Europe

Prodi's first priority, integrating a core group of EU countries, would clearly foster the Union's federalist goals. These elite would be "the countries most determined to push for a common European policy"—namely, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and probably Belgium and Luxembourg (*ibid.*).

For Europe to function successfully, 25 heads of state are far too many cooks in the kitchen. It must find a format with fewer decision makers. Prodi and

other Europhiles, especially Germany's conservative Chancellor Angela Merkel, know this all too well.

For example, six interior ministers from Europe's largest nations met in March in northern Germany at the same time their bosses were at a largely unproductive heads-of-state summit in Brussels, Belgium. Compare the two summits, and it's not hard to see which format gets more results. While the larger meeting broke down in bickering, the six interior ministers agreed to coordinate their security services to deal with immigration and security problems, and took home a number of agreements to this effect. These ministers, from the Union's six largest nations (Germany, Italy, France, Spain, the UK and Poland), represented 340 million of the 450 million European citizens that comprise the EU.

This intimate meeting indicates "there is plenty of room for cooperation—if they can get the forum right," Stratfor asserted (emphasis mine throughout). "If the Europeans are going to have a transnational structure that succeeds in doing something other than holding very expensive, very counterproductive meetings, they will have to develop a format like this" (March 24).

Stratfor says the next likely steps will be the steady adoption of Group of Six agreements to the bulk of the other EU states—no matter what the smaller nations think.

Stratfor wasn't alone in its analysis. Key EU thinkers have been calling for the fewer-cooks approach for some time. One thing the EU heads-of-state summit *did* produce was a resolution for the Union to take a hard look at its ability to accept more members. One reason behind this is cultural and religious—politicians know that EU citizens are leery about accepting a Muslim nation like Turkey. But another reason is that, within a few years, the number of heads at the table is set to exceed 30. This is only a recipe for more squabbling and stalemates.

These realizations were coming to the surface just weeks before Italy's biggest Eurochamp became prime minister.

Prodi is sure to help push Europe's largest states to work more closely together. In his interview with the *Times*, he outlined what he called his "more Europe" reforms—with France, Germany, Spain and Italy taking the lead in implementing them.

The *Times* reported, "In his manifesto Prodi called for more *harmonization*

of economic policies with the eurozone given 'a stronger political dimension,' the immediate appointment of an EU foreign minister and the abolition of the right of national vetoes on foreign-policy decisions taken at EU summits."

Prodi's election reinforces an unmistakable trend: Europe is on the fast track to becoming a federal state. Even before Prodi's announcement of his goals, Estonian member of the European Parliament and presidential candidate Toomas Hendrik told his local press that founding EU states were trying to convert the eurozone into a "core group." He warned that those members would "provoke a deep rift in the Continent" by creating a "federal state within the Union" that would sideline other member states (European Information Service, April 19).

The tendency we now see in Europe—of a smaller number of key states taking EU decision-making into their own hands—may well be a precursor to the formation of the final configuration prophesied in the Bible. A prophecy in Daniel 2 shows that the final resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire—the last kingdom in a series of empires tracing back to Nebuchadnezzar—would be comprised of 10 nations, or 10 groups of nations.

Britain Left in Cold?

Prodi's drive for a core Europe will make for a leaner, meaner political machine, meaning that other European nations will have to put up with what the "core" nations decide. Smaller nations will be sidelined.

What's more, Euroskeptic nations like Britain will, before long, reach a crossroads. The *Trumpet* has predicted for years, based on biblical prophecy, that Britain will not be a part of the final configuration of a united Europe. Events are leading rapidly to this outcome.

For years, Britain has been the most Euroskeptic nation in the Union. A tide coming over Europe of late is a mutual feeling of skepticism toward Britain.

Prodi's election doesn't bode well for EU-British relations. He specifically omits Britain from the core group of nations he foresees leading the EU, telling the *Times* it is "difficult to include [Britain] among countries which are pushing for more integration. Britain has decided not to hold a referendum on Europe so it has not approved the European position. Evidently it believes in a policy which is more independent of the EU" (op. cit.).

On top of that, another Prodi foreign-

policy platform is to remove Italian troops from Iraq—a move that will alienate Rome not only from Washington, but also from Washington's chief ally, Britain.

Simplify the Constitution

Prodi's second major priority, as he told the *Times*, is a "simplified constitution which focuses on the big principles. That

Prodi's election doesn't bode well for EU-British relations. He **SPECIFICALLY OMITTS BRITAIN** from the core group of nations he foresees **LEADING THE EU.**

means the first part of the constitution, the charter of fundamental rights and possibly a social protocol. But we have to remove all the technical, detailed aspects which scared people" (ibid.).

Prodi said he would like to see the constitution put to EU voters in a referendum in 2009 at the same time as European parliamentary elections.

Austria's *Der Standard* reported that "we may finally see the beginning of a new phase of pragmatic, unspectacular but perhaps ultimately more successful and serious policy in Europe."

The paper pointed to Merkel's rise to power in Germany as further evidence of a trend in Europe: "The time of loud macho-statesmen who are not all that interested in Europe but all the more in their egos and/or national aspects or business interests could be coming to an end" (BBC News, April 19).

Europhiles Ecstatic Over Prodi

Indicating their confidence in his ability to further their cause, other Europhiles

were elated with Prodi's victory. "The results of this election go beyond Italy's borders," said Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt. "Romano Prodi's victory is also important for Europe, especially during this period needing a pro-European vision and direction. ... I am convinced that Italy, steered by Prodi and his deep European experience, will

once again contribute to Italy's long EU tradition" (EUbusiness.com, April 11).

France's Europe Minister Catherine Colonna told Prodi: "... I am convinced that you will play an essential role in the relaunch of Europe" (ibid.).

"Europe needs an Italy that does not waver. Italy and the EU's interests coincide," said EU Justice Minister Franco Frattini (ibid.).

With Prodi in charge, Italy will likely deeply establish its position in Europe.

Though biblical prophecy causes us to expect Germany to be the driving force in bringing Europe together in a final resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire ("Assyria," the ancient name for modern-day Germany, is mentioned throughout the Bible as playing a key part in end-time events), history tells us we cannot ignore Italy—the seat of the "holy" part of it. Thus, watch for Italy, under Prodi's guidance, to aid Berlin in creating a more unified, streamlined and powerful Europe.

With reporting by **LISA GODEAUX**

Why You Should Care About EUROPE

The European Union may not seem to have a major impact on your everyday life today. But Germany and Italy are destined to reshape the lives of every American in the next few years. Our free booklet **Germany and the Holy Roman Empire** explains how and why. To request a copy, visit us online at theTrumpet.com.

GERMANY
AND THE
HOLY ROMAN
EMPIRE



Latin America Swings Left

The United States' southern neighbors are installing unfriendly leftist governments. Should Washington even give it a second thought? BY MARK JENKINS

READERS FROM THE UNITED States may skip this article simply because it is about Latin America—and what does Latin America matter?

Or so many would think.

More so than perhaps any other major region on Earth, Latin America is off most Americans' radar at the moment.

On casual inspection, the reasoning behind this nonchalance may appear sound. The Middle East, for instance, is a hotbed of terrorist activity backed by Iranian nuclear ambition; clearly, that is somewhere people need to watch. Asian

nations like China, Japan and India are propping up the U.S. economic juggernaut; anyone interested in America's financial health watches the Far East. Europe is rising as a powerful counterbalance to the United States. Even Africa receives attention simply because of its apparently perpetual state of disaster.

Then there is Latin America. There, a man in a red hat makes anti-U.S. speeches and respected analysts laugh him off, saying that the entirety of Latin America is a non-issue for Washington. Americans do not view Latin American nations as serious financial competitors; there is no

AMIGOS

Chavez visits Castro in February. The relationship is an act of strategic defiance against the U.S.

Latin American terrorist activity in the news; the stability of the Latin American oil supply is considered a minor concern compared to that of the volatile Middle East; Latin America is not the focal point of natural disasters or disease epidemics.

In short, Americans aren't watching Latin America.

Latin America, however, is certainly watching the U.S.—and not with affection. One of the main goals of just about any Latin American politician right now is to appear anti-Washington. What's more, the governments of the nations of Latin America are turning toward socialist policies one by one—setting the stage for a host of Castro clones.

There is good cause for Washington to care.

Still No Cigar

The key to understanding why developments in the Southern Hemisphere should matter to Washington lies in the one element of the Latin American political landscape that has not changed since the days of John F. Kennedy.

Where the United States' relationships with other countries have evolved over time, one nation

in the last 50 years has maintained its status as a sworn enemy of the U.S. One leader, now the longest ruling on Earth, has a perfect record of opposing the U.S. despite military threats, embargoes, sanctions and general opposition around the world. During the Cold War, this man brought the world to the brink of hot war by allowing America's enemy to install nuclear missiles in his island nation. The country: Cuba; the leader: Fidel Castro.

Do we really want Latin American leaders to emulate Castro?

That is exactly the direction things seem to be heading. Consider Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez. Without this man's support, Castro's regime in Cuba might have collapsed by now. Having lost the Soviet Union's subsidization of oil after the Cold War, Castro found relief from

Caracas. Perhaps the best example of what is happening to Latin America as a region is embodied in this man who would remake Latin America in Cuba's image.

President Chavez has made a point of putting his friendship with Castro in the public eye and painting the U.S.—especially its president—in the most wretched colors possible; a typical pronouncement: “The imperialist, genocidal, fascist attitude of the U.S. president has no limits. I think Hitler would be like a suckling baby next to George W. Bush.” Here is another: “Jesus was the first socialist, and Judas the first capitalist.”

Chavez has also, according to the *Washington Post*, “bashed the United States on the al-Jazeera television network and traveled to Libya to receive an award from

can flags. Ever the diplomat, President Chavez held an anti-Bush rally. Police were forced to use tear gas to break up the crowd and arrested over 60 people.

The violence wasn't limited to Mar del Plata, or even elsewhere in Argentina. It reached into Uruguay, for example, where “hooded protesters chanting anti-Bush slogans attacked bank buildings and shops, and shattered windows” (ibid.). Some called President Bush a fascist and terrorist; others praised Fidel Castro and Hugo Chavez.

The *New York Times* called George W. Bush “the most unpopular president ever among Latin Americans.”

It is in this climate that leftist governments are emerging throughout Latin America. The region is in the midst of

socialist direction, “advance his populist agenda—and cement his authority” (ibid., Dec. 16, 2005). During the Summit of the Americas in November, the anti-American Kirchner boasted that in his private meeting with President Bush he would “win by a knockout.”

In Peru, the most extreme, anti-U.S. presidential candidate, Ollanta Humala, was narrowly defeated on June 4 by former president Alan Garcia—a leftist himself, but not a supporter of Chavez like Humala. The election, though, showed widespread popular support for Humala's views: He actually won in 14 of Peru's 24 states and “vowed not to let his election loss halt his ‘grand transformation’ of the country,” bragging that he and his supporters had “changed the political

If a country is an enemy of the United States, it is a friend of Hugo Chavez.

Moammar Gaddafi” (March 15, 2005). He has openly supported Iran's nuclear program, saying to the Iranian leadership: “Faced with the threat of the U.S. government against our brother people in Iran, count on us for all our support” (ibid.). If a country is an enemy of the United States, it is a friend of Hugo Chavez.

The converse is also true: Washington's allies are Chavez's foes. Earlier this year, he called Tony Blair a “pawn of imperialism” and described him as the “main ally of Hitler”—meaning President Bush.

Chavez also referred to Mexican President Vicente Fox as a “puppy” of the United States and warned him: “Don't mess with me, sir, because you'll get stung.” As a result of this exchange, Mexico and Venezuela each recalled its ambassador from the other's country.

This conflict was Chavez's follow-up to the Summit of the Americas on Nov. 4-5, 2005, in Argentina, where Fox backed the U.S. proposal for the formation of a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and Chavez declared it dead, saying, “All of us here have brought an undertaker's shovel, because here in Mar del Plata is the tomb of the FTAA” (*Seattle Times*, Nov. 5, 2005).

President Chavez was joined in his opposition of the FTAA by 30,000 protesters who showed up in Mar del Plata, where the summit was held. By the end of the first day, initially peaceful marches turned violent with a group of about 200 trying to break through the security cordon around the hotel where the heads of state—including U.S. President George Bush—were staying. Some threw rocks with slingshots; others burned Ameri-

an 18-month election cycle which is seeing the emergence of left-leaning, anti-American leaders. Why? In part, it is because of a spreading hatred for U.S. policies in Latin America and elsewhere.

The new Bolivian president, Evo Morales, used the slogan “Long live coca, death to the Yankees” in his election campaign last year and has dubbed President Bush a terrorist; a coca farmer himself, he also has no intention of cooperating with the U.S. war on drugs. Rather, Morales has said he will take a cake made with coca leaves to Fidel Castro on his birthday.

That a coca grower opposes the war on drugs is to be expected, but President Morales's second shot came as more of a surprise: He has followed Hugo Chavez's lead by nationalizing Bolivia's oil and gas sector. Naturally, the oil and gas companies whose assets the government seized—literally surrounded with military personnel—were concerned as to how they would be compensated for their material and financial loss. In a fair-minded masterstroke they might not have considered, the president ruled out any compensation, reasoning that the oil giants had surely recovered their investment by now. Then, in a move that has echoes of Zimbabwe's president, Robert Mugabe, Morales announced that land is next up for grabs. The U.S. should not look to Morales for friendship.

In Argentine legislative elections last October, the success of President Néstor Kirchner's Justicialist Party—which gained political control of parliament and of Buenos Aires—gave him a mandate to lead his country further in a

map of the country” in only one year (Associated Press, June 6). Humala's party won the largest number of seats in April 9 congressional elections, “evidence that Chavez's anti-American brand of politics remains influential in Peru” (ibid.). Meanwhile, the new president, Stratfor predicted, will still “maintain a certain distance from Washington” (May 26).

With more elections set for this year, anti-Americanism is the one common theme across every political party. Candidates in countries such as Ecuador and Nicaragua “will compete to be seen as the most anti-American” (ibid., January 16). Up-and-coming leaders in the region adhere to either the moderate socialism found in Brazil and Argentina (which each endorse certain elements of capitalism), or the more revolutionary Chavez brand in Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.

Last October, a Republican senator from Florida, Mel Martinez, warned that Latin America risks sliding into a “populist Chavismo, anti-American sentiment” if the U.S. doesn't take on a more comprehensive, active approach to the region (*Miami Herald*, Oct. 1, 2005). If the world's politicians can be bothered to watch, they will see how correct that warning was.

Off the Agenda

In their determination to defy the U.S. and work against it at every opportunity, nations of Latin America are joining forces in the area of trade in order to decrease their dependence on America. The U.S.-backed FTAA is for all practical purposes dead, while the Latin American trade

group Mercosur (comprised of founding members Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay) is growing stronger, with Venezuela having joined last December and Bolivia expected to join.

Cuba's trade with Mercosur and Brazil accounts for 80 percent of its foreign trade. The president of Brazil has said that he favors trade with Latin American countries over the U.S.; in fact, President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva said last year that the U.S.-backed FTAA is off the agenda in Brazil altogether and had been

for two years—much to the surprise of Washington. He and the president of Argentina have opposed the U.S. trade embargo of Cuba and want to increase their own trade with President Castro. Two state-run oil firms of Brazil and Venezuela have plans to begin construction on a \$20 million lubricants factory in Cuba.

Now, Cuba has requested associate membership in Mercosur. A few years ago, this request would have been considered beyond ridiculous. The United States of America—the largest trading partner

of virtually every country on Earth—refuses to trade with Cuba. Washington would certainly have a less-than-friendly posture toward a group that boasts Cuba as a member. Even discussing the idea shows how intent Latin American governments are on alienating the U.S.

U.S. influence in Latin America is evaporating. *What will takes its place?*

The Religion Factor

Latin America Swings Left. Latins Dump U.S. Chinese Business Invades Latin America. Chavez Sends U.S. Troops Home. Morales Nationalizes Oil and Gas Industry. Beheadings in Mexico.

A confusion of headlines have flooded in from Mexico, Central America and South America over the past few years. What is really happening in the turgid mix of Latino politics? Believe it or not, the real story is not being told. Yet the headlines were written, in some cases, millennia ago in Bible prophecy! Let us explain.

Anyone half interested in the Latin American sphere is well acquainted with the volatility of its politics. In the 19th century, inflamed by revolutionary ideas resulting from the American and French revolutions and concerned at the general disregard of the international community for the perceived racism of their colonial overlords, Latino nations rose up, forcing the issue of decolonization.

Wars of independence in Latin America started in Venezuela—seven of its eastern provinces being first to gain independence from the Spanish in 1811. Paraguay signed its declaration of independence the same year. Argentina followed in 1816, Chile in 1818, Greater Colombia in 1819, Venezuela, Mexico and Peru in 1821. The independence of the Central American isthmus was then quickly, bloodlessly accomplished. Ecuador and Brazil followed in 1822, Brazil receiving its independence from the Portuguese. Then came Uruguay in 1825. The island nation of Cuba, where Columbus made his landfall after the Bahamas, finally gained its independence in 1898.

After decolonization, political instability, border disputes, economic ruin and rising national debt plagued Latin America. (These problems continue in many regions to this very day.) This produced a climate ripe for the rise of demagogues. Through most of the 20th century, a rash

of dictatorships arose—and much of the continent of South America and the isthmus of Central America turned to leftist politics.

The situation changed in the 1990s as free-market capitalism, encouraged by Western economists, was tried in many Latino countries. What followed was a flirtation with more conservative social, economic and foreign policies, heavily influenced by late-20th century thinking within U.S. academia. Especially influential was the school of young graduates in economics from Harvard.

However, what did not change within Latin America were the deeply rooted systemic problems, which in many instances heightened back to colonial times. Entrenched hierarchies, institutionalized corruption, and the stratification of Latino society based upon race all combined to restrict any real and positive economic progress of a

lasting nature. This was heavily overlaid in countries such as Peru, Colombia and Mexico by the illegal drug trade, which supplies income to so many rural dwellers, not to mention downstream profits reaped by those who process and distribute the wicked weeds in their various forms. Inevitably, Latin American politics swung back to the left as these entrenched

forces within the system failed to yield to genuine reform.

Thus we have the present-day scenario, with populist leaders of socialist persuasion leading Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, the Dominican Republic, Bolivia and Uruguay.

The *International Herald Tribune* commented recently that a White House distracted by events in Iraq, Afghanistan and the general war on terror may be waking up to the ticking bomb at America's back

door: "[T]he Bush administration is worried that a Chavez-led bloc of radicalism may be developing in Latin America" (April 27).

One should not read too much into the "left-wing swing" in Latin America.

Taking advantage of America's benign neglect of its Latino neighbors, China has moved aggressively in to Latin American trade over the past decade. Though many of China's promises to supply capital for the development of industry and infrastructure in Latin American countries have yet to materialize, Chinese-made goods are flooding into Latin America, supplying extremely stiff competition to home-grown industry. This has provoked a groundswell of concern that China may just be taking advantage of the Latinos, exploiting them in what are increasingly seen as one-sided trade deals in China's favor.

It was amid this atmosphere of volatile change that Latin American leaders met at a three-day summit, May 11 to 13, in Vienna, with other leaders of nations more closely attached to their old colonial roots—the leaders of the European Union. The European Commission chief



To many, China might appear to be the prime candidate. Make no mistake: China is definitely marginalizing the U.S. in the Latin American region both economically and militarily. Beijing's actions are causing the United States' power in Latin America to decline. Also, there is an ideological connection between the Chinese and much of Latin America be-

cause of what appears to be their mutual acceptance of communist and socialist thinking. Combine those two factors, and it might appear that Latin America has a future as the resource basket for Beijing.

The ideology that actually reveals where Latin American loyalties are headed, though, is *religious*.

With 500 million Roman Catholics

in Latin America, no matter what happens in Latin America politically, religion will be the predominant factor in foreign policy in the time

ahead. Ultimately, the biggest benefactor of Latin American wealth will be EUROPE (see sidebar, below).

A Mart of Nations

Last September, Chavez announced that Venezuela had moved its central bank foreign reserves out of the United States—just as America reeled from the double-fisted attack of Katrina and Rita. All in all, he sold \$20 billion in U.S. Treasury bonds and moved it to Europe.

This is a strong sign of the direction Latin America is headed.

Even as Latin America categorically rejects the possibility of a free-trade area



REUTERS

Jose Manuel Barroso called for a “convergence of interests, not only of values” between Latin America and the EU (Deutsche Welle, May 12).

However, the climate was far from one of real unity. Presidents Hugo Chavez (Venezuela) and Evo Morales (Bolivia) clouded the situation by touting their closed-market approach against other nations, particularly against the nations of Central America who seek more open international trade relations. But the tide swung against this leftist duo as, in the summit's final statement, the EU and six Central American states—Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and El Salvador—agreed to open negotiations on setting up a free-trade zone.

Commentators missed the real news in their observations on this EU/Latin America summit. They failed to see that despite the posturing of petty despots such as Chavez, Morales and their aging mentor, President Fidel Castro of Cuba, the trend is fixed. Inevitably there *will* exist a trade nexus between the European Union and Latin America.

One should not read too much into the “left-wing swing” in Latin America.

Currently there are three collectivist (socialist) ideologies extant in the world: communism, pan-Islam, and the socialist universalism of the Catholic religion. Though communism claims to be godless at its foundation, the original socialism has never been without its religion. In fact, it is *founded* in the Catholic social dogma of the ancient religion of Rome!

Ultimately, there is an authority to which the masses, be they right- or left-wing in their political leanings, really *do* pay attention within Latin America. It overrides all other influences, economic,

PAYING DEFERENCE

Venezuela's Chavez visited the pope at the Vatican in May.

political and ideological. That power is *religion*. South America is the only continent bound together by one predominant language and one dominant *religion*. The language is the second-most-spoken language in the world: Spanish. The religion boasts more adherents, globally, than any other single religion: Roman Catholicism. It is the national religion of all Latin American nations and the predominant religion of the member nations of the European Union.

All the pontificating and blustering of demagogues such as Chavez and Morales will pale into so much pallid stutterings in the mind of the masses when their *papa* speaks from Rome! *And speak he will*. That fact was made clear when Chavez visited, cap in hand, Pope Benedict XVI on May 11 at the Vatican. Not only did the pope extend additional time to get his points across to Chavez, giving him 15 more minutes than the standard 20 due such political leaders, but, as he turned to leave, Benedict broke protocol to personally hand him a stern letter counseling him to have second thoughts about the direction in which he was taking his country. Catholic World News called it “an extraordinary step” and a “challenge” (May 13).

Chavez left Vienna with real food for thought. He knows that Fidel Castro, on whom he has largely modeled himself, has twice over the past year invited Benedict to visit Cuba. He will not buck this pope. He knows it was Ratzinger who routed the liberal priests from their posts in Latin America during John Paul II's reign. Now that Ratzinger has the papal title himself, Chavez would be unwise to press further for endorsement of his populist political platform by the church in Venezuela.

Other leaders in Latin America will sit up and take note. They know the power of this man, Ratzinger.

It was Ratzinger, working behind the scenes, who contributed to the wave of political change that rippled through Latin America in the 1990s under John Paul's papacy. The European Union will yet have its day in Latin America. It will get its trading deal with that continent. But it will be far from a *free* trade deal! It will be nothing but a reversion to that old colonial relationship which once existed under Spanish domination.

One thing will be different this time. It will be the *German* nation that leads the colonial putsch in Latin America, with the willing submission of its partner in Madrid, under the watchful eye of Rome.

Watch for Pope Benedict to take a real interest in the politics of Latin America from here on. And if you really want to find out the biblical connection, search “Latin America” in our archives on theTrumpet.com.

RON FRASER

with the United States, Europe has been working to cement its trade ties with Latin American countries.

Negotiations have been underway since 1999 to forge a massive free-trade area joining together the European Union and the Mercosur trade bloc—encompassing 700 million people. The talks have encountered difficulties—in part because of EU demands that Mercosur drop internal trade barriers—but relaunched last September. EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson visited Brazil and Argentina in March for four days to boost those talks. At the fourth joint EU-Latin American summit that took place in Vienna on May 11-13, the EU launched trade negotiations with the Andean trade grouping of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela.

At the same time, the EU is looking for other inroads—apart from trade—into Latin America. Last December the European Commission proposed a “renewed strategy designed to strengthen the EU-Latin America strategic partnership” (*Austria Today*, March 24). The

As far back as May 1962, Herbert Armstrong’s *Plain Truth* magazine declared that the U.S. would “be left out in the cold as two gigantic trade blocs, Europe and Latin America, mesh together and begin calling the shots in world commerce.” We are seeing that prediction realized today, and the increasing anti-Americanism of leftist governments in Latin America is a driving force behind it. Bible prophecy tells us Europe will edge the U.S. out of

ticularly economically—to Europe.

Isaiah 23:3 describes the coming European superpower as a “mart of nations.” This means that its presence will be felt throughout the world’s economy. Biblical prophecy also has one general pronouncement regarding Latin America: that it will support the European combine with “all kind of riches; with silver, iron, tin, and lead” (Ezekiel 27:12). While the U.S. is pushed out of Latin America as a hated enemy, watch for Europe to move in as a welcome guest.

Do we see how critical the situation in Latin America is?

Washington officials seem to think Latin America doesn’t matter as long as Venezuelan oil continues to flow to the U.S. One analyst goes so far as to say that “if all of South America were swept by a Bolivarian revolution, it wouldn’t hurt the United States.”

If the long-term stability of the U.S. oil supply is not a concern, perhaps these analysts are right (America currently imports more oil from Latin America than from all Middle Eastern countries combined). If it does not matter that the democratic principles Washington espouses for the Middle East are leaving Latin America in country after country, then the examples Fidel Castro,

Hugo Chavez and Evo Morales set do not matter. If it does not matter that the entire region will eventually use its considerable resources to support another superpower—as biblical prophecy guarantees us—then the analysis is correct.

But if Washington has any interest in improving its international reputation, securing its oil supply, or preventing future enemies from grabbing resources on which it relies, then President Chavez is more than simply a harmless annoyance. The rise of these types of socialist, Washington-hating leaders to power—along with Fidel Castro’s perpetual existence as a political figure—is another sign of how weak the United States has become, while other global powers, especially the European Union and the Russo-China alliance, grow exponentially stronger.

Maybe Washington should recalibrate its Latin American radar after all. ■



PARTNERS

Venezuela’s Chavez is strengthening ties in Europe, such as with Italy’s former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi (right).

The EU is currently the leading donor, top investor and second-most important trade partner for Latin America.

policy paper made recommendations including stepping up political dialogue between the two regions, stimulating economic interaction, and tackling inequality. “Today’s partnership,” reported *Austria Today*, “reflects the increasing importance and growing potential of the Latin American region, and the will of both parties to further strengthen the relationship in the future” (ibid.).

In another effort to move in on Latin America, on March 27-28 the European Commission held a high-level conference in Brussels “on the theme of social cohesion in Latin America, bringing together some 30 ministers from both sides of the Atlantic with a view to drawing up ... strategies for enhancing social solidarity in Latin American countries” (*European Report*, March 28).

The EU is currently the leading donor, top investor and second-most important trade partner for Latin America. Their strategic partnership has developed basically over the past seven years.

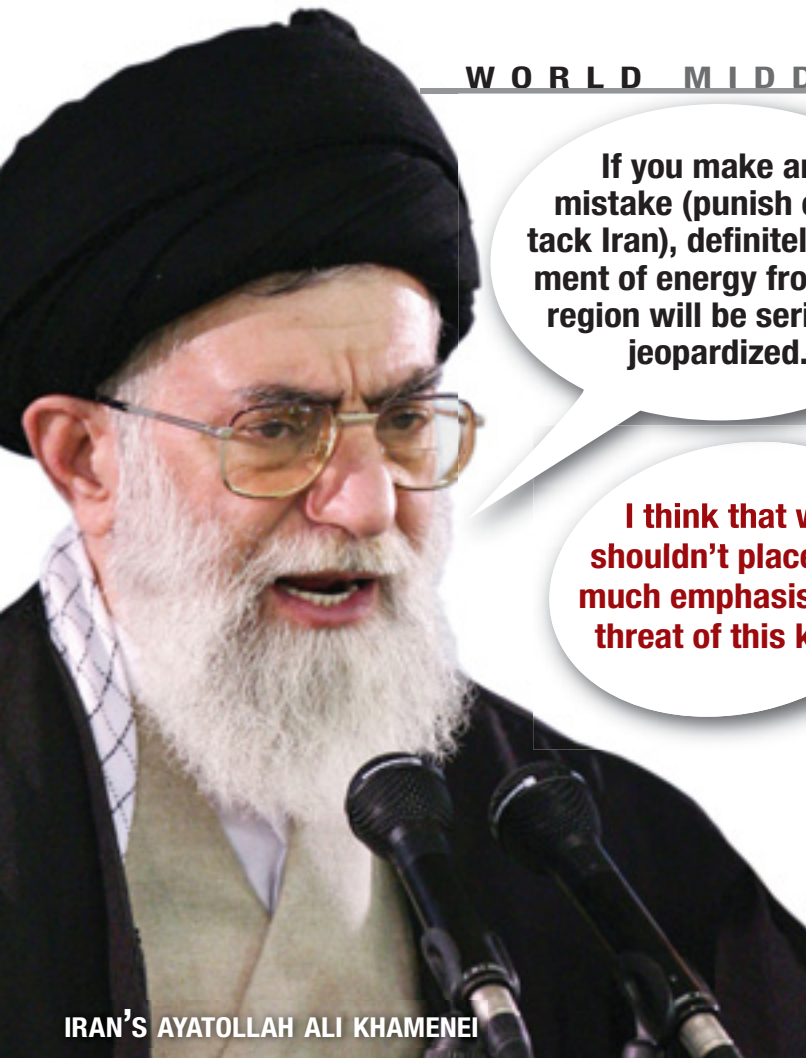
To longtime readers of the *Trumpet*, Latin America’s turn toward Europe should come as no surprise.

Latin America. It is easy to see that this has already begun.

Many would view the Roman Catholic Church as being a right-wing institution. The Vatican is powerfully anti-liberal. But at its core, the church of Rome is socialist. The very name *catholic* speaks of a universal collective. Ideologically, the main difference between Catholicism and communism is that one claims to worship a god, while the other worships the state. In practice the two have much in common. This explains why nations can swing so violently from one to the other. Whether Latino countries are democratic, socialist, communist states or monarchies will ultimately be overwhelmed by one factor: *Every country in Latin America is overwhelmingly Catholic.*

The Bible prophesies of a final resurrection of a European empire—the *Holy Roman Empire* of old (request our free booklet *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire* for proof). This empire is termed “holy” because—as in centuries past—it will be guided by a religious entity, the Vatican. The Vatican will use its influence in Catholic Latin America to bind it—par-

For the most up-to-date information, visit theTrumpet.com/LatinAmerica



If you make any mistake (punish or attack Iran), definitely shipment of energy from this region will be seriously jeopardized.

I think that we shouldn't place too much emphasis on a threat of this kind.



IRAN'S AYATOLLAH ALI KHAMENEI

U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE CONDOLEEZZA RICE

Shrugging at Evil

Iran freely declares its evil and violent intentions. The West responds with an incentives package. What will it take for America and other Western nations to take Tehran seriously? BY TRUMPET STAFF

IRAN'S PRESIDENT, MAHMOUD AHMADINEJAD, wants to start World War III. Together with the total destruction of Israel and the demolition of America, this is one of the primary goals of his presidency.

The *Trumpet* didn't receive this intelligence from a covert source in Tehran, or an undisclosed contact in the CIA or Mossad. We, like millions of other people, learned this from the overworked mouth of Ahmadinejad himself. Since his election last summer, the Iranian president has virtually laid out a step-by-step plan by which he intends to thrust the globe into its next world war!

In spite of the public revelations and the abundance of evidence proving the

nation is spoiling for war, America and Europe remain alarmingly casual and nonchalant toward Tehran. They simply do not take Iran seriously.

The story would be different if this was some middle-African dictator on a power trip. But this is Iran: leader of the Islamic world—a nation with deeply motivated, hard-core Islamic leadership—a nation with some of the largest energy supplies on the planet—a nation on the cusp of acquiring nuclear weapons.

All these factors tell us Iran should be taken *very* seriously.

But the West is doing anything but.

It is no longer (if it ever was) really about stopping Iran in its tracks—destroying the Iranian nuclear threat—

preventing the greatest terror-sponsoring nation in the world from developing nuclear weapons capability. It is about offering Iran incentives to *coax* it to behave responsibly and honestly in a seemingly never-ending diplomacy game in which Tehran holds the upper hand.

Enticing Iran

In the latest round, in early June, Washington joined the European Union in offering to conduct nuclear talks with Tehran. The proposal included an incentives package encompassing trade, security and technology benefits, boosted by a U.S. offer to lift sanctions on Iran (a European proposal the previous month having been rejected—and ridiculed). Of course, the sticking point is, Iran must first agree to suspend uranium enrichment—something it has refused to do.

Just what is it about Iran's dual insistence that 1) it wants to develop a nuclear program, and 2) it wants to destroy Israel and the West, that the U.S. and Europe don't get?

International intelligence firm Stratfor describes the farcical—and dangerous—game America is playing: "The problem

REUTERS (2)

is this: The Iranians are drawing the Americans into the North Korean model—meaning that negotiations would be about whether there will be negotiations, and the mere act of talking will, at the end of the day, be seen as a major concession. That works for the United States so long as Iran doesn't use the negotiations about negotiations as cover for disrupting Iraq or for actually building a bomb. The current situation really does parallel the North Korea issue. The North Koreans act like loons, and the international community negotiates among itself for the best way to hold a meeting with North Korea. That's okay for North Korea—but Iran borders Iraq, where U.S. troops are fighting daily” (June 5).

But it is a game Iran knows well and is playing skillfully.

To show his appreciation of the offer, in a speech broadcast on state radio on June 4 Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei threatened the West once again: “If you make any mistake (punish or attack Iran), definitely shipment of energy from this region will be seriously jeopardized,” he stated (*Advertiser*, Australia, June 6). He specifically threatened oil shipments passing through the Strait of Hormuz—a choke point for oil exports to the U.S., Western Europe and Japan.

Iran has exhibited a total disregard for any law but its own.

America's response, as usual, was to ignore the threat: “I think that we shouldn't place too much emphasis on a threat of this kind,” U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said. Oil markets reacted more strongly: The following day, world oil prices rose sharply.

Even while Iran is busy throwing out its usual array of threats, timid U.S. officials “have said they want to keep the details of the [EU-U.S.] proposal secret in order to avoid the appearance of threatening Iran” (Agence France Presse, June 5; emphasis ours throughout).

Why is the U.S. so afraid to threaten Iran—and at the same time so dismissive of Iranian threats? That is shamefully weak.

Rhetoric Precedes Action

Columnist Mark Steyn recently wrote, “Anyone who spends half an hour looking at Iranian foreign policy over the last 27 years sees five things: 1) contempt for the most basic international conventions; 2) long-reach extraterritoriality; 3) effective promotion of radical Pan-

Islamism; 4) a willingness to go the extra mile for Jew-killing ...; 5) *an all-but-total synchronization between rhetoric and action*” (*City Journal*, Spring 2006).

Since the Islamic Revolution of 1979, Iran's leaders have demonstrated remarkable consistency between their words and their actions (the obvious exception, of course, being their repeated lies about the malignancy of their nuclear program). In other words, if Iran says it will do something, be prepared for it to happen. If Iran's leaders say they intend to strike at Israel and the West, we ought to take them at their word.

Thus far, Iran has followed to a T its stated plan of assuming leadership of the Islamic world and working to spread its theocratic ideals worldwide. For example: When the Iron Curtain fell in 1989, signaling the end of the Cold War and heralding the dissolution of the USSR, Iran plainly stated its intention to fill the void left by the failure of communism. In a letter written to Moscow, Ayatollah Khomeini stated, “I openly announce that the Islamic Republic of Iran, as the greatest and most powerful base of the Islamic world, can easily help fill up the ideological vacuum of your system.”

That, indeed, is what happened. “As communism retreated, radical Islam

year unbelievably stated: “Iran today is, in a sense, the only country where progressive ideas enjoy a vast constituency. It is there that the ideas that I subscribe to are defended by a majority.”

Western leaders believe that if Ahmadinejad grows too haughty or dangerous,

MIXED MESSAGES

Dancers hold uranium hexafluoride capsules during an April ceremony in Tehran. Iran has successfully enriched uranium but denies accusations that the country intends to develop nuclear weapons.



seeped into Africa and south Asia and the Balkans” (*City Journal*, op. cit.). The Central Asian republics that practiced a moderate form of Islam 15 years ago are now permeated with Iran's radicalized version. This “Iranification” also occurred in Lebanon, with the aid of Hezbollah, and among the Palestinians, through Hamas. The process is currently underway in Iraq

If history is a guide, we can be sure that Iran's President Ahmadinejad is working to bring to fruition his beliefs and public comments regarding Israel, the West and the beginning of World War III.

Yet, for some reason, Western leaders have exhibited a generation-long refusal to simply believe what Iran says. They are blinded by an innate, naive desire to believe the best in Iran's leaders.

Though branded by President George W. Bush as a member of the “axis of evil,” Tehran was invited to be Washington's negotiation partner over Iraq. Iran has been praised by U.S. officials as a “democracy,” a nation undergoing a “democratic flowering.” Bill Clinton last

then the more moderate factions of the Iranian government will step in to keep the situation in hand. There is a common denial of the fact that, fundamentally, on their contempt for the West, they are all on the same side. “What's the difference between a hothead and a moderate?” Steyn satirically asks. “Well, the extremist Ahmadinejad has called for Israel to be ‘wiped off the map,’ while the moderate Rafsanjani has declared that Israel is ‘the most hideous occurrence in history,’ which the Muslim world ‘will vomit out from its midst’ in one blast, because ‘a single atomic bomb has the power to completely destroy Israel, while an Israeli counterstrike can only cause partial damage to the Islamic world’” (ibid.).

The very fact that no one takes Ahmadinejad seriously may currently be the greatest factor working in Tehran's favor. Iran's president can make just about any threat, *even declare war*—and in retaliation he may receive a stern word from the diplomatic community. If he oversteps the mark a little, the “moderates” are there to reassure the international com-

munity that Iran really does seek peace.

Once Iran acquires nuclear weapons, however, it will be a different story.

Demanding to be Taken Seriously

During the Cold War, the U.S. and USSR avoided a nuclear war because both



AP/WIDEWORLD

were a “normal” state is delusional. Iran simply has no regard for international conventions. It does not even respect the sovereignty of other nations, the very basis of relations between states. Ever since the seizure of U.S. soil and citizens in the form of the American Embassy in Tehran in 1979, Iran has exhibited a total disregard for any law but its own. Two months after the Iran-Iraq War ended, then parliamentary speaker (and future president) Ali-Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani stated that “the war taught us that international laws are only drops of ink on paper.” Iran thought nothing of sending a Hezbollah suicide bomber to blow up the Israeli Embassy in Argentina in 1993, killing 29, and the following year bombing the Argentine Israel Mutual Association, killing almost 100. The *fatwa* against British citizen Salman Rushdie calling for his assassination was answered by loyal Muslims who succeeded in murdering one of his translators (his publisher and another translator survived assassination attempts). Iran claimed jurisdiction over a Danish newspaper in the cartoons incident earlier this year, leading to riots and deaths worldwide. Iran has already done much to enforce its brand of Islam around the world.

In a sermon in Tehran on Nov. 9, 1986, Khamenei openly declared: “We are at war with the United States.” Clearly, as the *National Observer’s* Andrew Campbell states, it has been waging that war on some level ever since the 1979 Revolution (June 22).

Can the U.S. afford to be so nonchalant?

The U.S. has been struck before—but its reaction has been similarly weak. When two Iranian-inspired and -trained terrorists attacked the U.S. Embassy in Beirut in April 1983, killing 241 Americans, Iran got away with it. A former CIA officer specializing in Iranian terrorism, Robert Baer, assessed, “Iran ordered it,” and concluded: “The Islamic Republic of Iran had declared a secret war against the United States, and the United States had chosen to ignore it” (*See No Evil*).

Why? Many people dismiss such threats as mere Iranian exaggeration. “Iran’s leaders calculatedly use exaggeration to mobilize and inflame their followers for martyrdom-terrorist operations; and their followers use real bombs against live targets” (*National Observer*, op. cit.).

What if those “real bombs against live targets” become nuclear? In Iran’s hands, the world would witness the dawn of an age of *nuclear terrorism*.

knew that a single strike-counterstrike exchange would be catastrophic, and neither wanted to annihilate the human race. With Iran, there is no such restraint. It would be the equivalent of a suicide bomber with a nuke strapped to his chest. It could threaten to lob a nuke at the slightest provocation, essentially holding the entire Western world to ransom.

Tehran is already using the nuclear card to gain leverage in its (behind-the-scenes) negotiations with Washington over Iraq—now, when just the *possibility* of nuclear weapons exists. What mad bargaining power will Iran hold once it carries out its first successful nuclear weapons test?

Iran’s President Ahmadinejad envisages “a world without America”—as he stated in his keynote speech at a “World Without Zionism” conference in Tehran on Oct. 26, 2005. He threatened that such a goal was “attainable, and surely can be achieved.” A few months earlier, he stated: “... Islam will conquer all the mountaintops of the world” (Iranian Channel 1, July 25, 2005).

To try to entice such a country to adhere to a civilized agreement as though it

Last year, Graham Allison, a WMD proliferation specialist and former assistant secretary for policy and plans in the first Clinton Administration, stated, “If we continue on our present course, in the decade ahead we will see a nuclear attack on one or more Western cities” (*Herald Sun*, Melbourne, Jan. 8, 2005).

Sadly, America’s record for anticipating nuclear capability is not good: Five days before the Soviets exploded their first atomic bomb on Aug. 29, 1949, the CIA predicted that the Russians wouldn’t be able to produce a bomb until the mid-1950s; the U.S. also failed to predict India’s first nuclear test in 1998. Former CIA operations officer and Iran specialist Reuel Marc Gerecht warned: “Unless Langley [CIA headquarters] gets lucky with an Iranian ‘walk-in’ who volunteers detailed, critical information about Tehran’s weapons program, the CIA will probably only know the mullahs have the Bomb after they detonate it” (*Weekly Standard*, Nov. 14, 2005).

And still, Iran is not taken seriously.

A Historical Lesson

Step back 81 years for a moment. A young Austrian nobody wrote a book in which he described his antipathy for the Jewish people and his plan to sort the problem out when he gained power. He more or less laid out a step-by-step plan of how he would thrust the world into World War II. The world took no notice. Adolf Hitler was either a raving lunatic or a confused young man. Or perhaps it was all a bit of a joke. In any case, he couldn’t possibly have really meant what he had set out plainly in *Mein Kampf*.

The course of history, as we all know only too well, tells us differently.

But perhaps one could have been excused for not taking Hitler seriously when he said his goal was to eradicate the Jews. After all, he wasn’t in any position of power—actually, he was imprisoned at the time he started writing his book. He didn’t control 10 percent of the world’s oil, and he didn’t have a nuclear weapons program. If he had this kind of power and capability, surely the world would have done something preemptive to stop this madman from initiating war.

Look at the world scene today, and think again. ■

For the most up-to-date information, visit
theTrumpet.com/Iran

EUROPE

Laying Groundwork for Navy

A RECENTLY RELEASED document revising European Union transport policy provides a glimpse into the future of EU naval forces and has ignited controversy and debate in Britain. In the document, according to London's *Telegraph*, the "European Commission has drawn up plans to set up a European coastguard, which critics fear is a back-door attempt by Brussels to create an EU navy with its own powers to stop and search shipping" (May 21). Not surprisingly, the plans to redefine Europe's coastguard were buried deep inside the document among more mundane policy changes.

According to the *Telegraph*, plans to boost the European coastguard "come on the back of other 'empire building' moves by Brussels, including a planned EU army, a common foreign policy and diplomatic service, and a European-wide policy on energy." The newly empowered European coastguard would be involved in enforcing maritime law, ensuring passenger safety at sea, and enforcing environmental protection legislation. According to the European Commission, the federalized European coastguard would possess the authority to intercept shipping across all of Europe's maritime borders and would likely be armed.

In a lead article in May, *Lloyd's List*, a British daily newspaper that covers the maritime industry, accused the European Commission of attempting to construct a European navy by stealth. "[T]he concept of a European coastguard has a federalist charm about it

that causes eyes to brighten instantly among gatherings of Europhiles, tired of endless discussions about fish or agriculture," the newspaper said. "In a way, it is a European navy, by the back door" (May 17).

Regarding Europe's plan to bolster its coastguard, Britain's Shadow Minister for Transport Julian Brazier stated, "This is very worrying news. It seems the empire-building ambitions of Brussels know no bounds. The drift toward an EU navy must be stopped."

As Britain faces the distinct possibility of British waters becoming "European



LOSING AUTHORITY Prospects of an EU navy have some in the UK worried about the implications of British waters (pictured above) becoming "European waters."

waters" and falling under the jurisdiction of a newly empowered European coastguard, watch for this issue to further hinder Britain's already tenuous relations

with the EU. More importantly, it's highly likely that a revamped and bolstered European coastguard will indeed be the groundwork for a future European navy.

Bavarian Premier Calls for Anti-Blasphemy Laws



STOIBER

AN MTV PILOT CARTOON mocking the pope and even Jesus has sparked religious outrage in Germany. After Muslim outrage earlier this year caused by Danish cartoonists' renditions of Mohammad, this is *Part Two—Christians Strike Back*.

Though Germany is unlikely to declare *jihad* against MTV, what we see from both situations is a notable rise, across the board, in *religious sensitivity*.

The clash between those two sensitivities is certain to

grow more fierce. And who will be on the front lines of this inevitable conflict has already become plain.

When Muslims were offended by the Danish caricatures, one nation visibly took the lead in demanding legal action against the Danish paper. That nation was Iran. Its confrontational and arguably delusional president (who called the controversy a "blessing from God") banned Danish imports and halted all trade and business ties with the country in an effort to place Iran at the head of the anti-Denmark campaign. Other countries stepped in line behind Tehran's boycott.

Just as Iran wants to be viewed as the defender of all Islam, in the West we see another nation stepping up to bat for its region's religious sensitivities. Germany—particularly its most Catholic state, Bavaria—wants to be viewed as the defender of all Catholicism, especially since

Pope Benedict XVI hails from that state.

This was made clear in the controversy over the MTV cartoon *Popetown*.

The 10-episode series, which was to be aired on one of the lesser-watched stations in Germany, was met with outrage from a group "ranging from Bavaria's Catholic governor Edmund Stoiber to the archdiocese of Munich to members of Germany's ruling Christian Democrat Party (CDU). ... None of them, of course, had actually seen the series. After all, who wants to get bogged down in details when *basic principles* are at stake? But Germany's moralists, apparently, are alive and kicking" (*Spiegel Online*, May 10; emphasis ours throughout).

The article observed, "Much of the outrage, not surprisingly, seems centered in Catholic southern Germany." Stoiber "spoke about a 'sordid attack on large numbers of people' and

U . S .

Key Business to Be Germany's?

GETTY IMAGES



IN THE LARGEST-EVER hostile takeover of an American company by a German corporation, New Jersey-based Engelhard Corp. announced it was abandoning resistance and would succumb “to the inevitable,” and accept the German-owned BASF corporation’s offer (Financial Times Information, May 31).

The deal is “the biggest for BASF, the world’s largest chemicals maker by sales,” and is valued at \$5.6 billion (*Wall Street Journal*, May 31).

Engelhard Corp. employs 7,000 people worldwide and is best known for inventing the catalytic converter used

in cars, trucks and factories, as well as for its precious metals bars, which are traded worldwide. Engelhard is also a world-leading surface and materials science company.

The Engelhard takeover is a symptom of a major problem facing America.

Because of America’s massive and growing debts and trade deficits, the dollar is coming under pressure. As the value of the U.S. greenback erodes, American assets become worth less in dollar

terms and more vulnerable to foreign takeovers. Additionally, foreign nations like China, Japan and Germany hold piles of U.S. debt. If trends persist and the dollar keeps eroding, pressures upon foreign nations to spend those devaluing dollars will increase—and American companies will continue to be the target of choice. As more companies are bought out, America’s control over its strategic industries is bought out too.

charged the Bavarian minister of justice *with developing new legislation on blasphemy.*”

Under Edmund Stoiber, Bavaria is determined to be the protector of the faith in Europe. Stoiber saw to it that crosses could not be removed from public school classrooms in his state. At the end of 2005, his interior minister made one of the most significant crackdowns against Muslims ever. Stoiber (not to mention Benedict) is adamantly opposed to a Muslim nation (even a “moderate” one) joining the EU (a stance specifically aimed at Turkey). Even when a blatantly anti-U.S. (i.e., pro-Muslim) Turkish film hit theaters in Germany in February, Stoiber took the lead in demanding that German cinemas boycott the film.

A number of trends the *Trumpet* has watched for some time converge here.

We are watching for another resurrection of the *Holy Roman Empire*. Based

on key biblical prophecies, we are looking for a *Germanic* resurrection of such an empire. That is why we strongly speculated on the appearance of a German pope before he was elected. And that is why we have tracked the career of the Bavarian premier radically loyal to the Vatican.

We particularly watch Stoiber when he is involved in religious affairs. With the Nov. 3, 2005, private meeting between the Bavarian Benedict and Stoiber (see our December 2005 cover story), Stoiber is the only German politician to have had a private audience with the pope since Germany’s conservatives took power in Berlin last fall.

The Bible tells us that in this Holy Roman Empire, legislation will be enacted that protects Roman Catholicism’s version of “blasphemy.”

We are witnessing the development of a relationship

soon to shake this world!

Religious fervor will continue to rise in Europe. Watch this especially in Germany—and in Bavaria, particularly, from where some of Germany’s most influential leaders have hailed.

And don’t forget about the other rising religious sentiment in global affairs—Islam. Remember Ahmadinejad’s “blessing from God”? *Spiegel Online*, putting words in the mouths of Germany’s Catholics, said, “It was wonderful to be offended—like true believers. The Catholics have caught up with the Muslims in the ongoing competition over who can muster the most outrage.”

Before long a clash between Islam and European Catholicism will come. For more on this, read our editor in chief’s December 2004 piece, “The Coming War Between Catholicism and Islam.”

R U S S I A

Will Putin Seek a Third Term?

SINCE VLADIMIR PUTIN assumed control of Russia in 2000, the government has arrested control of Russia’s key assets, including the vast oil and gas industries and the media. Although it is called a democracy, Russia is becoming more like an autocracy.



PUTIN

This is why the results from a recent poll conducted in Russia are surprising. An increasing number of Russians believe the nation’s Constitution should be changed to allow President Putin, whose second term expires in 2008, to run for a third term.

Conducted by the Levada Center in Russia, the poll, which covered 46 regions, showed that “the number of people who want Putin to remain on the post of president after 2008 grew from 41 to 59 percent over the past nine months” (*Itar-Tass News Agency*, June 8).

Despite his popularity, Putin has repeatedly said he will not run for re-election—but most Russians don’t believe he will keep his word. In the same poll, only 32 percent of the people surveyed believe the president will not take action to run for re-election.

It appears Russians want Putin’s leadership. *Why not?* Russia has developed into a formidable power under his watch.

For more on the significance of President Putin’s presidency—and *re-election*, should he seek it—see our January 2004 cover story.

U.S., China Race for Mideast Oil

H EADLINES ABOUT soaring gas prices are increasingly common across America. This is reality—and it may not improve anytime soon.

According to Alan Gaines, chief executive officer of Houston-based Dune Energy and a former top energy analyst, Americans could easily see \$5 a gallon gas this summer. Gaines correctly predicted the rise in gas from under \$3 to \$4 several months before it occurred.

Several factors could produce \$90- to \$100-per-barrel oil, he says—up from the current \$70 price. But perhaps the most significant factor is increasing demand from Asia—primarily China.

In February, China's net oil imports soared 28 percent over the previous month. In March, Chinese crude oil imports were up a comparatively smaller but still huge 10.9 percent year over year. China has become the world's second-largest oil consumer after the United States. Its increasing appetite for oil has ignited a global resource race with America to secure sources of supply, and this is causing tension between the two.

As Asian demand for oil has increased, Middle Eastern reliance on American oil consumption has fallen. Consequently, U.S. influence within the Middle East, Saudi Arabia in particular, is eroding. If these trends continue, America will reach the point where it needs Middle Eastern oil more than the Middle East needs U.S. money.

Perhaps nothing illustrates the growing tensions over oil between China and

America better than the less-than-open-armed reception Chinese President Hu Jintao was given on his April visit to Washington. In contrast, President Hu's visits the same month to Saudi Arabia (China's second-largest supplier of crude oil) and Nigeria (the top African oil producer) underscored China's increasing demand for oil and its growing relationships with oil-exporting countries. Also, Saudi Arabia's tense attitude toward the United States was clear.



WARM WELCOME China's Hu Jintao receives flowers from a Saudi girl during his April visit to her country.

In a speech before Saudi Arabia's legislature on April 23, President Hu—only the second foreign leader ever invited to address the Saudi as-

sembly—pledged to help stabilize the Middle East, saying that “China is ready to work with Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries to support peace and growth in the Middle East and build a harmonious world that enjoys constant peace and prosperity.”

Hu's remarks were seen as a “direct challenge” to the U.S. (*Times Online*, April 24).

China and Saudi Arabia have found the basis for a friendship in their shared disdain for Western meddling in their internal affairs. China resents American criticism over its human rights record; for Saudi Arabia, both human rights and Islamism issues are cooling its relationship with the U.S.

After his trip to Saudi Arabia, Hu was welcomed to Nigeria by President Olusegun Obasanjo. An example of this developing relationship is the Chinese state-controlled oil company CNOOC's \$2.3 billion investment to develop a Nigerian off-shore oil field, announced in January. CNOOC is the same company the U.S. government blocked from purchasing U.S.-based oil company Unocal last year.

In stark contrast to the Chinese president's warm reception in both Saudi Arabia and Nigeria, Hu's latest visit to America was characterized by a snub and a series of blunders. The *Seattle Times* reported that the “protocol-obsessed Chinese leader suffered a day full of indignities—some intentional, others just careless” (April 24).

America's snubs of the Chinese president are surprising given the fact that China is the second-largest foreign holder of U.S. debt and has been one of America's largest financiers in recent years.

Iran Seeks Global Anti-U.S. Axis



SAFAVI

I N YET ANOTHER SIGN OF IRAN'S far-reaching ambitions, an Iranian general recently revealed a plan to form a global axis of major powers against the United States.

In a meeting with the leaders of the Basij militia in Tehran on May 9, Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps commander Maj. Gen. Yahya Rahim Safavi said, “China, Russia, India and Iran are capable of establishing a pole of major powers in Asia, opposing the policies of America” (*WorldTribune.com*, May 26). He spoke of Iran playing a role in uniting these countries in an alliance that would produce a “face-to-face clash with the global arrogance” embodied by the U.S.

Safavi revealed Iran's efforts to recruit other countries into this coalition, including Venezuela, another leading energy producer that is increasingly becoming a thorn in Washington's side.

As bigheaded as these comments may sound to Western ears, they fairly represent the developing reality of the world today. China, Russia and India have all remained staunchly supportive of Iran in spite of Western furor over Iran's nuclear program. China's and Russia's status as permanent members of the UN Security Council guarantee the UN's worthlessness as an organ in effectively dealing with Iran.

Safavi made the case for how strong, even indispensable, Iran has become in the world today. “In the last 27 years,” he said—referring to the period since the 1979 Iranian Revolution—“the Islamic Republic of Iran has always been at the center point of the political, economic and even military confrontations of the West, and at the present, Islamic Iran enjoys the role of a geopolitical heavyweight in the region.”

Uncomfortable as it may be, those statements are hard to dispute.

Jerusalem Day Loses Relevance

ON MAY 25, A CEREMONY ON AMMUNITION Hill celebrated “the day of Jerusalem’s unification.” Jerusalem Day is an annual memorial to pay tribute to those who gave their lives to liberate Jerusalem in the 1967 Six Days’ War. But does this day hold the meaning it once did?

“Some 39 years have gone by,” wrote Israel Harel, “and a pall of gloom now hangs over Jerusalem, and on other parts of the country too. The elation is gone. Not only is the Temple Mount not in our hands, but other parts of the city too are only formally under Israeli control, and, in fact, are no longer ‘in our hands.’ Israel’s capital is divided not only between Jews and Arabs, but between Jews and Jews. The sense that Jewish and Israeli identity would be weakened if Israel fails to retain a grip on its historic parts is diminishing. And the smaller the national and emotional solidarity with the capital, *the smaller the desire to fight for its unity*” (Haaretz.com, May 25; emphasis ours throughout).

Jerusalem’s importance to the Jews goes back centuries. Psalm 137 records: “If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.”

When East Jerusalem was captured from Jordan in the 1967 Middle East war, there was a broad consensus among Israelis that their capital should never again be divided. A unified Jerusalem under Jewish control symbolized the fruition of Jewish hopes and dreams since antiquity. In 1980, Israel’s parliament enacted a law that declared Jerusalem the “*unified and eternal capital*” of the State of Israel.

Five years of Palestinian *intifada* changed all that. Five years of *jihad* and the Jews’ aspirations are shattered; the Arabs’ aspirations, hotter than ever.

The Jews’ capitulation was embodied in their election of a leader *whose very platform was to divide Jerusalem*. In what amounted to Ehud Olmert’s “victory” speech, he spoke directly to the Palestinian leaders: “*We are ready to compromise, to give up parts of the beloved land of Israel ...*” (Reuters, March 28).

If we compare the national morale of the

beleaguered Israel with the morale of the opposing force in the Middle East—the Islamic movement led by Iran—we get a good indication of what the future holds for Jerusalem.

Leo Tolstoy penned in *War and Peace* that the force of an army depends upon its size multiplied by “an unknown *x*.” That “*x* is the spirit of the army, the greater or lesser desire to fight and to face dangers The men who have the greater desire to fight always put themselves, too, in the more advantageous position for fighting.”

The biblical term for that unknown *x* is “pride of your power,” something of Israel’s that is prophesied to be *broken* in this end time (Leviticus 26:19).

Israel is a nation whose strength has been sapped and replaced with a spirit of defeat.

Who could put it better than Prime Minister Olmert himself,

who said during a speech in New York in June last year: “*We are tired of fighting, we are tired of being courageous, we are tired of winning, we are tired of defeating our enemies.*”

If a people are tired of fighting—if they don’t think what they once held most precious is even worth fighting for—what are the chances of them holding on to that possession? How can such a people even survive—despite any military strength, or even nuclear capability? Add to that the fact that this nation is the enemy of perhaps the most determined, even fanatical, peoples on Earth, and the chances of survival become even slimmer.

“Now, after the victory in the Gaza Strip, we will transfer the struggle to the West Bank and later to Jerusalem,” Hamas’s leader in the Gaza Strip, Mahmoud Zahar, declared last year. “Neither the liberation of the Gaza Strip, nor the liberation of the West Bank or even Jerusalem will suffice us. Hamas will pursue the armed struggle until the liberation of all our lands. We don’t recognize the State of Israel or its right to hold on to one inch of Palestine” (*Jerusalem Post*, Aug. 17, 2005).

This comment was echoed recently by the Iranian foreign minister, whose country leads the charge against Israel. When asked to comment on Israel’s call for economic sanctions against Iran, he retorted, “What country is that? There is no such country” (Haaretz.com, May 30).

Such a view from an enemy should be shocking enough. But the sad reality is that Israel itself, increasingly, is losing sight of its own identity.



Why the huge contrast between how China was received by the U.S. and the warm receptions Saudi Arabia and Nigeria gave? The answer is largely that China’s rapid growth has put it in direct competition with the U.S. for many resources—including oil. Additionally, many Middle East oil producing countries are dominated by Muslim populations that increasingly see the U.S. as the enemy, and who thus seek allies elsewhere. China, which desperately needs oil and conveniently is a UN Security Council veto holder, makes an ideal partner for these nations.

As these types of relationships develop, America will probably continue to lose influence in the oil-rich Middle East and resource-rich Africa.

What does this mean for Americans? It means that as China continues to secure oil supplies, oil prices will probably keep going up.

And that doesn’t just mean higher gas prices. Less than half of each barrel of oil imported into the U.S. is used for gasoline. In the form of petrochemicals, oil is a key ingredient in thousands of other products. Everything from radios and shampoo bottles to soft contact lenses and garbage bags are made with oil, in the form of plastics.

The modern world in its work and leisure relies very heavily on oil. As the saying goes, oil makes the “world go round.” As the price of oil goes up, the grease that keeps the world spinning starts to cost more—and so will all the things that are manufactured from it.

Higher oil prices could cause inflation and rising consumer prices—not a good thing for the U.S. economy, which has become so dependent on consumer spending.



PREMAGSTIME

Pressures Drive Dollar Down

THE ORGANIZATION FOR Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) warns that the dollar could lose *one third to one half its value* in the foreseeable future. Why? The current account deficit.

America's current account deficit, which is now in the neighborhood of \$800 billion, is the trade deficit plus certain financial flows. We have this deficit because we import hundreds of billions more of goods and services than we export. Axel Merk, an investment fund manager, defines this deficit this way: "It is precisely the amount foreigners must acquire in U.S.-denominated assets to keep the dollar from falling" (Merkfund.com, May 23).

The OECD says this yawning trade imbalance will correct itself at some point. When that happens, it says it will "send shock waves across the globe, starting with a slump in the dollar's exchange rate" (Forbes.com, May 23).

The OECD warned that "Already, the widening of current account imbalances has been sustained far longer and with much smaller exchange rate responses than would have been judged plausible even a decade ago." Indeed, the current account imbalance is now 7 percent of the nation's gross domestic product—a level above the 5

percent threshold where other currencies have crashed with massive devaluations.

As long as America is able to attract the more than \$2 billion per day needed to

finance its current account deficit, the dollar should remain fairly stable. But as the current account deficit grows, America is becoming less attractive to investors. Throw in soaring governmental and consumer debt, a deflating housing bubble, and the fact that the euro is now challenging the dollar for reserve currency status, and you have the perfect storm to drive foreign investors away.

How serious would such a devaluation of the dollar be? If the OECD's "one third to one half" devaluation scenario is correct, anyone with dollar-denominated savings would see their bank accounts become worth *one third to one half the value they are today*.

Personal Savings Rate Plummets

FOR 11 MONTHS IN A ROW, Americans as a whole have spent more than they have earned. According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the personal savings rate fell to negative 1.6 percent in April, a trend that has been progressively worsening since September 2005. In June last year, the savings rate turned negative for the first time since the Great Depression.

Since consumer spending accounts for two thirds of U.S. economic activity, the question is: How much longer can Americans spend more than they earn?

Take for example, Tim and Caren Mayberry of Yulee, Fla. According to *USA Today*, Tim's job as a senior bank loan officer "qualifies him as an expert at lending money," but it certainly doesn't mean that he and his wife know how to save it. Though Tim makes more than \$100,000 a year, and Caren makes \$65,000 per year as a physical therapist, they say they're still "absolutely unable to put money aside, except with retirement accounts" (May 22).

Their plans for a new hardwood floor and a pool will probably push them further into debt. The couple owe \$285,000 on their mortgage on top of a whopping \$125,000 in other debt, including credit cards, and loans on cars, a boat and a motorcycle—all depreciating assets. To pay off their credit cards, Caren is making minimum payments; Tim usually pays more on the card with the lowest balance.

Growing numbers of Americans have allowed themselves to get into this same predicament as a result of spending money they don't have. At almost all levels of society, debt burden is a problem. Eventually, our creditors will not only refuse to extend our credit, but demand to be paid. That will take a toll on the economy and our standard of living.



INDEX OPEN

ARMs Set to Create Trouble



ISTOCKPHOTO

IN FEBRUARY, *THE TRUMPET* I.com reported on a possible housing bubble bust in the United States due to the resetting of adjustable rate mortgages (ARMs) and interest-only loans. Now, headlines from across much of the country confirm a housing slowdown, and it has the potential to be a big one.

A May 28 PalmBeachPost.com article, "Easy-to-get loans cause thousands to lose homes," blamed easy lending practices by brokers and option ARMs for the recent spike in foreclosures across Palm Beach, Martin and St. Lucie counties in Florida. More than \$106 million in home loans defaulted during the first quarter of this year, up from only \$68 million in the same period last year. That translates into approximately 2,100 families that could lose their homes in just those three counties.

Foreclosures are also mounting on the Pacific Coast, as outlined by the *San Diego Union-Tribune's* May 15 article: Notices of default jumped by 60 percent during the first three months of this year in the San Diego region—the largest increase since 1992. Neighboring Riverside County saw foreclosures rise 64 percent last year. California statewide foreclosures jumped 29 percent.

In fact, according to the U.S. Foreclosure Market Report, nationwide, over 320,000 properties entered

some stage of foreclosure during the first quarter of 2006—a 72 percent jump over last year.

Adjustable rate mortgages typically start a borrower at one rate but can adjust up or down after a set period depending on prevailing interest rates. Interest-only loans allow borrowers to lower their monthly bills by only paying the interest on the loan during the initial years. “In both cases, the terms of the loans change. That can spell disaster, particularly in a market facing both declining real estate values and rising interest rates” (op. cit.).

Senior market strategist Michael Pento of Delta Global Advisors agrees, saying that much of the rise in mortgage defaults is a result of the 22 percent of the \$8.7 trillion in mortgages held by Americans that are resetting this year. That means a “typical three-year ARM will go from 3.6 percent to 5.6 percent. On a \$500,000 mortgage, the monthly payment would increase by \$800 ...” (321gold.com, May 26).

But some experts say the worst is yet to come.

“We know the whale is coming, we just don’t know how big the whale is,” said one spokesman for the Center for Responsible Lending, a Washington nonprofit group (PalmBeachPost.com, op. cit.).

“Millions of households across the country are at risk of ‘payment shock’ when mortgage payments adjust upward over the next two years,” says Nicholas Retsinas of Harvard’s Center for Joint Housing Studies (*San Diego Union-Tribune*, op. cit.).

The signs of a housing bubble bust are all around. The rise in default notices and foreclosures is definitely an ominous warning. If the increase in foreclosures leads

to a greater supply of houses on the market and therefore lower home prices, it could put a damper on borrowing against home equity lines of

Will the U.S. Lose the NYSE?

IN FEBRUARY, WHEN IT became known that Dubai Ports World, a United Arab Emirates state-owned company, was attempting to take over the operation of several of America’s premier port complexes, it provoked a huge uproar. A surge in patriotic fervor across party lines led to Congress blocking the deal. So it is a wonder that hardly a peep is made about the potential loss of control of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE)—the nation’s premier stock market.

Founded in 1792, the NYSE is the largest equities marketplace on the planet, having a global market value of approximately \$21 trillion.

On May 22, the NYSE surprised many analysts by making a \$10.2 billion cash and share offer to merge with the Euronext stock exchange, headquartered in the Netherlands. Euronext controls exchanges in Paris, Brussels, Amsterdam and Lisbon, as well as a futures exchange in London. Approximately half of the group’s workforce and revenue comes from its English operations.

“It is not enough to build the best marketplace in the U.S. or a champion of Europe,” said NYSE chief executive John Thain. “The challenge is to build the best marketplace in the world” (*New York Times*, May 23). Thain’s vision would change the American-owned and -controlled company into an internationally-owned corporation.

credit, consumer spending and home construction.

For the U.S. economy—in which about 40 percent of all new American jobs created

Under Thain’s proposal, the new company, whose shares would be listed in both New York and Paris, would be 50-50 owned between investors from each exchange. Though, at least initially, the top management position would be filled from the NYSE, the chairman and deputy chief executive would be from Euronext. The combined entity, said Thain, would be “the world’s largest and most liquid global securities marketplace,” with listings totaling \$27 trillion (MSNBC.COM, May 23).

Although under the current proposal the NYSE will not be completely owned and operated by foreign interests, 50 percent of the ownership will be based outside the U.S. It would not take much for an additional 1 percent to change hands, making the combined NYSE/Euronext corporation majority foreign-owned.

The takeover also raises the question of America’s vulnerability to market interruptions. What if relations between America and Europe were to become strained? Is it unrealistic to be worried that foreign interests, in a position to sabotage America’s largest stock exchange, would be tempted to do so?

Another fear, as outlined by the *New York Times*, is that the merger would allow companies that are listed in America to move their listings to European exchanges that have less strict regulatory scrutiny.

in the private sector over the last few years were related to the housing market—this is definitely not a good development.



Euronext and NYSE shareholders have not yet approved the merger. If Deutsche Börse, the German-owned stock exchange, has its way, it—not the NYSE—will merge with Euronext. After repeated failures over a period of several years to take over the London Stock Exchange (LSE), Deutsche Börse set its sights on Euronext.

Deutsche Börse officials touted the potential Euronext purchase as the first creation of a “truly pan-European exchange organization” representing a “significant step forward in the integration of European financial markets. It would ... have the ability to compete on a global scale” (Agence France Presse, May 22). Deutsche Börse shareholders lauded the potential pairing as the creation of a “European champion.”

The NYSE’s recent offer for Euronext puts the Deutsche Börse offer in jeopardy, and New York and Frankfurt are now in direct competition.

Which stock exchanges will end up merging is still unclear. What is clear is that American and German economic concerns are increasingly at odds with each other. The recent stock market competition is just the latest example.

Nation: A Place With Borders

The debate over illegal immigration shows a fundamental misunderstanding of what's at stake: the nation itself.
BY MARK JENKINS

THE AMERICAN DREAM: TO sneak over the U.S.-Mexico border under cover of darkness, get a job that no legal citizen will take and send the money you earn back to your family in Mexico. That scenario is, of course, an exaggeration; it's easy enough to cross the border in broad daylight. As a result, the nation is embroiled in a national debate over illegal immigration.

The debate, though, is multifaceted. Economics, social development, border control, guest worker programs, racism or any of a myriad of issues related to illegal immigration prevent anyone from actually solving the problem. The debate becomes so complex that the politicians responsible decide there are no easy solutions, then accordingly implement nothing of consequence.

As a hot-button political issue, illegal immigration is sometimes bound up in the notion of the American dream. The idea that we as a melting-pot nation would send immigrants home is viewed by some as racist, economically undecidable and—worst of all—un-American. They say the U.S. was built by immigrants for immigrants; it is who we are as a nation. And that is exactly where the debate should center: on the status of the United States of America as a nation.

A few fundamental principles define a nation. One of these is the existence of government, which is there to define and execute law. Certainly no nation has

ever survived without law.

A second defining quality is culture: The glue that holds a nation together is its common language, culture and ideals. Without a unifying culture—without common values—the political and moral fiber of a nation frays.

A third requirement for a nation—but perhaps first in importance—is the establishment of borders. We identify a country on a map by where its borders lie. No one would consider establishing a country without clearly delineating its borders.

Let's apply these three fundamental principles of national sovereignty to the debate over illegal immigration.

A Nation of Law

First, consider the idea that a nation enforces its laws. The truth is, the main reason illegal immigration hasn't been curbed is that the government doesn't respect its own laws enough to enforce them.

There are currently about 12 million illegal immigrants living in the United States. Although that estimate is probably low, let's give the number context: It lies somewhere between the populations of Pennsylvania and Ohio. It is slightly greater than the entire population of Cuba. The U.S. could designate a 51st and 52nd state called North and South Illegal that would still comprise two of our most populated states—or it could be broken into 12 states the size of Rhode Island.

Clearly, the hundreds of thousands that violate our borders annually do so

without significant fear of penalty. Certainly the argument that it would be nearly impossible to deport every illegal immigrant is true. It is also true that it is impossible to catch and convict every rapist. The police cannot solve every murder. Would anyone argue that we should not even try? If a nation does not even make the pretense of enforcing law, what kind of nation is it?

Combine the notion that the flow of illegals cannot be stopped with the assertion that those already present should be given amnesty and one thing is guaranteed: The flow of illegals will increase.

By debating the right of those who enter the country illegally to do so without penalty, we debate the very notion of law. The idea that someone has a *fundamental right to illegally enter a country* is absurd.

If the United States does in fact need workers from abroad, that problem could be solved by opening legal avenues for those workers to come and go within the bounds of the law. The debate isn't really about whether the U.S. needs workers though: It's about the status of illegal workers. On that issue, the law has already spoken. If we claim to be a nation of laws, we should be a nation that enforces those laws. On this first fundamental principle on which any nation is built, the United States fails the test.

A Common Culture

Second, consider the fundamental principle that a country's citizens share a

common culture. Culture, as defined by Samuel Huntington in *The Clash of Civilizations*, refers to “a people’s language, religious beliefs, social and political values, assumptions as to what is right and wrong, appropriate and inappropriate, and to the objective institutions and behavioral patterns that reflect these subjective elements.” Unlike skin color or ethnic heritage, someone’s culture can change. People can convert to other religions or systems of values and beliefs. They can learn new languages.

Initially, this was the basis of U.S. immigration: There existed an American identity, and people of all creeds and races took on that identity. In other words, they could Americanize.

This Americanization process was given a metaphor in Israel Zangwill’s 1908 play *The Melting Pot*. In the play, a youthful Russian-Jewish composer in New York calls America a pot where everyone melds together and re-forms. Theodore Roosevelt, to whom the play was dedicated, called it a “great play”; he

agreed with Zangwill’s concept. He, like presidents before him, welcomed large-scale immigration into the U.S. as long as those immigrants became Americans. “Either a man is an American and nothing else, or he is not an American at all,” Roosevelt famously proclaimed.

Another U.S. president, John Quincy Adams, said that for immigrants to succeed in this land, they had to “cast off the European skin, never to resume it.”

Until the 1960s, that is largely what immigrants did. The height of immigrant assimilation occurred between about 1870 and 1920. Almost every city with a large immigrant population had Americanization programs through local schools and businesses.

This latest wave of illegal immigrants represents a stark contrast to that historical ideal. Because the nation decided who would be allowed to enter the country, the best and the brightest became part of America, then embraced its culture, its language and its history. Now, the vast majority of illegal immigrants actually intend

to fill the unskilled labor void and support another country with the proceeds. If we encourage that sort of immigration as a nation, we are creating a permanent underclass of non-Americans. Forget the American dream; many of these illegals don’t even want to learn English.

In response to a government proposal last spring to provide grants to those who want to learn English and U.S. history, the director of Immigration Policy and Research for La Raza, a Hispanic American group, complained that though the proposal “doesn’t overtly mention assimilation, it is very strong on the patriotism and traditional American values language in a way which is potentially dangerous to our communities.”

Most illegal immigrants have no intention of adopting American culture or values. Instead, they intend to transfer their own culture to within U.S. borders.

Certainly the illegal immigration debate fails the culture test as well.

Benefits of Illegal Immigration

SOME ARGUE THAT ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION IN THE UNITED STATES IS A necessity—and they are right. Consider these facts:

- Fifteen percent of Mexico’s work force—about one in every seven—is working in the United States.
- Every year, illegal aliens remit \$20 billion to Mexico, equaling income from Mexico’s oil exports and dwarfing the tourism industry. That money is nearly the equal of the United States foreign-aid budget for the entire globe.
- An illegal immigrant often earns up to 10 times what he would have made in Mexico.
- Criminals that might be unwelcome in Mexico can move to the United States. Many of the most violent gang members, such as those in MS-13, are foreign born with prior criminal convictions.

As you can see, illegal immigration provides many benefits economically and socially—for Mexico.

Mexican President Vicente Fox has said immigration is the most pressing issue in U.S.-Mexico relations: “One cannot underestimate the importance of this moment and how complex this issue is for our two nations,” Fox said. “Since the beginning of my administration, the government of Mexico has promoted the establishment of a new system that regulates the movement of people across our border in a manner which is legal, safe and orderly” (Associated Press, May 24). He left out one final criterion: northbound.



MEXICAN PRESIDENT VICENTE FOX

Secure Borders

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said, “A body that does not have any borders cannot act cohesively” (Deutsche Welle, May 11). Consider how important national borders are. Most ongoing military disputes involve some sort of conflict over a border. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is inherently a border conflict. Wars typically begin when one nation decides to violate the territory of another. When citizens of one country encroach on another country’s territory without permission, it is trespassing—and in some cases, invasion.

Whether those people think they are invading, trespassing, or just crossing into a land of opportunity, though, is of less importance than the reality that the U.S. is absolutely unable to protect its own borders—the lines that define it as a nation.

A group of Mexican mercenaries known as the Zetas graphically highlights why having a porous border in America is so dangerous.

First, authorities say this group controls the border town of Nuevo Laredo, which sends more than 6,000 merchandise-laden trucks daily into Texas—roughly 40 percent of Mexico’s exports. Last year, the group killed that city’s police chief the day he took office (his predecessor also having been shot dead) and then fired a shot at his successor too, killing the new chief’s bodyguard instead. President Vicente Fox sent hun-

dreds of troops to the city to restore order, but those efforts were in place even before the above-mentioned killings.

Between January and June this year, Zetas killed 126 people, including 13 officers; the city of 350,000 currently has no police chief. The Zetas are described as commando types, dressed in black and using high-powered weapons and handheld radios.

The leaders of the Zetas originally

belonged to an elite anti-drug paratroop and intelligence battalion known in Mexico as the Special Air Mobile Force Group. In 1991, they deserted the group, lured by the easy money to be made in drug trafficking.

The Zetas are now believed to have followers in Texas, Arizona, California and Florida. As though that weren't enough, the Zetas offer a \$50,000 bounty for the assassination of U.S. law-en-

forcement officers.

Members of the Zetas claim the group works with U.S. drug dealers: "They cross the river. They do the job over here [the U.S.]. They kill. They pick up—they make people disappear, and they come back to the Mexican side. That's why police never find them" (KRGVTV, May 22).

The Mara Salvatrucha gang is another example. In May, investigators in Hidalgo County, Tex., found 84 illegal immi-

Where Terrorists and Deportees Walk Free?

At the beginning of June, 17 Muslim men were arrested by Canadian authorities and charged with planning to carry out terrorist attacks against targets in Toronto and Ottawa. The alleged plot targeted symbolic sites including the Toronto Stock Exchange, a military installation and a Canadian intelligence headquarters facility; it included bombings, armed assaults and beheadings.

Though this was a homegrown group of extremists—albeit with connections to terrorists in other countries—the situation is generally seen as a product of Canada's lax immigration and security policies. Although all involved were either Canadian citizens or legal residents of Canada, as Stratfor points out, the June 2 arrests "certainly underscore the possibility that Canada, which has a long history of liberal immigration and asylum policies, has been used by jihadists as a sanctuary for raising funds and planning attacks" (June 7).

The fact that the alleged conspirators had been long settled in Canada raises the question of how many more jihadists or jihadist sympathizers are hidden within the open Canadian society, planning further attacks.

Canadian officials admit that the nation's liberal immigration policies and its multiculturalism make Canada vulnerable. Canada has taken pride in its tolerance of immigrants and has encouraged them to retain the cultural identity of their homeland; Canadians have contrasted their immigration system with America's and claimed its superiority and success. But the uncovering of this latest terrorist plot is not the only evidence to the contrary. As Audrey Macklin, a University of Toronto law professor who specializes in immigration affairs, admitted, "The view of Canada as removed from the immigrant frictions and diplomatic strains suffered by its superpower neighbor may be outdated" (*Los Angeles Times*, June 6).

For decades, the Canadian government has operated its borders based on the thinking that, if Canada opened its borders to the refugees of the world and went out of its way to take care and provide for them, Canada would be considered a friend of all and therefore would never be threatened. As such, its immigration policies have been based upon the idea that "very few bad people will try to abuse the laws of an open, multicultural nation such as Canada, and that closer scrutiny of newcomers is unnecessary or even offensive" (*National Post*, May 12). Unfortunately, especially in the post-9/11 world, that is a deadly assumption.

Canada is known worldwide for its loose refugee policies and generous social welfare programs. As a result, it receives 20,000 to 30,000 applications for asylum each year, over half of which it accepts. Many of the refugees arrive with no documentation or with counterfeit documents, which makes verifying their information very difficult. This approval rate for asylum seekers is close to four times the average for other Western nations and may be actually higher because even when refugees are turned down, they are often permitted to remain in Canada through the lengthy appeals process. On top of all that, the overloaded immigration department accepted 260,000 *legal* immigrants last year.

Accepting unknown and unverifiable refugees is dangerous enough, but accepting them from nations that are known terrorist sponsors (which Canada does) is even more dangerous. Worse, prior to 9/11, none of these people were screened for criminal, terrorism or other security concerns unless they requested permanent residency.

The April 17 *National Post* reported that as many as 3,000 people ordered deported for "human rights abuses, terrorism ties, war crimes, gangsterism links or criminal convictions" are still living in Canada. Twenty-seven thousand other foreigners also ordered deported are still living underground in Canada as part of the approximately 400,000-large illegal immigrant population.

Immigration expert Martin Collacott, a former Canadian ambassador in Asia and the Middle East and counterterrorism policy coordinator at the Department of Foreign Affairs, warned in a February 28 report that major world terrorist groups operate in Canada. He says the problem lies both with Canada's multiculturalism ideology and politicians who pander to minority interest group pressure.

Canada's policy of multiculturalism, he says, puts greater emphasis on the "rights of newcomers" than "their obligations to Canada" (*Edmonton Journal*, March 1). He blames this ideology for encouraging refugees and immigrants from terrorist-sponsoring nations to treat Canada "as a convenient and generous base from which to engage in or mount support for their favorite conflicts abroad."

Another problem is that Canada's Immigration and Refugee Board contains appointees forced onto it by pro-immigrant activist groups, who have a vested interest in keeping the system as wide open as possible (*National Post*, March 3).

These poor immigration policies have left the nation vulnerable.

In his annual report to the Canadian Cabinet last November, Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) director Jim Judd warned that a terrorist attack in Canada is not only possible but probable (*ibid.*, May 12). Earlier last year he noted that Canada has twice been named as a target by al Qaeda and that Canadians have been "extremely fortunate ... not to have had a terrorist attack" since 9/11.

In outlining his concerns about Canada's safety, Judd warned that Canada had become "an attractive refuge for extremists." He specifically mentioned two worrisome trends: First, more terrorists are being found in the "second generation of immigrant families—whether in Europe, Canada or elsewhere"; second, many terrorists operating within Canada have no "discernible previous link of any kind with the terrorist networks."

A report prepared by Ottawa's Integrated Threat Assessment Center and released this May warned, "Canada is home to Islamic extremists, both homegrown and immigrant," who "advocate violent jihad in pursuit of their political and religious aims" (*National Post*, May 12).

For Canadians who were skeptical that years of irresponsible and lax immigration policies had allowed terrorist groups to establish strongholds in the "True North strong and free," the deadly terrorist

grants including two tattooed members of the gang in a single apartment complex. County Sheriff Lupe Treviño said it was “quite obvious that the majority of the 84 illegal immigrants were not here

to work, but to commit crimes such as drug dealing and thievery” (*The Monitor*, May 17). An array of weapons and 230 pounds of marijuana were seized.

This sort of gang activity is only possible because our borders are porous. If these sorts of hardened criminals can cross our southern borders that way, so can terrorists with a mind to commit far more

devastating acts. A similar situation exists in Canada (see sidebar, below).

The argument against enforcing the border is that it would be undoable. One solution that is often dismissed is a wall; politicians—the president among them—say that a wall could never stop the “enormous pressure on our border.” *Washington Post* columnist Charles Krauthammer disagrees: “Opponents pretend that these barriers can always be circumvented by, say, tunnels or clandestine entry by sea. Such arguments are transparently

See **BORDERS** page 37 ▶



CASE IN POINT

A Muslim woman arrives with a man at the June bail hearing of 17 suspected al Qaeda sympathizers accused of planning bomb attacks. All 17 individuals were citizens or residents of Canada.

plot uncovered this month would have been a rude awakening.

According to Stratfor, “Canada has a long history of harboring political dissidents from a number of different ethnic militant groups (perhaps as many as 50 organizations)” (May 3). Terrorist organizations with members who have obtained sanctuary in Canada stand out like a “who’s who” of world terror, and include organizations like Hamas, Hezbollah, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, Algeria’s Armed Islamic Group and Babbar Khalsa (a Sikh militant group).

Another example of how Canada’s immigration policies have failed is illustrated by Mahmoud Mohammad Issa Mohammad, who was welcomed to Canada in 1987. One year later, it was found that he had been a terrorist for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and had been convicted in the fatal hijacking of an Israeli airliner. Canadian officials then proceeded with deportation protocols, but, 18 years later, Mohammad is still living in Canada! His latest attempt to remain in the country is based on the argument that it would be “cruel and unusual” to send the unwell 62-year-old to Lebanon where medical treatment may not meet Canadian standards.

Then there’s Leon Mugesera, a Rwandan who, according to the Supreme Court of Canada, helped incite the genocide of more than 800,000 Tutsis in 1994. Amazingly, a decade after deportation proceedings began and nine months after the court ruling, he is still living in Canada and may even be allowed to stay if it is determined his life would be at risk in his home country.

Canada’s lax borders and naive immigration policies have not only affected Canadians, but also its neighbors and trading partners. The recently released U.S. State Department annual “Country Reports on Terrorism” states: “Terrorists have capitalized on liberal Canadian immigration and asylum policies to enjoy safe haven, raise funds, arrange logistical support, and plan terrorist attacks.” Canada’s border policies have added to U.S. difficulties as Canada has been the point of entry for people who have tried to attack the U.S. on several occasions.

Probably the best-known case involved Ahmed Ressam, who orchestrated the “millennium bomb” plot. When, in 1994, Ressam was caught entering Canada from France with forged documents, he immediately claimed political asylum. Immigration officials released him until his asylum hearing. Not too shockingly, Ressam never showed up for the hearing, and his claim was later denied. Once Ressam was free and

at large within Canada, he was able to plot and plan terrorism—and on the taxpayer’s dime: At his eventual trial in the millennium bombing case it came out that Ressam supported himself in Canada for four years with petty theft and welfare payments. During his illegal stay in Canada he was arrested four times in regards to theft, credit card and other financial document fraud, yet he was not deported.

While in Canada, Ressam fraudulently obtained an authentic Canadian passport, which got him to and from Afghanistan to take part in an al Qaeda training camp. Upon return to Canada in 1999, he drew up plans and made preparations to attack Los Angeles International Airport. Ressam was finally arrested when he tried to enter the U.S. with explosives to carry out his plot.

Other notorious examples of terrorists or suspected terrorists who have entered the U.S. from Canada include Abdel Hakim Tizegha and Ghazi Ibrahim Abu Mezer. Abdel Tizegha was another member involved in the millennium bomb plot, who, after being denied asylum in the U.S., went to Canada. He later snuck across the border to America with a plan to carry out a suicide bombing against the New York subway system. Thanks to a tip-off he was arrested before he could strike.

These are just a few of many individuals who have taken advantage of Canada’s hospitality while plotting to harm others.

Until Canada changes its naive mindset regarding asylum, immigration and border control, it will continue to be regarded as a safe haven by radicals and extremists. Surely Canadians can no longer be fooled into thinking that terrorists will leave them alone just because they have a liberal and multicultural society. “Canada remains on al Qaeda’s target list of six countries,” reported Canadian CSIS director Judd. “And it is the only one not to have been attacked. We live next door to target number one on that list”

This time, the terrorist plot was foiled. But considering Canada’s favorable conditions for terrorist infiltration and operation, we can expect to see further security breaches and terrorist plots come to light. And, sooner or later, the odds are that such diabolical plans will come to fruition. It’s a matter of cause and effect. And the effect has been prophesied in the Bible.

God foretold in Leviticus 26:16-17 about the terrorism problem the English-speaking nations (birthright descendants of ancient Israel) would face in this end time. Verse 17 says that terrorism will become so widespread that the people of nations such as Canada and America will flee even when no one pursues them, and those that hate them will rule over them.

But there is good news. For proof that the people referred to in Leviticus 26 include today’s nations of Canada and the U.S., and for the ultimate solution to the immigration and terrorism problems facing our nations, please write for our free book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*.

ROBERT MORLEY



TECHNOLOGY

U.S. Beaten in Brain Game

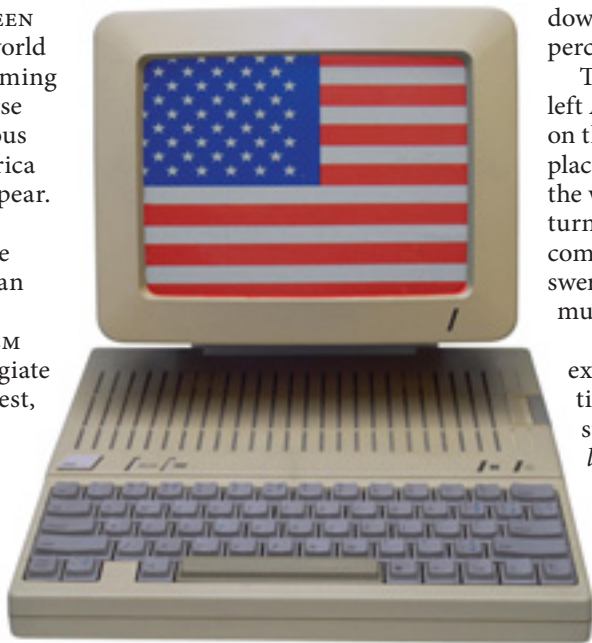
AMERICA HAS BEEN Askunked in a world computer-programming contest. This is worse news for a prosperous and powerful America than it may first appear.

In April, whiz kids from across the globe gathered in San Antonio, Tex., for the 2006 annual ACM International Collegiate Programming contest, sponsored by IBM. According to the Baylor University website dedicated to the event, "The contest pits teams of three university students against eight or more complex, real-world problems, with a grueling five-hour deadline. Huddled around a single computer, competitors race against the clock in a battle of logic, strategy and mental endurance" (January 5).

Eighty-three teams were selected from 5,606 teams representing 1,733 universities from 84 countries. Some prestigious American universities were among the 83, including the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Princeton, DePaul University, California Institute of Technology, and Duke.

How did the American universities fair? "We're the worst of the best of the best," answered Matt Edwards in response to Duke coach Owen Astrachan's attempts to encourage the team after its dismal honorable-mention finish (*Business Week*, May 1).

After MIT, which ranked in eighth place, only four other American teams made the top 50. The top 10 was dominated by teams from Russia, Eastern Europe and



Asia. In fact, Russia had *five* top-place finishers.

"Until the late 1990s, U.S. teams dominated these contests," wrote *Business Week* in its May 1 commentary about America's poor showing at the contest. "*But the tide has turned.* Last year not one was in the top dozen" (emphasis ours throughout). Eastern European and Asian schools dominate the global tech industry. "China and India, the new global tech powerhouses, are fueled by 900,000 engineering graduates of all types each year, *more than triple the number of U.S. grads*" (ibid.).

This, then, is the bad news: "If our talent base weakens, our lead in technology, business, and economics *will fade faster than any of us can imagine,*" warns Richard Florida, a professor at George Mason University and author of *The Flight of the Creative Class*" (ibid.).

Software programmers are the roots of a modern information-based economy. But, according to *Business*

Week, a 2005 survey of freshmen showed that just 1.1 percent planned to major in computer sciences, down from a paltry 3.7 percent in 2000.

This complacency has left America teetering on the edge being last place among the elite of the world. Will America turn the tide of this complacency? The answer to this question is much more unsettling.

While the U.S. export of information technology is still growing, *the leadership position is gone*—and it isn't coming back. In accordance with biblical prophecy, the United States is losing its superpower status

in one area after another, continually being overtaken by Russia, China and the European Union.

Russia's Saratov State University won this year's competition on the anniversary date of Yuri Gagarin's historic 1961 voyage into space. It was this feat of science that *Business Week* suggests touched off America's quest for scientific dominance—dominance it held for almost 50 years. "Gagarin's rocket ride shocked Americans out of their postwar complacency, sparking a national quest for tech superiority that led to such breakthroughs as the moon landing and the microchip. A trouncing in a programming contest doesn't inspire the same kind of response today. Truthfully, *Americans just don't feel threatened enough to exert the effort*" (ibid.).

It is clear that America's technology leadership position is gone. This loss, if not reversed, has the potential to touch all of our lives.



DRUGS

UK Kids Hooked on Heroin

AN ASTOUNDING NUMBER of children in Britain are taking heroin.

According to government figures released in February based on a nationwide survey, up to 35,000 children under 16 in Britain are using the drug. Doctors refer to this problem as a ticking "health time bomb" and warn that heroin abuse could cause serious long-term damage to children's health.

To battle this problem, the Department of Health is ensuring schools receive guidance on drug usage. Yet the numbers are still expected to rise, and here is why: A narcotics expert from Glasgow University states that around 300,000 children growing up in the UK have one or both parents addicted to heroin.

These young people grow up thinking heroin use is normal.

The Department of Health can give all the guidance it wants, but if parents don't take responsibility for their own drug problems, the situation will only grow worse. Even if the parents aren't addicts, the responsibility falls largely on them to educate their children and create a loving environment. Then children wouldn't be looking for meaning, answers and comfort from the contents of a syringe.

Horror Movies More Sadistic

GORE IS GOOD. SEVERED body parts and flesh-eating viruses are even better—at least for box offices and movie producers. Since last fall, 10 horror movies have topped the box office.

Every few years or so, horror becomes the fad in Hollywood. Each wave of horror movies is more violent and grotesque. Movie companies are eager to capitalize on a growing movie audience that has a voracious appetite for evil.

Tom Ortenberg, president of Lions Gate Films (the company that released the movie *Hostel*, for which previews alone were horrific enough to cause people to pass out), felt no shame for his money-making strategy. When questioned by *Newsweek*, Ortenberg said, “When we see a void in the market, we do our best to fill it. And we didn’t feel that there were enough, or really any, R-rated ... horror films out there” (April 3).

As movies are becoming bloodier, the violence portrayed in movies is also becoming more real. Bob Weinstein, the executive producer of *Scream*, described the filmmakers as now having the ability “to put viewers directly into the shoes of the victims going through these horrible things, *in an almost documentary way*” (ibid.; emphasis ours). Filmmakers not only show vivid violence on the movie screen—they make you *live* it. Some actually endeavor to put viewers inside the mind of the killer.

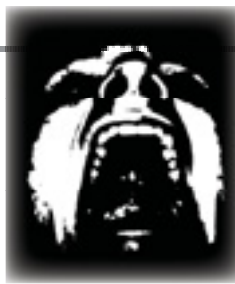
Some of the latest horror films are so purely sadistic that even seasoned, battle-hardened movie critics are asking some basic questions about what the point of all

this obsession with evil is.

Occasionally some fallow-headed filmmaker or social scientist will try to explain how this playing out of horror fantasies provides some kind of catharsis, serving the “greater good.”

Such arguments are simply wrong. No *good* can come from allowing graphic descriptions of revolting acts of murder and rape into our minds. No *good* motivates those producing such lurid content. No *good* draws people to watch. Surely we should be able to recognize *evil* when we see it.

Our increasing fascination with darkness belies the common idea that deep down, people’s hearts are good. In fact, it supports the polar opposite and little-believed scriptural pronouncement, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and



desperately wicked: who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9).

Evil is a drug. People

by the millions are hooked and constantly craving stronger doses. The Apostle Paul used a powerful analogy when he compared sin to a slave owner: “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?” (Romans 6:16).

God, in whom is no darkness at all (1 John 1:5), tells us that the way to be free from evil is to shun it—not entertain it.

For criminals in ancient Israel, God did not want the people of the nation to “get inside their minds”; He ordered them to “put the evil away from among you” (Deuteronomy 17:7). For the woman who was caught in

adultery, Jesus Christ did not try to understand what motivated her lawlessness. He perceived her sincere repentance, forgave her and commanded her to “go, and sin no more” (John 8:11). The same principle motivated both instructions.

Some would say the Bible itself dwells on evil, with its descriptions of wars, murders, rapes and betrayals. But the difference between the Bible and any horror show is a profound one.

Much of popular culture, in portraying the evils of human nature, seeks to titillate and hook people into an increasingly demented world of wickedness. Even while labeling something bad, pop culture glamorizes it; the bad guys are always the most seductive. Resolution, if it comes, arises from within the person, or from professional help.

Contrarily, the Bible, in describing such evils, simply and justifiably supports its main purpose: to show *how much man needs God*.

That is a lesson we can never afford to forget. Recognize the evil within your own heart, and you realize how much you need God to replace it with something better.

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth” (Colossians 3:1-2). That is the way to break evil’s hold on your mind. “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things” (Philippians 4:8).

Record Sales of Sleeping Pills

AT LEAST 10 PERCENT OF AMERICANS REPORT THEY have trouble falling asleep, and many are turning to sleeping pills for help. About 42 million sleeping pill prescriptions were filled last year, according to the research company IMS Health—a sharp 60 percent increase since 2000 (*New York Times*, February 7).

Sleeping pills are being oversubscribed “without enough regard to known, if rare, side effects or the implications of long-term use.” Experts warn of sleep aids causing sleepwalking, short-term amnesia and, perhaps more significantly, *dependency* (addiction), sleepiness the next day and possible abuse.

Insomnia is certainly a sign of an overworked, overwrought society, as some researchers recognize. But the massive number of sleeping pill prescriptions being filled is also a symptom of a society overly dependant on drugs to fix all its problems so it can continue in destructive habits. After all, pills only treat the effect. The solution lies in changing the *cause*—the way we live, work and eat.



CORRECTION

In our June-July 2006 issue, on page 24 an article erroneously stated that Canada has refused to support the war on terror. The article should have read: "While Britain and Australia remain America's staunchest allies, its most immediate neighbor, Canada, though giving early and continuing support to the U.S. effort in Afghanistan, has refused to support the war in Iraq."

Feminism Harms Families

I HAVE BEEN A STAY-AT-HOME MOM, and I allowed society to change my way of thinking. That I wasn't fulfilled because I don't have a career. I made the decision to go to work; it has only been two months that I have been employed. I am wary how it is affecting me as a wife and mother and how it is affecting my husband and our four children. I have always known that my purpose is to be a mother and wife. ... It has burdened my heart to be away from home and neglecting my family for a paycheck. My trust in God has led me to be very blessed by this article ("How Feminism Harms Families," June-July) and what an awesome truth of God's Word that is so neglected by women today. Women need to realize what God's will is for their life. I have been given peace about my decision through this article. ...

Subscriber—VIRGINIA

The American University

IT IS TRUE THAT THE YOUTH IN OUR country have certain authority over the elders, and not for our betterment. Many of the revolutionary movements of the past century have developed from within the universities of the nation ("The American University," June-July). These ideals ... have not been fruitful, but harmful. ... This nation lacks quality education because, like the rejection of the Constitution, the people rely on their own reasoning. ...

Harley Breth—KANSAS

Israel's Final Chapter

THIS IS PROBABLY THE MOST COGENT article encapsulating the present situation in Israel ("Israel's Final Chapter," May). The majority, seemingly safe in the coastal plain, is willing to expel 70,000 mountain-dwelling Jews for an illusion of greater strength.

The German involvement is far deeper and more insidious than you assume. It is not in the future, but already deeply entrenched. Most of the NGOs active in Israel, working with Arabs and Jewish traitors, are financed by the European Union. That is, Germany, the central European power. The Geneva Initiative, a facade for the Saudi death plan, is the central pillar of both the Labor party and the smaller sister, the Meretz party. That too is European Union underwritten, which is Germany. In addition, Germany is the Western country with the deepest involvement with Iran's nuclear program, the largest trade partner for Iran. Iran is now the major sponsor of *jihad* activity in Arab locales in the Holy Land. What more do we need to say that Germany is back on track for fulfilling ... the Third Reich ideals of a Jew-less world?

Yuval Brandstetter—ISRAEL

The Da Vinci Code

THIS CURRENT FERVOR OVER *THE DA VINCI CODE* ("Let Us Introduce ... Jesus Christ!," May 2006) has led a number of people to not only question the teachings of the Bible, but also to question the very existence of Christ Himself. Being raised by a single mother in ghetto areas of Cleveland, Ohio, in the mid-'60s, religion played a very important part in my upbringing and has played an important part in my adult life as well. I would love to receive and read the three booklets mentioned in your article. The booklets ... could only help me to further clarify and explain to the many individuals that I come into contact with every day in my current situation in life the truth behind the deceptions in *The Da Vinci Code* and point them toward a more rewarding and enlightening reading of the Holy Bible.

Charles McGill—KINCHELOE, MICH.

ABOUT *THE DA VINCI CODE* ("Debunking *The Da Vinci Code*," April). ... How can such a different version of our traditional foundation in human religious values find so much credence among so many "Christians" and non-Christians alike? Is there such a void out there that people will grasp at anything? Or can it be that institutionalized religion has become so out of favor with the masses that people are determined to find their own foundation outside the church? Or worse and most likely yet: Are humans really

stupid and gullible in the extreme and, like Jesus intimated, a bunch of sheep ...? You don't have to believe in Jesus if you don't want to. I can sympathize with that. But to believe so ardently in a novel which purports to know more about Jesus than the gospels is nuts. Literally insane. ...

Tony Blyth—SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

THE ARTICLE "DEBUNKING *THE DA VINCI CODE*" was good, but still missing something. And this is missing in all books and articles that refute Brown's "fiction." It's obvious that the book is not about Jesus and Mary Magdalene. You see, Brown took a great deal of his research from a book called *The Templar Revelation*. The authors of that book try to claim that Jesus was a magician from Egypt and that Mary Magdalene was His "sacred prostitute." Their description of Jesus and Mary is almost identical to Ireneus's description of Simon Magus and his "reformed prostitute" Helena.

R. McDowell—TENNESSEE

Fate of Serbs

I AM WRITING TO COMMEND YOU ON repeatedly exposing what has been occurring in the former Yugoslavia. Your repeated exposures of what has befallen the Serbian people both in the past and during the wars in Bosnia and Kosovo has been heartening. Until I started reading the *Trumpet*, I was convinced that evil had become the norm and that there were few, if any, who knew the true villains and would be brave enough to speak the truth. In a previous issue (August 2005), you revealed the fact that it was Germany that instigated World War I and not the Serbs. I was pleased that in your last issue ("Putting Muslims to the Test," May) you pointed out Europe's intolerance to "alien cultures living in its midst: The Serbs prior to World War I and the Jews before and during World War II are two notable and uncomfortably recent examples." Please continue to inform the world of the truth and continue to bring the message of hope to a rapidly degenerating world.

Peter Zaklan Farougi—LAKE CITY, MICH.

Comments?

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Don't Know Much About Samurai

Esteeming ourselves more highly than we ought—and a lesson learned. BY PHILIP NICE

IN A SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION ABOUT Japanese samurai warriors, a casual debate arose over some warrior custom. Several were talking at once, expressing differing opinions on the subject. Then I butted in, ready to part my lips and let all my prolific samurai knowledge and wisdom fill the room. After all, I had not only seen a samurai movie recently, but I had also once flipped through pictures of samurai in a back issue of *National Geographic*.

In my distinctly above-average standing as a thus-enlightened samurai expert, I felt confident setting the record straight on the samurai way.

Then I stopped and actually thought.

I have never actually studied samurai. In fact, I have never read a single book or encyclopedia entry about Samurai culture. I have never spoken with a samurai scholar—or a samurai scholar's research assistant. I have never met a samurai. I have never lived in a samurai village (or whatever they are called). And I have certainly never *been* a samurai. I have never even been to Japan. I had zero knowledge on the subject. Yet I esteemed myself knowledgeable enough to speak for all samurai everywhere.

This time, I buttoned my lip.

In this small but indicative example, I had fallen prey to a widespread problem in our society: better-than-average self-esteem.

Our society is deathly sick with violence, crime, abuse, failing education, division, infighting, depression, lethargy and a host of other evils. In response to these mounting failures, leaders in psychology, education and child rearing have prescribed *self-esteem* as the cure.

Self-esteem culture took root in the 1960s and has since sprouted throughout our educational system to the point of carpeting our culture with the dense foliage of positive self-talk, non-judgementalism, and general sunny thinking.

After four decades of “going to your happy place,” the self-esteem movement has convinced us that those who engage in unacceptable behavior should never be corrected, disciplined, punished (*gasp!*) or otherwise restrained. Instead, they should be made to feel good about themselves—that their actions are just as good as anyone else's. This will make them stop engaging in those actions, the thinking goes.

By the turn of the millennium, the exaltation of self-esteem had become so rampant as to see students assigned to write, “I am great,” “I am special,” and “I am me, and I am enough” as class assignments and robotically reciting “you are very important,” and “you are a good friend” to others as a matter of routine.

But the blooming, thoughtlessly sunny flower of the self-esteem movement is turning out to be less the cultural cure-all many hoped for and more akin to the *Little Shop of Horrors'*

man-eating plant. Not only have the original societal symptoms this liberal panacea was supposed to remedy gotten worse—in part *due to* this “remedy,” as some studies have proven—but also a new and bizarre fruit has formed on the vine of self-esteem: *above-averageness*.

As a result of discouraging honest evaluation, overcoming and excellence, our educational system has turned out ranks of narcissists with grotesquely overblown self-esteem, zero motivation, and the deeply planted conviction that, no matter what they actually *do*, they are always and in every way above average.

In intelligence, leadership ability, personality, sense of humor, wisdom, communication skills and general samurai trivia knowl-

edge, the majority of Americans esteem themselves way above average.

In 1999, Cornell University's Department of Psychology published its findings on the subject in “Unskilled and Unaware of It: How Difficulties in Recognizing One's Own Incompetence Lead to Inflated Self-Assessments” (*Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*). The study found that those scoring in the 12th percentile of a combined logic, grammar and humor test had the most inflated self-analysis, estimating themselves to be in the 62nd—quite comfortably above average. It found that those with the least understanding of the test subject had the loosest grip on the reality of where they stood compared to the average individual.

For over a generation, our culture has spawned the logically and mathematically impossible view that we are all above average in most fields. American education has soaked our political, educational, societal and military leaders in sunny delusion. It's “I am me, and I am enough” times millions. This self-deception is a national flaw, and the painful truth will hit home very soon.

Instead of lying to ourselves that we're better than we are and also better than most other people, God directs us in His Word to follow His standard and His law, admit our faults, avoid praising ourselves, be honest, and—with His help—work to overcome our shortcomings and sins. Quite the contrast from the gray litany of almost-robotic and miserably failing “you are above average” platitudes.

Biblical prophecy speaks repeatedly and in detail of the imminent fall of the mightiest single nation this world has ever produced. (This is explained in detail in our book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*, a book we will send you free upon request.) It requires a penetrating acknowledgement of personal and national failure in order to understand why God would deem correction on such a devastating scale to be necessary. Clearly, our assessment of ourselves is radically different from God's assessment. It seems that a shocking awakening from our stupefying delusions of above-averageness is inevitable. ■



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Hawaii, Hawaii Na Leo Chan. 54 6:30 am, Sun; 8:30 am, Wed

Hawaii, Maui/Lanai/Molokai/Niihau Akaku Chan. 52 6:30 pm, Sun; 3:30 am, Mon

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Idaho, Boise KWOB 10:30 am, Sun

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Maine, Bangor WBAN 9:30 am, Sun

Maine, Presque Isle WBPQ 9:30 am, Sun

Massachusetts, Boston WBPC 6:00 am, Fri

Massachusetts, Holyoke-Springfield WBQT 9:30 am, Sun

Michigan, Alpena WBAE 9:30 am, Sun

Michigan, Cadillac-Traverse City WBVC 9:30 am, Sun

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Michigan, Grand Rapids WZPX 5:00 am, Fri

Michigan, Lansing WBL 9:30 am, Sun

Michigan, Marquette WBMK 9:30 am, Sun

Minnesota, Duluth-Superior KWBD 8:30 am, Sun

Minnesota, Mankato KWYE 8:30 am, Sun

Minnesota, Minneapolis KPXM 5:00 am, Fri

Mississippi, Biloxi-Gulfport WBGP 8:30 am, Sun

Mississippi, Columbus-Tupelo-West Point WBSP 8:30 am, Sun

Mississippi, Greenwood-Greenville WBWD 8:30 am, Sun

Mississippi, Hattiesburg-Laurel WBHA 8:30 am, Sun

Mississippi, Meridian WBMM 8:30 am, Sun

Missouri, Columbia-Jefferson City KJWB 8:30 am, Sun

Missouri, Hannibal-Keokuk-Quincy WEWB 8:30 am, Sun

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Montana, Billings KWBM 10:30 am, Sun

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Texas, Lubbock KWBZ 8:30 am, Sun
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unserious. You're hardly going to get 500,000 illegals lining up outside a tunnel or on a pier. Such choke points are exactly how you would turn the current river of illegal immigrants into narrow streams—which is all we need to turn the illegal immigration problem from out of control to eminently manageable" (May 19).

Instead of actually sealing the border, the number of guards has been increased, a strategy that has been implemented time and time again with no real success.

It seems that the most powerful nation on Earth cannot defend its borders. Is the U.S. really so weak? Clearly, the answer is yes—and biblical prophecy tells us why.

The Stranger

In our book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*, we explain that the nations of America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom comprise the modern-day descendants of biblical Israel. This is important to understand, because the Bible has specific prophecies concerning these nations. One of those prophecies discusses the problem that these nations would have with immigration.

God gave a dire warning to the Israelite peoples concerning immigrants from other cultures (the Bible uses the word *strangers*). He said that if the children of Israel were to rebel against His laws—to turn away from His commandments and embrace the practices of the heathen—they would suffer terribly (Deuteronomy 28:15-19). The curses included this prophecy: "The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low. He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail" (verses 43-44). Lax immigration policies and weak borders are playing an instrumental role in the fulfillment of the Bible's prophecies.

Consider how profound the effect of these prophecies is. As we watch illegal immigrants demonstrate for rights they do not have, consider the nature of the national debate. A fundamental disregard for law, the loss of a common culture, and the inability to even protect borders shows that the very things that define the United States of America as a nation are being chipped away one by one. ■

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