



PROPHETIC TIMES

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IRAN, VENEZUELA LEADER SEEK 'NEW WORLD ORDER'

October 20, 2010 The Associated Press reported: "Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez and his Iranian counterpart have declared they are united in efforts to establish a "new world order" and warned their enemies would be relegated to the "graveyard."

The rhetoric wrapped up Chavez's two-day visit to Iran meant to boost cooperation between the allies' in oil, gas and petrochemical industries.

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said their countries are "united in efforts to establish a new world order" that will eliminate Western dominance over global affairs. Chavez said any efforts to stop Iran's and Venezuela's progress would fail, and he denounced U.S. "imperialism" saying it is headed for "the graveyard."..."

CHINA STAKES CLAIM TO S. TEXAS OIL, GAS

October 12, 2010 The Houston Chronicle reported: "State-owned Chinese energy giant CNOOC is buying a multibillion-dollar stake in 600,000 acres of South Texas oil and gas fields, potentially testing the political waters for further expansion into U.S. energy reserves.

With the announcement Monday that it would pay up to \$2.2 billion for a one-third stake in Chesapeake Energy assets, CNOOC lays claim to a share of properties that eventually could produce up to half a million barrels a day of oil equivalent. It also might pick up some American know-how about tapping the hard-to-get deposits trapped in dense shale rock formations, analysts said.

As part of the deal, the largest purchase of an interest in U.S. energy assets by a Chinese company, CNOOC has agreed to pay about \$1.1 billion for a chunk of Chesapeake's assets in the Eagle Ford, a broad oil and gas formation that runs largely from southwest of San Antonio to the Mexican border. CNOOC also will provide up to \$1.1 billion more to cover drilling costs.

The deal represents China's second try at making a big move into the U.S. oil and gas market, following a failed bid five years ago to buy California-based Unocal Corp."...

Aubrey McClendon, CEO of Oklahoma City-based Chesapeake, said he has not heard objections to the sale. Unlike China's Unocal bid, the latest deal doesn't involve technology transfers or a direct investment in Chesapeake, he said, and CNOOC employees won't work for Chesapeake, which will continue to operate the project.

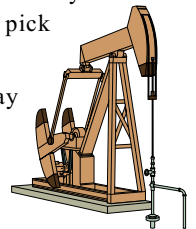
"This is a pretty simple business transaction," McClendon said. "The initial feedback we're getting is that this is something the government should be very happy to see, which is the return of American capital into our country so that we can use it to create high-paying American jobs and also reduce oil imports a few years down the road."

He projected that the sale would create as many as 20,000 jobs, directly and indirectly, and, on CNOOC's dime, allow the company to increase its rig count in South Texas from 10 rigs to about 40 by the end of 2012.

Analysts have suggested that much of CNOOC's interest is in gaining technical insight. Gas and oil locked in the nation's plentiful shale formations is abundant but difficult to extract.

The deposits, known as unconventional plays, have attracted growing interest in recent years because of improved technology in hydraulic fracturing, which frees hydrocarbons by pumping fluid and sand into reservoirs to crack the rock. Chesapeake, one of the nation's largest independent oil and gas companies, was an early mover in the shales, leasing up land aggressively this decade.

"From the Chinese perspective, this is a golden opportunity for them. They have identified shale resources in China, but they don't have the knowledge or technical expertise to go after those resources," said Ken Medlock, a fellow at Houston's Baker Institute and adjunct professor in Rice University's economics department. McClendon disputed that notion, saying hydraulic fracturing is now "off-the-shelf technology" available to anyone."



CHINA SAID TO WIDEN ITS EMBARGO OF MINERALS

October 19, 2010 The International Herald Tribune reported: "China, which has been blocking shipments of crucial minerals to Japan for the last month, has now quietly halted some shipments of those materials to the United States and Europe, three industry officials said..."

The Chinese action, involving rare earth minerals that are crucial to manufacturing many advanced products, seems certain to further intensify already rising trade and currency tensions with the West. Until recently, China typically sought quick and quiet accommodations on trade issues. But the interruption in rare earth supplies is the latest sign from Beijing that Chinese leaders are willing to use their growing economic muscle.

"The embargo is expanding" beyond Japan, said one of the three rare earth industry officials, all of whom insisted on anonymity for fear of business retaliation by Chinese authorities. They said Chinese customs officials imposed the broader restrictions on Monday morning,

hours after a top Chinese official summoned international news media Sunday night to denounce United States trade actions.

China mines 95 percent of the world's rare earth elements, which have broad commercial and military applications, and are vital to the manufacture of products as diverse as cellphones, large wind turbines and guided missiles. Any curtailment of Chinese supplies of rare earths is likely to be greeted with alarm in Western capitals, particularly because Western companies are believed to keep much smaller stockpiles of rare earths than Japanese companies.

China experts said on Tuesday that Beijing's assertive stance on rare earths might also signal the ascendance of economic nationalists, noting that the Central Committee of the Communist Party convened over the weekend.

A few rare earth shipments to the West have been delayed by customs officials in recent weeks, said industry officials in China, Japan and the United States. But new restrictions on exports appear to have been imposed on Monday morning.

Industry executives said there had been no signal from Beijing of how long rare earth shipments intended for the West would be held by Chinese customs officials."..."

U.S. CONFIRMS \$60 BILLION ARMS SALES PACKAGE FOR SAUDI ARABIA

October 21, 2010 Voice of America News reports: "The Obama administration announced plans Wednesday to sell up to \$60 billion worth of advanced fighter aircraft, helicopters and related weapons systems to Saudi Arabia. The package is aimed at helping Saudi Arabia deal with potential threats from Iran and regional terrorism.

The outlines of the arms deal - the largest in U.S. history - had been known for some time, but the administration withheld an official announcement pending consultations with the U.S. Congress. Under its terms, the United States will provide Saudi Arabia with 84 advanced F-15 fighter planes with electronics and weapons packages tailored to Saudi needs. An additional 70 F-15's already in Saudi hands will be upgraded to match the capabilities of the new planes.



Saudi Arabia will purchase a huge fleet of nearly 200 Apache, Blackhawk and other U.S. military helicopters, along with a vast array of radar systems, anti-aircraft and anti-ship missiles, and guided bombs.

Officials put the total value of the sales package at as much as \$60 billion but said it could be less if Saudi Arabia elects not to exercise purchase options over the 15 to 20 year span of the deal. At a press event announcing the sale, Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs Andrew Shapiro said it reinforces the existing long-term U.S. military relationship with Saudi Arabia.

Shapiro said a potentially-nuclear armed Iran is one threat the package is designed to deter, but that there are others, including terrorist threats to Saudi Arabia's oil facilities, and border problems such as recent incursions of tribal militants from Yemen."..."

MERKEL SAYS GERMAN MULTI-CULTURAL SOCIETY HAS FAILED

October 16, 2010 theJakartaGlobe.com reported: "Germany's attempt to create a multi-cultural society has failed completely, Chancellor Angela Merkel said at the weekend, calling on the country's immigrants to learn German and adopt Christian values. Merkel weighed in for the first time in a blistering debate sparked by a central bank board member saying the country was being made "more stupid" by poorly educated and unproductive Muslim migrants.

"Multikulti", the concept that "we are now living side by side and are happy about it," does not work, Merkel told a meeting of younger members of her conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU) party at Potsdam near Berlin.

"This approach has failed, totally," she said, adding that immigrants should integrate and adopt Germany's culture and values.

"We feel tied to Christian values. Those who don't accept them don't have a place here," said the chancellor."..."

US INFLUENCE DWINDLING IN IRAQI GOVT

October 21, 2010 The Associated Press reported: "American influence has so dwindled in Iraq over the last several months that Iraqi lawmakers and political leaders say they no longer follow Washington's advice for forming a government. Instead, Iraqis are turning to neighboring nations, and especially Iran, for guidance _ casting doubt on the future of the American role in this strategic country after a grinding war that killed more than 4,400 U.S. soldiers.

"The Iraqi politicians are not responding to the U.S. like before. We don't pay great attention to them," Shiite lawmaker Sami al-Askari, a close ally of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, said Thursday. "The weak American role has given the region's countries a greater sense of influence on Iraqi affairs."

Vice President Joe Biden, the administration's point man for Iraq, has doggedly lobbied Iraqi leaders, both on the phone and in six trips here over the past two years.

Iraqis, however, measure U.S. influence largely by its military presence, which dipped by threefold from the war's peak to 50,000 troops in late August. As a result, Baghdad is now brushing off U.S. urgings to slow-walk a new government instead of rushing one through that might cater to Iran.

"The Iranian ambassador has a bigger role in Iraq than Biden," said a prominent Kurdish lawmaker, Mahmoud Othman. He said the Americans "will leave Iraq with its problems, thus their influence has become weak."..."

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