

PROPHETIC TIMES

WEEKLY WORLD NEWS UPDATE

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

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IRAN VOWS RESPONSE TO MORE SANCTIONS

March 22, 2007 The Los Angeles Times reported: "Iran's supreme leader struck a defiant tone Wednesday about any possible new United Nations Security Council sanctions over his country's nuclear program, threatening to "use any means necessary" to strike back. Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, in a televised address marking the beginning of Nowruz, the Persian New Year, said Iran would respond in kind to punitive measures and he blamed the country's domestic divisions on foreign powers.

"If they want to threaten us and use force and violence, they should have no doubt that Iranians will use any means necessary to strike a blow against those who assault them," Khamenei, Iran's spiritual, political and military chief, said from the northeastern city of Mashhad, his hometown. Enemies "seek to drive a wedge between the ranks of the nation, kill the unity of the Iranian people ... and make the Iranians preoccupied with internal divisions."

Audience members chanted "Death to America!" several times during the speech.

The Security Council is debating additional sanctions to pressure Tehran to halt uranium enrichment, including placing an embargo on Iran's weapons exports and freezing assets of a major bank as well as people and companies involved in the nuclear and missile programs. The draft resolution also would ask countries to monitor the movements of certain individuals and to cut off financial assistance to Iran except for humanitarian purposes.

The Security Council's five veto-holding members have agreed on the proposed sanctions, but South Africa, Qatar and Indonesia have offered amendments that probably will delay the vote until next week. South Africa argues that the resolution should more carefully target the nuclear program, and Qatar and Indonesia want the Middle East to become a nuclear-free zone.

Khamenei said Iran was being punished even though it had broken no laws. He hinted that Iran was prepared to violate unspecified international laws if the U.N. tried to force it to halt activities aimed at enriching nuclear material. If the U.N. "takes illegal actions, we will take illegal measures too," he said."..."

PENICILLIN-RESISTANT STAPH INFECTIONS RISING



March 22, 2007 Contra Costa Times reported: "It was just a scrape on Laura Debell's shin, not even two inches long. But it looked strange from the start— red and purple and swollen. Debell is convinced that the scrape she got during a two-week stint at the Santa Clara County jail in 2005 led to a serious, antibiotic-resistant staph infection that landed her in a hospital bed for more than three months and will cost taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars.

He story provides a rare glimpse of the steep personal and public costs of a "superbug" called methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, or MRSA, that is on the rise in Santa Clara County and elsewhere around the nation. The infection traveled to her blood, then her spine, causing permanent damage...

Public health officials worry a lot about the little bug with the big name because it is expensive and difficult to cure. A course of treatment can cost up to \$30,000, depending on the severity of the infection and the complications it can cause. And when people who contract the infection have no health insurance, like Debell, taxpayer bear the cost.

Last year in Santa Clara County, 3,079 people were diagnosed with MRSA, nearly triple the number of cases in 2005. Local doctors are more aware of MRSA, accounting for part of that increase, local public health official say. But better diagnosis cannot completely explain the spike in infections."..."

EU NERVOUS AND INTROSPECTIVE AT FIFTY YEARS OF AGE

March 21, 2007 EU Observer reported: "The EU sees itself as a force for good in the world; it practises soft power, promotes human rights and sets the global bar in environmental standards. Yet a sizeable part of the bloc's 492 million population still remain disaffected from the one-of-a-kind political experiment that has evolved over the past 50 years.

"This process of European integration...is now being called into question by many people; it is viewed as a bureaucratic affair run by a faceless, soulless Eurocracy in Brussels - at best boring, at worst dangerous," said the then German foreign minister Joschka Fischer in 2000.

Five years later, citizens of two founding members of the European Union – France and the Netherlands – rejected the EU constitution, a document that would have led to further European integration.

And today, surveys continue to show a lack of enthusiasm. A Financial Times poll of the five biggest EU states published on Monday (19 March) show that just 25 percent of those asked feel that life in their country had improved since it joined the EU, while 44 percent feel it has become worse...But crowd-pleasing moves such as ensuring lower plane fares and mobile phone charges merely gloss over the fact that people are still shocked that as much of 80 percent of national laws come from Brussels or when they hear that EU law has supremacy

over national law – a principle that was established several years ago by the European Court of Justice.

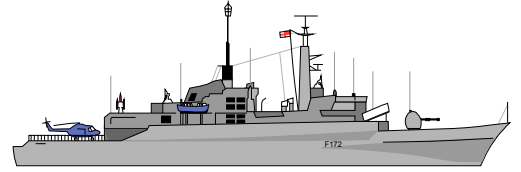
And even when they can do something to affect what goes on in Brussels - namely with their vote, they are not rushing in droves to the ballot box. The last European elections in 2004, with citizens from ten spanking new member states, saw record low turnouts.

This can't-be-bothered attitude comes despite the fact that the EU affects the minutiae of people's lives down to the labelling of the food that goes on their tables and the safety standards for their children's toys....”...”

EGYPT'S NAVY THREATENS ISRAEL

March 20, 2007 The Middle East Newsline reported: “Egypt has built a powerful navy that could threaten Israel, a new report said. The report by the Middle East Review of International Affairs said Egypt, which receives \$1.3 billion in annual U.S. military aid, has built one of the most powerful navies in the Middle East. The report said Egypt has ordered U.S.-origin weapons that could block sea lanes to Israel.

“While apprehensive about the buildup of the Egyptian ground and air forces, some Israeli officials, especially Knesset member Yuval Steinitz and former commander-in-chief of the Israeli Navy, Maj. Gen. Yedidia Ya'ari, consider the overhaul of the Egyptian Navy to be the most significant aspect of the military's modernization program,” the report said.



The Egyptian Navy has been operating two Knox-class frigates and four Oliver Hazard Perry frigates exported by the United States. The report said the warships were capable of over-the-horizon combat and anti-submarine warfare.”...”

CONFLICT WITH IRAN INEVITABLE, YA'ALON SAYS

March 20, 2007 YnetNews.com reported: ““The question of who won the war in Lebanon has yet to be determined,” former Chief of Staff Moshe Ya'alon said at a lecture in Tel Aviv Tuesday.

He stated that conflict with the Iranian regime was inevitable. “The Western world is avoiding it because it is weak and that is only bringing it closer.”

He said that Iran had declared war on the West and its culture. “In the last war we fought their agent.” He added that this battle is also against such organizations as el-Qaeda and could take decades and will have many secondary wars.

Ya'alon described the battle as being fought on many fronts simultaneously: “In Lebanon between Hizbullah and the Christians and Druze; in the Palestinian Authority, the fight between Hamas and the other factions; in Iran, the fundamentalist regime against the majority of the population that would gladly forsake the ayatollah regime but has not yet been able to translate that into political power.”

Ya'alon agrees that “we can and should talk about the weakening in Israel's deterrence,” because of the war in Lebanon.

He said it was a direct result from creating very high expectations during the fighting, probably due to the successes of the very first days. The objectives were impossible to achieve and more moderate goals should have been set, for example aim to lessen Hizbullah's potency in the Lebanese internal scene. We missed the opportunity to end the war so it would better suit our political goals.”...”

U.S.: WITH IRANIAN HELP, HAMAS FORCES GROWING FASTER THAN FATAH

March 21, 2007 Reuters reported: “With Iranian help, Hamas forces are expanding fast and getting more sophisticated weapons and training than do those under Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' control, according to the U.S. security coordinator.

U.S. Lieutenant-General Keith Dayton said Hamas' growing military strength, if left unchecked, would erode Abbas' already limited ability to enforce any ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and increase the chances of Israeli military intervention. Dayton delivered his assessment in a series of closed-door briefings late last week to congressional leaders and staff, sources familiar with the discussions said on Wednesday.

Concerned about Abbas' coalition government with Hamas, a group that Washington considers a terrorist organization, the U.S. Congress has blocked \$86 million in U.S. funding to bolster Abbas' presidential guard and national security forces.

Sources familiar with the Bush administration's deliberations said a revised spending plan would be submitted, likely limiting aid to Abbas' presidential guard and security improvements at Gaza's main commercial crossing with Israel. It is unclear if and when the money will be approved.

Palestinians hope a unity government formed on Saturday between Abbas' secular Fatah faction and Hamas Islamists will bring an end to fighting between the groups. But tensions remain high, especially in the Gaza Strip.”...”

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