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UN GIVES IRAN 30 DAYS TO HALT URANIUM SCHEME

March 30, 2006 The EU Observer reported: "The 15 members of the UN Security Council on Wednesday (29 March) unanimously called on Iran to suspend uranium enrichment activities within 30 days and cooperate with UN nuclear watchdog the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The adoption of the text, proposed by France and the UK, came after three weeks of troublesome negotiations, with China and Russia opposed to any wording that could later be used to press for military action or sanctions against Iran, according to press reports.

In the watered-down version of the original Franco-British text, there is no mention of Iran's activities as jeopardising peace and security, formulas that traditionally herald tougher future action. Nevertheless, the five veto-wielding permanent members of the Security Council expressed satisfaction with the joint call on Wednesday.

"It's a strong message we're sending to Iran - that Iran has to comply with the resolution and the requests made by the board of governors of the IAEA," French ambassador Jean-Marc de la Sabliere said, according to Le Monde.

US ambassador John Bolton indicated Wednesday's statement sends "a very clear message" that Iran should meet its obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty. "Libya made the decision that they were safer, better off, giving up the pursuit of nuclear weapons than continuing to pursue them," he said according to Reuters, referring to the fact that Tripoli ditched a previous nuclear scheme. "I think the people of Iran understand that logic. Now we'll see whether their government understands it," he added.

The council will request IAEA director-general Mohamed El Baradei to deliver a new report on Iran's compliance with IAEA demands, including the suspension of its enrichment activities, after the 30 day deadline.

Iran's UN ambassador, Javad Zarif, reacted saying that Iran had an "inalienable right" to pursue nuclear energy and is "allergic to pressure and intimidation."..."

SPINAL CORD INJURY EASED BY STEM CELLS

March 29, 2006 The Toronto Star reported: "Canadian researchers have used stem cells to repair spinal cord damage in laboratory rats, restoring significant mobility in the animals and bringing the search for a human therapy another step closer.

A team led by Toronto neuroscientist Dr. Michael Fehlings extracted stem cells from adult mice, which were transplanted into rats whose spines had been crushed. The stem cells developed into one type of cell destroyed by the injury — the kind that produces myelin, the insulating layer that cocoons the bundle of nerve fibres that make up the cord.

Injuries that crush or compress the spinal cord destroy its ability to regenerate myelin-forming cells, leading to paralysis. Without the myelin sheath, "nerve fibres don't conduct the signals, they kind of short out and you don't get signals crossing," said Fehlings, medical director of the Krembil Neuroscience Centre at Toronto Western Hospital.

Dr. Oswald Steward, director of the Reeve-Irvine Research Centre for spinal cord injury at the University of California, said the concept of using stem cells for spinal cord cell regeneration has been applied by other scientists. But Fehlings' work "breaks new ground in a couple of ways": by showing that adult stem cells work as well as the more ethically controversial fetal or embryonic stem cells and that the drug minocycline improved their survival, Steward said.

Fehlings said, however, that his transplanted cells, called neural precursor cells, are not as versatile as embryonic stem cells because they can give rise only to cells of the nervous system.

In Fehlings' experiments, rats whose crushed spinal cords were injected with adult stem cells and given a cocktail of drugs — growth hormone, cyclosporine to prevent rejection and the anti-inflammatory minocycline — were found to walk with better co-ordination and weight-bearing ability. As well, researchers were able to get those results even when the stem cells were injected two weeks after the injury. Current therapies that attempt to save spinal cord tissue from trauma-induced destruction must be given within hours of injury."..."

ISRAEL GIVES GREEN LIGHT TO SET BORDERS

March 30, 2006 The Middle East Newline reported: "Acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's centrist Kadima party won a narrow victory in Tuesday's election, giving the go-ahead to set Israel's borders with the Palestinians and evacuate Jewish settlements in the West Bank.

With the lowest voter turnout in Israel's history of 63.2 percent, former Likud Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's break-away Kadima party won 28 seats in the 120-seat Knesset. Labor came in a close second with 20 seats, followed by Shas, the Sephardi ultra-Orthodox party which gained 13 seats.

The fourth largest party was the newly-formed right-wing Yisrael Beitenu which won 12 seats. The hawkish Likud, for three decades

Israel's ruling faction, took the biggest blow in the election with 11 mandates. The national religious Ihud Haleumi followed with nine seats, the pensioners party with seven, the ultra-orthodox Torah Judaism party with six and the far-left Meretz with four. The three Israeli Arab parties -- Ra'am-Tal-4, Bala'ad-3, Hadash-3 -- gained a total of 10 mandates.

Announcing his victory early Wednesday morning, Olmert appealed to Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas to begin negotiations over the permanent borders of Israel. But, Olmert said, Israel would act unilaterally if peace talks remained stalled..."

AL QAIDA DEEPENS ROOTS IN LEBANON

March 29, 2006 The Middle East Newline reported: "Al Qaida has formed links with groups in Lebanon. Islamic sources said Al Qaida has begun financing and coordinating with Islamic groups in Lebanon. The sources said Al Qaida operatives in Iraq have been using these groups for recruitment for the Sunni insurgency in Iraq.

"Al Qaida has selected certain Wahabi groups in Lebanon to recruit and train Muslim fighters for the jihad in Iraq," an Islamic source said. The effort has been led by Abu Mussib Al Zarqawi, the commander of Al Qaida in Iraq. The sources said Al Zarqawi has established a recruiting infrastructure in Lebanon for training in neighboring Syria and deployment in Iraq.

Many of those recruited in Lebanon have consisted of Jordanian and Palestinians, the sources said. They said at least 200 recruits from Lebanon joined Al Zarqawi to fight in Iraq. Many of them were believed to have conducted suicide attacks against the Iraqi Army and U.S. military forces in Iraq..."

'WE'RE ON THE EVE OF WORLD WAR III'

March 28, 2006 WorldNetDaily reported: "Global civilization is on the verge of "World War III," a massive conflict in which the Islamic world will attempt to impose its ideology on Western nations, according to Meir Amit, a former director of Israel's Mossad intelligence agency.

Amit, one of the most esteemed figures in the international defense establishment, warned Islamic nations and global Islamist groups will continue launching "all kinds of attacks" against Western states. He urged the international community to immediately unite and coordinate a strategy to fight against the "Islamic war."

"We are on the eve of war with the Islamic world, which will wage a war and all kinds of actions and attacks against the Western world. We already noticed the terrorists in the world hit Spain, England, France. I call it World War III. You must look at it from this angle and treat it wider, not as a problem of terrorism here and there," said Amit, speaking during an exclusive interview with WND's Aaron Klein and ABC Radio's John Batchelor broadcast on Batchelor's national program, for which Klein serves as a co-host.

Amit served as Mossad chief from 1963 to 1968. He directed some of the most notorious Mossad operations during that time and pioneered many of the tactics currently used by intelligence agencies worldwide. The subject of multiple books and movies, Amit is routinely described as a "living legend." Now in his mid-80s, Amit serves as chairman of Israel's Center for Special Studies.

The former intelligence chief referenced recent terror attacks against Israel, Europe and the United States; Iran's alleged nuclear ambitions; the insurgency in Iraq and Afghanistan; and worldwide Muslim riots.

"It looks to me like it is a kind of coordinated or contemplated problem to somehow impose the Islamic idea all over the world," Amit said."..."

ISRAELI LEADER'S PARTY WILL DIVIDE JERUSALEM

March 24, 2006 WorldNetDaily reported: "Just five days before national elections here, acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's Kadima party revealed yesterday it would divide Jerusalem and allow a Palestinian state to be established in parts of Israel's "eternal capital."

The revelation follows months of denials by top Kadima officials that the party would advocate withdrawing from Jerusalem.

"The Old City, Mount Scopus, the Mount of Olives, the City of David, Sheikh Jarra will remain in our hands, but [regarding] Kafr Akeb, Abu-Ram, Shuafat, Hizma, Abu-Zaim, Abu-Tur, Abu Dis, in the future, when the Palestinian state is established, they will become its capital," said Otniel Schneller, a Kadima member who represented the party at a debate yesterday on dividing Jerusalem.

The neighborhoods Schneller listed are located on Jerusalem's periphery near the city's border with the West Bank. Schneller said Kadima supports "separation between us and the Palestinians who don't live in the heart of Jerusalem," claiming there would be "no concessions" on sites that are sacred to Jews.

Several Kadima officials and leaders associated with the party's now comatose founder, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, previously made statements about dividing Jerusalem that immediately were denied by the party."..."