

PROPHETIC TIMES

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RUSSIA IN DEFENCE WARNING TO US

April 26, 2007 BBC News reported: "Russia may stop implementing a key defence treaty because of concerns over US plans for a missile shield in Europe, President Vladimir Putin said. Mr Putin made the threat during his annual address to parliament - which he said would be his last as president. He also hit out at an influx of foreign money which he said was being used to meddle in Russia's internal affairs.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice dismissed Russian concerns over the missile shield as "ludicrous".

BBC diplomatic correspondent Jonathan Marcus says Mr Putin's speech marks a significant raising of diplomatic stakes. The Russian president suggested that his country should freeze its compliance with the 1990 Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaty - which limits military deployments across the continent - until all Nato countries had ratified it.

The treaty was adapted in 1999 after the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, but Nato states have not yet ratified the new version, linking it to the withdrawal of Russian forces from Georgia and Moldova.

Mr Putin accused Nato states of exploiting the situation to increase their military presence near Russia. He said that the Russian moratorium would continue "until all countries of the world have ratified and started to strictly implement it".

If there was no progress at upcoming talks between Nato and Russia, Russia would "look at the possibility of ceasing our commitments under the CFE treaty", he said.

The US wants to station 10 interceptor missiles in Poland, with radar operations in the Czech Republic - which Russia strongly opposes.

"The Russians have thousands of warheads. The idea that you can somehow stop the Russian strategic nuclear deterrent with a few interceptors just doesn't make sense," said the US secretary of state in Oslo, ahead of the Nato-Russia meeting."..."



IRANIAN OFFICIAL SAYS IRAN WILL STRIKE U.S., ISRAEL IF ATTACKED

April 26, 2007 Haaretz.com reported: "Iran will strike U.S. interests around the world and Israel if attacked over its disputed nuclear program, a senior official was quoted on Thursday by the official IRNA news agency as saying.

"Nowhere would be safe for America with (Iran's) long-range missiles ... we can fire tens of thousands of missiles every day," said Mohammad Baqer Zolghadr, the deputy interior minister in security affairs. 'With long-range missiles Iran can also threaten Israel as America's ally.' Iran says its Shahab-3 missile with a range of 1,250 miles (2,000 km) is capable of hitting Israel and U.S. bases in the Gulf.

Iran's top nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani and European Union foreign and security policy chief Javier Solana on Thursday described their latest set of meetings as "positive" with both sides saying they were working towards a diplomatic solution to defuse the nuclear dispute.

The West has called for a halt to Iranian research on uranium which Western countries and Israel fear is a nuclear weapons program but which Iran says is a civilian power generation project. Solana described the two-day talks in the Turkish capital of Ankara not as the beginning of formal negotiations but as preliminary talks and that they will prepare for further talks in the future."..."

ABBAS GROUP REJOICES OVER U.S. DEATHS IN IRAQ

April 26, 2007 WorldNetDaily reported: "Members of Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah militias are celebrating a suicide car bombing that killed nine U.S. soldiers in Iraq earlier this week, stating the attack bolsters their belief the U.S. will soon be defeated and retreat from "Muslim lands."

"It was a very happy day for us Palestinians to hear nine American dogs were killed in Iraq. We feel encouraged and we feel great solidarity with our brothers in Iraq, and we consider this heroic operation, which aims to humiliate the Americans, as proof that the will of our resistance is more powerful than any [big] American war airplanes," Abu Ahmed, the northern Gaza commander of the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades terror group, said in a WND interview today.

The Brigades is the declared military wing of Abbas' U.S.-backed Fatah party, which American policy largely considers moderate.

Abu Ahmed was responding to news Monday of a suicide car bomber that struck a patrol base northeast of Baghdad, killing nine U.S. soldiers and wounding 20. It was one of the deadliest attacks against American ground forces since the Iraq war started more than four years ago.

"The Iraqi people, with the help of the mujahedeen fighters all over the world, are teaching the American dogs a huge lesson that will serve for generations for anybody who will dare attack lands of Muslims," Abu Ahmed said. "Iraq will be the beginning of the collapse of the American empire."

The Palestinian terror leader said he believes the U.S. will soon withdraw from Iraq, and he labeled any retreat a victory for "resistance."

"Bush is speaking about bringing more soldiers to Iraq as a way to hide his crisis, but by the end of the day the Americans don't support

the occupation and Bush will give up the conflict, which is judged from Allah to fail," he said. "This is the era of resistance. Bush is staying [in Iraq] now only because Cheney and the Israelis are pressing on him."

Abu Ahmed said Palestinians are learning from the Iraq insurgency for their own war against Israel. "The coming victory in Iraq proves the next step is to release Palestine if we speak in one voice," he said."..."

SYRIA DEPLOYS IRANIAN MISSILES

April 24, 2007 The Middle East Newsline reported: "Israel's military has assessed that Syria deployed an Iranian-origin cruise missile. Military sources said Syria has obtained and deployed the Iranian version of the Chinese-origin C-802 anti-ship missile. They said the missile was used successfully by Hizbullah during the war against Israel in mid-2006.

"Syria has ordered scores, if not hundreds, of such missiles," a military source said. "The C-802 would keep the Israel Navy away from the Syrian coast in any future war."

The C-802 employs a small turbojet engine and contains a range of 120 kilometers. The missile could be launched from aircraft, ships, submarines and land-based vehicles."..."

POPE, ABBAS HAIL MOVES TO REVIVE MIDEAST PEACE PROCESS

April 24, 2007 YnetNews.com reported: "Pope Benedict XVI and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on Tuesday hailed moves to revive the Middle East peace process, a Vatican statement said. The two, in a "cordial" meeting, "in particular appreciated the commitment, thanks also to the help of the international community, to the relaunching of the peace process between the Israelis and Palestinians," the statement said.

The pope and Abbas also "discussed the internal Palestinian situation, referring to, among other subjects, the difficulties faced by Catholics and to the value of their contribution to that society," the statement said. The audience lasted just 12 minutes and took place in English without interpreters, Vatican pool reporters said.

The Palestinian leader, who arrived in Rome late Monday, has met Italian President Giorgio Napolitano and was to meet Tuesday evening with Prime Minister Romano Prodi.

Abbas also met Tuesday with Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, the Vatican secretary of state, who said afterward: "All that goes towards unity and towards peace ... is very positive."

He added: "There are so many initiatives, by Arab countries as well as the Quartet, and especially the periodical meetings begun between the president of the Israeli government and (Abbas) that are positive steps. Let's hope they bear the desired fruits."

The Middle East Quartet comprises the European Union, Russia, the United Nations and the United States."..."

TAIWAN STUNG BY MILLIONS OF MISSING BEES

April 26, 2007 Reuters reported: "Taiwan's bee farmers are feeling the sting of lost business and possible crop danger after millions of the honey-making, plant-pollinating insects vanished during volatile weather, media and experts said on Thursday.

Over the past two months, farmers in three parts of Taiwan have reported most of their bees gone, the Chinese-language United Daily News reported. Taiwan's TVBS television station said about 10 million bees had vanished in Taiwan.

A beekeeper on Taiwan's northeastern coast reported 6 million insects missing "for no reason", and one in the south said 80 of his 200 bee boxes had been emptied, the paper said.

Beekeepers usually let their bees out of boxes to pollinate plants and the insects normally make their way back to their owners. However, many of the bees have not returned over the past couple of months.

Possible reasons include disease, pesticide poisoning and unusual weather, varying from less than 20 degrees Celsius (68 degrees Fahrenheit) to more than 30 degrees Celsius over a few days, experts say.

"You can see climate change really clearly these days in Taiwan," said Yang Ping-shih, entomology professor at the National Taiwan University. He added that two kinds of pesticide can make bees turn "stupid" and lose their sense of direction.

As affected beekeepers lose business, fruit growers may lack a key pollination source and neighbors might get stung, he said.

Billions of bees have fled hives in the United States since late 2006, instead of helping pollinate \$15 billion worth of fruits, nuts and other crops annually. Disappearing bees also have been reported in Europe and Brazil."..."

