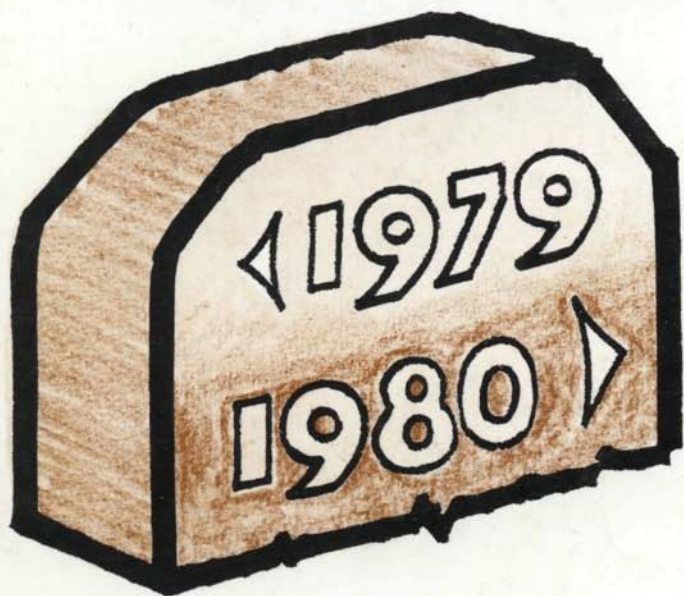


MILESTONES 1979

AND INTO THE '80s



**A Review of
World Events
in the light
of Bible Prophecy**

GRAHAM PEARCE

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DETAILS OF BOOKS REFERRED TO IN THE TEXT:

WORLD WAR III:

General Editor Shelford Bidwell,
Hamlyn Paperbacks, 1978.

SOVIET SEA POWER:

The Covert Support Fleet
Conflict Study No. 84, June 1977.
Institute for the Study of Conflict,
12/12a Golden Square, London, W1R 3AF

WORLD SHIPPING AT RISK:

The Looming Threat to the Lifelines
Conflict Study No. 111, September 1979
Address as above.

POPE JOHN PAUL II:

A Biography by George Blazynski —
Sphere Books Ltd.,
30/32 Gray's Inn Road,
London WC1X 8JL

MILESTONES 1979 & INTO THE '80s

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(Daily Telegraph 4.1.80)

DECADE OF THE BEAR?

RUSSIA'S OCCUPATION of Afghanistan by huge military forces provides instant support for the general prognostication that the '80s will be a decade of crises. It shows the contempt with which Russia now disregards world opinion. It is doubtless also part of the widening pattern of intimidation through military might which is already affecting Nato Europe. (D.T. 31.12.79)

WORLD TURNING POINT

RUSSIA'S AFGHAN ANNEXATION is a power-political earthquake that threatens to change the map of the Middle East and southern Asia and bring the world closer to nuclear war than it has ever been before. (D.T. 2.1.80)

As the years go rapidly by, the pace of world events increases. Unexpected crises; the frightening power of armed masses, like the sea and the waves roaring; terrorism, assassination, violent crimes, economic recession, inflation—it all shows a degree of instability that points to a gigantic crisis ahead. The great men of the earth flit to and fro, attend conferences, yet make no worthwhile progress. Marvellous scientific and technical developments continue to be thrust upon us, yet man is unable to cause them to bring peace and prosperity. How wonderful was the brief summary given to Daniel regarding this Time of the END: *“Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.”*

When this review of 1979 was nearly complete, there was the news of the military invasion of Afghanistan by Soviet troops, starting just before Christmas. As America and the rest of the world gradually woke up to the implications of this act of aggression there was a surge of alarm and sense of impotence to do anything effective. Those of us attuned to Bible prophecy were thrilled with this further move of Russia into the Middle East. Already having a grip on Aden and South Yemen, Iraq and Syria, she is drawing a ring of steel round the Middle East oil fields.

But we must thoughtfully assess the likely steps flowing on from this invasion. We may not see an immediate onward rush by the Soviet; rather the reverse. It is possible that her progress will be checked by the opposition now building up, and by the much increased naval and military activity by America. American public opinion has now been strongly aroused, and the military authorities will have no difficulty in getting Congress to vote vast sums of money. There may be a period while the SOUTH power is building up its strength. On the other hand, Russia may decide to take greater risks now while she has the greatest superiority over America. Also, the economic pressures America is applying may have an unexpected result. Will the economic starving of Russia provoke her to take western Europe to obtain food and industrial skills? She would justify such action, saying it was her justifiable reaction to how she had been treated. We cannot answer these questions. But the Bible makes it clear for us that the building up of the great European Confederacy takes place before the invasion of the land of Israel, and in this direction we must constantly be looking. So, as in past Reviews, we pay particular attention to the Soviet Union and the Vatican, the builders of the confederacy.

As will be seen on reading this Review, there has been considerable development of American power in the south of the Middle

East over the year. The Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty in March was of the utmost importance to America. Over the year plans for a 'Seventh U.S. Fleet' for the Arabian Sea/Indian Ocean have come into being; a marine force of 100,000 with all its complement of equipment has been formed; the co-operation with China in the south-east of this region is a massive factor. How those matters were moved forward, and how reluctant American public opinion has been slowly opening its eyes, is told in the Review. One continually marvels at the way the angels are working to carry forward God's purpose. So 1979 has seen a big development, not only in Russian activity, but in the development of that SOUTH POWER that is to exist south of Israel. We are very privileged to see God's hand at work.

The feebleness of America in the face of the holding of hostages at the Iran Embassy, and in the face of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan has been striking. One simple fact points to her great weakness: in 1964 she had 976 major warships; she now has only 460—her number of major warships has declined to about half in the past 15 years. But safeguarding one's foreign interests requires a dominant sea power. When Russia invaded Afghanistan she was well aware America had no effective means of action in this region remote from her own shores. Russia learnt the lesson of sea-power in the Cuban crisis of 1962, when she had to back down and lose face. But what has she done since 1962? She has such a modern navy, maritime and fishing fleet moving over all the oceans of the world that she has the necessary naval power to become an IMPERIAL POWER. We devote several pages to sketching the potential grip the Soviet is developing on world trade via the sea; a position that can threaten blockade and cause nations to surrender without fighting.

Afghanistan and Iran for the present fill the headlines. But other significant matters have occurred over the year. President Carter's strenuous personal efforts in March to bring about the Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty indicate how important this matter was, and is, to the U.S. There is the emergence of China in her relation with the 'West'; the turmoil of the Islamic religious fervour. There has been the new Pope's performance on the world stage; the deteriorating relations between Britain and the Common Market; and the revival of the 'special relationship' with the U.S.; there have been the manifestations of Britain's world influence, which is a necessary complement to the American military power, and the increasing roar of 'angry nations', like the 'sea and the waves roaring'.

The great Russian confederacy, that is to swallow up all Europe, most Middle East countries, and many more, so that 'all nations shall be gathered to Jerusalem' is presented to us in various Biblical descriptions. In one manner of speaking it will be the latter-day manifestation of the original Assyrio-Babylonian Power. All the terribleness of the original power will exist, but on a larger scale. In chapter two we give some consideration to the Bible description, and how we see this despotism already taking shape. Bro. Thomas could only see these things by prophetic eyesight, which we now begin to see with our very eyes: "The war to be initiated is the setting in of an overwhelming inundation that will submerge them under one of the most scorching despotisms that ever wrung the heart of nations" (Exposition of Daniel).

In conclusion, the admonition is repeated that has been made in varying forms in each Review. Fulfilling prophecy is intended to give us encouragement, to assure us that our God, the God of Israel, is working according to His plan. He is not a God afar off. His purpose is with this earth, with the nations and with ourselves. It tells us to fear not, to be conscious of his power, to trust in His care in our own uncertain life. So we shall wait patiently, looking and ready for his appearing, whether it be very soon, or whether it be some way off. It is proper to seek to know the time of Christ's coming, but fulfilling prophecy has the good purpose of helping us to endure, whatever happens.

GRAHAM PEARCE
Crick, England
February, 1980

Chapter 1

RUSSIA AND THE WORLD CHESSBOARD

AGGRESSIVE RUSSIA

The year has been marked by a greater awareness of the aggressive intentions of the Soviet. It is now realised that her colossal build-up of conventional arms, nuclear weapons and naval power cannot be merely for defence. This was appreciated long before the military invasion of Afghanistan. The Daily Telegraph opened 1979 with an editorial headed: "THE YEAR OF THE BEAR?"

"THIS YEAR OPENS with a heightened Soviet offensive against Western positions, many of which were weakened in the first place by our own follies and lassitude. The Soviet bloc's limping socialist economies—its true achilles heel—have been saved from near collapse by generous Western credits and technological aid, which have underwritten the massive Soviet military programmes. For years these have ensured increasing conventional military predominance. Now Russia has been accorded massive nuclear superiority from the early 1980s onwards by the American negotiators of the S.A.L.T. Treaty. The Russians have digested strategic areas of Africa, the Arabian Peninsula and the Middle East, and now Afghanistan. This permits them first to threaten, later perhaps to swallow up, countries which provide vital fuel and raw materials to the West. They are now poised against southern Africa, a rich strategic and economic prize."

A French assessment of the situation by the Editor-in-chief of *Le Monde*, Andre Fontaine, appeared in the English section in the *Guardian*:

"The Soviet Union's superiority is sufficient as of now to prevent the United States from exerting the least pressure on it to evict it from any position it might be tempted to occupy in Africa, the Middle East, or elsewhere" (*Guardian* 18.9.79).

Although perhaps a little too sweeping, how true these words have proved. When President Carter made a fuss about Soviet troops on the borders of his country, in Cuba, it was Carter who had to back down. Quite different from the similar situation in 1962, when the Soviet had to back down. This was followed by the humiliation of America in the holding of her Embassy personnel in Iran; and at the end of the year by the 'naked aggression' in Afghanistan. In neither situation was America in a position to bring any worthwhile military or naval power to bear; if she had been able no doubt these moves would not have taken place.

Although we are most readily impressed with Russia's land activities, it is her progress on the sea that carries most significance.

RUSSIAN NAVAL POWER

“Russia’s Global Naval Threat has become the most dangerous of all those in her comprehensive military quiver”
(Opening words of Editorial, Daily Telegraph, 1.10.79).

A book was published in the Conflict Studies series in June 1977 with the title “Soviet Sea Power: The Covert Support Fleet” with subheadings “Meteoric Naval expansion; Challenge to West’s command of the seas; Freighters as fleet auxiliaries; World’s largest fishing fleet; Moscow’s penetration tactics”. The opening words read: “Over the past decade, the Soviet Navy has become a major strategic force on the oceans of the world”. After summarising the Soviet’s various maritime developments it declared: “In this perspective the dramatic rise of the Soviet naval and maritime forces in the past decade *is a unique and unprecedented development in the whole of naval history*” (their italics). So preparations are in hand that will fulfil the words of Daniel 11:40 — the King of the North comes “like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships”.











This progress continues unabated both in quantity of ships and in novelty of design. America is being left behind (see the chart on page 10). In the book “World War III” it is stated that the number of American major warships has dropped from 976 in 1964 to 460 in 1978. In a review of the book “The Modern Soviet Navy” the Telegraph Navy correspondent had as the article-heading “NAVAL BUILD-UP HAS ALREADY GIVEN RUSSIA WIDE LEAD”, and the opening paragraph reads:

“Russia now has a wide-ranging lead at sea over America and Nato, according to Admiral Thomas Hayward, American Chief of Naval Operations. This includes anti-ship missiles, application of new technology, and ship-building” (D.T. 19.10.79).

The greatest threat comes from the attack submarine. Russia has 350, 150 of them nuclear-powered, and is building at the rate of one every five weeks. If this does not seem very impressive the contrast with 1939 will make it so. The German Navy, which came near to winning the battle against the Atlantic food convoys, started the war with approximately 60 submarines. Since the Second World War there has been extensive design improvements in submarines. The latest Soviet design of submarine was announced in these terms:






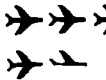
“WEST OUTCLASSED BY LATEST SOVIET SUBMARINES: Russia is now believed to have at sea four Alpha class torpedo-armed nuclear sub-

THE CURRENT BALANCE OF FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE

	NATO Countries	Warsaw Pact Countries	NATO Countries - Warsaw Pact Countries
TOTAL SOLDIERS			1-1-2
SOLDIERS IN FIGHTING UNITS			1-1-1
MAIN BATTLE TANKS			1-2-8
ARTILLERY			1-2-7
FIXED-WING TACTICAL AIRCRAFT			1-2-2

The Nato strength includes French forces in West Germany

THE CURRENT BALANCE OF FORCES IN THE EASTERN ATLANTIC

	NATO Countries	Warsaw Pact Countries	NATO Countries - Warsaw Pact Countries
SURFACE SHIPS			1-1-3
SUBMARINES			1-1-5
FIXED-WING TACTICAL AIRCRAFT			1-0-9

The Nato forces include the French Atlantic fleet.

marines whose diving depth and speed would enable them to evade most Western anti-submarine weapons. The hull is built of titanium, and the nuclear power plant appears to be more efficient than the American counterparts" (D.T. 22.8.79, *Guardian* 27.5.79).

Distinct from the attack submarines are the ballistic-missile submarines with a fantastic firing range. The Soviet have a craft called Delta III "whose 5,200 mile SS-N-18 missiles can reach any part of the northern hemisphere from Soviet-controlled waters". Every American city is open to attack.

At the same time that the vast submarine building project goes ahead, larger ships are also being turned out.

"RUSSIA SURPRISES THE WEST WITH 12 NUCLEAR CRUISERS: The Russian navy has sprung a surprise with the construction of 12 nuclear-powered cruisers able to operate Forger vertical take-off and landing fighters as well as anti-submarine helicopters. These 32,000 ton ships are the first nuclear-powered surface warships in the Russian Fleet" (D.T.14.8.79).

The article adds:

"In addition to the new cruisers, the Russians, within the next three years, are expected to complete the third and fourth of their Kiev-class aircraft carriers. Three smaller cruisers of the new 10,000-ton Kirov class are being built as well as the last two of the ten ships of the 9,500-ton Kara class".

What a picture of a mighty naval power.

To this picture one must add the significant merchant and fishing fleets. They are significant because they are organised as auxiliaries to the navy. In the book referred to at the beginning, the object in writing was to highlight the importance of these two fleets, and this was expressed in the title: "Soviet Sea Power: The Covert Support Fleet". These two fleets are under the centralised control of the Soviet Navy and carry naval personnel. The merchant fleet is now estimated at 2,000 ships; many are long hatch cargo boats designed to carry heavy artillery, aircraft, and tanks: and have been used in this way in the wars in Angola and Vietnam. There are some 4,000 fishing vessels, some 1,000 of them over 2,000 tons. A description is given of "the centrally directed, semi-militarised structure" which controls this vast fleet; — "a superbly modernised and semi-militarised fishing fleet roams the high seas". These vessels are able to lay simple but effective mines. Russia now has a stock of some 400,000 mines.

"Do not forget that in the last war there were 280 Royal Navy ships sunk by mines, more than by any other means. On average there are 35 Russian merchant ships in British ports every day. Last year a total of 3,491 Soviet merchant ships called at ports in Britain".

In these words Admiral Sir Terence was emphasising the way in

which by careful planning the Soviet could block so many British ports before hostilities started (D.T. 23.3.79).

All this has developed in some 20 years!

This is only half the story! For world-wide maritime and naval fleets cannot operate without world-wide bases. British school children used to be acquainted with the world map and the many pink areas scattered over the globe providing ample British naval facilities. For the Soviet, essentially a land-based power, all such facilities had to be acquired as the Navy grew. In 1955 the USSR had no foreign naval bases. Now the situation is as depicted on the map. So many of her aggressive land exploits have been guided by this vital need for naval facilities. Tartus and Latakia in Syria; Tripoli, Benghazi, Tobruk in Libya; provide bases in the Mediterranean. On the African Atlantic coast she has Conakry in Guinea, Point Noire in Congolia, Luanda in Angolia; moving eastwards she has Maputo in Mozambique, Aden in South Yemen, Umm Quasr in the Persian Gulf, Cam Ranh in Vietnam:—all these places have been ‘acquired’ by treaty, by bullying, by terrorism in the past 10 years or so. Some bases had been built by the British or Americans years ago; this is so for the base at Tripoli where Gaddafi offered facilities to the Russians this year. Likewise the giant American and naval air base in Vietnam; and of course, the excellent British naval facilities at Aden. For the control of the northern Atlantic, Russia is currently building a large naval base in the Baltic near Riga.

“Nato’s naval circles in Brussels conclude that the base will strengthen the Warsaw Pact’s ability to intercept heavy seaborne equipment, such as tanks and artillery, reaching Western Europe from North America during a crisis period when mobilisation has begun” (D.T. 5.4.79).

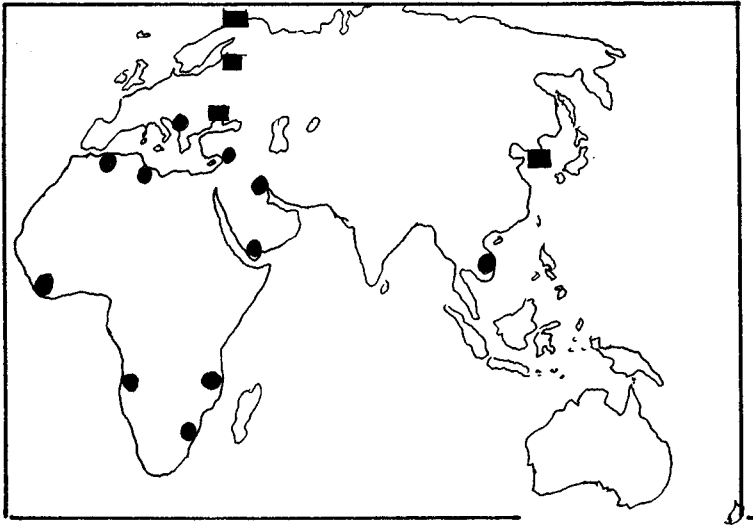
WORLD DOMINATION

When we have digested this complex and astonishing development in so short a time, the question is—for what purpose? Their own Chief Naval Commander, Admiral Gorshkov answers in his book “The Sea Power of the State”:—

“Today we have a fully modern navy, equipped with everything necessary for the successful performance of all missions on the expanses of the world oceans. Naval forces can be used—in peace time to put pressure on their enemies, as a type of military demonstration, as a threat to interrupting sea communications and as a hindrance to ocean commerce. The flag of the Soviet Navy now flies over the oceans of the world. Sooner or later the West will have to understand that it is no longer master of the seas.”

“Soviet sea power, merely a minor defensive arm in 1953, has become the

optimum means to defeat the imperialist enemy, and the most important element in the Soviet arsenal to prepare the way for a Communised world” (*Conflict Studies No. 3*).



Sketch map showing the Headquarters of the four Soviet fleets — ■, and the main naval bases and facilities she has 'acquired' in recent years round the African and Asian continents — ●.

No longer defensive, the Soviet has plans for world domination. Relative to Western Europe and the Middle East, Russia is so placed as a land power that she could expect to conquer these without a great navy. Her aims are larger than this, and world domination requires control of the sea; access to all shores. Naval power is the only way to a direct confrontation with her rival superpower, America.

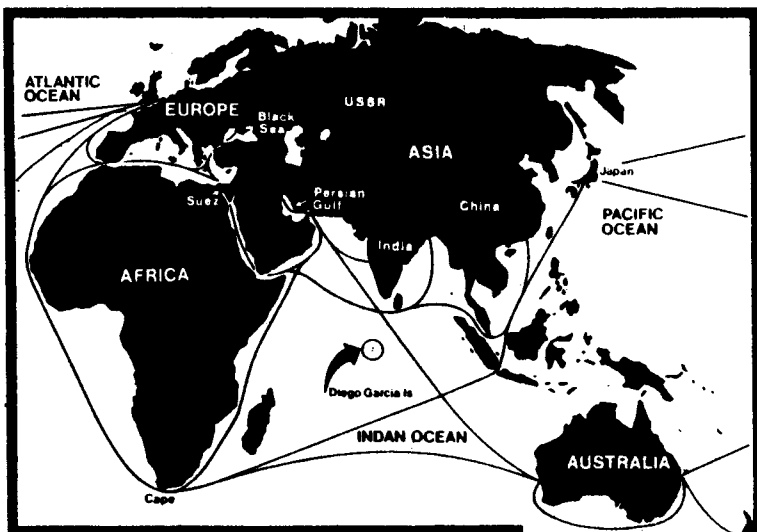
But as Admiral Gorshkov states in the quotation above, the navy they have built is a tremendous factor now, in 'peace time'.

THE VITAL ELEMENT OF THE WORLD'S SEA LANES

Here and now the Soviet by sea control are aiming at a stranglehold on Europe particularly, and on America to a less extent. This threat has become so alarming that Conflict Studies produced in September 1979 an assessment by the Admiral of the Fleet with the

title "World Shipping at Risk: the Looming Threat to the Lifelines". For Britain and Western Europe the sea is absolutely vital to continued economic life. The inflow of food and raw materials, the export of manufactured goods, are taken for granted, but depend entirely on the freedom of the seas. To demonstrate the vastness of the traffic along the world's 'sealanes' this book presents figures of the ships being used. World shipping is largely along four highways. Trade with the Arabian oil area results in 1,000 loaded ships at sea on any day; trade from the Far East 1,300 ships; trade from South America 900 ships; and trade across the Atlantic from America 5,000 ships. **Well over 8,000 fully loaded ships at sea every day, all the year round: and nearly as many again in ballast going to pick up exports or imports!**

In as far as the Soviet attains supremacy on the seas, the vast flow of the nation's life-blood is under threat. This can have a profound effect on the thinking of European leaders. They are afraid of a confrontation with the Soviet. Acquiescence to the pressure from the Soviet becomes an accepted condition of mind, and the will to resist aggression gets less. This is part of the Soviet's preparation for the take-over of Western Europe. In the book "World War III" it is assumed that the subjugation of Europe is the primary aim, and the initial surprise action will be at sea, in the North Atlantic.



The complexity of the sea trade routes which the Soviet fleets now threaten.

“So Stage One would be limited operations at sea. Once the Western Power’s will to resist had been tested . . . if the current spate of weak-willed vacillation were predominant, Stage Two, a land and air offensive in Europe, would probably follow” (p.160).

WEST EUROPE AND THE SOVIET

“Weak-willed vacillation” is perhaps not a fair description of West Europe’s plight. With 600 missiles constantly pointing over Western Europe, each fitted with three independently pre-targetted nuclear warheads, all capable of ‘reaching all points in Europe with 300,000 times the force of the Hiroshima bomb’ (Dr. Luns—D.T.),¹ this is a fearful situation under which to live. It is quite understandable that France and Germany have not been willing to give their full support to America against the Soviet in the matter of Afghanistan. Their attitude is well expressed in the headline: “WEST GERMANY KEEPS DETENTE HOPES ALIVE” (D.T. 8.1.80). Western Europe shrinks from finding herself in a cold war relation with the Soviet.

Further, one must keep in mind the degree of co-operation between France, Germany and the Soviet in the past ten years (see *Milestones to the Kingdom*, 1978). Brezhnev visited Bonn in 1978; Giscard D’Estaing spent two days in Moscow in May 1979. France has quite close relations with Poland:

“Mr Edward Gierek, the Polish Communist party leader, flew into Evreux military airport from Warsaw for two days of confidential talks with President Giscard d’Estaing . . . The two-nation ‘summit’ is the fifth since President Giscard d’Estaing’s election . . . historically France has had a ‘special relationship’ with Poland and this seems to have grown apace in recent years” (D.T. 8.9.79).

The probable key to the immediate future is Communist Yugoslavia. Tito is passing off the scene. The Soviet has always regarded Yugoslavia as a rebellious son, and would feel justified in putting the Socialist house in order when ‘invited’ into the country. This would be a crucial test for America. Whereas she could do nothing about the Afghanistan invasion in a military sense, she clearly has ample troops in Europe to act. If she did not, Western Europe would thereafter regard herself as abandoned by the U.S. and would turn to the Soviet. But the situation may very likely be the other way round, with the same end result. Western Europe may be unwilling to actively support America against Russian “aggression” in Yugoslavia, and America would then decide to write-off Western Europe.



Once Russia has got a grip on Yugoslavia, she has a coastline in the Mediterranean, and is directly threatening Italy. This would speed up the Pope's negotiations with the Soviet! No doubt the Jesuits would prepare the ground for the "surrender" of Western Europe to the Soviet, as they prepared the ground between the two world wars for the surrender of France to Germany in 1940.

THE LATTER-DAY LUCIFER

A CRUEL DESPOTIC POWER

We have looked at the rapid growth of the Soviet sea power, a master key to world domination. The story is similar on the land and in the air. In Europe Russia's military strength is now well known, with the 600 SS-20 nuclear missiles facing Western Europe, and the 2.5 to 1 preponderance of tanks. Her European armies are trained and equipped to use poison gas. The terrible suffering that nuclear and chemical warfare would bring chills the heart. With the vast stocks of nuclear weapons, chemical and germ weapons, war is a fearful prospect when waged by the cruel leaders such as Russia has.

Europe and other countries in the grip of the Soviet will be in a cruel bondage. The character of the men who rule in the Soviet is well-known, and the oppression within the Soviet is well-known—though people at the present look at this from afar with little personal fear. Even though there has been some relaxation of recent years, it is estimated that there are today five million people imprisoned or working in forced labour camps (D.T. 15.9.79); the treating of dissidents in mental hospitals has been widely reported; there lives in our memory the crushing of the revolts in Hungary (1956) and Czechoslovakia (1968). These facts are pointers to the nature of what is about to come: much of the world will be in the grip of a terrible despotism.

We have enough facts before us today, that we have no difficulty in picturing this coming day of trouble. Bro. Thomas saw the same terrible picture by the guidance of Bible prophecy: "There never has been such an age of conquest as that which will soon open upon the world; and as to the establishment of European freedom and independence, the war to be initiated is the setting in of an overwhelming inundation that will submerge them under one of the most terrible and scorching despotisms that ever wrung the heart of nations" (Exposition of Daniel, Section 26). How did he know this? There is much prophecy concerning these days that lie ahead. In Israel's 'eventide' of trouble, before the day of Zion's glory, there is to exist the replicas of the Assyrian and Babylonian powers that swept over the then known world. So we speak of the latter-day Assyrian; and the final phase of the Babylonian power. The characteristics of these nations described in the Bible, and their attitude to Israel, are to be repeated. This is one of the major themes of Bible prophecy. Babylon started as Babel, Genesis ch. 10, with



THE KINGDOMS OF MEN CHALLENGE CHRIST

"What shall be in the latter days . . . This great Image whose brightness was excellent . . . and the form thereof terrible". (Daniel 2:28, 31).

rebellion against God, and it passes through many phases of the kingdoms of men until destroyed as Babylon the GREAT by Christ and the saints. The Old Testament prophets were quite clear that there would be a final Babylonish power in opposition to Christ. This is well expressed in the Image seen by Nebuchadnezzar, which concerned *“what shall be in the latter days”*. This great Image *“whose brightness was excellent . . . and the form thereof terrible”* has never yet stood on its feet. It is to be assembled in the latter days and will have a Babylonish head to direct it, and it will stand on the iron-clay feet and toes of Europe. So there is to be a final confederacy of the nations represented by the metals of the Image and a Babylonish head to direct them. This is the confederacy to be destroyed by the little Stone Power of Christ and the saints. Again, the continuance of the spirit of Babylon through the “seven times” (2,520 years) is also declared in the fourth chapter of Daniel. The Babylonish tree is cut down, but the root and stump remain, banded with brass and iron for the seven times. In other words, the Greek and Roman dominions would all belong to the root of Babylon. The latter-day Babylon is to attempt to crush Israel, but this time it will not succeed. Jeremiah tells us the situation will be different from what happened in his time. Jeremiah chapters 50 and 51 speak of events then soon to happen, and also of events afar off, when *“in those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve”* (50:20). This is salvation both for the ten tribes and the two tribes, which has not yet happened. Of this time, Jeremiah later says, *“The portion of Jacob is not like them (the idol makers); for he is the former of all things: and Israel is the rod of his inheritance: the LORD (Yahweh) of hosts is his name. Thou art my battle axe and weapons of war; for with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms”* (51:19, 20). And the section ends with making Babylon, the ‘destroying mountain’ a ‘burnt mountain’ rolled down the rocks. Such language tells us we must be looking for the appearance of a final phase of ancient Babylon, a power with the same characteristics and hostility to Israel.

Our interest is in comparing the characteristics of the Soviet system as we see it emerging, with the characteristics of Ancient Assyria and Babylon (see footnote on page 23).

We have several descriptions of the Chaldean Babylonian power that dominated the then-known world.

JOEL

Joel in his 2nd chapter describes the invasion of Israel by the Babylonians:

“A day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been any the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them.

“Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness.

“The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining: And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?” (vv. 2, 3, 6, 10, 11).

HABAKKUK

Habakkuk, after speaking of wickedness in Israel, has a similar message:

“For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwelling places that are not their’s.

“They are terrible and dreadful: their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves.

“Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves: and their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from far; they shall fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat.

“They shall come all for violence: their faces shall sup up as the east wind, and they shall gather the captivity as the sand.

“And they shall scoff at the kings, and the princes shall be a scorn unto them: they shall deride every strong hold; for they shall heap dust, and take it” (1:6-10).

Habakkuk then makes it plain in his next chapter that a similar power would exist at the end of prophetic times: *“And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an*

appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it" (vv. 2-3). In our day the vision is beginning to 'speak'. This Babylonish ruling power that is to arise is described in the following words:

"Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, he is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people: . . . Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his! how long? and to him that ladeth himself with thick clay! Woe to him that covereth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil. Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and stablisheth a city by iniquity!" (vv. 5, 6, 9, 12).

We have already witnessed how the Soviet power exhibits these qualities—laying hands on nations, taking that which is not his, building a city with blood as it takes hold of the capitals of Eastern Europe, South Yemen, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, to install its puppet governments.

ISAIAH

Isaiah gives us a similar picture. Chapter 13 is the burden of Chaldean Babylon:

"Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them . . . And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah" (vv. 17, 19).

Then in the next chapter, in a very similar way to what we saw in Habakkuk, the prophet pictures a latter-day Assyrio-Babylonish power, and events still in the future. That the events are still in the future is clear from verses 1-3. It is at a time when the LORD has mercy on Jacob; strangers shall cleave to the house of Jacob and shall bring Israel back to their own land; Israel shall take their oppressors captive and rule over them. This did not happen in the restoration under Zerubbabel and Nehemiah; they were subject people paying tribute. So the proverb or parable that follows against "the king of Babylon" is something yet future, modelled on events in the past. This is how the latter-day Babylonish power is described: *"He who smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger"* (v.6); *"That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened*

not the house of his prisoners” (v.17). We find no difficulty in picturing the Soviet power fulfilling this, when it has developed to its full power.

This chapter in Isaiah also tells us of how this Power and its subject people will invade the land of Israel to establish its rule over the world from Jerusalem, and defy the God of Israel.

“How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer (Day Star), son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the cloud; I will be like the most High” (vv.12-14).

This is parallel with Daniel 11:45: *“He shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain”*. Sennacherib the Assyrian was the type of the latter-day Lucifer (see footnote below). *“By the multitude of my chariots am I come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon; . . . I will enter into the height of his border”*. To which boasting Isaiah says: *“Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? even against the Holy One of Israel”* (37:23, 24). The ‘stars of God’ refer to the rulers of Israel against which Lucifer exalted himself. No doubt Nebuchadnezzar, like Sennacherib, expressed the same thoughts; and Belshazzar also despised the Holy One of Israel; and so will it be in the future.

Here then, written in the prophets long ago is the outline of things we see shaping in our day. Bro. Thomas saw accurately this outline of events from his study of the prophets; and he hoped for an immediate fulfilment. But the countries were not ready in his day. What tremendous developments there have been in the further 150 years. Russia then was a comparatively backward country; the Middle East was only beginning to stir from its long centuries of desolation. We can trace the progress of the 150 years, and more particularly the amazingly rapid changes of the past 25 years. Surely we are approaching the final shaping of things long prophesied in the scripture.

As with Bro. Thomas we want it all to happen in the next year or so. We do not know the detail or pace of the unfolding drama. We must keep ourselves diligently watching — the watchmen on the walls of Jerusalem who *“keep not silence, and give him no rest, till*

he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth” (Is.62:6, 7).

Knowing the terrible time that lies ahead before Jerusalem can become the city of peace, we should enter into the spirit of Jesus’ words in Luke 21:34-36:—

“And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

“For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

“Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”

“Worthy to escape” — that is what we should be attending to at this late hour. Those who are getting involved in helping the world in its present distress, are losing their way. Ours is to prepare for the great work of regeneration under Christ. The present world is doomed, and its anguish and suffering will increase. We do not know whether we shall still be waiting when Russia invades Western Europe and brings a time of trouble for Britain. We can be sure from the prophetic record that the saints will be gathered before the great confederacy invades the land.

FOOTNOTE TO PAGE 19

THE ASSOCIATION OF BABYLON WITH ASSYRIA

Brethren sometimes try to assign different future happenings to the latter-day Assyrian and to the latter-day Chaldean Babylon. There may be substance in this, but what is important is the close identity of the two powers. We usually associate Nineveh with the Assyrians and Babylon with the Chaldeans. But in the last Assyrian supremacy, Babylon was a centre for Assyria as well as Nineveh. Here are a few historical facts taken from Bro. W. H. Boulton’s “Babylon, Assyria and Israel”. The last Assyrian dynasty, which is the one with which the kings of Israel were concerned, included the kings Tiglath Pileser, Sargon II, Sennacherib, Esarhaddon, Ashur-bani-pal. It runs from about 740 BC to 626 BC when Nabopolassar, father of Nebuchadnezzar, reasserted the independence of Babylonia, and founded a new Chaldean dynasty. Regarding Sargon, Bro. Boulton writes: “After this Sargon turned his attention to Merodach Baladan, who was compelled to flee from Babylon, the country being entirely conquered by the Assyrians. The result of this conquest was that Assyria and Babylon were ruled over by one king. It is very significant in the history of Assyria, to see how the kings seemed drawn by some influence to seek opportunity to go to Babylon and there ‘take the hand of Bel’. Sargon did this, taking part in the ceremonies which were supposed to consecrate him a properly recognised successor to the fabulous heroes of the old Babylonian Empire”. Regarding the next king of Assyria: “Babylon was treated by Sennacherib as a vassal state”. Esarhaddon’s attitude was different: “Towards the city of Babylon, however, he adopted a different policy from that of his predecessors. He set to work to rebuild it and its temples, and

even went so far as to worship the Babylonian gods, Nebo and Marduk". He sometimes lived in Babylon and retired there when he abdicated in favour of his son. Ashur-bani-pal rebuilt the temple of Merodach in Babylon. So it will be seen that around the word Babylon we can associate the Assyrians as well as the Chaldeans of Nebuchadnezzar's days. This will explain Bro. Thomas' frequent phrase—the latter-day Assyrio-Babylonian power. Biblically the close relation is expressed in the Chaldean dynasty, Daniel's first beast, being the Assyrian lion with wings plucked. The Assyrian was a type of the Lucifer in Isaiah chapter 14, as well as the Chaldean king.

RELIGION IN LATTER-DAY BABYLON— Activities of the New Pope

THE SORCERIES OF BABYLON

No power can conquer and govern by force alone. Religion was a big element in the government of the ancient Babylonian empire. Isaiah refers to this in his 47th chapter: *“But these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments”*. *“Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the star-gazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee”* (Is.47:9, 13). Jeremiah describes how her wine intoxicated the nations (including Israel): *“Babylon hath been a golden cup in the LORD’s hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunk of her wine; therefore the nations are mad”* (Jer. 51:7). Thus her philosophies and religion had been used in her conquest of the nations. Almost identical language to that in Isaiah and Jeremiah is used in the book of Revelation of the latter-day Babylon; words in chapters 17 and 18 with which we are familiar. The latter-day Babylonish power is a beast with seven heads and ten horns carrying a harlot. She has a golden cup in her hand: *“All nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her.”* Modern Babylon’s intoxicating wine is similar to that of old Babylon; she has her priestcraft, her confession, her rituals, the worship of the many gods, including the Woman and Child. We can be sure that the Roman Catholic power will increase in influence in the world of today; her theme of peace and justice, her ritual, her systematic forgiveness of sin, her scope for intrigue in every country through her priests and ambassadors: all this will be part of the paraphernalia of the Babylon power that holds the nations in its grip. So we know that there must be reproachment between the Soviet and the Vatican, in the building up of the Image confederacy.

We have written on this theme several times before, but events of 1979 add to the picture. The general situation surrounding the new Pope is quite thrilling.

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE POPE’S FIRST YEAR.

After Pope John Paul II’s election in November 1978, writers offered their assessment of his personality and prospects. It was

generally acknowledged that here was a man of outstanding physical and intellectual strength and determination; a man with much experience, diplomatic skill, oratory and charisma. Now a year has gone by and he has become a leading personality of the world. Vast millions have become aware of his power and potential. The senior editor of the French *Le Monde* reviewed the position in October 1979 after the Pope had addressed the United Nations in New York. His opening paragraph read:

“From Saint Peter’s Square to Harlem, by way of Mexico, Poland and Ireland, Pope John Paul II attracts record-breaking crowds wherever he goes. He’s today’s star of stars: there isn’t a king, a president, a rock singer, a sports hero or a movie star who can compete with him. The phenomenon is all the more extraordinary in that a year ago few people outside the archdiocese of Krakow even knew that a Cardinal Wojtyla existed.

“An event of this scale in the last quarter of a century which has thought it could get along without God to the point of prematurely celebrating His demise definitely merits some investigation into the reasons behind the Pope’s popularity and its significance for the future.

“The reasons aren’t legion—in fact they can be boiled down to one alone: the emergence of the right man at the right time.”

He explained the reasons why in more detail. The world is reaching a point of disillusionment with the attractiveness of material progress and the exploitation of the senses. And faced with uncertainties, crises, lack of purpose in life and fears for the future, it turns to a man speaking with authority on a higher spiritual plane; a man whose presence is solid and reassuring:

“In fact John Paul II would appear to be the man of the hour in a number of respects. In a chilly, anxious world that has seen everything, he embodies tranquil certitude, he is both undaunted and beneficent . . .”

Though he has this command as a leader, he can equally be at home with the common people.

“Before he entered the priesthood, Karol Wojtyla trained to become an actor. Today he walks on the world stage and he is one of its great performers. His repertoire ranges from deep, obvious piety to broad humor, profound ideas and a great line in drinking songs, which he bawled from a balcony on a remarkable Sunday evening in Gniezno. He has an unerring feel for the mood of an audience and the timing and voice — a rich, rolling baritone” (*The Pope in Poland, June 4th, 1979*).

Norman Webster, the reporter who produced material for the book “*The Pope in Poland*” gives his own assessment of this man. Here are some extracts:

“First off, he’s a superstar, no doubt about it. Take the intellectual bite of a Churchill, add the flair of a Kennedy, then perhaps mix in a little Muhammad Ali, and you’ll be getting there. The television camera loves him.

Strength, sincerity and good humour fairly leap from the broad face into your living room. In addition, as an old student of acting, he has command of gesture, timing, and voice modulation that any politician would sell his executive assistant for."

"He has a marvellous knack for the common touch. Karol Wojtyla has not spent his life in a monastery. He played sports, acted and wrote poetry, had a girl friend, worked in a dusty quarry and chemical factory—all before committing himself to the priesthood."

"Finally, a man in a hurry, his mission seems to be nothing less than to save Christianity from itself. He is concerned about the Third World, with hammering out a new deal with Communism, and with forging some kind of Christian unity from the Atlantic to the Urals."

So the Pope is a man of the world, whom the world likes to think is a man of God. He answers to John's criterion: "*They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them . . . hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error*" (1 John 4:5, 6).

The Pope's activities in his first year of office throw considerable light on probable aims and the effectiveness of this suddenly launched world leader. Both the Soviet and the Vatican, each in their own spheres, are aiming at world influence and control. They are both power seekers. We know they are to join forces. What a tremendous force it will be! Military power from the Soviet, supported by the emotional, religious grip of the Vatican; both crying loudly "Justice and Peace".

The Pope has already carried out five far-flung missions: Mexico in January; Poland in May; Ireland in September; America and the United Nations in October; Turkey in November. All in one year! If the reports on these visits are examined closely, each can be seen to have its own different objective. Here is a man working on a plan of action. No doubt he is laying foundations for his envisaged coming 'spiritual' world power. Like Sennacherib of old, he works to his own ends, unconscious that God is using him to God's ends: "*I will gather all nations to Jerusalem to battle.*" Yes, eventually Jerusalem will become the world focus. It will be the crisis place for religion as well as for world government.

VISIT TO MEXICO

What the Pope said in Mexico heralded a distinct change in Vatican policy. The Pope condemned the Marxist leaning of the past few years. His stand was for orthodox Roman Catholic values. Christian justice and peace must not be confused with Marxist materialism, and revolution. Yet he was quite ready to interfere in politics, acting from his elevated position.

“For while the Pope said the fight for human rights and social justice must be firmly rooted in the Church’s teachings, and not the ideology of revolutionary violence, he went on to demonstrate that this doctrinal position did not inhibit him attacking poverty, calling for expropriation of land for peasants, and championing workers’ rights” (*D. T. 7.2.79*).

He is aiming at a strong distinctive Church that can stand up to opposing political forces, and win public approval.

VISIT TO POLAND

Obviously the particular significance of this visit lies in Vatican-Soviet relations. It demonstrated that after 35 years of Marxist indoctrination little impression had been made. The Church is winning and the Party are on the defensive. There has been growing, limited, co-operation between Church and Party over the past 10 years. There has been great hardship in the country with shortages of bread, meat, fuel, etc., and the Church has provided a helpful control of the people to avoid riots and sabotage. With such a preliminary development, the Pope’s visit was seen as a great success; he established the Church position, reluctantly accepted by the government. He was treated with dignity and full honours.

He visited seven major cities, where vast open-air assemblies around an elevated altar listened to his speeches. The crowds took Mass, sang hymns— Christ conquers, Christ rules’—and cheered themselves hoarse. In some of his speeches the Pope was openly critical of the restraints still imposed on the Church. The overall picture is briefly sketched by Hella Pick of the Guardian:

“One of the Pope’s first acts in Poland was to meet the Polish Leader, Mr. Gierek. The two cohorts, Church and State, faced each other unsmilingly. But both spoke of the need for mutual understanding and co-operation. During the Pope’s visit the authorities allowed the Pope to dominate the Polish scene, assert the superiority of Christian values, and call for reconciliation between Eastern and Western Europe that sounds like the launching of a campaign for Euro-Christianity” (*17.6.79*).

The Pope left Poland on June 10th:

“His voice cracking with emotion and fatigue, the Pope bade farewell today to his countrymen at an outdoor mass attended by at least 1.5 million of them. It was the largest gathering in Polish history, maybe one of the largest such crowds the world has ever seen” (*Norman Webster*).

The Soviet must see what an advantage it would be in controlling the satellite nations to have this man co-operating with them.

MARY ELEVATED

Polish Catholics are very superstitious. They are devoted to the

black Madonna of Cracow. The Pope is a strong devotee of Mary. He has a large 'M' on his coat of arms for Mary. At Czestochowa on June 4th in the middle of an outdoor mass, delivering a speech about the Virgin Mary, he led the huge crowd into song, "Mary, thou art our queen, you are our liberating mother." The following is the Pope's final prayer on leaving Poland:

" Our Lady of the Bright Mountain, Mother of the Church! Once more I consecrate myself to you 'in your maternal slavery of love': Totus tuus! I am all yours! I consecrate to you the whole Church—everywhere and to the ends of the earth! I consecrate to you Humanity: I consecrate to you all men and women, my brothers and sisters. All the Peoples and the Nations. I consecrate to you Europe and all the continents. I consecrate to you Rome and Poland, united, through your servant, by a fresh bond of love.

Mother, accept us!

Mother, do not abandon us!

Mother, be our guide!"

(Combat. Belfast, November, 1979).

The growing cult of Mariolatry is dealt with in chapter 4 of "Babylon and Jerusalem" (by the author, 1977) entitled "Mariolatry, old Babylon with a new emphasis."

The great emphasis on Mary was also apparent in his visit to Ireland.

VISIT TO IRELAND

In Poland the impact was chiefly on the satellite countries. In his visit to Ireland he made an impression over a much larger area. Ireland is part of the Common Market; it has strong connections with the large Irish population in the U.S.; it is a neighbour of Britain. So he had a big audience via television and other reporting. The occasion was an excellent introduction to his grand sweep through America and to the United Nations that followed.

In Ireland two of the objectives were, first, championing the Virgin Mary. His visit was officially to visit Knock in the centenary of the appearance of Mary at Knock. This has created a new shrine, perhaps to rival Lourdes. It is estimated there will be a million or more tourists a year to honour Mary. Secondly, he was attempting to influence the modernists. In Poland, 90% Catholic as in Ireland, the people are all loyal to conservative Catholic doctrine, but in Ireland the hierarchy have been concerned for years with the liberal modernist outlook of the younger Catholics and particularly the upper classes. So the objective was to re-assert, for all the world to hear, the basic Catholic teaching and condemn divorce, homosexuals, contraception, abortion, marrying of priests, etc.

The Guardian summarised his visit:

“The Pope has made his visit a masterpiece of pastoral and political presentation. In four separate major addresses, he has punctiliously reaffirmed basic Catholic theology, pointed to the political consequences, appealed to the nation's young to grasp the new vision, and demonstrated his own passionate commitment to the Virgin Mary” (*Guardian* 7.10.79).

In addition to this he drew into his picture many Protestants from Northern Ireland, indeed the Protestant community generally. As the Daily Telegraph editorial said:

“The main purpose of the visit was to recall Ireland, and through her the rest of Christendom, to the authentic traditions of Christian faith and morals. The POPE is plainly determined to arrest the progress by which Christians of all denominations, in their efforts to come to terms with the contemporary world, are stripping their beliefs of everything that acknowledges the miraculous ...” (*D.T.* 2.10.79)

VISIT TO AMERICA AND UNITED NATIONS

‘TIME’ magazine issued a special colour album of the Pope’s visit. The cover title was: “JOHN PAUL, SUPERSTAR”. Observers generally were astonished that he captured all America, Catholics and non-Catholics alike; with his great triumph of being received at the White House by President Carter with all the honours of a Head of State.

Quoting from the beginning of the six-page Introduction to the Album:

“As he led his triumphant seven-day journey of joy through the U.S., Pope John Paul II confirmed what his earlier tours of Mexico and Poland had intimated: after only a year in office, the Pontiff is emerging as the kind of incandescent leader that the world hungers for—one who can make the people feel that they have been lifted above the drabness of their own lives and shown that they are capable of better emotions, and better deeds than they may have thought”.

Near the conclusion the same theme was repeated:

“Perhaps more important, John Paul left behind him a morally imperative message for a people who seemed to need it. His visit showed with surprising clarity that many Americans of many creeds are looking for direction and stability. They found themselves attracted to this strong virile figure, a natural leader who was both compassionate and stern”.

On arrival in America he was met by Rosalynn Carter delegating for her husband. “Americans of every faith have come to love you in a special way”, she said. As he toured the various States, there were the vast crowds, the open-air Mass, the varied addresses to suit the particular audience. Then came the visit to the White House.

“On Saturday morning John Paul made his last and most historic stop, arriving in Washington in a blaze of sunshine and a feast of good will. For the first

time, a Pope was visiting the White House, a happening that would have been inconceivable in U.S. politics just two decades ago”.

In greeting the Pope before the 3,500 guests, including many ranking figures of the Government, the President said:

“You have moved among us as a champion of dignity and decency for every human being, and as a pilgrim of peace among nations. You have offered us your love . . . you can be sure, Pope John Paul, that the people of America return your love.”

Before the second reception before 6,000 guests, the President and the Pope conferred together for an hour.

It is less than 20 years since John Kennedy in campaigning for the Presidency struggled hard to keep any reference to Roman Catholicism, or the Pope, out of his campaign. These topics would have ruined his chances. So in this report of John Paul’s visit, under the heading “Back Door No Longer”, the writer opens:

“Even after we have seen it, the act of bringing a Pope in the front door of the White House just like an Arab with oil, or a State chairman with delegates, is nothing short of a miracle.”

Altogether the Pope delivered 49 speeches, prayers, greetings and homilies. No one could object to what he said. His appeal all the time was for justice, service, christian love. When addressing young people he said:

“Faced with problems and disappointments, many people will try to escape from responsibility in selfishness, escape in sexual pleasure, escape in drugs, escape in violence, escape in indifference and cynical attitudes. But today, I propose to you the option of love, which is the opposite of escape . . . Whatever you make of your lives, let it be something that reflects the love of Christ . . . love demands effort and a personal commitment to the will of God. It means discipline and sacrifice, but it also means joy and human fulfilment. Dear young people: Do not be afraid of honest effort and honest work; do not be afraid of the truth.”

Here indeed is a world religious leader. And he has behind him a world-wide system to back up his actions. It is not difficult to see the coming fulfilment of Biblical prophecy in Revelation, chapters 17 and 18; “*For by thy sorceries were all nations deceived;*” “*the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication*”. The gracious and righteous teachings of Christ have through the long centuries been used to deceive the nations, to hide the evil intentions; and so it continues today.

VISIT TO TURKEY

His visit to Turkey was a straightforward matter, seeking a continuation of the reconciliation between the east and the west

Churches. The major schism was healed in 1965 when Athenagoras annulled the excommunication pronounced on the Church of Rome in 1054.

The only hindrance to full communion between the professed 700 million Roman Catholics and the 200 million Orthodox Catholics is the matter of the Pope's infallibility. As a result of the visit a theological commission is being set up to examine the matter, and no doubt find a 'formula' regarding the collegiality of the bishops of Rome that both sides can swallow. The further purpose of his visit, and of greater interest, was his appeal to the Moslems, seeking to overcome past enmities. He did his best to find common ground: the Moslems worshipped one God; they venerated Christ; they honoured the Virgin Mary; they waited for the same Day of Judgment and resurrection.

"I ask if it is not urgent today, when Christians and Moslems have entered a new period of history, to recognise and develop the spiritual links which unite them" (*D.T. 30.11.79*).

What effect this had, or will have, we do not know, but here is the Vatican seeking association with other religions in spreading her world influence.

OBEY OR ELSE

We have already commented on the Pope's stand for traditional Catholic doctrine and morals in his various visits. In western countries the liberal Catholics have been allowed to adopt modern ideas and compromise doctrine with Protestants and even Marxists. John Paul has now said firmly this must stop.

The famous Swiss priest, theologian Hans Kung, was allowed to defy Paul VI for years; the new Pope has excommunicated him and taken away his licence to teach theology. Now there is a further remarkable step. Seven Dutch bishops have been summoned to an extraordinary Synod at Rome at which the Pope himself will preside behind closed doors. "The holding of an Extraordinary Synod with the Pope is unprecedented" (*D.T. 14.1.80*). In America there are 6,000 Jesuits — out of a world total of 27,500. They may be teachers, in Congress, doctors, etc. and move in every walk of life. In a Guardian article headed "PAPAL MESSAGE: OBEY OR ELSE" it is reported that the Pope has called on Jesuit Superiors throughout the world to take action against "the lamented shortcomings' now found in the Order. Use 'requisite firmness' the Pope advised" (*13.1.80*).

It requires a man of the strength and purposefulness of John

Paul to restore the authority of the Church.

THE THIRD ROME

Russia is the successor to the old Roman Byzantine Empire (see “Babylon and Jerusalem”). She has for centuries cherished the idea of restoring the Roman empire and establishing the Third Rome in Constantinople — modern Istanbul. This we believe will happen, with the dominant civil power in Constantinople and the religious centre in Rome. This is the time of the standing up of the great Image, forming a European and Middle East confederacy, a phase prior to the final support of the ten horns for the Papacy after Armageddon. Now, is it not significant that the present Pope is a Slav! The Russians, Poles, Czechs, Bulgarians, etc., are all Slav people. Will not this Slav orientation make it easier for Pan-European christianity to be governed by the Pope with the civil support of the Russian leader. It needs a Slav to understand a Slav, and John Paul’s background, education and wide experience all make him a man suitable for this revival of ritualistic christianity in Europe, in co-operation with Russian civil power.

Chapter 4

ISRAEL AND THE MIDDLE EAST

LATTER-DAY MOAB TO PROTECT THE JEWS

As children of Zion our interest focuses on the land of Israel, Jerusalem, and the events associated with the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Many prophecies project forward to the final disaster that is to overtake Israel, when their land is over-run, two thirds of the population are killed, and out of this terrible calamity Christ intervenes to destroy the enemy and save his city. The setting for this time of trouble is a clash between two powers north and south of the land. It is expressed in Daniel's king of the north and king of the south; in the challenger to the northern invasion in Ezekiel 38: "*Art thou come to take a spoil?*"; in the two mountains of brass in Zechariah 6, from between which the chariots of the Lord of the whole earth go forth. Relevant to the scriptures used in this Review, the situation is also indicated in Isaiah's prophecy. We have looked at chapters 13 and 14 pointing to the latter-day Assyrio-Babylon power that is to hold the nations in its cruel grip, and come as Lucifer to the mountain of God to set up his throne. Two following chapters, 16 and 17, also direct us to latter-day events in the land, and are part of the same picture. Chapter 15 deals with Moab, but projects forward to the time when "*In mercy shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness*" (Is.16:5). In this setting, in the previous verses, 3 and 4, we read:

"Take counsel, execute judgment; make thy shadow as the night in the midst of the noonday; hide the outcasts; bewray (betray) not him that wandereth. Let mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab; be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler: for the extortioner is at an end, the spoiler ceaseth, the oppressors are consumed out of the land."

This is very clear when read in the context of the first part of chapter 14 about the spoiler. So 'Moab' is not at this time in alliance with the northern confederacy, and is called upon to protect the Jews fleeing from the northern invader. The situation is confirmed by what we read in Daniel 11:41: "*But these shall escape out of his hand (the northern power), even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon*".

Today JORDAN occupies the territory of Moab, Ammon, and Edom. There is no separate people we can now identify with Edom. As we piece together the appropriate scriptures we see the SOUTH Power will extend from Egypt across to Saudi Arabia and Jordan;

that the Northern confederacy will then get a grip on the southwest, Egypt; but it will be successfully resisted towards the southeast. Knowing these things beforehand we watch with great interest today those moves and influences that appear to be in the direction of this final situation. And events that have happened give us much encouragement that the angels are now working towards the finale. How wonderful: the Lord Jesus Christ, with omnipotent power and authority about to return to this wicked, unhappy, groaning world.

EGYPT-ISRAEL PEACE TREATY

The Peace Treaty was signed in Washington at the end of March 1979. Its successful conclusion was essentially the work of President Carter. In the previous 10 years America had built up strong positions in Iran and Saudi Arabia, flanking the Persian Gulf, and the situation looked very satisfactory. Then during 1978 dramatic changes took place. In June a Moscow satellite type of government was established in South Yemen and Aden; in April 1978 there was a communist coup in Afghanistan, rapidly followed by the Soviet installing 2,500 Russian officers and technicians to supervise the Afghan army, and similar 'advisers' for the civil government. The rumblings in Iran were growing larger, and the Shah was deposed in the Revolution in November, 1978.

As a result Saudi Arabia became critical of the U.S.A.'s will and ability to stand by her friends. There was desperate need to establish a firm footing in this South region. Israel and Egypt, the strongest military powers in the region, as enemies were useless; they neutralised each other. As friends, their joint strength would be a tremendous acquisition. Both Israel and Egypt genuinely wanted peace, but their outlooks were so different. Israel was willing to give up Sinai, but would not budge on Jerusalem and the West Bank, and thus provoked the bitter hostility of America's other ally, Saudi Arabia; and of course the more extreme Arab states. President Carter seemed to have an impossible task. During and after the Camp David Agreement, Begin was subjected by Carter to tremendous pressure—threats, bullying, hard words (Jerusalem Post 9.12.79). Begin had to make some semblance of accepting the Egypt-American position on the West Bank, but remained completely unyielding on Jerusalem. As the implementation of the Camp David Agreement was examined in detail, stalemate developed, and the signing date for a Peace Treaty at the end of 1978 was left behind. Thus it was that President Carter risked his personal and Presidential standing by going in person to

Egypt and Israel in March, shuttling to and fro between the two countries for several days. It was a tense situation. The main newspaper headline on the 13th was: "PEACE PACT FAILURE BY CARTER"; and on the 14th "SADAT AND BEGIN SAY 'YES' ". Carter had wrung out of the Israelis enough concessions in that day and night to change the scene; and when he returned to Egypt late on the 14th, he received Sadat's agreement. The situation is graphically painted in the Jerusalem Post:

" But the most extraordinary scene of all was that of the most powerful man in the world spending tens of exhausting hours with the leaders of a tiny, distant and strong-minded nation, picking through the nit and grit of the details of a contract between two Middle Eastern countries . . . He had, after all, a planeload of experts who get paid for doing that kind of work. Carter's intense personal involvement seemed to be a response to a higher calling than politics. His face was without guile. Weariness and something close to despair sometimes seemed to be sheltering behind the smile. But when he spoke, however gently and discreetly, his hosts understood it was not the voice of an American innocent abroad, but the voice of power" (*Jerusalem Post* 18.3.79).

So the shape of things once more moved according to prophecy. Persia — modern Iran — does not belong to the South power; but by implication from the words in Dan. 11:42 Egypt is with the South power until overrun by the North power.

Although it was in 1978-9 that great pressures built up to carry

PEACE שלום

NO MORE WAR...
 DAY OF ISRAEL-EGYPT
 PEACE TREATY 26.3.1979

... לא עוד מלחמה
 יום חתימת חוזה שלום
 26.3.1979 ישראל-מצרים

PEACE שלום

COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE TO CELEBRATE ISRAEL/EGYPT PEACE TREATY

through this dissolving of 30 years hostility and warfare, the moves in this direction go back years. By tracing the steps of a development to a final position, one then sees it as a more solid event. Right from the time that Sadat took over after the death of Nasser in 1970, he was concerned for the improvement of the economy of Egypt, rather than pursuing a Pan-Arab glory. An article in the Jerusalem Post said:

“There has been consistency in Sadat’s attempts to make peace with Israel almost from the moment he gained power. All his changes have the marks of well thoughtout steps” (17.10.78).

As early as April 1977 Carter had agreed with Sadat that Egypt’s direct and friendly contact with Israel was desirable (Guardian 8.4.79). Secret contact was made with the Israelis in July 1977 for Sadat’s dramatic visit to Jerusalem in November.

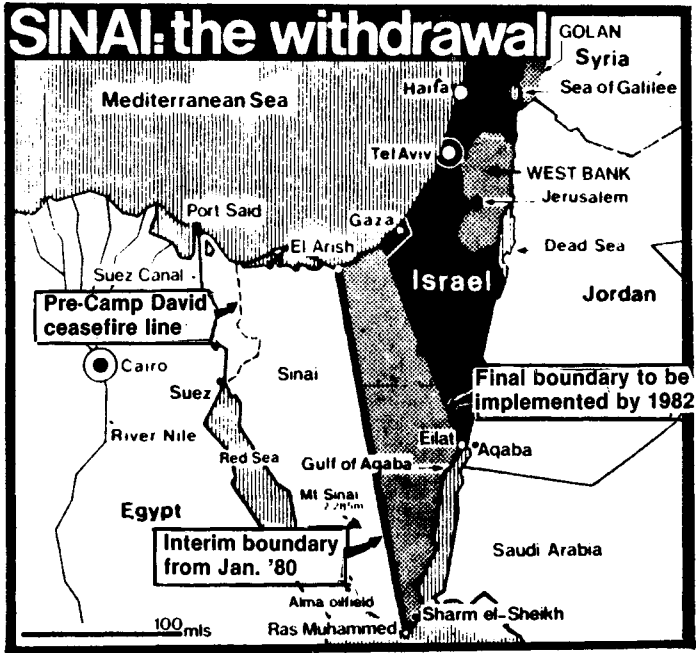
The progress since the Peace Treaty was signed shows that there is goodwill on both sides. Begin’s visit to Cairo in the early days of April 1979 went off satisfactorily, if not with enthusiasm. In May 1979 three Israeli naval ships, flying the Israeli and Egyptian flags passed through the Suez Canal. In 1974, after the ships had been launched, it had been necessary for them to sail 13,000 miles round the Cape to get to Sharm el-Sheikh; this return journey was 400 miles. Open borders were declared in June and Egyptians and Israelis can mix freely. Sadat received “a rousing welcome” when he went to the Haifa Summit in September. A further three days Summit at Aswan has just been concluded. “BEGIN AND SADAT GO AHEAD WITH PLANS FOR DIPLOMATIC LINKS” was the headline reporting this meeting.

“They agreed to open embassies, air services, border crossing points, and telecommunications links between the two countries on January 26” (D. T. 11.1.80).

Israel has made five successive phased withdrawals from Sinai and given up the oil fields. With the sixth withdrawal on January 25th it left Egypt in control of two-thirds of the Sinai peninsula. Julian Amery, M.P., gave a broad assessment of the great changes after a recent visit to Egypt.

“Once countries cease to be enemies the dynamic of history tends to make them friends. The Camp David agreements have already produced an entente between Egypt and Israel. It is not yet an alliance, but it is more than a peace. Israel has traded Sinai and its oil for Egyptian friendship . . . it means that America’s special relationship with Israel is now extended to Egypt. The two most advanced Middle Eastern States and the American super power are thus locked in a triple entente. It is a formidable combination” (D. T. 26.11.79).

Mr. Amery also spoke of the friendliness towards Britain, very



different from the days of Nasser.

Egypt is to receive vast economic aid from the U.S. as a result of agreements associated with the Peace Treaty, and Israel will supply much technical expertise. Israel and Egypt are mutually useful to each other economically. Egypt can benefit greatly from the expertise that Israel is anxious to provide. Also great business development are expected between Israel and America as a result of this greater stability in Israel. Israel has a business and manufacturing infrastructure ready to take up American investment. It is pictured that American companies will set up factories in Israel, and so be able to enter the E.E.C. market free of tariff, because Israel is an Associate member:—

“The opening of the Suez Canal (to Israel) will have great significance for American manufacturers, who will be able to use Israel not only as a place of manufacture, but as a distribution point to ship throughout the world” (J.P. 28.11.79).

With headquarters in Israel, American companies can then subcontract manufacture of parts to Egypt where wages are so much

lower. Do we begin to see some of the elements by which Israel will become prosperous, as required in Ezekiel 38?

The total military strength that the U.S. is assembling in this area is staggering. Israel in 1978 was described as having an airforce equal to the total of Britain and France, and a task force equal to the half of the whole of Nato. For Saudi Arabia, 7,000 million pounds worth of weapons have been supplied since 1975, and military construction schemes worth 12,000 million pounds are in hand. About 5,000 Saudi officers are being trained in America (D.T. 17.5.79). And now a similar programme is in hand for Egypt. In May the Senate approved aid which means 1,250 million pounds for military and 650 million pounds for economic aid. And in December 1979:

“The U.S. State and Defence Departments are recommending that President Carter approve some \$3,000 million (1,350 million pounds) foreign military sales credits to Egypt over the next five years to purchase advanced U.S. weaponry, including the F-16 fighter-bomber and the M-60 tank” (*Jerusalem Post* 9.12.79).

America is currently using a base in Egypt for operating her Spy planes over Afghanistan. This was intended to be kept secret and camouflaged as joint exercises with Egypt (J.P. 13.1.80). Israel is understandably fearful of this extensive arming of her new ‘friend’, and a little upset that she now has a rival for America’s interests in the region.

JORDAN

Jordan is unwilling at present to voice any partiality toward Egypt and Israel. She would gain nothing by it, and she is too near for comfort to her northern neighbours, Syria and Iraq. But Jordan continues to be armed and trained by Britain and America. The *Jerusalem Post* report of 9.12.79 said:

“Administration officials have confirmed that Jordan has reconsidered its earlier opposition and that 100-200 M-60 tanks will probably be sold to Jordan, in addition to a much larger British transaction”.

The sale of 275 advanced versions of the British Chieftain tank to Jordan was announced in December (D.T. 1.12.79). How friendly King Hussein is with Britain is well expressed in this cutting:

“HUSSEIN TO FLY IN: The final event of this year’s Battle of Britain celebrations at Biggin Hill, on Saturday, is to be opened by King Hussein of Jordan, who holds the honorary rank of Air Chief Marshal of the Royal Air Force. He will arrive piloting his own helicopter” (D.T. 18.9.79).

Nothing of God’s purpose will fail. ‘Moab’ will be ready to “hide my outcasts”.

OMAN AND THE GULF STATES

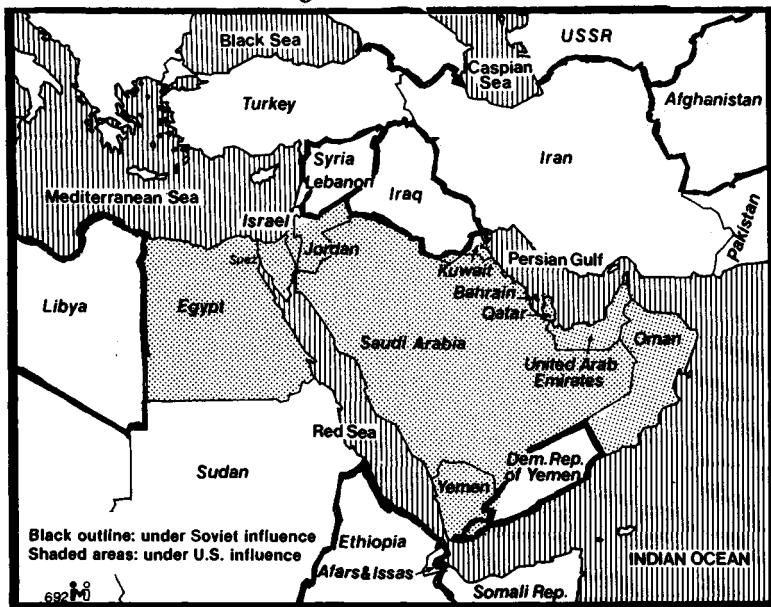
This is the most vital part of the Gulf oil region, and British influence still predominates. America is very dependent on this influence. These States are very loyal to Britain, as was shown on the Queen's visit early in the year. Oman is of the greatest importance relative to shipping through the Persian Gulf. Since the removal of the Shah she has the task of protecting the vital Strait of Hormuz with her tiny navy. Julian Amery in his report already referred to said:

"Oman is openly pro-Western. Its geographical importance and the efficiency of its small armed forces are at last being recognised in Washington as well as London."

Oman has offered America a base for emergency action. On a recent occasion Sadat sent troops to aid the Oman army against rebels. American technicians have recently taken over as air controllers at Oman's military and civil airport at Seeb.

The British have officers and men seconded to the armies in Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, as well as Oman. What was the British Naval base in Bahrain is now the headquarters of the American Gulf Squadron of a flagship and two frigates (D.T. 25.1.80).

So one sees how extensive is the influence of the Merchants of Tarshish in the South region.



Countries friendly to Britain and America in the region South of Israel.

SAUDI ARABIA

It has been an uneasy situation this year with the U.S. seeking to be friends, both with Egypt and Israel, and also with Saudi Arabia. Understandably, Saudi Arabia, guardian of Moslem shrines in Jerusalem, etc., denounced the Peace Treaty and withdrew her aid to Egypt. Egypt verbally attacked Saudi Arabia for obstructing peace. So there has been some considerable tension between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia. It is out of the question that Saudi Arabia should forsake the U.S. for Russia, but it has not been willing to welcome the U.S. more firmly on her soil. Two events in the year have pressed Saudi Arabia more firmly into the U.S. camp. North Yemen is a little country lying along the southern border of Saudi Arabia, and is largely financed by Saudi Arabia. South Yemen and Aden are in the grip of the Soviet. In March of 1979 there was a probing attack of North Yemen by South Yemen, and America demonstrated her support for Saudi Arabia:

“America has ordered the 80,000 ton aircraft carrier Constellation and a naval task force to the Saudi Arabian peninsula following the invasion of North Yemen by the Soviet-backed regime in South Yemen” (*D.T. 7.3.79*).

“American support for Saudi Arabia in the defence of North Yemen was dramatically stepped up last night as two of its most sophisticated secret reconnaissance planes landed in Riyadh (the Saudi capital)” (*D.T. 10.3.79*).

North Yemen is now receiving emergency shipments from a U.S. arms package worth \$500 millions, including F-5E fighters and M-60 tanks (*Guardian 22.4.79*). Saudi was made to realise by this incident how much she is open to attack.

Later in the year a rather similar, but much more serious incident occurred. In November there was an armed attack on the Grand Mosque, in Mecca, the holiest of the Muslim shrines.

“The attacking force in fact consisted of over 300 heavily armed men using well-rehearsed military tactics. Equipped with walkie-talkies, machine guns and bazookas, they moved into strategic positions during the confusion of a well-attended dawn prayer ceremony on the first day of the Moslem New Year. Within minutes of their initial assault they had positioned snipers on the commanding heights of the minarets, set up a command post in a first floor scripture room . . . and captured 50 hostages” (*Guardian 16.12.79*).

It took two weeks to dislodge them. Saudi Arabia has a 500 mile border with Soviet-controlled South Yemen, and it has now come to light that during the Mecca crisis the South Yemeni army were mobilised along the Saudi Arabia border, ready to intervene on the pretext of ‘protecting the holy places’. Large quantities of arms had been stock-piled ready for a forward move, and

the Soviet had a special Command post in operation. On this occasion Saudi Arabia stamped out the initial part of the plan, but there must now be no doubts as to where their enemy is. So far Saudi Arabia has not been willing to grant the U.S. landing bases for its troops. In the financial sphere, it is interesting to note that Saudi Arabia has been recognised as a senior member of the financial world; she is a new permanent member of an I.M.F. finance ministers committee.

IRAN

At the time of writing the U.S. Embassy hostages are still held. The world has seen America more or less impotent and humiliated for three long months. What is important in this, from our prophetic point of view? It is the impact on American public opinion. It is burying the Vietnam guilt complex and loss of national confidence. When this is over we can expect Congress to agree to demands for vast sums of money to build new warships and prepare army, air and naval sites in the Gulf-Indian Ocean region:

“The humiliations inflicted on the Americans in Iran may have had a therapeutic effect, in helping to overcome the Vietnam psychosis, that has crippled Washington’s response to every foreign crisis since the Communist conquest of Saigon. But the hostages . . . are paying a heavy price for restoring some understanding of the role of force in world affairs, without which no country can function as a great power” (*Robert Moss, D.T. 24.12.79*).

We may comment with what skill the angels manipulate world affairs.

AN AMERICAN PRESENCE IN THE GULF AREA

America has abundantly armed and is training the various countries we have mentioned. She also provides American technicians, advisors and maintenance men. But this does not permit any speedy and firm action in time of crisis. As already noted American public opinion has been strongly opposed to America even preparing plans to take direct action. But from the Shah’s demise onward, the Military have pushed on with preparations, and public opinion has slowly come into line.

Taking the fall of the Shah as a starting point, at first officials and public alike appeared dazed, and it was several months before any reaction emerged. After the U.S. had sent its aircraft carrier Midway 5,000 miles from the Philippines to the Arabian waters at the time South Yemen threatened North Yemen, and a few months

later had it returned for maintenance, leaving the region in the hands of the Russian aircraft carrier Minsk and 25 support ships, Stephen Barher in Washington spoke of “the pathetic weakness of American naval power” in this region. Gradually plans for action emerged:

4.3.79: Tour by Pentagon chief Harold Brown making known America’s intention to provide more arms, and increase the U.S. naval presence.

29.3.79: “The Carter Administration is seriously considering plans to deploy a super-carrier naval task force, to be called the ‘Fifth Fleet’, in the Indian Ocean. The British island of Diego Garcia . . . would be upgraded to a forward outpost and anchorage” (D.T.).

23.4.79: Disclosure of plans for Britain to have a task force of four frigates in the Indian Ocean, based on Diego Garcia (D.T.).

1.7.79: “The Army is drafting plans for a ‘quick-strike’ force of 110,000 troops to respond to crises in the Gulf or other hot spots outside Nato.” “Key strategists in the Administration sense a sharp change of mood in Congress” (Washington Post).

14.7.79: “The policy review committee of the National Security Council — the highest foreign policy body in the administration — recently decided to upgrade the U.S. presence in the Persian Gulf. The Pentagon has plans to create a separate Mid-east military command structure, a job that is now part of the European command” (Toronto Star).

15.8.79: “The first two American ships for Diego Garcia later this year should be the 39,000 ton amphibious assault ship Tarawa, equipped with British-built Harrier fighters, helicopters, and over 1,900 marines”, and a similar smaller ship. Completion of the American Naval base is due in 1981 after 10 years work by America. The jetty is a mile long, and the air strip over two miles long.

20.9.79: 100,000 U.S. troops ready for ‘Proxy war’ with Russia (D.T.).

7.12.79: “America’s Defence planners propose to spend \$9,000 million (4,120 million pounds) by the mid-80’s on new sea and air lift capacity for its army and marine units. A key role is also envisaged for the British-owned island of Diego Garcia”. America now has two of its aircraft carriers and supporting warships in the Arabian Sea region. Altogether there are 21 warships.

19.12.79: “Pentagon officials arrived in Saudi Arabia last night to

ask King Khaled for use of military bases and ports in times of crisis. The delegation plans to put a similar request to the Governments of Kenya, Somalia and Oman”.

24.12.79: “President Barre of Somalia has offered America the use of former Russian naval and air bases at Berbera, the New York Times reported yesterday”.

3.1.80: Egypt offers ports and airbases to America (D.T.).

Although America and Britain have mustered a large fleet in the Arabian Sea, the ships have been taken temporarily from other stations. It will take five years to build new warships, submarines and aircraft carriers. We may remember with interest the words spoken in 1974 and quoted in *Milestones 1978*: “Military planners expect that the strategic interests of the United States and global strategy in general will pivot on the Persian Gulf late in this decade.”

What vast changes we have seen in the past 5 years!

AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan has become the Soviet’s second prong of the pincer movement on the Persian Gulf area, South Yemen and Aden being the other. With South Yemen and Aden the Soviet took nearly 10 years to move from a Communist government to a full-blooded satellite government with control from Moscow. With Afghanistan it looks as if this will be achieved in less than 2 years. It began with a Communist coup in April 1978, and in a few months 2,500 Russian officers and technicians were installed to supervise the Afghan army. Preparations for a Soviet military takeover of the country became apparent with the signing in Moscow of a Military Pact in December, 1978. At the time the Daily Telegraph editorial said: “The Afghan base has an enormous role to play in exploiting the chaos in Persia and the near panic in the surrounding area” (*D.T. 6.12.78*).

The Pentagon forecast that there would be direct military intervention before the end of 1979. In June 1979 Russia identified Afghanistan as a member of the “Socialist community”, thus according to the ‘Brezhnev doctrine’, giving her a right to direct military intervention. So the process unfolded. Military roads from the Soviet border into Afghanistan were hurriedly completed. Troop movement began in September.

24.9.79: “The Soviet Union moved 10 companies of combat troops into Afghanistan on Friday . . .”

31.10.79: “The Russians are setting up their own military and air bases in Afghanistan near the frontier with Iran . . .”

7.12.79: “The flow of Russian troops into Kabul has increased

considerably in recent days . . . Some of these troops are reported to be guarding the airport . . .”

27.12.79: “5,000 troops fly to Afghanistan.” “50,000 troops could be poised north of Afghanistan”.

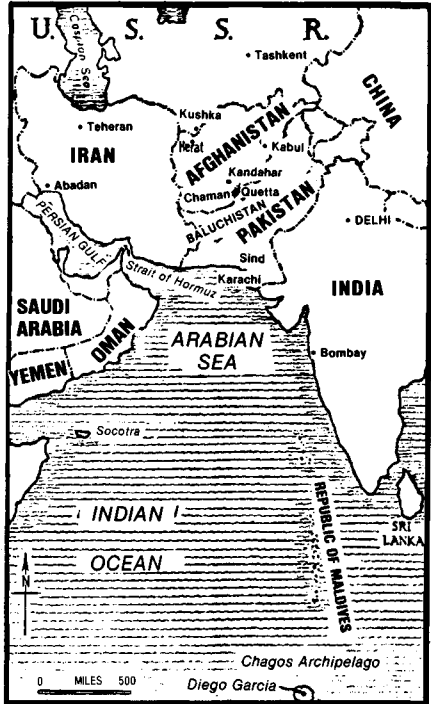
31.12.79: “A White House spokesman . . . He said this would bring the number of Russian troops in Afghanistan to between 25,000 and 30,000.”

The final figure was put at around 80,000 to 100,000. It is expected that the attempt to subdue the outlying parts of Afghanistan will wait for a Spring offensive.

Probably the actual timing of the invasion was an immediate decision in the light of all the circumstances. A calculated risk was taken, and it was successful. This move into Afghanistan may reflect a change in direction in Moscow. With Brezhnev failing,

“the Afghan decision seems already to be that of a new era of leadership that is turning its back on detente and is likely, if unchecked, to go from strength to strength” (*Richard Beeston, D.T. 7.1.80*).

As others have put it, the hawks appear to be in the ascendancy. Whether there will be further aggression in the immediate future we do not know. No one doubts Russia’s objective of reaching the Arabian Sea. A land route from the Soviet through Afghanistan and Pakistan or Persia, would be of tremendous military value. However, great the strategic value of Aden and South Yemen, all supplies have to come by sea. But a land supplied base and port near the Persian Gulf would be a tremendous asset. We cannot imagine America allowing this to happen without a struggle. President Carter in his State of the Union address plainly said any attempt to gain control of the Persian Gulf would be met with military force. On the other hand, Russia is very clever at subversion and ‘con-



quest' without direct military action. The expected line of action is as follows:

"UNITED BALUCHISTAN IS MOSCOW'S OBJECTIVE: Moscow's objective is to create a 'United Baluchistan' by taking advantage of the unrest and the strong separatist movements which exist on both sides of the Iran-Pakistan border that divides nearly three million Baluchi tribesmen. By giving the Baluchis their long-fought-for 'national independence', Moscow would acquire a new satellite and realise the age long dream of the Tsars to have a port on the Indian Ocean . . . While the United States is, in theory, looking for military facilities in the Middle East, Russian agents are working on the Baluchi tribes to inspire them to revolt against the Government in Islamabad and Teheran and establish the new state of Baluchistan" (D.T. 4.1.80).

From our Biblical viewpoint we see this Afghan development as bringing near the fulfilment of the words: "*Persia, Ethiopia and Libya with them*" (Ez. 38:5).

The invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet was no surprise to the U.S. Military Command, as we have seen; even though President Carter chose to say he was surprised and disappointed. One should note the 'advantages' that accrue to the U.S. as a result of the invasion. First American public opinion is now fully alerted and will support a militarily strong U.S. Secondly, Turkey immediately turned to America.

"America will sign four agreements with Turkey on Wednesday covering military and economic aid, and in turn the Ankara Government has granted permission for the United States to continue operating its airbase and three intelligence gathering stations in Turkey. American sources confirmed that the Russian invasion of Afghanistan had precipitated the agreements" (D.T. 5.1.80).

CHINA

A third new factor is China. After several years of developing friendliness between Communist China and America, the current visit of Defence Secretary Brown to China has taken on unexpected importance. As the Telegraph's editorial wrote:

"THE CHINA FACTOR: China's rapprochement with America and her remarkable opening-up towards the West since Mao died have greatly served the interests of both sides by, in a general way, mitigating the extent of Russia's growing strategic preponderance. Suddenly, however, what was a vague Chinese-American common strategic interest has become a very immediate and specific one" (4.1.80).

China cannot be ignored by the Soviet in its expansion south and east of the Middle East. It has just announced that:

"The Chinese army are now deploying their new Inter Continental Ballistic Missiles, which have an effective range of over 6,000 miles" (D.T. 21.1.80).

WORDS FOR THE HOUR

There are two small sections of Bro. John Thomas' writings that are of particular interest in the current atmosphere of the Iranian and Afghanistan crises.

On page 332 of '**Elpis Israel**', in the section considering the possession of Persia by Russia, Bro. Thomas writes:

"We have already in the heraldry of nations an intimation of the power destined to act the part of the Bear, when the Four Beasts have "their dominion taken away". This power is the Russian, whose symbol is a Bear. This is so well known that the phrase "the Russian Bear" is as familiar as household words. **Russia, which already comprehends some of the Persian territory in its bounds, is destined to conquer Persia, and to possess it from India to Ethiopia.** This is not conjecture but an absolute certainty: for God has declared by Ezekiel that Persia in the latter days shall be a constituent of the dominion of Gog; and that Gog is the autocratic dynasty of Russia will be seen when we come to treat of that prophecy in its proper place." (1848)

In "**Exposition of Daniel**", page 86, under the title "Future Magnitude of Gog's Dominion", we read:090

"By turning to a map of Europe and Asia, the reader may trace out the territory of the Kingdom of Babylon as it is destined to exist in its last form under the King of the North in his Gogian manifestation. The names of countries furnished by Ezekiel will lead him to a just conception of its general extent. Besides "All the Russias", it will take in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Prussia, Austria, Turkey, Persia, Tartary, Greece, the Roman Africa, and Egypt. This will be a dominion of great magnitude, **extending from the North Sea to the Wall of China and Afghanistan**, and from the Ice-Sea to the Deserts of Africa and Arabia." (1868)110

The presence of these words in our Christadelphian library is a great blessing of God. The territory of ancient Persia mentioned above (against the obvious background of Ezekiel 38:5 "*Persia, Ethiopia and Libya with them*"), encompasses the three modern countries under principal concern in the last two or three months — Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

So for more than 130 years we have been led to see that Iran and Afghanistan should come under Russian control according to the sure word of prophecy. Our heritage through the pioneer writings is thus again impressed upon us. With thankful hearts we lift our voices to our God and take comfort that His hand still guides the destiny of the nations.

These could reach the industrial areas of Russia. China also has a stockpile of nuclear warheads for missiles with ranges up to 1,750 miles. Her army is around 3 million men, but they are poorly equipped. It may be that co-operation between China and America on the borders of Afghanistan will turn the Soviet's interest for the time being to her weaker flank in West Europe. President Carter's vigorous reaction to the Afghan invasion, and the weak support he has received from Western Europe, has high-lighted Western Europe's unwillingness to oppose the Soviet. This will not be lost on the Soviet leadership.

ISRAEL

We can add up this review of the southern Middle East, and be impressed by the way in which a South Power has grown over the year, largely provoked by the aggressive actions of the Soviet. Some will not be interested, saying it is merely a list of cold facts; others will be encouraged in seeing the unfolding picture of prophecy fulfilling.

But what of Israel itself? We have seen that to some extent she is becoming a secondary consideration by America in her larger regional considerations and diplomacy. Apart from the resistance by Israel to relinquishing East Jerusalem, which no one expects her to do, Israel's attitude over the West Bank—Judah and Samaria—presents a major obstacle to America's and Britain's diplomacy with the Arabs. However, although America makes a fuss about this, one cannot be sure whether she really agrees with Israel on keeping the P.L.O. out.

In the nation of Israel, no light has yet appeared. The scene is characterised by factions, strife, corruption, socialist inefficiency and pleasure seeking. For us, as students of prophecy the problem remains as to how the peace and prosperity of Ezekiel chapter 38 will come about. This continues to be the great puzzle. How can there be peace with the countries all bristling with arms? How can there be peace with the nation so ungodly?

We have suggested earlier that Western Europe may come into the Soviet orbit without a world conflagration. If this happened, then we would expect the U.S. and her allies to draw the line of war across the Middle East. The Soviet would, like Hitler, declare she had no more territorial aggressive intentions and readily agree to the Middle East being made a zone of neutrality, a buffer zone between the two opposing North and South Powers. Such a situation

would fit the language of Ezekiel 38:10-11; *“It shall come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought (margin, conceive a mischievous purpose): And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely . . . ”* The invasion is presented as an act of treachery, a breaking of her promise of peace.

But in all probability there will be at this time a stronger hand than America’s in this region. The resurrection having taken place, there will be a new Power here, unseen by mortal eyes. Under this protecting hand of Christ and the saints this strange peace could be established. In this time Israel would become prosperous in cattle and goods, to provide the great spoil for the Northerner. Also in this time Israel would be instructed in divine ways to the extent described by Malachi: *“Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD”* (Mal. 4:4, 5). These words were addressed primarily to Judah and Jerusalem (Mal. 3:4). These are events that will take years to unfold.

AFGHANISTAN—A LONG TERM RUSSIAN GOAL

The turning of the 1970’s into the 1980’s saw the country of Afghanistan, with its deserts and frozen peaks, spring out of its obscurity into the headlines of the media across the world. Yet although the country may previously have been of small moment to the rest of the world, its strategic position has been in the mind of the Russian for a century and a half, for the old Russian ambition has been to gain political and economic access via Kabul to the Indian Ocean. In its recent decisive invasion, the Soviets have played the final card in the ‘great game’ of the last century between contending Russian and British interests in Central Asia, of which Afghanistan was the key piece.

It was as early as the 1830’s when Britain, which had been lured eastward by the exotic riches of India and the promise of trade, sought to protect this newest jewel in the Empire’s crown by invading Afghanistan. For to the north were the distrusted Russians.

The fear of the early 1830’s was that Russia with its imperialist attitude would move down into Persia, and then across into Afghanistan. If it took the town of Herat, it would be poised for a sudden sweep into India. (At that time, there was of course no

Pakistan to act as a buffer between Afghanistan and British India). British resolve to protect her eastern interests strengthened, so that in 1838 Lord Palmerston could say:

"We have long declined to meddle with the Afghan and have purposely left them independent, but if the Russians try to make them Russian, we must take care that they become British".

So began the first Afghan war which saw the British 'Army of the Indus' in 1838 creep its way on camelback through tortuous passes in sub-zero weather up to Kandahar and then victoriously on to Kabul. But three years later the viciousness of the wild tribesmen of the Afghan mountains (who today are giving so much trouble to the Russians) forced the British to retreat from Kabul to Jalalabad where a British brigade held control — a journey of 90 miles which, out of an army of 12,000, only one man completed; the others having been destroyed by the Afghan tribesmen or by the bitter winter conditions.

There followed 70 years of vacillation of British policy on how to



Nineteenth Century Afghanistan and Central Asia showing Dates of Expansion by Russia from the North.

handle the increasing Russian threat in the north. The policy which favoured an active British presence in Afghanistan became known as the "Forward Policy". India could not be defended against the Russians along its existing frontiers, hence it was essential — so the argument ran — to push those frontiers forward to the natural barrier of the Hindu Kush, the very high mountain range which cuts through the middle of Afghanistan.

While Britain vacillated, the Russians moved inexorably southward into Central Asia. A change of government in Britain brought into power Disraeli who reactivated the Forward Policy and embroiled Britain in its second Afghan war (1878-79). A further change of government in 1880 brought a British withdrawal, upon which the Russian army marched to the northern border of Afghanistan and soundly defeated a large Afghan army. Herat was within their striking distance and would have provided a convenient halting place for a still further advance towards the Indian Ocean in fulfilment of Russia's "historic destiny". For several weeks it seemed possible that Britain would go to war with Russia, but eventually the latter climbed down and the diplomats of the two countries went to their task of defining the boundaries of Afghanistan.

For a century the status quo virtually remained, with Russia being contained on the northern border of Afghanistan, until December 1979 when 85,000 Soviet troops crossed the border. Not for the Soviets were the great transport and supply problems which weakened the British army of the 19th century, for the Russian army was able to drive along a modern road system, including a tunnel under the Hindu Kush mountains, constructed in advance by the Soviets during the 1960's (and thoughtfully completed by the Americans), and fly in supplies using an international airport at Kabul kindly built under an American aid programme!

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

The significance of Prime Minister Disraeli's military thrust into Afghanistan did not go unnoticed by our brethren of 100 years ago.

The two following extracts are taken from the "Christadelphian" magazine of 1879. Shortly before this date Bro. Robert Roberts had introduced into the pages of the magazine a new section entitled "The Signs of the Times". Political developments were so significant that he felt compelled to impress the brethren and sisters with the fulfilment of Bible prophecy in their times. This feature of the magazine has continued till the present day but some of the old comments are of intriguing interest in the light of present day events.

Bro. Roberts observed Britain and Russia jealously watching each other's moves and interpreted them in Biblical terms:—

“THE TERMS OF PEACE IN AFGHANISTAN: Peace is being negotiated with Afghanistan. The proposed terms of peace will virtually incorporate Afghanistan in British India. The Ameer is to give up a large slice of his country direct to Anglo-India; he is to allow a British Resident (that is in fact a British Controller) in his capital, and he is to permit his foreign policy to be directed by the Indian Government. Henceforth Afghanistan will be Britain in relation to Russia, just as Asia Minor has become so through the Anglo-Turkish Convention. **The Lion and the Bear are thus face to face at all points.** The next Eastern outbreak will send them into each other's embrace in a death struggle” (*June, 1879, p.274*).

“ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN: Just as matters were settling down between Afghanistan and England on the basis of the Treaty of Peace entered into between the new Ameer and the Anglo-Indian Government, a catastrophe has occurred which re-opens the whole question. British armies are once more in motion, and the probability looms that England will be obliged to annex the whole country of Afghanistan, and thus realise Dr. Thomas's anticipation referred to some months ago. The catastrophe in question is the massacre of the British resident accepted under the new treaty, and the whole of his escort. Sir L. Cavagnari had reached Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, and been received with honours, and had entered upon the duties of his position which he had exercised for several weeks, when on the arrival of some Afghan regiments from Herat, an attack was made upon the fort assigned to the Resident, and resulted, after severe fighting, in the murder of Sir L. Cavagnari and the whole of the 150 men that formed his suite and escort. The event has come like a thunderclap. Its political bearings are of great importance. The Russian bear was growling before, at the position conquered by Britain in Afghanistan: now it has broken out into a roar as follows:

‘England has always been the deadly enemy of Russia, whose policy in Asia can only consist of reprisals against England. It is necessary to expel the British from Central Asia, and this can be done by sending 20,000 Russian troops to defend Afghanistan. A timely interference on the part of Russia must decide the question of the existence of England's might in that region, and now is the favourable moment to free Russia's eastern frontier for ever from danger on the part of England’
(*St. Petersburg Gazette*).”

(*Oct. 1879, p.469*)

Russia's one-hundred-year-old plan to send an invading and occupying force into Afghanistan has been realised in the last few days of 1979. But it was 85,000 troops they sent, not the 20,000 envisaged by the writer of the *St. Petersburg Gazette*! Accompanying them was a vast array of modern military machinery and armaments and the intent is clearly to Russianise this southern neighbour of their's.

Clearly “the Bear” has won this long and historical battle for Southern Asia and “the Lion” powers have done little else than raise their voice in protest at the new King of the North.

“THE MERCHANTS OF TARSHISH AND ALL THE YOUNG LIONS THEREOF”

This brief phrase from Ezekiel chapter 38, indicating that the Merchants of Tarshish will be involved in challenging the northern invader of the land of Israel, is suggestive in a number of directions. It tells us:

1. that Britain will not be part of the European confederacy;
2. that we can look for close co-operation between Britain and America, the strongest of the young lions;
3. that Britain has a part to play in the Middle East;
4. that she will maintain her world trading position, expressed in the words ‘merchants of Tarshish’;
5. there is the hint that she may be closely involved in the prosperity of Israel at the time of the invasion.

We will pursue these themes in the light of 1979 developments.

BRITAIN AND THE COMMON MARKET

We are well aware of the low state to which Britain has sunk, from God’s point of view; a decline comparable to those that occurred in Israel, yet like Israel, not without the hope of redemption, through the goodness of God. Having ceased to honour God’s word, and losing the wisdom that comes from reading it, having ceased to believe that the Pope is Antichrist and that Roman Catholicism is an intoxicating wine, she has tied herself to the Western European economic system. Already people have become aware that there is no blessing in this direction. But having shackled themselves, they must take the consequences. *“They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices”* (Prov. 1:30, 31). How and when Britain will be detached from Europe we do not know, but this will come. Britain does not belong to the Fourth Beast system that is to be destroyed and her body given to the burning flame. The ships of Tarshish, obedient to the new King, will bring scattered Israel back to their land (Is. 60:9). Yes, obedient. She is presented as a suppliant at the marriage of the King and his bride: *“The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour”* (Ps. 45:12).

The people’s dislike of the Common Market increases. In a Gallup poll in December 1979, 55 thought it was bad for every 21 who thought it was good. A previous poll six months earlier gave

the figures 48 and 25 (D.T. 5.12.79).

The change of Government did nothing to reverse the growing coolness between the government and the Common Market; and fundamental disagreements have become more obvious. Britain's unwillingness to become integrated with Europe was expressed by Mr Callaghan at the Lord Mayor's banquet, when he said the British are a different people because of centuries of different traditions. Mr. Silkin's aggressive, unyielding style in fighting for British interests in oil, fish and agriculture was much resented at Brussels. An article in March 1979, illustrating how Britain was a "bad neighbour", concluded:

"There seems to me now to be a real danger that the next five years could produce a break between Britain and the Community. The fact that senior ministers and officials now discuss this possibility quite seriously is itself evidence of the danger" (*Guardian* 18.3.79).

A Conservative Government under Mrs. Thatcher was elected in May 1979. Mrs. Thatcher's forthright demand at the Dublin Summit in December for 1,000 million pounds has greatly increased ill-feeling. This ill-feeling is, of course, led by France and President Giscard d'Estaing. An article in *Le Monde* after the Dublin Summit was headed "STORM SIGNALS FOR THE EEC". There was no sympathy for Mrs. Thatcher:

"Besides Mrs. Thatcher wants a lot more, and what she demands is hard cash on the nail. She cares little for Community niceties that require all expenditures in Britain to flow from common E.E.C. initiatives or policies. She is supremely indifferent to Community logic" (*Guardian* 9.12.79).

The Daily Telegraph's report said:

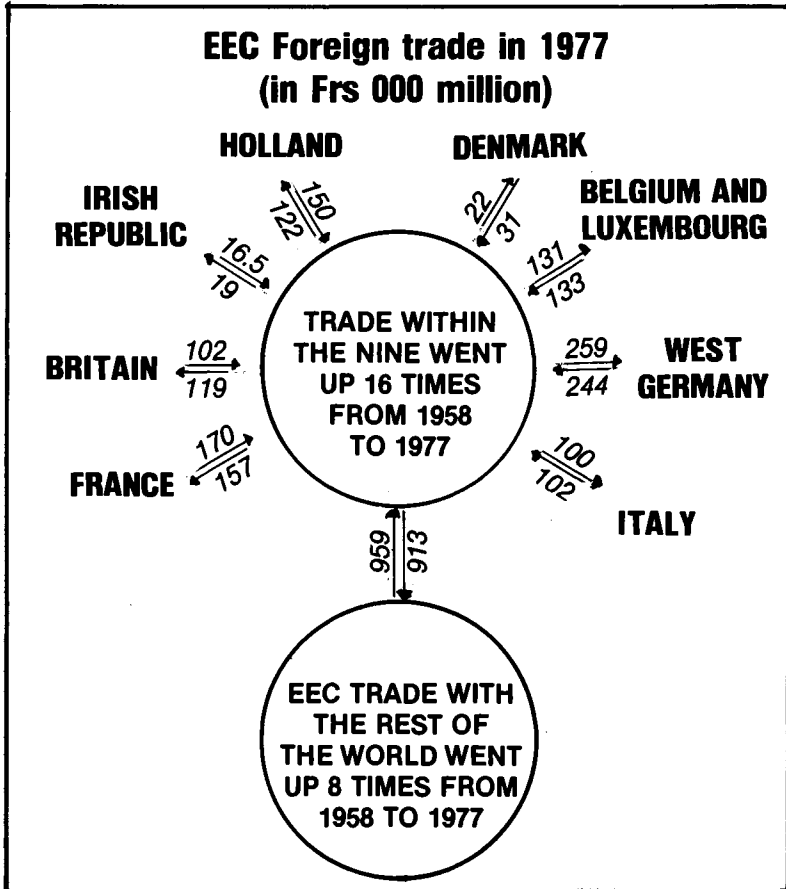
"The big surprise was the almost total lack of sympathy from the rest of the E.E.C. . . . but the complete lack of sympathy or understanding from President Giscard d'Estaing of France was to many observers the most striking feature of the meeting" (*D.T.* 1.12.79).

Later articles from Paris have had strong headlines:

"HOW FRENCH NOW SEE PERFIDIOUS ALBION: Mrs. Thatcher's determined line on the cost of E.E.C. membership has brought sarcasm in France about Britain's awkwardness as a European partner. The idea that Britain should get a 'fair return' seems to most Frenchmen outrageous. A member's first duty is to obey the rules they say" (*D.T.* 10.12.79).

Again:

"FRENCH SEE MRS THATCHER AS UNTRUSTWORTHY: According to a poll in a current issue of L'EXPRESS, Europe's first woman Prime Minister appears in the eyes of the 'average' citizen to rank with the likes of Ayatollah Khomeini and Leonard Brezhnev as dangerous and untrustworthy" (*D.T.* 29.12.79).



"THE European Economic Community (EEC) is the largest trading power on the globe. Trade both inside and outside the Community accounts for more than one third of the world's commerce. Twenty-two per cent of world trade consists of goods bought or sold by the Community, whereas the population of the EEC countries (about 260 million inhabitants) amounts to only 6 per cent of the world's population.

"The Community buys and sells almost three times as much as the United States, about five times as much as Japan, and nine times as much as the Soviet Union.

"Trade within the Nine has gone up 16 times since the setting up of the Community, reaching Frs 1,850,000 million in 1977.

"The EEC is the world's biggest automobile manufacturer, producing more than 10 million cars a year, as compared with the United States' 8.5 million. The EEC also tops the list of world iron and steel manufacturers and of milk producers; and it is the third-largest producer of cereals. It has the largest merchant navy in the world, and its tonnage will increase considerably when Greece is admitted to the EEC" (*Guardian* 24.6.79).

A significant reaction to the situation is that France is sinking her differences with Germany to make a common stand against Britain's attack on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) which puts such vast sums into the pockets of their farmers:

"Only joint action by Paris and Bonn can put an end to the current British manouvre in time. France will have to trust the Federal Republic fully — there is no other tactic" (*Guardian* 23.12.79).

How this hostility works itself out we shall have to wait and see. But it is in line with Britain's eventual separation from Europe.

Despite the big subsidies to the French and German farmers because of their inefficiency, compared with Britain, the price of food in the Common Market is wildly above world prices. Wheat 118 pounds a metric tonne (world price 68 pounds); barley 106 pounds (51 pounds); maize 106 pounds (61 pounds); butter 1,893 pounds (487 pounds); skimmed milk powder 769 pounds (185 pounds); beef 911 pounds (522 pounds); sugar 227 pounds (107 pounds). The cost of merely storing Europe's food surpluses last year amounted to 800 million pounds! If Britain was free to trade on the world market for her food, and not pay for subsidising Europe, a lot of money would be saved (*The Reformer*, Special Issue, October 1979).

THE SUCCESS OF THE COMMON MARKET

It may be appropriate here to point out the great progress that has been made by the Common Market—European Economic Community to give it its proper title—since its inception. Despite the extravagances of CAP, butter mountains, etc., the trading within the Community has increased many times over the twenty years.

This is well expressed in the table and comments from the *Guardian* on page 55.

The growing cohesion of the E.E.C. is also expressed in the new European Parliament that has been elected in 1979, and the power it expressed in throwing out the 1980 budget prepared by the ministers. We can certainly see growing a Western European confederacy of nations. It will be subservient to Russia while the great Image stands, but afterward it will be fully manifest as the ten horns giving their power to the beast and waging war with the Lamb and his faithful followers. These nations are diverse, and yet they have a common heritage over centuries. It is not surprising that they can act as an economic unit, concerned with their own welfare and largely inward looking. So, they exist to the last as separate horns, yet co-operating.

BRITAIN'S INDEPENDENCE

Britain's history and outlook are different. Her interest is in world trade and free movement of goods around the world. Although not as prosperous as years ago, she still holds to her characteristics, and maintains a troublesome independence of the E.E.C. Several things have happened this year in line with these traditions. At the end of 1978 she refused to join the European Monetary system that Herr Schmidt had devised, leaving the pound sterling to float. This judgment proved correct and the pound is now a very firm currency drawing a lot of money and profit through exchange rates. Another important decision was the removal of Foreign Exchange Controls in the autumn of 1979. Comment on the financial page was as follows:

"A further plus from the Government's dramatic decision is that the international earning capacity of the City of London has been enormously increased. The City has hung on to and then expanded its international business remarkably well during 40 years of foreign exchange restrictions, but it has never been able to get back its pre-war position as an international capital market. Now it can do so" (D.T. 27.10.79).

No doubt through adversity and disruptions the world trading centre will continue in London; "*and her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the LORD*" (Isa. 23:18) when she submits to the King in Zion.

When Iran said it would transfer half its British assets abroad this was little worry to London:

"London's role as a leading world financial centre means that the withdrawal of, say, \$2,000 million of deposits would cause little problem in the aggregate. Total foreign currency held by all the banks in London stands at more than \$360,000 million" (D.T. 24.11.79).

Even in the world of art and its finance, London is supreme. When there was a threatened cancellation of the 1980 Grosvenor House Antiques Fair, a writer commented:

"The event had a considerable influence in maintaining London's position as the centre of the world art market" (D.T. 8.12.79).

Until recently Britain had the largest merchant navy in the world, but she has now slipped to fourth place, Liberia, Japan and Greece now being greater (D.T. 3.12.79). But it still claims to be the best:

"The Merchant Navy may be shrinking, but the Service itself is among the world's leaders, and is in no danger of 'sinking into oblivion', shipping experts said last night — 'It was alive and kicking' " (D.T. 19.6.79).

BRITAIN AND AMERICA

We expect to see close co-operation between America and Britain, and less between America and Europe. During the Labour Governments, with Socialists thinking kindly of Russia, there was not much spirit of co-operation with America. With the coming of a Conservative Government this has noticeably changed. The 'special relationship' has been revived, and we can see Britain becoming more linked with the U.S. than with Europe. Mr. Pym, Defence Minister, visited Washington in August:

"Mr. Pym agreed that Britain would harmonise its views with those of the United States on what type of weapons be recommended for Europe. Further, Mr. Pym consented, in principle, to purchase these Eurostrategic theatre nuclear weapons from the United States. One of the unfortunate products of the quiet resumption to the 'special relationship' between Washington and London which has been renewed since the return of the Conservatives to power is the deep disappointment reflected in Paris . . . the French government had hoped for some form of Anglo-French co-operation in independent nuclear deterrence" (*D.T. 21.8.79*).

The co-operation with the U.S. was confirmed by a decision in November:

"Britain will maintain an independent nuclear deterrent, replacing the Polaris missile by an American-built Trident carrying a British warhead also based and fired from a submarine".

The five submarines will be committed to Nato, but Britain retains the right to act independently of Nato (*D.T. 2.11.79*).

American-British friendship was given a big boost by Mrs. Thatcher's visit to America in December:

"Mrs. Thatcher scored a tremendous personal success with President Carter and the American public on her 48-hour trip to Washington and New York. She gave them a sorely needed boost to morale with her sturdy pledge of British support, and sympathy for the United States as it endures the continuing ordeal of the Iranian hostages crisis. And she 'came across' superbly on American television — crisp, forthright, in full command of her subjects" (*D.T. 20.12.79*).

THE DEFENCE OF BRITAIN

Although Britain's world naval power continues to sink into insignificant proportions, available money is being concentrated on the defence of this island independently of Nato. The main emphasis at sea is on anti-submarine capacity:

"NAVY TO LAUNCH WORLD-BEATING SUBMARINES: Britain's new diesel-electric submarines, the first to be designed for the Royal Navy for 30 years, will be the fastest conventional submarines in the world" (*D.T. 1.8.79*).

The North Sea is too shallow for nuclear submarines. Again:

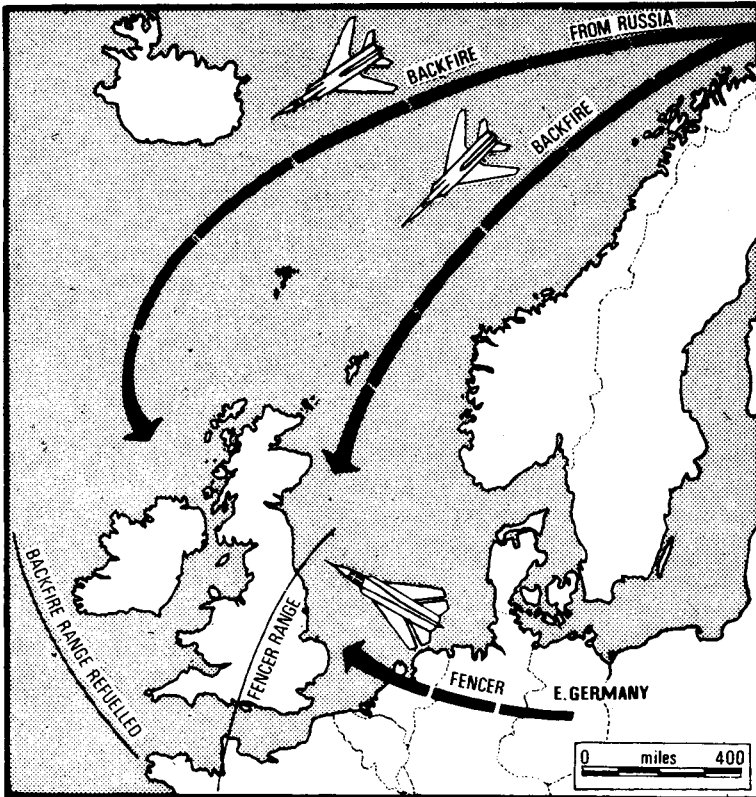
"The Government has placed a 200 million pounds sterling contract for the development and initial production of the Marconi 'Stingray' anti-submarine torpedo. Development of the weapon puts Britain ahead of rivals in this field" (D.T. 15.11.79).

It is of particular value in the shallow waters of the North Sea.

"The R.A.F.'s anti-submarine capability got a big boost yesterday with the delivery of the first of the re-equipped Mark 2 Nimrod long-range aircraft. Fitted with E.M.I. Searchwater radar, which is claimed to be the world's most advanced maritime equipment, the plane, one of 32 to be converted, represents an important step in countering the threat of Russian submarines in the North Atlantic" (D.T. 24.8.79).

"British Aerospace Dynamics has been awarded a Defence Ministry development contract worth 300 million pounds sterling for the air-launched, sea-skimming, anti-ship missile called P3T" (D.T. 1.8.79).

As with the navy, so with the air force. After decades of run-down of the Royal Air Force, rebuilding started in 1977:



"The Royal Air Force has embarked on a 15-year programme, costing well over 1,500 million pounds, to rebuild the air defences of the UK almost from scratch."

A conventional war is expected, and it is calculated that the Russians might deploy against British targets an attack equal to five times the peak bombing effort of Germany in the 2nd World War.

Little do the British people reflect on the attention Russia gives to attacking this country:

"Russian aircraft are now making regular mock missile attacks on certain key targets in Britain and against Nato warships at sea. During the past 18 months Russian air and naval activity has increased markedly around the Shetlands" (D.T. 12.1.80).

The range of their bombers is shown on the map on page 59.

BRITAIN AND THE MIDDLE EAST

In these troublous times Britain is still a considerable world political influence, especially in the Middle East, and is probably more effective there than America. As the years have gone by since independence, she is respected for her past contribution to the growth of these nations. The Eton, Harrow, Sandhurst training still produces men with political and commercial skills that are the envy of the world. But the biggest factor maintaining a degree of friendship is the Royal Family. Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, and Bahrain are ruled by kings or sultans with hereditary titles and large royal families. The constitutional monarch of Great Britain, and her family, is much more acceptable to them than the President of a Republic. And at the present time, the charm and wisdom of the Queen gives much added appeal. This region was the Queen's assignment for 1979, and her goodwill visit to these countries was declared a great success. She provides the necessary link between the local peoples "*Sheba and Dedan*", and the far-flung "*merchants of Tarshish and all the young lions thereof*". A Telegraph editorial explained her influence:

"ROYALTY STILL COUNTS: As the Queen returns from an exhausting tour of the desert oil States, defeatists and denigrators here will attempt, as ever, to minimise the value of the trip by reference to Iranian experience in order to suggest that these regimes too are built on sand. They are, as ever, wrong. These principalities are traditional societies, hewing to the hereditary principle in all things. Unlike Iran, where the monarchy was secular and secularist, they are theocratic, with a ruler firmly at the head of a religious pyramid. Small wonder, then, that rulers and subjects alike warmed to a visit from the head of the world's largest monarchical State which, though perhaps a shadow of its former self, is still large, powerful and prestigious by their standards" (D.T. 3.3.79).

The Gulf sheikhs expressed themselves with many gifts: “THE QUEEN’S PATH STREWN WITH GOLD” said the headline.

“Diamond studded watches, huge natural pearls, a gold handbag and a pinafore of gold chainmail are among the gifts which have been showered on the Queen by the Gulf sheikhs during her tour of the area.

“The Queen, who already has one of the most considerable collections of jewellery in the world, has been slightly stunned by the lavishness of the gifts now stowed aboard the Royal Yacht Britannia. Their total value is thought to be well over one million pounds sterling” (*D.T.* 23.2.79).

BRITAIN AND THE POPE

“The Pope’s official representative in London is being given diplomatic rights, including permanent diplomatic immunity, as a first step towards establishing full diplomatic relations between the Court of St. James and the Holy See”.

So opened an article in the Times under the heading “VATICAN AND HENRY VIII BRIDGE THEIR OFFICIAL RIFT”. So Britain now thinks it can trust the Pope and the diplomatic bag of Swiss representative, Archbishop Heim! But what was most interesting in the article was the reason given for this step. It was another feather in the cap of that attractive Pope, John Paul II.

“The British Government had previously considered that the historic breach between Henry VIII and the Papacy had put insuperable constitutional obstacles in the way of formal relations with the Vatican. There is considerable nervousness in government circles on the subject, **but the unprecedented popularity of Pope John Paul II has changed the climate**”.

How true are the words of Revelation 18:23 “*for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived*”. The article continued:

“Leaders of the Government, including the Prime Minister herself, the Foreign Secretary, and the Lord Chancellor, are understood to favour a gradual normalisation of relations, leading to an exchange of ambassadors . . . One possible result of full relations with the Holy See would be an official visit by Pope John Paul II to Britain even as soon as next year” (*Times* 13.11.79).

The new Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie, is in favour of full relations. This is certainly a victory for the Pope. But there is probably now less likelihood of the ecumenical get-together of the past ten years arriving at the English Church joining Rome. As we have already reported, John Paul II has called for a tightening up on Church doctrine, and this will make it more difficult for other churches to join up. The Pope has his eye on Western and Eastern Europe, and if it means losing something in America and Britain this will be accepted.

A CHANGE OF HEART IN BRITAIN?

No, nothing tangible yet. We look hopefully for signs of a reversal of the present permissive ways—a swing of the pendulum when things get very bad. The Daily Telegraph had three items that were pleasant reading. One was a letter that had been headed “Back to Scripture”. It was opposing the present trends in immigration:

“God warned the Israelites many years ago: *‘they (the heathen) shall not dwell in your land, lest they make you sin against me, for if you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you’* (Ex.23:33). God also told them to care for the stranger travelling through the land, but this did not mean sharing rights of citizenship. Surely we should be working towards a single-hearted Christian society, not a pluralist one? We have been caught in the humanist trap of thinking loving our neighbour is enough, forgetting that loving God comes first.”

Another was a letter headed “Assault on integrity”. It dealt with the current discussion on homosexuals. In it the writer said:

“Religion apart, if it be indeed possible to separate morals from religion, I still think it immoral. So do millions of people. My religion, however, requires me not only to hold fast to that which is good and right but also tells me that I must in allwise reprove my brother. I serve a God who is not merely a puppet president of a social club called Christians, which has certain rules and regulations for members. He is a Creator in whom we live and move and have our being . . .”

The third item was the Daily Telegraph Editorial for December 24th, 1979: “WHO ARE THE THREE WISE MEN?” It was a long editorial, from which two paragraphs are reproduced:

“Christmas reminds each of us that we desperately need a change of heart. Political decisions, social engineering, strikes, protests and all the clever words, spoken and printed, are vain without resolute individual re-orientation, however demanding, towards daily lives of stronger spiritual and moral integrity. The biblical prophetic cry is more telling after all: ‘Repent’, which means ‘change your mind’.

“As we enter another decade, let us not so much tell others what they should do but begin with ourselves. Some would say that a highly practical way to begin would be simply by keeping Britain clean: an even better way would be by considerate manners and wholesome language; better still by more honesty in everyday things; yet better by helping the helpless here and overseas; and best of all would be by reviving our private prayers—which is not so much a matter of presenting God with our requisition list as listening to His Word.”

Epilogue

THE ISRAEL OF GOD IN THE ISLES OF THE SEA

Isaiah Chapter 24 is a grand sweep through history from the days of the prophet to the Millennium when *“The moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously”*. Verses 1 to 12 describe the punishment of the nation up to their dispersion in AD70. Throughout these verses the context requires that the Hebrew ‘*eret*’ shall be translated **land** and not earth. The verses are referring to Israel and their land, Israel being the people who had *“transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, broken the everlasting covenant”* (v.5). Verses 13-16 deal with Israel in dispersion, until the overthrow of the Gentile powers, verses 17-20. Throughout verses 13-20 the word ‘*eret*’ should be translated **earth** rather than land. Attention to this will help to make sense throughout the chapter, and help us to distinguish two situations that are described in similar language. Verse 1 reads: *“Behold the LORD maketh the land empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof”*. This is very similar to verses 19, 20: *“The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage.”* Whereas the first description applies to Israel in their land, the second description is many centuries later and describes the future overthrow of the Gentile powers. We know this is so because verse 20 adds: *“and it shall fall, and not rise again”*. The Gentile powers do not rise again, because Israel and their King are now in the ascendent.

Now the interesting verses are 13-16. During the dispersion of the nation we have a remnant who are faithful; those Paul calls ‘The Israel of God’. So verses 13, 14 (R.V.): *“For thus shall it be in the midst of the earth among the peoples, as the shaking of an olive tree, as the grape gleanings when the vintage is done. These shall lift up their voice, they shall shout; for the majesty (‘excellence’) of Yahweh they cry aloud from the sea.”*

Verse 15 is very interesting: *“Wherefore glorify ye Yahweh in the fires (Hebrew ‘URIM’), even the name of Yahweh Elohim of Israel in the isles of the sea.”* The Urim and Thummim belonged to the High Priest’s breastplate of judgment. Urim was the term applied to the sparklings of the cut and polished gems. These things find their real meaning in Christ. He is the substance to which the breastplate and its gems pointed. The Israel of God, ‘in Christ’

“*shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life*” (Phil.2:15-16). In Christ they are Urim. And they glorify the God of Israel in the midst of Gentile darkness. Verse 16 adds: “*From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the righteous (RSV Righteous One).*” The Righteous One is the God of Israel, and His Son.

Here is a wonderful exhortation to us, dwelling afar off in the isles. Are we part of this world, or are we crying aloud the excellence of Yahweh; are our songs of glory to the Righteous One heard? Our witness is growing feeble, our separation less, our holiness less apparent. Let us also be admonished by the words in chapter 25 regarding this class of people: “*And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation*” (v. 9). Let us get into this proper frame of mind, ‘waiting for the Master’ before it is too late.

The second half of verse 16 describes national Israel; it is their time of ‘leanness’; the long time of punishment following their ‘treachery’ in crucifying their Messiah. But the end is near, and soon their King, our King, will be reigning in Mount Zion, and before his ancients gloriously.

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