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Terror by Chemical Bombs

Is a chemical bomb the next weapon of choice that al-Qaeda groups will use on the United States, the United Kingdom and continental Europe? There are strong indications that it is! Specialized al-Qaeda training camps turned out multiple hundreds of terrorists capable of producing such bombs. These people in turn trained even more in the chemistry of killing.

by Cecil Maranville

Are al-Qaeda and its shadowy branch groups even now planning to use horrible chemical weapons against targets in the Middle East, Europe and the United States? The evidence that they are is mounting steadily.

While visiting the United States in mid-April, Jordanian King Abdullah rocked the world with the revelation that his country's security service foiled a terrorist plot to kill up to 80,000 people with chemical agents. The carefully orchestrated scheme was thwarted just in time to avert a colossal disaster, which, in the king's words, "would have decapitated the government."

The primary target was the nation's General Intelligence Department, an intelligence service of world renown. The conventional blast and the chemicals it dispersed would have killed for a radius of about a half mile.

Secondary targets were the prime minister's offices and the U.S. embassy, on which the terrorists were intending to use poison gas.

Authorities stopped five trucks loaded with 17.5 tons of explosives and intercepted at least one car owned by the terrorists, loaded with a chemical bomb and poison gas. The car was captured 75 miles from the Syrian border.



Reuters/Chip East

King Abdullah of Jordan (right) meets with New York Mayor Mike Bloomberg in front of a memorial to fallen New York police officers.

King Abdullah said his country believes the terrorists came from Syria, although that government denies it. (The king was careful to point out that Jordan did not believe that Syrian President Bashar al-Assad had any knowledge of the plot.)

Although greatly underreported, U.S. weapons inspector David Kay said in March that his investigation showed Iraq moved many components of its weapons of mass destruction program to Syria before the coalition

(See "CHEMICAL BOMBS," page 3)



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Editor: Don Ward

Managing editor: Darris McNeely

Senior editors: Melvin Rhodes, Robin Webber

Contributing editor: John Ross Schroeder

Copy editors: Becky Bennett, Doug Johnson, Cecil E. Maranville

Layout/design: Mike Bennett, Peter W. Eddington

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Address changes: POSTMASTER—Send address changes to *World News and Prophecy*, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027.

International addresses:

AFRICA (except as listed below): United Church of God, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027, U.S.A. E-mail: info@ucg.org

AUSTRALIA: United Church of God—Australia, GPO Box 535, Brisbane, Qld. 4001, Australia. Phone: 0755 202-111 Fax: 0755 202-122

BAHAMAS: United Church of God, P.O. Box N8873, Nassau, Bahamas. Phone: (242) 324-3169 Fax: (242) 364-5566

BRITISH ISLES: P.O. Box 705, Watford, Herts. WD19 6FZ England. Phone: 020-8386-8467 Fax: 01257-453978

CANADA: United Church of God—Canada, P.O. Box 144, Station D, Etobicoke, ON M9A 4X1, Canada. Phone: (905) 876-9966, (800) 338-7779 Fax: (905) 876-0569 E-mail: info@ucg.ca

FIJI: United Church of God, P.O. Box 11081, Laucala Beach Estate, Suva FRENCH-SPEAKING AREAS: Eglise de Dieu Unie—France, 127 rue Amelot, 75011 Paris, France

GERMANY: Vereinte Kirche Gottes, Postfach 30 15 09, D-53195 Bonn, Germany. Phone: 0228 - 9454636 Fax: 0228 - 9454637 E-mail: info@gutenachrichten.org

ITALY: La Buona Notizia, Chiesa di Dio Unita, Casella Postale 187, 24100 Bergamo, Italy. Mobile phone: 338-4097919 Fax: (+39) 035-452.16.26 E-mail: redazione@labuonanotizia.org

MALAWI: United Church of God, P.O. Box 23076, Kitwe, Zambia. E-mail: malawi@ucg.org

MAURITIUS: P.O. Box 53, Quatre Bomes. E-mail: mauritus@ucg.org

THE NETHERLANDS: United Church of God Holland, P.O. Box 93, 2800 AB Gouda, The Netherlands

NEW ZEALAND: United Church of God, P.O. Box 22, Auckland, 1015, New Zealand. Phone: 0508-463-763

NIGERIA: United Church of God—West Africa, P.O. Box 1715, Yaba, Lagos, Nigeria. Phone: 234-1-791 8009 E-mail: nigeria@ucg.org

PHILIPPINES: United Church of God, P.O. Box 81840, DCCPO, 8000 Davao City, Philippines. Phone: (+63) 82 241-0150 Cell/Text: (+63) 0918-904-4444

SCANDINAVIA: Guds Enade Kyrka, P.O. Box 705, Watford, Herts. WD19 6FZ England E-mail: sverige@ucg.org

SOUTH AFRICA (and Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland only): United Church of God, Southern Africa, P.O. Box 2209, Beacon Bay, East London 5205. Phone/Fax: 043 748-1694 E-mail: rsa@ucg.org

SPANISH-SPEAKING AREAS: Iglesia de Dios Unida, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027, U.S.A. Phone: (513) 576-9796

TONGA: United Church of God—Tonga, P.O. Box 127, Nuku'alofa, Tonga

ZAMBIA: United Church of God, P.O. Box 23076, Kitwe, Zambia. E-mail: zambia@ucg.org

ZIMBABWE: United Church of God, Zimbabwe, P.O. Box 928, Causeway, Harare. Cell Phone: 011716273 E-mail: zimbabwe@ucg.org

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"Whom heaven must receive until the times of

Restoration

of all things ... ACTS 3:21

D-Day for Britain

On June 6, 1944, the Allied armies massed in Britain threw themselves across the English Channel against Hitler's Fortress Europe. It was the beginning of the end for the latest attempt to unite Europe under one system of rule. Within a year Hitler's dream of a restored Reich crumbled under the assault.

This June the latest effort to unite Europe under one banner will likely take a significant step forward when the European constitution is put forward for ratification by member countries. This will follow the accession of 10 more countries this month as the union expands to 25 members. If it is ratified, it will represent another key pillar in the foundation of what many call a rising superpower, a United States of Europe that could one day rival the United States in not just economic, but military power.

The key is that every member country will have to ratify the constitution for it to take binding effect on the European Union. Last month British Prime Minister Tony Blair reversed himself and announced that he would put the constitution to a referendum of the British electorate. The people will have the final say whether the nation will bring itself under the terms of this document. To do so would result in loss of a significant share of national sovereignty.

Blair has been a staunch proponent of Britain's future with Europe, while at the same time being America's strongest and most reliable ally in the perpetual "special relationship" between the two nations. The nation has been ambivalent since joining the union (then called the EEC) in 1973. To this date Britain retains the pound sterling as its currency, shunning the euro. The outcome of a vote on the constitution appears uncertain at best.

"Euroskepticism" has been rising in Britain while support for further integration has increased in Europe. Wolfgang Munchau speculates in a recent *Financial Times* that "a No vote would effectively end Britain's membership of the EU." It could lead to a "call on London either to reconsider, or to withdraw" (April 26, 2004, p. 13).

Fallout from rejection could possibly set up a second vote that might include the question of continuing membership in the union. All this could be a significant factor leading to a redesign of the existing structure to a "core Europe," led by France and Germany. This "new Europe" could pursue more aggressive policies that would lead to reshaping the current world order.

Combine this with deep continental resentment toward American policy in the Middle East and the proven ability of terrorism to alter national policy, and the stage is being set for a different scene than some of the actors might imagine. Prime Minister Blair's support of American intervention in Iraq may yet turn against his designs for Britain, resulting in isolation from the present European Union.

The dream of European Union is a "siren call of utopia." Its dramatic and enticing themes waft across the English Channel drawing Britain away from its historic spiritual connection to its American brothers. Melvin Rhodes further discusses this special relationship in this issue in his article on the EU referendum (p. 10). A day of decision is approaching for Britain. Will it give yet more power and authority to another larger sovereign? To continue to do so would forever change its historic role and mission in the world. It would narrow the Channel, the historic barrier to the Continent. Time will tell whether the nation finds itself traveling a bridge to the future or isolated in its own neighborhood, alone in a new world.

—Darris McNeely

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<http://www.ucg.org/wnp/>

“CHEMICAL BOMBS,” (Continued from page 1)
forces invaded Iraq last spring.

A Syrian journalist, Nizar Nayuf, wrote the same thing in the Dutch *De Telegraaf* a few weeks before Kay's comments. Nayuf produced a letter from an Iraqi source detailing the transfer and the storage locations for the weapons.

Abu Musab al-Zarqawi

The Jordanians' success in stopping the mass murder by terror began with the arrest of two terrorists in early April. They pointed to the militant Islamic terrorist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi as the mastermind. The United States has a \$10 million reward out on al-Zarqawi because of his terrorist activities in Iraq.

Just a few days before this writing, al-Zarqawi posted a message on an Arab Web site, encouraging Sunnis in Iraq to “burn the earth under the [foreign] occupiers' feet” (Mark Huband, “Terrorist Chemical Threat ‘Worse Than Suspected,’” *Financial Times*, April 11, 2004).

This same al-Zarqawi is believed to be the mastermind of the Madrid bombing that led to the replacement of the pro-coalition government in Spain.

Is the man knowledgeable about chemical weaponry? Absolutely. He taught classes in chemical warfare at an al-Qaeda training camp in Herat, Afghanistan, in 2000 and 2001. And he ran the al-Qaeda training camp in northern Iraq that coalition forces took out in early 2003.

Britons prevent chemical terror attack on London

Other disturbing pieces of intelligence are slowly emerging from a sweeping raid conducted by British antiterrorism police on March 30, 2004. Ten people were arrested: eight Britons of Pakistani origin, another of Algerian origin and one Canadian. Hundreds of officers participated in the evidence search of 24 London locations, acting on telephone intercepts by GCHQ (the British electronic eavesdropping intelligence agency)—with possible help from the U.S. National Security Agency.

Those intercepts showed serious intent to acquire and use a chemical agent, osmium tetroxide (OsO_4), in ter-

rorist attacks on crowded public places, including Gatwick airport and the London subway. Attacks were not limited to the United Kingdom, for the plotters discussed U.S. targets, too, including the Sears Tower in Chicago.

(The Sears Tower had been among the sought-after targets for 9/11's bombing with hijacked commercial aircraft. Some terrorism experts note that al-Qaeda's persistence with the World Trade Center, after initially failing to destroy it in a 1993 bombing, indicates that the group will return to a missed target.)

Because of obvious prob-



London and Chicago's Sears Tower are among terrorist targets.

lems in using OsO_4 as a weapon, it's been generally discounted as an unlikely possibility. The largest deterrents to using OsO_4 are: (1) it is expensive to purchase; (2) even though it has legitimate commercial uses, its sale is closely monitored; (3) it is dangerous for the bomb maker to work with; (4) the damage it causes doesn't compare to what could be done through a radiological device—in other words, it wouldn't be terrorizing enough to make it worth the trouble.

Osmium tetroxide— an insidious killer

That's not to say it wouldn't terrorize the public. It can indeed terrorize, and antiterrorism authorities have long been aware of its potential as a weapon.

The effects of OsO_4 are similar to the old blister agents, producing chemical burns to the skin, irritating the eyes and throat, causing dizziness and headaches.

But the real evil of OsO_4 is that it works undetected for hours after exposure, causing effects that the victims are unaware of until too late. OsO_4 will turn the cornea of the eye to brown or black, causing permanent blindness. Even more seriously, again over several hours, it slowly causes the lungs to fill with fluid and brings about the same type of death as a severe asthma attack. That is what is known as “dryland drowning.”

Compared to deadly sarin gas (used to kill 12 and injure 5,000 in a terrorist attack on five Tokyo subway lines in 1995), victims have to inhale a great deal more OsO_4 to suffer fatal effects. But sarin, like VX and many other chemical agents, is hard to aerosolize. OsO_4 isn't. It vaporizes from its typical solid gel-like form the instant it comes in contact with the air. (A person can suffer its terrible effects just by opening a container of OsO_4 .) In a broad comparison with sarin, then, OsO_4 is equally as deadly.

OsO_4 is easy to absorb. It can be taken in by breathing, contact with the skin and through the eyes or any other mucous membrane. But these properties work against its effectiveness for a terrorist, too, because it is just as easily absorbed by other things, including rubber, plants and cooking oil.

Unlike radioactive material, there's no residual threat from OsO_4 , and it is easily cleaned up—further characteristics terrorists should find unattractive about the substance.

In an explosion, such as the British terrorists apparently intended to use to disperse OsO_4 , the chemical could actually have oxidized, rendering it useless.

Finally, as noted above, it's quite



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costly to buy. So why, in spite of the many downsides to it, were these terrorists planning to use osmium tetroxide?

Why use a dangerous and costly agent?

Let's look at the fact of its expense. A reality of state-sponsored terrorism and al-Qaeda's businesslike structure is that terrorists have considerable financial means to accomplish their wicked missions. They can afford costly weapons. (Al-Qaeda put out a statement recently that they had purchased two suitcase nuclear devices—if true, they paid in the millions of dollars for each one.)

Let's look at two more facts—that OsO_4 is tightly controlled and dangerous to work with. In January of 2004, French antiterrorist police arrested five people on suspicion of plotting terrorism. Two of them confessed to a plan to use ricin poison and botulinum bacteria in attacks on Russian targets in France. The investigation uncovered the fact that one of the five was highly skilled in the production of chemical substances for weapons use.

So they had the means to obtain or manufacture, and the knowledge to use, chemical weapons. In a *Financial Times* interview, a senior French counterterrorism official warned: "We have seriously underestimated the terrorists' willingness and capacity to develop chemical weapons" (ibid., Mark Huband).

Where do they get such training, and what is the Russian connection? The terrorist with training in chemical warfare arrested by the French learned his skills in Chechnya. Hence the reason for targeting Russian interests—the terrorists sympathized with the al-Qaeda-connected terrorists in Chechnya.

But that's not the only place for training in chemical warfare. At least one other source, a Pakistani Islamist group, Lashkar-e-Toiba, is knowledgeable about chemical weaponry and has trained other groups within the al-Qaeda network.

As mentioned above, al-Qaeda had

a training camp (maybe more than one) in Afghanistan to teach the chemistry that kills. Antiterrorist specialists now suspect that there is a wide network of such specialists who can aid each other in their goals—*without detection through normal monitoring channels*. Because their network is nearly impossible to break into, antiterrorist police know only part of the unsettling picture.

Were the London fanatics dumb?

Some suggest that the London terrorists knew only a little chemistry and did not know that they would likely destroy their osmium tetroxide by



The implications are that terrorists will indeed use chemical bombs in future assaults. As 9/11 demonstrated, a single terrorist attack can strike a crippling blow to the strongest economies in the world.

exploding a conventional bomb to disperse it. Were they ignorant? Were they on a fool's errand?

I'm not so sure. What if they intended to release the OsO_4 *after* a conventional explosion? That is, after the first responders (police, firefighters and EMTs) came to the aid of the victims? Such timing would maximize the effect of the osmium tetroxide by redoubling the terror on the survivors of the initial explosion and targeting the first responders.

There's more intelligence from the French arrests. This group also had connections to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who is proving to be a criminal of colossal proportions. The day King Abdullah announced the foiled terrorist chemical attack, Jordan's state security court sentenced al-Zarqawi (and seven others) to death at an in-absentia trial for the 2002 murder of U.S. diplomat Laurence Foley in Amman.

Clearly, al-Zarqawi and al-Qaeda's fingerprints are all over the world—and the horrific specter of chemical weapons along with them. I am not so quick to assume that anyone associated with the evil gang was wasting time and money. They may have been crazy like a fox.

Implications from what we see and from prophecy

The implications are that terrorists will indeed use chemical bombs in future assaults. As 9/11 demonstrated, a single terrorist attack can strike a crippling blow to the strongest economies in the world. As "3/11" (the bombing of Madrid trains on March 11, 2004) demonstrated, a single terrorist attack can apparently bring down a government. Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's thugs nearly did it again in Jordan in April—only a month after their success in Spain.

They are clearly capable of planning multiple operations at the same time, in part, because terror cells are trained to operate independently of each other. At the same time, they can draw upon each other for resources, as necessary.

The U.S. security forces are gearing up to guard against possible attacks just before the presidential elections in November. Greece is bracing itself for possible attacks on Israelis, Americans and others at the Olympics in August of this year. The EU recently appointed an antiterrorist "czar" to coordinate European defenses against terror.

Yet, as Western government and security officials repeatedly warn their citizens, the defensive network must be right 100 percent of the time, whereas

(See "CHEMICAL BOMBS," page 9)

Will European Unity Be Forged in Fear?

The recent terrorist attack in Spain has impacted elections and policies in Europe. Is this a trigger for future events that will create a larger cohesive continental power?

by Paul Kieffer

Europeans tend to agree when it comes to identifying their common history: the influence of Greek philosophy, a Christian heritage originating in Jewish tradition, Roman culture, the influence of the Catholic Church, the Renaissance and the Age of Enlightenment. In the two centuries prior to World War II, this historic commonality was often overpowered by the drive for individual nationhood and conflicting national interests. This led to a series of bloody disasters, the last of which was World War II itself.

A different Europe rose from the ashes of that war. However, this different Europe was not solely the result of self-examination and self-determination by Europeans themselves. Instead, it was the result of an Atlantic partnership forged to counter the perceived Soviet threat to Western Europe's freedom and security.

America's commitment to Europe and its military presence on the old continent helped Europe establish stable democracies and become a key player in the world economy. The United States, originally created by Europeans, had returned to Europe and influenced the development of a new Europe with a democratic Germany at its core.

Forty years after NATO was founded to counter the Soviet threat, Germany was reunited peacefully, an event soon to be followed by the demise of the Soviet Union itself. The Cold War was won, and Western Europe, united in its fear of Soviet domination or even conquest in the years after World War II, breathed a sigh of relief.

America remains the common denominator

When the Soviet system collapsed, the geopolitical situation changed, and the United States shifted its focus. China, seen as a potential superpower, took on a new dimension in American foreign policy. Stability in the Middle East with its key energy reserves became a

higher priority as well. Europe, however, was no longer as important as it had been during the Cold War years.

In the last nearly 50 years, the European Union has made remarkable progress in peacefully uniting Europe. For example, the introduction of the euro for 12 of Europe's then 15 members is without precedent in history: individual countries voluntarily gave up a degree of national sovereignty to forge a common currency.

In many ways the United States remains a common denominator for Europe, although the orientation has changed considerably since the end of the Cold War. Instead of America being the key factor in European security, it has become at times a counterpoint to the European view on world affairs.

In terms of its influence, however, Europe still is largely the "junior partner," as it was sometimes called during Cold War days, in its relationship to the United States. The reason is that Europe is still influenced by the nationhood mentality of past centuries, and without a clear European identity, Europeans tend to react not as Europeans, but as French, Germans, Italians, etc.

To be sure, Western Europe was not always enthralled with America's actions and policies during the Cold War era, the Vietnam War being a notable case. However, in a Europe divided by the Iron Curtain, overriding security concerns inhibited open prolonged dissent with the United States and contributed to nuances and differences among Europeans being sacrificed for the common goal of mutual defense.

The Iraq war as a case in point

Following the attacks in New York and Washington on Sept. 11, 2001, President George W. Bush declared America at war against terrorism and expected to receive support for that war from Europe. Europe obviously rejects terrorism in all its forms. In the 2½

After the bombings in Madrid on March 11, fear gripped European cities as people realized that their continent was not immune to Islamic terrorism.

years since 9/11, though, most Europeans have not seen themselves as being at war with terrorism, causing some of the difficulties in the transatlantic relationship during this period.

Without the common denominator of fear influencing them, Europeans reacted in different ways to the potential for military confrontation with Iraq. France and Germany openly opposed the war and its justification (and so far feel vindicated on the issue of weapons of mass destruction).

Britain and other European countries sided with America for various reasons. They either shared the U.S. view about the threat posed by Iraq, they did not want to damage their relationship with the United States or they were not willing to accept Franco-German leadership within Europe in response to America's endeavor.

In retrospect, France and Germany's approach was bound to provoke the latter response, especially in Eastern Europe. Talk of a "German path" in foreign relations or the manner in which French President Jacques Chirac attacked Poland for its support of the United States did nothing to enhance European unity in the weeks prior to the start of the war. American Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld got in on the act during the 2003 annual security conference in Munich by contrasting the reaction of the "old" Europe with the "new" Europe, i.e., Eastern Europe.

The Madrid attack: a catalyst?

On March 11, 2004, Europeans learned firsthand what it is like to experience large-scale radical Islamic terror. Bombs detonated by cell phone calls tore through four commuter trains in Madrid, Spain, killing 191 people and injuring over 1,500.

Fear gripped European cities as people realized that their continent was not immune to Islamic terrorism: "Whoever thought that the so-called holy warriors of Islam would limit their terror to Jews and American citizens was taught a lesson" by the Madrid bombings (*Pforzheimer Zeitung*, March 26, 2004). Surveys in Germany after Madrid

revealed that 60 percent of Germans now expect terrorist attacks in their own country.

With its attack in the Spanish capital, the al-Qaeda terrorist network has unwittingly contributed to the process of European unity, with fear being the motivating factor. Prior to Madrid, the EU would have admitted 10 new members on May 1 without having agreed upon a constitution for its 25 members. With the existing unanimity rule for EU decisions, Poland and Spain as holdouts could have prevented the implementation of the proposed EU constitution with



Three days after the Madrid bombings, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero (upper right, shown with Spain's King Juan Carlos) was elected prime minister.

its new "double majority" provision. This provision allows the EU council of ministers to make decisions by simple majority, provided that the countries voting in the majority represent at least 60 percent of the total EU population.

Three days after the Madrid bombings, Spain's conservative government of José María Aznar was soundly thrashed in a previously scheduled national election. Newly elected Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero quickly announced an end to his country's opposition to the "double majority" scheme, isolating Poland as the only holdout. "Out of fear of isolation," noted the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, "the 'nou-

veau Europeans,' who had been embraced selfishly by the USA, have returned to sit on Europe's lap" after Poland also decided to alter its stance (March 24, 2004).

Following the meeting of the 25 EU heads of state at the end of March, German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder was optimistic that a compromise would be achieved on the EU constitution: "The commonality of the threat [of terrorism] brings us closer together" (*ibid.*, March 26, 2004).

Just as important, though, were the many calls for greater cooperation within Europe to combat the threat of terrorism. Germany's Interior Minister Otto Schily called for the implementation of a European computer profiling system to identify potential Islamic terrorists and their movements within the EU. In view of Europe's strict data protection laws, Schily's proposal was nothing less than sensational. For Germans who went through years of attacks by the Baader-Meinhof gang, the post-Madrid discussion about which civil liberties might be sacrificed to get the terrorists was nothing new.

Terrorism, fear and the EU "double majority"

Europe's fight against terrorism provides a possible insight into a prophecy in Revelation 17. There we find an end-time union of "ten kings," who "will make war with the Lamb [Jesus Christ], and the Lamb will overcome them" (verses 12, 14).

These "ten kings" will be alive at the time Jesus returns and are the same power represented by the toes of the image described by Daniel in his interpretation of Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Daniel 2:42, 44). The legs and the feet of Daniel's image represent the Roman Empire, and the toes of that image—like the 10 kings of Revelation 17—are alive in the end time and represent a final resurrection of the Roman Empire.

Revelation 17:13 gives us an inter-
(See "FEAR," page 14)

How Close Are We to the End of This Age?

A prominent London newspaper reported that “a 2002 survey revealed that 59 percent of the [American] population believes the prophecies of the book of Revelation. Seventeen percent believe that the end of the world will happen during their lifetimes.” So how close are we to the end?

by John Ross Schroeder

Millions of dollars have been made from novels and so-called nonfiction books about Armageddon—now a symbolic expression, generally used for the climactic battle to occur just before the end of this age and the second coming of Jesus Christ. Popular author Tim LaHaye has said, “Our generation has more reason to believe that Christ will return than any other” (*The Daily Telegraph*, April 1, 2004, also cited in drophead).

His doomsday novels have sold more than 40 million copies. Many mainstream Christians in America have shifted their reading habits to include these books about chaotic world events that climax at Christ’s return. (However, LaHaye’s books, among others, erroneously portray Christ taking Christians off to heaven in a secret rapture. See our reprint article “Have You Been Misled by the Rapture Theory?” on our Web site at www.ucg.org/reprints for the biblical proof that the theory is wrong.)

Critical articles about these prophetic books, like the one published in *The Nation* (New York), say, “Obsession with doomsday prophecy increasingly affects U.S. policy in the Middle East” (quoted in *This Week*, April 17, 2004).

An erroneous approach to fulfilling prophecy

Whether American foreign policy is really affected or not, there are disturbing factors about how some fundamentalist groups approach their role with regard to end-time events in the Mideast. *The Independent on Sunday* summed up these radical tendencies: “The evangelical view of Israel is terrifyingly simple. Biblical prophecies have started to come true ever since 1948, when the State of Israel was created. The in-gathering of the Jews to the Holy Land is, of course, all part of His [God’s] plan to bring on the final battle.



The Muslim Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem plays a prominent role in what some secular reporters call evangelical doomsday prophecies.

“This is where the forces of Good (the U.S. and Israel) will confront the forces of Evil (the Arabs, Muslims, Europeans and the UN). This battle will lead to the destruction of the earth, at which point Jesus can return to rule for a thousand years. All the Jews have to do in return for the evangelists’ support is precipitate the apocalypse by blowing up the Dome of the Rock, building the third temple on the site. And—when Jesus arrives—repent for failing to see that He is the true Messiah” (Supplement, June 20, 2003).

Of course, the above is only one secular

The Bible predicts an utterly unique time of great trouble for the world in the future—greater than what we now witness. These prophecies are usually followed by a promise of deliverance—coinciding with the second coming of Jesus Christ.

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reporter's cynical assessment, but it is not all that far from the general approach taken by some TV evangelists. There are elements of biblical truth in this journalist's report as well. Perhaps the primary error is in believing that Christians should play a direct part in influencing the politics or policies of carnal human governments of this world with a view to fulfilling biblical prophecies. That's not what the Bible teaches.

God will see to it that His prophecies are fulfilled. That is His job—not ours! (If you would like to understand the truth about prophecy concerning the Mideast, please request our free brochure *The Middle East in Bible Prophecy*.)

An increasingly dangerous world

Another *Independent on Sunday* feature article reported: "Nearly two in three Americans believe Revelation's apocalyptic prophecies to be broadly accurate. Among these, it is understood, is President George Bush" (Supplement, Sept. 7, 2003).

Such beliefs are not entertained without good reason, nor do they emerge from thin air. We live in the kind of world that would naturally foster all kinds of apocalyptic beliefs. These are not normal times.

Professional secular observers of the world scene have spent their adult lives studying and evaluating global political and social trends—and some have come up with some horrifyingly disturbing conclusions. One such observer is author Robert Harvey, a former member of the British House of Commons' Foreign Affairs Committee. He was also an assistant editor for *The Economist* and is now a leading feature writer for *The Daily Telegraph*.

At the end of the preface of his latest book, *Global Disorder*, he wrote: "Unless action is taken as the warm glow of sunset on the Twentieth Century is replaced by the pale dawn light of the

Twenty-First, we will gaze towards the same horizon of global horrors as our great-grandfathers, this time through a nuclear haze. *The world is a much more dangerous place than it has been for nearly half a century*" (2003, p. xxxii, emphasis added throughout).

Regular *Daily Telegraph* columnist Janet Daley is another intelligent witness to the unfolding events of our anxious times. In the wake of the horrific train bombings in Madrid, she wrote: "Even the Cold War was not this perilous . . . The serious threat to our lives comes from an entirely new global force . . . We are now faced with a genuine threat that is almost unfathomable . . . We are well and truly on dangerous and untrodden ground" (March 24, 2004).

U.S. military rethinking

In facing and effectively dealing with very real terrorist threats, new military options are currently being contemplated. Not the least of these is the creation and possible use of "small" nuclear weapons as antiterror devices. Large-scale weapons capable of reducing entire cities to rubble are not an effective deterrent to terrorist

cells. What would be far more practical from a military standpoint are smaller nuclear weapons designed to penetrate deeply underground targets not now reachable by conventional weaponry.

This is only one option being considered by a special task force of the U.S. Defense Science Board. As an editorial in *The Wall Street Journal Europe* put it: "The idea is to give the [American]

President the option of incinerating enemy weapons, leaders and command-and-control systems with as little damage as possible to civilians" (April 13, 2004).

This "Rethinking Armageddon" editorial concluded: "No American President wants to cross the threshold

[of using nuclear weapons again]. But if he has to, to protect American lives, surely it's preferable to have the option of using a highly precise, low-yield weapon that strikes a specific target than the Armageddon alternative."

Much worse to come

Mr. Harvey also addresses the question of what war may well be like during the 21st century. "A war based on prolonged global disorder is indeed in prospect. *It will be unlike any that has occurred before*. It will not be a general global conflict between major powers. Rather it will be one of constant friction between middle-ranking powers, occasionally flaring into open conflict involving huge numbers of casualties, *and even possible nuclear exchanges* . . .

"There will be sporadic, murderous terrorist attacks on a potentially huge scale, ethnic and nationalist clashes sometimes leading to genocide; periodic economic crises, social discontent and a growing anticapitalist backlash" (Harvey, p. 11).

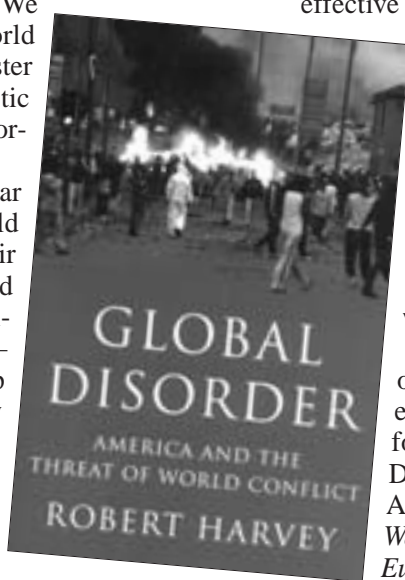
Christ Himself predicted "wars and rumors of wars" and that "nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom" in His Olivet Prophecy. Finally, conflict in the Middle East will become so pronounced that the world will enter a supremely perilous period Jesus called the "great tribulation."

A unique time of world troubles

The Bible predicts an utterly unique time of great trouble for the world in the future—greater than what we now witness. Nothing like it has ever happened before. Nothing like it will ever occur again. Several biblical prophecies focus on this specific period.

One of the major Hebrew prophets alludes to this unique time. "Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it; and it is the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it" (Jeremiah 30:7). (To understand who the descendants of Jacob are and their role in world history, please request our free brochure *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy*.)

The book of Daniel also addresses this unique period in its concluding



chapter: “At that time Michael [apparently an archangel] shall stand up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people [the sons of Jacob]; and there shall be *a time of trouble such as never was* since there was a nation, even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered” (Daniel 12:1).

Then in the New Testament Jesus Christ enlarges on the scope and meaning of these Hebrew prophecies. “For then there will be *great tribulation*, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake, those days will be shortened” (Matthew 24:21-22). This particular prophecy is repeated in Mark 13:19-20.

Luke’s version of the Olivet Prophecy approaches it from a somewhat different angle. “For these are the days of vengeance, that *all things which are written* [in the Old Testament] may be fulfilled” (Luke 21:22). Humankind in general has never perceived the meaning and scope of most prophecies in the Hebrew Bible. Nonetheless, at this future time they will be fulfilled, as Jesus Christ clearly said they would.

In the last book of the Bible, once again, Christ refers to this unique period of global troubles. “Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial *which shall come upon the whole world*, to test those who dwell on the earth. Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown” (Revelation 3:10-11).

You will notice that these prophecies are usually followed by a promise of deliverance—coinciding with the second coming of Jesus Christ.

The crucial question of when

The New Testament warns us not to be overly concerned about the exact time of ultimate fulfillment of these major biblical prophecies. Jesus said no one, including even the angels in heaven, knew precisely when this age of man would draw to an end or when He would return. He told His

disciples that only the Father knows the time.

Naturally Christ’s apostles were still more than curious, as we all are today. Even after His resurrection, they persisted in questioning Him about the timing of His return, but His answer had not altered. “It is not for you to know the times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority” (Acts 1:7). He focused their attention on getting on with the job of spreading the gospel around the world. So should it be today!

Nonetheless, the Olivet Prophecy recorded by Matthew, Mark and Luke contains statements by Christ Himself telling us to watch major world events and to know what is happening globally—while at the same time keeping our spiritual houses in good order.

We will quote just one: “But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life [it’s all too easy to let down], and that Day come on you unexpectedly. For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth.

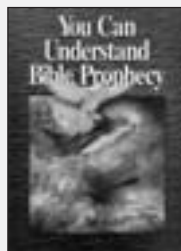
“*Watch therefore, and pray always* that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man” (Luke 21:34-36). God expects His Church to be constantly alert and aware—and to warn others of these impending events. ❖

Recommended Reading

This article can only give a brief sketch of these major prophecies with global impact.

Space prohibits including the vital historical background and many additional biblical details. In order to get a well-rounded and much more complete view, please request the free brochures *You Can Understand Bible Prophecy*, *The Book of Revelation Unveiled* and *Are We Living in the Time of the End?*

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www.ucg.org



“**CHEMICAL BOMBS,**” (Continued from page 4)
the terrorists have to meet their objective only once.

Terrorism has redefined the economies of the world, as untold trillions have been lost in revenues and/or spent on defensive measures. Terrorism has also redefined the political structure of many nations, for a given government’s stand on antiterror efforts looms large in the minds of the electorate.

How does that dovetail with Bible prophecy?

The Bible foretells three shifts of seismic proportions in the geopolitical landscape:

(1) The modern inheritors of the wealth God promised to biblical Israel will suffer mortal defeat. Those nations are principally the United States, Great Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

(2) Much of Europe will coalesce into a sovereign entity, capable of dominating the world’s economy and of marshalling armies to go to any place in the world they are needed.

(3) Another entity, identified only as the king of the South (Daniel 11:40), will provoke the European superpower to sweep into and take over the Middle East. Terrorist attacks on European targets may well be the catalyst that incites Europe to take this action.

We publish several booklets that present in easily understood language the Bible’s warnings on these subjects: *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy*, *You Can Understand Bible Prophecy*, *Are We Living in the Time of the End?*, *The Book of Revelation Unveiled* and *The Middle East in Bible Prophecy*.

Consider the present evidence:

- Many hundreds, if not thousands, of terrorists are trained in the procuring, production and use of chemical bombs.

- The vicious and deadly al-Qaeda complex is capable of financing and mounting major operations in numerous countries around the world at the same or nearly the same time.

- The Bible forecasts crippling losses for some of today’s leading nations.

One can only conclude that chemical bombs will indeed be used successfully, and soon . . . ❖

EU Referendum: Will Britain Choose Europe or the U.S.?

British Prime Minister Tony Blair stunned everybody with his dramatic U-turn April 19 announcing a referendum on the proposed new EU constitution, responding to fears that the proposed legislation would make Britain an offshore province of a European superstate. Which way will the British vote? What will be the consequences for the special relationship with the United States?

by Melvin Rhodes

The debate is still not over. Britain is now set to have another referendum on Europe, this time to decide whether the country should sign the new European constitution, a constitution that will create a federal Europe to rival the United States of America.

When I was in school in England in the '50s and early '60s, we were taught that British foreign policy toward the Continent for 400 years had been based on staying out of Europe unless one of its nations became so powerful that it threatened the peaceful existence of others, especially Great Britain. British security, we were told, lay beyond the seas, with the British Commonwealth and the United States.

Four of my younger brothers, a few years behind me, were taught something quite different. Britain's future, they were assured, lay with Europe. Following a vote in the British Parliament in 1971, Britain applied to join what was then the European Economic Community (EEC). On Jan. 1, 1973, Britain became a full member.

Britain's future, however, was still not resolved. Two years later, a different government announced the first referendum in U.K. history—a vote on whether to stay in the EEC. At the start of the campaign, most were against continuing membership in the community. By the time of the vote, they had changed their minds and Britain's future seemed assured.

Now, it seems, the debate is still not over. Britain is now set to have another referendum on Europe in the autumn of next year, this time to decide whether the country should sign the new European constitution, a constitution that will create a federal Europe to rival the United States of America.

Broken promises

Europe has come a long way since British entry into the EEC in 1973. Before that year there were only six members of the EEC. Joining at the same time as the United Kingdom were Ireland and Denmark. Others

joined later, making it 15. May 1 this year another 10 joined, making the total number of members 25. A little over 10 years ago the EEC became the European Union (EU). Members are committed to forming “an ever closer union.”

With the new century came the euro, the European currency used by 12 of the 15 members at its introduction. The currency has already successfully established itself as a viable international trading currency to rival the American dollar. Britain stayed out of the eurozone, keeping its own currency, the pound sterling. Prime Minister Tony Blair has been in favor of Britain using the euro, but the conditions for entry have never been right. This is partly because Britain's economy is in better shape than many of its continental neighbors.

With the euro firmly established as the European currency, the push is now on for the next step toward full union—a European constitution that would effectively end national sovereignty and create, in essence, a United States of Europe, though it will still be called the EU.

Many British people are very aware of the implications of the new constitution. While the prime minister claims that it will have little impact on the day-to-day lives of the peoples of the United Kingdom, older people remember similar promises made 30 years ago before the first referendum. Then, the British people were told that the EEC was simply a free-trade area and would not impact their laws or way of life in any way whatsoever.

Nothing could have been further from the truth.

Right at the beginning food prices increased dramatically, as Britain had to stop importing cheap food from Commonwealth countries and

switch to importing much more expensive food from the continent of Europe. The fishing industry in my home town was ruined by U.K. entry into Europe, when British fishing waters were opened to fishing fleets from other countries.

On the economic front, the British people were told that their economy would boom as markets opened in Europe. The fact is, their economy did boom, but it was mostly due to Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's economic reforms in the '80s. Even today the British still export more to non-European countries than to other nations in the EU.

Economically, there have been many negatives for the United Kingdom. The country remains a net contributor to EU funds. In other words, the British pay more into Europe than they get out of it. The Germans are even greater contributors, but they have a much higher population and seem to get things more their way in the EU. Other economic negatives include mountains of red tape from the bureaucracy in Brussels—rules and regulations to which private companies and farmers must adhere.

An additional burden on the British people has been the free movement of peoples within the EU. With the addition of 10 new (and much poorer) members May 1, fears are being expressed of a massive influx of immigrants from the new member states. Britain has already absorbed millions of immigrants from Europe, all of whom qualify for full welfare and medical benefits from the moment they set foot on the island's shores.

On the legal front, European courts often overturn British legal decisions.

Recent problems

Of more immediate concern to many lately has been the united front most EU

members have had against the U.S./U.K. coalition that overthrew the former Iraqi regime. Of particular concern has been the Franco-German stance against Washington and London. Once again, it seems, the French and the Germans have tried to set the course for the whole of Europe. If the proposed new constitution



Britain's Prime Minister Tony Blair waves good-bye to his Luxembourg counterpart Jean-Claude Juncker April 19 as he prepared to announce plans for a referendum on a European Union constitution—a major change of heart for Blair.

is approved, Britain will lose its independent foreign policy in a European Union dominated by Germany and France, two nations that have become increasingly anti-American at the highest levels of government.

If Britain opts out of the new constitution, what will be the consequences?

Rejection could mean a two-tier Europe. If enough countries reject the constitution (Britain is not the only country promising a referendum), then those countries left out of the new federal Europe could continue to be linked in an economic union. But it could also mean the end of the European dream, with Britain having to think once again about its future course.

On the other hand, a "yes" vote will leave America having to rethink its future course. Losing its most powerful ally in an increasingly unfriendly world would be a serious loss for Washington. The history of the 20th century shows that whenever America and Britain have fought together, they have always won.

If the vote on the proposed EU constitution is "yes," it could very likely spell the end of the special relationship.

What would replace it? The Bible shows that between now and the second coming of the Messiah there will be a union of 10 kings who will restore the Roman Empire (Revelation 17:8, 12-14).

This will not be the first restoration of the Roman Empire. Just 35 years before what is now called the EU was founded by the Treaty of Rome in 1957, Benito Mussolini proclaimed the restoration of the Holy Roman Empire.

Many today in the new Europe draw inspiration from an earlier restoration of the Holy Roman Empire, that of Charlemagne.

All of the nations that once were a part of the Holy Roman Empire are

today members of the EU. Interestingly, Britain was never a part of the Holy Roman Empire.

There are now 25 members of the EU. As Bible prophecy shows that "ten kings" (or nations) will come together to form the revived Roman Empire, it may be that some of the present members will not be a part of the new federal Europe. Or there could be a hard-core 10, with many others forming a closely connected economic union.

Whatever the outcome of the referendum next year in Britain, Europe is certainly a continent to watch. A new European superpower is rising and the world will never be the same again. ♦

In Brief...

World News Review

Moqtada al-Sadr—Revolutionary or Puppet?

Is Moqtada al-Sadr a genuine Shia religious leader, guiding the righteous anger of thousands of young Iraqis in opposition to the coalition occupation of their country? Or is he a self-important rebel, either taking direct orders from Iranian mullahs or being adroitly manipulated by them?

Al-Sadr's name is gaining recognition worldwide with the recent violent actions of his "Mahdi Army" against coalition forces, but he was little known outside Iraq until recently. The name "Mahdi" has double significance. It links al-Sadr's objectives with that of the army of Mohammed Ahmed bin Abdullah of the late 19th century in Sudan. Bin Abdullah, a boat builder on the Nile by trade, changed his name to el Mahdi ("the guided one"), and led an uprising against the British occupation forces in Sudan in the 1880s.

Some Shia traditions teach that Mohammed, the founder of Islam, had a vision of a mahdi who would arise at a time when Muslims around the world were oppressed. The mahdi, says the tradition, would unite all Muslims to throw off their oppressors, thereby ushering in an age of peace and security—a sort of "Muslim messiah."

Perhaps al-Sadr sees himself as driving the coalition from Iraq and even as the prophesied Muslim "savior."

But is this young man truly a religious leader?

His only claim to "religious authority" is his father, Muhammad Sadiq al-Sadr, who was selected by Saddam Hussein to lead the main center for Shia instruction in Iraq. Even Al Jazeera reports that he lacks the religious education and degrees that Shia doctrine requires for him to qualify as a cleric ("Muqtada al-Sadr—a Profile," April 5, 2004). So he is a fraud in that regard.

Hussein's secret police are believed to have later murdered the senior al-Sadr, along with other members of his family, when he became "too popular." This makes the fact that al-Sadr now opposes the coalition that toppled those who killed his father all the stranger. Equally strange is the fact that the Mahdi Army fights alongside former Baathist loyalists.

Numerous reports describe his "army" as a group of

unemployed, angry young men, who—and this is confirmed by al-Sadr himself—fight for Hezbollah and Hamas. Hezbollah is the radical Muslim terrorist group fighting Israel from Lebanon. Hamas is its twin, fighting Israel from Palestinian territories. Both are financed by Iran.

Iran, by the way, also finances about 90 percent of the financial needs of Yasir Arafat's Fatah party, replacing the support Saddam Hussein's Iraq used to give (World Tribune.com, Jan. 29, 2004). Iran is clearly putting forth great effort to promote radical Islamic interests in the region.

Respected Middle East authority Michael Ledeen, writing in *The Wall Street Journal* of April 16, 2004 (online edition), reports that al-Sadr recently visited Iran, where he met with the nation's number 2 man in power, the head of intelligence for Iran's Revolutionary Guards, and the Iranian general in charge of Iraqi affairs.

Ledeen also cites an Italian intelligence service (Sismi) report, prepared before the current violence, that warned of precisely what is taking place, a series of attacks by Saddam loyalists and Shiite revolts throughout Iraq. Ledeen quoted Sismi: "The strategic goal of this revolt [is] the establishment of an Islamic government of Khomeinist inspiration."

Two Arab newspapers based in London, *Al-Hayat* and *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, documented in early April the fact that hundreds of Iranian intelligence agents were sent into Iraq through the north before Saddam fell. Even greater numbers poured over a virtually open border after his regime fell. They went to Najaf and Karbala, pretending to be religious students or journalists. Are they part of this "popular uprising" that is actually a calculated attempt to seize control of Iraq?

What is Iran's interest in Iraq? A democracy in that country would surely encourage the already pro-democracy elements in Iran and might well lead to an overthrow of the mullahs. Whether al-Sadr fights for himself, as well as for his Iranian sponsors, is immaterial. His battle is a battle for an Islamic state, governed by sharia law.

Radical Islamists fear any reduction of their strength and of their ultimate objective in the Mideast: to free Israel from control by "infidels." See our booklet *The Middle East in Bible Prophecy* for the rest of the story—what Bible prophecy shows will ultimately happen with this high-stakes struggle.

There are powerful spirits of selfishness and self-interest at work in the Mideast that are going unnoticed or underreported by much of the world. Driven by an anti-American



Iraqi Shiite gunmen guard an office of radical cleric Moqtada al-Sadr.

Reuters/Imad Alkhozai

bias that splashes over the British and other coalition members, most journalists seem bent on painting al-Sadr as a popular cleric with a righteous cause.

United States vs. Syria

In a related development, Syria is doing little to stop a steady flow of Sunni insurgents into western Iraq. The American forces in Iraq are fully engaged in countering the infiltration of these al-Qaeda allies, who make their way from the border into Ramadi and Fallujah, and eventually all the way to Baghdad. U.S. forces have killed Syrian security personnel, as well, in fighting that shows Syria's reputed cooperation with coalition forces to be a lie. Not for religious reasons, but purely to preserve himself in power, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad is trying to have it both ways—giving tacit support to a free Iraq, at the same time as aiding any forces that will oppose the coalition.

The fighting along the Iraqi-Syrian border has cost at least five American lives, not to mention the huge additional cost burden to maintain surveillance and support battle lines in the wilderness area.

Wars seem to turn on the slightest of circumstances, sometimes. By all rights, the American-led coalition should defeat the al-Sadrs, the al-Qaeda allies and the self-seeking despots. But is it God's will to bless the good intentions to free Iraq? Time will tell. But at some point, America's economic and military might will fail her.

Prophecy shows that only Jesus Christ, when present on the earth as its conquering King, will subdue insurgents for all time. Interestingly, in the context of one prophecy of that event, God tells what it takes to truly bring peace: "'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts" (Zechariah 4:6).

British-American Special Relationship Suffers Loss

It was extremely hot and humid—the hottest time of the year, immediately prior to the coming of the rainy season. We were standing under the tree talking, desperate for some shade.

The location was a small farm just outside Accra, the capital of Ghana. The subsistence farmer and his wife were present as well as a visitor from the United States and me.

It was the farmer who spoke.

"I was shocked," he said, "to hear that Alistair Cooke had died. We will miss him greatly."

At 95, Alistair Cooke still presented a weekly 15-minute radio program *Letter From America*. It was the longest running radio program in history—it began in 1946 and continued until the end of March this year, less than a month before his death.



Alistair Cooke

Broadcast around the world on the BBC World Service, Mr. Cooke's voice was familiar to hundreds of millions. More importantly, he helped the world understand America.

At a time when America is increasingly misunderstood and frequently the odd man out in world affairs, Alistair Cooke is needed now more than ever.

The British newsmagazine *The Economist* had a full-page obituary of Mr. Cooke in their issue of April 3. The obituary began with the following words: "For as long as anyone can remember, Alistair Cooke was the perfect embodiment of the special relationship . . . For more than half a century he formed a solid, though urbane, one-man bridge between the two cultures," referring to Britain, where he was born, and America where he lived from the time of the Great Depression until his death.

He had actually gone to the United States to be a drama critic, but soon discovered that America itself was "far more gripping and dramatic than anything I had ever seen" (ibid.). Becoming a U.S. citizen in 1941 and starting his weekly radio broadcast immediately after World War II, Mr. Cooke's experience of America and his coverage of it to the world coincided with America's period of global pre-eminence.

The Economist's article ends with a sobering reference to rising concerns in the United Kingdom about U.S. foreign policy and especially the conduct of the Iraqi war: "At Mr. Cooke's death, the special relationship had never needed him more."

The EU: Still an Economic Dwarf?

In late March *Süddeutsche Zeitung* reported from Munich, Germany, that although EU expansion is imminent, "the EU appears above all despondent. This stands in sharp contrast to the self-confidence with which the EU proclaimed at the beginning of the millennium its intention of overtaking the U.S. as strongest in the economic area. The giant EU construction must become strong, politically, but above all economically."

The fact is that economic growth in the European Union as a whole is averaging 0.6 percent compared with 3.6 percent in the United States. These figures were published by *The Wall Street Journal Europe* (March 25). The *Financial Times* adds, "On issues from innovation to employment, the transatlantic gap has either remained or widened" (March 25). Plainly the EU has fallen well short of the target of matching American economic strides any time in the near future. Most media observers, whether liberal or conservative, judge Europe to be an economic dwarf compared to America—and that was the exact phrase *The Wall Street Journal* used.

Others sources are more positive in their outlook—especially about the future of the EU. British current affairs author Robert Harvey writes: "The European Union as a whole has an economy comparable to that of the United

States, and is steadily progressing towards greater integration. But in terms of growth, cutting-edge technology and most key economic indicators, it continues to lag behind, although this state of affairs may not continue indefinitely" (*Global Disorder*, 2003, pp. 16-17).

Also take note of Bryn Mawr



Photo © 2004 www.photos.com

College professor emeritus Richard Du Boff's assessment: "The United States faces a formidable rival—the EU, its equal in production and trade. The EU is also an emerging political entity, anchored by France and Germany and bent on greater competition with the United States despite the mismatch in military power" (*Monthly Review*, December 2003).

Yet while Britain has generally kept pace with America, simultaneously Germany has fallen into the economic doldrums. There "more than 41,000 small to medium-sized companies went bust last year, an average of 110 per day." Also "great metropolises like Berlin are quite literally, bankrupt to the tune of billions" (*The Scotsman*, April 3).

One always worries about German angst when things are going badly economically. We have not yet returned to the historic days of the Weimar Republic. Nonetheless, we should remember that mass unemployment combined with runaway inflation helped produce Adolf Hitler.

Scenes of uncollected rubbish and long bus lines, normally associated with the Britain of the '70s, are beginning to appear in certain German cities. We should all keep an eye on the German economy—keeping in mind the alternative possibility that an unprecedented German economic reversal could happen as well.

Ongoing Troubles in Iraq

How does the United States wisely extract itself from Iraq without "cutting and running"? And is it possible to democratize a people so used to dictators and demagogues?

In October 1993 the United States left a lingering legacy in Mogadishu, Somalia, when they sent elite American soldiers into the heart of the city to abduct top lieutenants of the warlord Mohamed Farrah Aidid. America lost 18 servicemen, and more than 500 Somalis died. That event has had a cautionary influence on American foreign policy. Indeed, recent uprisings in Iraq appear to be a throwback to what happened in Somalia: Fiercely resist the infidel intruders and they will leave the country.

President Bush has repeatedly said the U.S.-led coalition will not "cut and run" but will finish the job. Perhaps that's the only thing that can be done. Can a people so acculturated to demagoguery be democratized? Possibly. But at what price? There aren't that many options available.

The capture of Saddam Hussein has helped remove the fear of the return of his despotic rule. A contained Saddam helps the majority of Iraqis entertain a form of democracy. They want freedom like all peoples; and democracy, despite all its warts and bumps, allows for such freedom.

Time is of the essence, as are the successes of a new Iraqi democratic form of government. Early democratic successes would mean faster acceptance. But the nagging factors of time and American casualties play a dominant role on the American psyche. Are Americans willing to sacrifice their youth for the possible peaceful returns from an Iraqi democratic government? And will Europe get involved in the Iraqi process?

Ongoing troubles can be expected in Iraq and from its neighbors. The Bible says that Middle Eastern troubles will continue and only God will bring lasting peace to the Middle East.

Contributors: Jerold Aust, Cecil Maranville, Melvin Rhodes and John Ross Schroeder

"FEAR," (Continued from page 6)

esting detail about this final union: "These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast" (emphasis added).

The 10 kings will be in agreement on the nature of the situation that confronts them, and they will voluntarily cede their "power and authority"—in modern language we call this sovereignty—to a central authority that then acts on their behalf.

It is important to note the clear wording of Scripture on this point. The 10 kings—whether 10 literal nations in a "core" Europe scheme or perhaps 10 nations or groups of nations within Europe, that, representing a double majority within Europe, render a decision for all of Europe—give their power away. If they give it away, it will not be taken from them by force, making this final prophetic union different from all its predecessors.

A rational explanation would be that a crisis or a perceived threat could lead to emergency legislation or the declaration of martial law. Fear of losing one's life is a very strong motivating factor.

Since the end of the Cold War, Europe has not faced any threat with the potential for disruption of normal life similar to the possible effects of large-scale terrorist attacks. How Europe meets this challenge may have a profound effect on us all. ♦

Recommended Reading

The book of Revelation remains mysterious to most people today, but offers great insight into the events leading up to one of the world's most momentous events—the return of Jesus Christ! For more information, request *The Book of Revelation Unveiled*, as well as *You Can Understand Bible Prophecy* and *Are We Living in the Time of the End?* They are free of charge.



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“KINGDOM,” (Continued from page 16)
estimate our responsibility to act.

“Of whom the world was not worthy”

For some, Iraq is just one big geopolitical migraine headache that won't go away. Reasoned optimism may be the only cure, along with 130,000 troops to keep the place from blowing up into all-out civil war. It all can seem too big. U.S. President George W. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair try to stir their nations by stating the historic nature of this quest to bring democracy to an Arab state. The march of time and future historians will make their judgments on these men, who at times seem to stand alone on the world stage.

But what about us? When our own challenges of life seem bigger than the moment, let's remember that we truly are on a historic or, better stated, “divine” mission. As Christians, whose citizenship is in heaven (Philippians 3:20), we are the frontline forces of the Kingdom of God that have been called to set up a beachhead for those yet to follow. It isn't the physical metal of modern weapons, but rather our spirit that is being tested down here below.

Jesus Christ said in John 15:18, “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.”

It is clearly indicated through Christ's own words that His followers would take physical casualties along the way between His first and second comings. He states it plainly up front, because God is always honest in telling us what to expect. But He also adds a value to such sacrifices in the here and now. He says of such devoted “soldiers of Christ” in Revelation 12:11, “They did not love their lives to the death.” He inspired Hebrews 11:38 to add that those who make such a sacrifice are people “of whom the world [is] not worthy.”

Long ago the Pilgrims who would found Plymouth Plantation in the New World had advertised themselves in this manner as they searched for a sponsor: “It is not with us as with other men,

whom small things can discourage, or small discontentments cause to wish themselves at home again.”

Nothing, absolutely nothing, was going to cause them to waver and go back before the job was completed. In fact, in their case, there was no going home. This was it! They were intent on founding a new society in the New World and experiencing freedom. When it came to matters of importance, these same individuals would weather the storms of life, because they had convictions, not simply opinions. They weren't going to waver in the heat of the moment.

Opinions or convictions

But we're not in the Iraq of today or the Plymouth of yesteryear. Still, the big question for us regarding whatever might be coming at us in our own lives is, do we simply have opinions or do we have convictions?

Allow me to share a story to make the case for being a person filled with proper convictions. In the operating room of a great hospital a young nurse had her first day of full responsibility. “You've removed 11 sponges, doctor, but we used 12,” she said to the surgeon.

The surgeon replied, “I've removed them all; we'll close the incision now.”

“No,” the nurse objected. “We used 12.”

“I'll take the responsibility,” the surgeon said grimly. “Suture.”

“You can't do that!” blazed the nurse. “Think of the patient.”

The doctor smiled, lifted his foot, and showed the nurse the 12th sponge. “You'll do,” he said. He had been testing her for her integrity—and she had it.

It's plain to see that the nurse had more than an opinion. She was convicted and she stood her ground. She didn't melt under pressure, but rather she rose to the occasion. She was thinking beyond herself. Under the barrage of notable irritation by her superior, she had only one thought—“the patient.”

God is also looking for such resolve in His followers, because the times, now and ahead, are going to demand it. God speaks of a time ahead in Hebrews 12:26-28 in which He declares, “‘Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.’ Now this, ‘Yet once more,’ indicates the removal of those things that

are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.”

A prayer that comes with a price

Yes, a new world order is coming. The pages of *The Good News* and *World News and Prophecy* strive to clearly and truthfully depict a world that is going to be shaken to its core by the triumphant return to this earth of Jesus Christ as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Along with Christians everywhere, we pray, “Your kingdom come. Your will be done . . .” But it's a prayer that comes with a price at the human level. It will not be a time for the faint of heart, but rather for people who are steadfast in their resolve and convictions to follow and serve Jesus Christ, wherever He might lead.

And just like the soldiers in Iraq, Christian soldiers can't “hightail it out of here” at the first sign of things not going our way in the battlegrounds of our life—be it in marriage, parenting, in the extended family, at work, in the neighborhood or even in church. Jesus Christ, the Captain of our salvation, is testing and training us now, just as much as the surgeon did with the nurse. He wants to know what's inside of us, whether we're in it for others or simply for ourselves.

Perhaps the thrust of Isaiah 30:21, which says, “This is the way, walk in it,” is best given voice this month by the apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 4:7-10. In one stroke of the stylus, he transforms that which would seem to be a human nightmare run amok into the divine will for us in full formation.

He says: “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed—always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.”

Let's hold our ground, hold on to God's truth and stand in Him! ❖



by Robin Webber

A Kingdom That Cannot Be Shaken

Right now in Iraq, the United States of America and its coalition partners, along with Iraqis desiring a brighter future, are combating a multipronged insurgency designed to weaken their resolve and cause them to pull up stakes and go home. Place names like Fallujah, Ramadi and Najaf have become synonymous with thoughts of despair, massacre and quagmire.

All of us have seen the shocking pictures of charred bodies hanging from bridges, mug shots of the bewildered faces of civilian hostages and the pictures of lifeless little innocent ones, caught in the crossfire of urban warfare. It's been a tough few weeks for everyone, especially the residents of Iraq and the troops on the ground. Terrorism is designed to make you shake in your boots, because your heart is wobbly and you don't know what or who will be next. In fact, it could be you! The bottom-line equation is simply this: "Kill one and paralyze one thousand."

The numbing effects of terrorism on some coalition member nations, both in Iraq and for some on their domestic soil, have served their intended purpose and caused some coalition partners to say, "We're packing our bags and going home where we belong!" Spain has already withdrawn its troops, and little Honduras is not too far behind. Only time will tell if this is the beginning of "a stampede of the unwilling" or a time for a retooled "exit strategy" that can be declared a victory for both the Iraqis and the coalition partners.

An adversary that nips at our hearts

But, we might be asking, "What does this have to do with me?" Everything! The recent calamities that have

befallen the coalition troops in Iraq have some powerful parallels for Christians. Let's never forget that we, too, battle against a nemesis that "hits and runs" and continually nips at more than our heels, but at our hearts. And, yes, sometimes the momentary pain or sorrow can shake us up emotionally and spiritually and make us wish ourselves at home again.

The Bible clearly lays out our adversary's intentions toward us. To put it bluntly, Christians are in Satan's crosshairs. But unlike a typical assassination, he would like us to turn our gun barrel around and pull the trigger on ourselves.

Satan rejoices in hurling at us the emotional mortar rounds of doubt, discontentment, discouragement and despair. His goal is to destroy any vestige of hope regarding our divine commission, so that, ultimately, we get to the point of exhaustion, and say, "What am I doing here anyway? I don't need this grief!"

In Ephesians 6:12-13, the apostle Paul jolts us into a broader reality by stating: "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

As in every war, the spiritual war is ultimately a contest for "hearts and minds." In this war, our heart and mind is the goal—both for God and our adversary. But let's remember a simple, yet profound key: The door to our heart opens from the inside, not the outside. Never under-

(See "KINGDOM," page 15)