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ELBARADEI: WESTERN POLICY IN MIDEAST A TOTAL FAILURE

March 31, 2010 YnetNews.com reported: "Western policy in the Middle East has been a 'total failure' and risks creating a new generation of Islamic radicals, Mohammed ElBaradei says.

"Western policy towards this part of the world has been a total failure, in my view," the former International Atomic Energy Agency chief told The Guardian in his first English-language interview since leaving the UN post. "It has not been based on dialogue, understanding, supporting civil society and empowering people, but rather it's been based on supporting authoritarian systems as long as the oil keeps pumping."

The Egyptian ElBaradei said he sees increasing radicalization in the Middle East, adding that he understands the reason for it.

"People feel repressed by their own governments, they feel unfairly treated by the outside world," he said. "They wake up in the morning and who do they see – they see people being shot and killed, all Muslims from Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Sudan, Darfur."

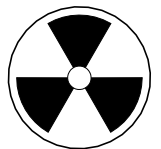
ElBaradei was especially critical of Western governments over their support for regional tyrants.

"If you bet on individuals, instead of the people, you are going to fail. And western policy so far has been to bet on individuals, individuals who are not supported by their people and who are being discredited every day," he said. "The policy should be: 'We care about you, we care about your welfare, we care about your human rights.'"

'OBAMA RESIGNED TO NUCLEAR IRAN'

March 28, 2010 The Jerusalem Post: "Former US ambassador to the UN John Bolton expressed concern Sunday that Washington was coming to terms with a nuclear Iran.

"I very much worry the Obama administration is willing to accept a nuclear Iran, that's why there's this extraordinary pressure on Israel not to attack in Iran," Bolton told Army Radio. The former envoy claimed that this pressure was the focus of last week's meetings in Washington between Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and US officials, including President Barack Obama.



Bolton said that the Obama administration had embraced the view, prevalent in Europe, that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was the key to the resolution of all other conflicts throughout the Middle East, including the Iranian conflict. He added that the rift in US-Israel relations stemmed from a fundamental difference in the understanding of the Middle East and Israel's role in the Middle East, and is not really about east Jerusalem at all.

Bolton said that the treatment Netanyahu received during his visit "should tell the people of Israel how difficult it's going to be dealing with Washington for the next couple of years."

On Saturday, meanwhile, The New York Times reported that international inspectors and Western intelligence agencies suspect that Teheran is preparing to build more sites in defiance of United Nations demands.

According to the report, half a year after the revelation of a secret Iranian nuclear enrichment site northeast of Qom, the UN inspectors assigned to monitor Iran's nuclear program are now searching for evidence of two additional sites, prompted by Israeli assessments as well as by recent comments by a top Iranian official that drew little attention in the West.

In an interview with the Iranian Student News Agency, the official, Ali Akbar Salehi, head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization, said Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad had ordered work to begin soon on two new plants. The plants, he said, "will be built inside mountains," presumably to protect them from attacks."..."

UNDERSEA VOLCANO THREATENS SOUTHERN ITALY

March 30, 2010 AFP reported: "Europe's largest undersea volcano could disintegrate and unleash a tsunami that would engulf southern Italy "at any time", a prominent volcanologist warned in an interview published Monday. The Marsili volcano, which is bursting with magma, has "fragile walls" that could collapse, Enzo Boschi told the leading daily Corriere della Sera.

"It could even happen tomorrow," said Boschi, president of the National Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology (INGV).

"Our latest research shows that the volcano is not structurally solid, its walls are fragile, the magma chamber is of sizeable dimensions," he said. "All that tells us that the volcano is active and could begin erupting at any time."

The event would result in "a strong tsunami that could strike the coasts of Campania, Calabria and Sicily," Boschi said. The undersea Marsili, 3,000 meters (9,800 feet) tall and located some 150 kilometres (90 miles) southwest of Naples, has not erupted since the start of recorded history. It is 70 kilometres long and 30 kilometres wide, and its crater is some 450 metres below the surface of the Tyrrhenian

Sea.

"A rupture of the walls would let loose millions of cubic metres of material capable of generating a very powerful wave," Boschi said.

"While the indications that have been collected are precise, it is impossible to make predictions. The risk is real but hard to evaluate."

INDIA LAUNCHES BIOMETRIC CENSUS

April 1, 2010 BBCNews.co.UK reported: "India is launching a new census in which every person aged over 15 will be photographed and fingerprinted to create a biometric national database.

The government will then use the information to issue identity cards. Officials will spend a year classifying India's population of around 1.2 billion people according to gender, religion, occupation and education. The exercise, conducted every 10 years, faces big challenges, not least India's vast area and diversity of cultures.

Census officials must also contend with high levels of illiteracy and millions of homeless people - as well as insurgencies by Maoists and other rebels which have left large parts of the country unsafe.

President Pratibha Patil was the first person to be listed, and appealed to fellow Indians to follow her example "for the good of the nation".

"Everyone must participate and make it successful," she said in Delhi.

"India has been conducting a national census since 1872," the man leading the exercise C Chandramouli told the AFP news agency.

"Nothing - floods, droughts, even wars - has been able to stop it.

"The trick is to get things right the first time. There is no question of a re-census."

Over the next year, some 2.5 million census officials will visit households in more than 7,000 towns and 600,000 villages."..."



India

HEZBOLLAH: ISRAEL PLANNING TO DESTROY AL-AQSA MOSQUE

April 1, 2010 Haaretz.com reported: "Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah has accused Israel of plotting to destroy the Al-Aqsa mosque in the Old City of Jerusalem, in an interview with Al-Manar television on Wednesday.

The Hezbollah leader also said that is responsible for the blame put on Hezbollah for the death of former Lebanese prime minister Rafik al-Hariri,.

"Well known sources in Lebanon blamed Syria, as did Arab and international officials,' Nasrallah told Al-Manar, adding that "then Israeli officials and the Israeli media said that the Hezbollah is behind the assassination."

"The American Zionist lobby then came out and blamed the Hezbollah for the attacks in September 2000 [meaning 2001], and there were U.S. officials who blamed us for cooperating with al-Qaida," he added.

Nasrallah's comments come following a reconciliation meeting between Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and Lebanese Druze leader Walid Jumblatt, who had a falling out after the assassination of Hariri. Assad met Jumblatt on Wednesday, the official Syrian news agency said, sealing a reconciliation with one of his fiercest former critics in Lebanon. The two former rivals discussed the importance of resistance against Israel, referring to the Lebanese organization Hezbollah.

The meeting consolidates Syria's political gains in Lebanon as it restores influence lost when it withdrew troops from its neighbor five years ago under international pressure. It also opens channels with Lebanese politicians who have been firmly in the U.S.-backed camp.

"The meeting discussed the importance of role of the resistance as a guarantee against Israeli plans," the news agency said, in reference to Hezbollah, which mediated the meeting.

Jumblatt had turned fiercely anti-Syrian after the 2005 assassination of former Lebanese prime minister Rafik al-Hariri and criticized Assad as responsible for the killing. But he has since said good ties with Syria were crucial to prevent Lebanon from descending into chaos and to preserve its Druze minority."..."

LARGE HADRON COLLIDER ACHIEVES SUCCESS WITH HIGH ENERGY PARTICLE COLLISIONS

March 30, 2010 Telegraph.co.uk reported: "After years of setbacks, the £5bn machine finally achieved high energy collisions of two protons at 12.06pm British time, at a total energy of seven trillion electron volts - more than three times more force than ever before.

All four detectors around the 17mile underground track picked up evidence of collision "events" which could when analysed completely re-write the rules of physics.

Dr Lyn Evans, the Welsh scientist who led the construction of the machine, said: "It is quite emotional. We had a few problems but we have resolved them and the beams came into collision beautifully. "Today is the end of a very long road. There has been some bumps along the way. It is absolutely fantastic to see this today.

"It is a new era of science."

The experiment at the European Centre for Nuclear Research (CERN), which aims to recreate the Big Bang at the beginning of the Universe 13.7billion years ago, will allow researchers to examine the nature of matter and the origin of stars and planets."..."

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