

# MILESTONES



1995

# **MILESTONES TO THE KINGDOM**

***A Review of the  
World Events of  
1995 in the light  
of Bible Prophecy***

**Don Pearce**

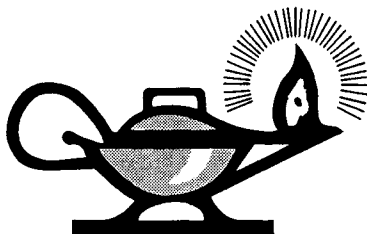
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## PREFACE

At the end of a race the landmarks pass rapidly by as the contenders quicken the pace and the finishing line comes closer to their view. How deeply do we feel the comparison as we speed on to the finishing line of our race for the Kingdom of God. Surely time has never sped by so fast with modern travel and communications making so much more possible within a given hour of time than ever before in earth's history. This is the age of time saving inventions in every field of life, but the inhabitants of the earth have never felt more the need for time to themselves.

What a remarkable year it has been in the Middle East! 1995 saw the spectacle of Israeli-Palestinian rapprochement, with the resolving of details for a Palestinian Authority in the Gaza Strip and the "West Bank" territories. Even the status of Jerusalem is on the agenda for July 1996! Mr Yasser Arafat the one-time terrorist leader has successfully persuaded a majority of the Israeli people that it is in their interest to trade land for peace. We need to keep a right perspective on these negotiations. Israel are trading away the land which was the subject of Divine promises to their fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. To negotiate this deal with a man of such infamous history as Mr Arafat is quite sickening. Why does Israel give to Arabs that which their God gave in solemn covenant to their fathers? No nation would do such a thing with their own land let alone if their land was theirs by Divine promise! The land truly belongs to God: "the land is Mine" He states in Leviticus 25:23. Israel were strangers and sojourners with God and were never given the right to trade "*eret* Israel" for peace. Arafat's people call themselves "Palestinians", but this has no Divine support whatsoever. When Abraham died he "gave all that he had to Isaac" (Gen. 25:5). The son of the bondwoman was not to be heir with Isaac (Gen. 21:10). But now we see the sons of Ishmael pushing for equal ownership of the Land of Promise with the holy places and even for Jerusalem itself, when really they have "no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem" (Neh. 2:20). The Israelis, though themselves but tenants in the Land, think to sub-let a portion of the Land for their personal advantage, yet they have not enquired of the will of the Landlord!

After 50 years of strife and five major wars we can all appreciate Israel's deep yearning for peace. The tragedy is—and what a deep tragedy it is!—that Israel have sought their peace not by faith in the God of their fathers, but by very political and human means. Even their fallen hero Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, distinguished soldier and leader that he undoubtedly was, did not seek peace from his knowledge of the Word of God but on the basis of Israel's illustrious military achievements and her present ability to defend herself against surrounding potential enemies. "Peace and safety" said the Apostle Paul would precede the sudden destruction of Divine judgement. To a degree almost unthinkable just, say, two years ago we now see the whole environment of the Middle East

permeated with the spirit of peace. The funeral service of Mr Rabin in November highlighted this remarkable change. Among an auspicious array of world leaders who attended was President Mubarak of Egypt making his first visit to Israel and indeed contributing a significant speech for the occasion again in the theme of peace. Even Mr Arafat was invited to the funeral of the Israeli Prime Minister, but declined because of the security risk. The high note on this sad but significant occasion was struck by King Hussein of Jordan. Without a note this man of very small stature strode with dignity to the microphone and spoke in brotherly tones of his grief at the death of a companion, a fellow peace-maker and longed for the time when all Abraham's children will be together in peace. There was a lot more Biblical overtones in his words than from any other world leader.

The year closed with Syrian and Israeli leaders in negotiation for peace and pointers being given that both sides were prepared to make serious concessions in order to obtain their goals. Then Lebanon, too, a country that has been under the heel of Syria since the 1983 war, has expressed her desire to settle her Southern border with Israel, in order to augment the rapid growth and rebuilding of the country. Who will be next? The whole middle East is in a state of remarkable change.

The four-year civil war in former Yugoslavia and the forty-year strife in Northern Ireland would have to be the other two most notable areas of war in the world. Remarkably in 1995 both these turbulent areas of hatred seem to have quietened down. There is a momentum of peace going round the world and intractable conflicts are coming to a cessation of hostilities!

"For when they shall say, 'Peace and safety'; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape". The sense of the passage is that this calm would settle over the world scene just before Divine destruction: this would be the last sign, the calm before the storm!

Therefore our Brotherhood should be on its toes, waiting anxiously for the dawn to break and bring our King to earth again. It is not a time for revision, for change, for endless testing of foundations. The whole world scene is in a turmoil of change but wise brethren and sisters will be building upon a privileged and wonderful heritage which we have enjoyed for so many years and which has allowed us to stand on the hill and see the essential outline of things to come, confirmed by the Spirit's anticipation of things now past. This is the Divine perspective and we are truly privileged to have this heritage.

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand."

B. N. Luke  
Secretary, CSSS

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## Abbreviations used

### Books and Publications

- ARLR All Roads Lead to Rome. Book. See book list obtainable from *Milestones*, address on page 2.
- BIPAC Britain Israel Public Affairs Centre. Newsletter published fortnightly. £35 a year UK. Overseas rate on application.  
Write to BIPAC, 21-22 Gt. Sutton St., London, EC1V 0DN Fax 0171 490 4785
- CFI Conservative Friends of Israel. (i.e. political). Monthly newsletter. £10 a year. Write to 45B Westbourne Terrace, London W2 3UR. Fax 0171 224 8941
- DT Daily Telegraph
- Geog The Geographical Magazine (British—not the National Geographic which I do take also)
- GW Guardian Weekly
- JP Jerusalem Post International edition, published weekly
- ST Sunday Telegraph, sister paper to Daily Telegraph.
- TE The European, published weekly
- Time The Time magazine, published weekly
- TME The Middle East Review. London. Monthly
- TR The Reformer. Published bimonthly. "The Official organ of the Protestant Alliance". A valuable source of information on matters of concern to Protestants. Minimum subscription £4., overseas £6. The Protestant Alliance, 77 Amptill Rd., Flitwick, Bedford MK45 1BD. Tel 01525 712348
- TT The Times. London Daily

### Other abbreviations

- [ ] Author's notes
- EU European Union. Was the EEC, then the EC, now the EU. The Common Market
- GDP Gross Domestic Product. Measure of the income generated by a country, usually expressed in terms of \$ per person
- GNP Gross National Product. Similar to above, but includes income from overseas investments as well.

\$1Billion = £660,000,000

\$1Million = £660,000 approximately. \$ are always US\$.



## Acknowledgements

- Cover photo © *Australian Associated Press* . Shimon Peres lays a wreath on the grave of former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

We gratefully acknowledge kind permission to use the following material:

- Map of West Bank, p. 16 © BIPAC
- Shift in global wealth, p. 43 © The Telegraph, London, 1996
- Pipeline, p. 64 © The Telegraph, London, 1996
- Nato membership, inside back cover, © The Sunday Telegraph

I would like to thank Bro. Alan Clarke for his helpful comments, and with others, for his proofing of my draft.

## Author's notes

I am grateful for items which readers have sent me. The sources below indicate the publications that I regularly see, so if an interesting item appears in some other magazine please let me see it, ensuring the date and source are indicated. Please let me know if you wish me to acknowledge its receipt.

Conventional terminology is used to describe parts of Israel—i.e. West Bank; people—i.e. the Palestinians; places—i.e. holy sites.

Sources are given where appropriate. Remember that the dates on weekly publications are when they are published—the event could have taken place 7 - 10 days earlier. Where publications show two dates i.e. 23-29th Nov., only the first date is indicated i.e. 23-11-95.

## Chapter 1:

# THE PROGRESS OF MIDDLE EAST PEACE

### *Introduction*

*The dramatic event of this year, must surely have been the assassination of Mr Rabin at the hands of his own countryman. Knowing that all things are under angelic control, we conclude that Mr Rabin's work was deemed to have been accomplished. A new turn was needed to move forward the Divine plan. It is early days yet, but by his death the peace talks with the Syrians seem to have been set back on course. It has united the nation in revulsion for what happened, allowing the withdrawal from the West Bank to proceed with little opposition. It will have sharpened Mr Arafat's desire for peace and co-operation with Israel, lest he too suffer the same fate.*

*This year has seen the implementation of troop withdrawals from most Palestinian towns, as the second stage of the Peace Treaty becomes a reality on the ground. The status of Jerusalem becomes increasingly contentious in the run up to talks about her future, which have to be held in 1996 under the terms of the Peace Treaty.*

*On the other hand increasing cooperation between Israel and her neighbours has led to continuing progress on many levels and covering many topics.*

*We would remind readers that, thrilling though it is to see peace and stability coming to this troubled region, yet we know from the word of God that it is a man-made peace, as it does not have the blessing of God. It is part of the Divine purpose, but will be swept away by Israel's enemies, when the words of Ezekiel are fulfilled:*

*"...in the latter years thou [Gog] shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them. Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee. Thus saith the Lord God; It shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought: And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwallled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates, To take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land."*

Ezek. 38:8-12

*That day must be near, as we see the stage setting before our eyes. Let us remember that, **before** it does come, the call to Judgement will have taken place.*

## **The death of Mr Rabin**

The details were so well publicised, and with the trial of his assassin being in the news, our interest is to sketch what he achieved in his life and in his death by furthering peace.

The two historic moments in his career were the victorious campaign which he led in the Six Day War in 1967, culminating in the taking of Jerusalem, and the handshake with Mr Arafat on the White House lawn in 1993.

Born in Jerusalem in 1922, he was a military man for most of his life, retiring in 1968 to become American Ambassador for 5 years. He returned to Israel after the Yom Kippur war and entered the Knesset as a member of the Labour party in December 1973, becoming Prime Minister the following year, following Golda Meir's resignation. He signed an interim agreement with Egypt, pulling back troops to allow the Suez canal to reopen. He held secret talks with King Hussein, but the time for peace had not yet come. He left politics after 3 years, forced to resign over a scandal concerning an overseas bank account of his wife's.

Seven years later, in 1984, he returned as defence minister. In November 1991 the Madrid Peace Talks started, bringing Israel and her neighbours to the negotiating table. In 1992 he was re-appointed Prime Minister and swiftly restored good relations with America, winning \$10 billion in loan guarantees to enable Israel to absorb the mass of immigrants from the Soviet bloc. In 1992, in partnership with Mr Peres, he started secret negotiations with the Palestinians in Oslo concerning withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho, and the recognition of the PLO. This resulted in the Oslo Accord and the historic signing of a Peace Accord in Washington in September 1993, leading to a Peace treaty signed in Cairo in May 1994. For this he shared a Nobel Prize for Peace award in 1994. This was followed in October 1994 with the Peace treaty with Jordan. Then 1995 saw the signing of the Oslo II agreement in September, giving Palestinians self-rule in the majority of West Bank towns.

“The dour, stolid, undemonstrative, anti-charismatic Yitzhak Rabin enjoyed an extraordinary relationship with his people. He was the man of the moment, uniquely trusted by his countrymen to steer them through a psychological and political revolution in relations with their former enemies.”

BIPAC 6-11-95

He realized that Israel could not keep down 2 million Palestinians in their midst. Peace could only come through cooperation, not confrontation.

In his speech to the Peace rally just before his death he said,

"I was a military man for 27 years. I waged war as long as there was no chance for peace. I believe there is now a chance for peace, a great chance and we must take advantage of it for those standing here and for those who are not here—and they are many...Without partners for peace, there is no peace. Also with Syria, there will be an opportunity to achieve peace."  
JP 11-11-95

250,000 attended his funeral. It brought together the leaders of the world. President Mubarak came to Israel for the first time and King Hussein came for the first time to Jerusalem. The Prince of Wales, John Major and Bill Clinton were amongst a host of heads of government and officials who came to mourn.

## **Mr Peres takes control**

Shimon Peres is quite a different character from Yitzhak Rabin. Mr Rabin was known as a loner in the decision-making processes. His close associates were often not consulted. He liked to make decisions himself rather than delegate. "On an average day, Rabin has at least a dozen meetings, where at least 30 decisions are made," said a senior aide (JP 11-2-95). In the partnership with Mr Peres in the peace talks, he was the pessimist, Peres the optimist. Rabin was portrayed as the brake, Peres as the accelerator of the slow-moving peace caravan.

Mr Peres is a consultant who surrounds himself with advisors. He is good with words and is very open and less abrasive. He prides himself on his ability to work hours that would demoralize people half his age (73)! He is expected to speed up the Peace Talks and to take more risks. He was Defence Minister from 1974-1977, Prime Minister from 1984 to 1986, and then served as Foreign Minister (DT 27-11-95; JP 16-12-95; 2-12-95). *Milestones* '85 described his former time as P.M. -

"Over a very difficult year Mr Peres has shown himself as a man of statesman-like quality, both at home and abroad. He can list a number of achievements: withdrawal of the army from Lebanon; the curbing of 1000% inflation in the face of hostility from each section of the community against unfair burden; managing to move circumstances towards direct negotiation with Jordan, despite the opposition of other political parties; and has gained considerable respect for Israel with the U.S. and the rest of the world."

His outlook is different. Mr Rabin moved more slowly, but would have given the Palestinians more control of the West Bank. Mr Peres has moved more quickly, but does not anticipate going much further than the steps already taken. Under his vision, Israel retains control over most of the area.

Like Mr Rabin before him, in his new cabinet he has taken the role of Minister of Defence as well as Prime Minister. He was brought younger blood into the cabinet. The important role of Foreign Minister has been

given to Ehud Barak, 53, the former Chief of Staff who has no political experience. He retired from the Army less than a year ago.

“Mr Barak’s elevation may recreate something of the successful Peres-Rabin ‘dream team’, with Mr Peres the chief visionary of the peace and Mr Barak taking on Mr Rabin’s mantle as the cautious military tactician”. DT 22-11-95.

[A wonderful echo of the Barak of 3,300 years ago! Joshua chapter 4.]

Because of Mr Peres’ close working with Mr Rabin, the transfer of power went smoothly. An indication was given by the Tel Aviv stock exchange. An assassination of a leader would normally send shares tumbling—yet they hardly wavered. One of his first acts was to pull forward the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the major Arab “cities” (large towns) on the West Bank, cancelling Mr Rabin’s order that withdrawal should not take place before bypasses have been built around them. As Israeli troops withdrew from the Arab cities there was a remarkable silence from the Opposition parties. With the nation still focused inwards following the assassination, it seemed to ignore the momentous changes in Israel’s boundaries. Their forceful opposition to withdrawal was held responsible, in part, for the climate of hate that led to the cold-blooded murder. There is now a feeling that the price of hatred and opposition is too high a price to pay (JP 16-12-95). Then talks with Syria were on again after a six month break, following his decision to use the US as peace brokers after receiving America’s assurance that they would defend Israel, if she had to give up the Golan.

## PEACE AND THE PEACE TALKS

There is no doubt that we are living in a remarkable era. Not only is there a peace settling on the Middle East, but in the wider field—Bosnia and Northern Ireland are two notable cases—there is a desire for peace. An article in the Daily Telegraph carried the headline:

### **“The fourth Horseman: unseated but not defeated”**

It hadn’t quite understood the Apocalyptic symbols, giving the four horsemen as *Disease, Famine, Death* and *War*! The point it was making was that we are in a remarkable period of peace.

“Nowhere in the world, give or take the occasional border skirmish, are two nation-states at war.” DT 23-12-95

A full page in the Sunday Telegraph was headed:

### **“What happened to war?”**

“Peace is breaking out all over the world and the signs are that this time it is more than a coincidence.” ST 24-12-95

Yet beneath the surface the tensions still run high. There have been more deaths of Israelis from the terrorist suicide bombs than there were under

the intifada. Muslim extremists are responsible for many attacks elsewhere. Even in Northern Ireland, as we shall see later, beatings, maimings and intimidations go on. And to the north of the Middle East, the events in Russia, with a growing movement back to the old days, casts it shadows. The believers have been forewarned:

*“For when they shall say ‘peace and safety;’ then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.”*  
1 Thess. 5:3

**The Peace Talks.** The pattern of talks has changed. Having signed Peace Treaties with the Palestinians and the Jordanians, the talks have focused this year on two matters—Syria and what is termed Oslo II. These talks concern the next steps on the road to a Palestinian homeland, after the withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho. There have been other talks, many linked with economic matters. Also continuing, have been the Multilateral talks, where Israel and her many Arab neighbours meet to discuss issues such as water, Middle East security, refugees, the environment and regional development. These have now become so unremarkable that very little gets into the press, even in the Jerusalem Post, but occasional snippets show that they are still continuing! We will look firstly at the progress of peace with the Palestinians and the Oslo II agreement leading to Israeli troop withdrawals from the West Bank; next relations with Jordan; then the on/off/on talks with Syria.

## Peace and the Palestinians

To recap on the situation leading to the position at the end of last year, the Peace Accord, signed on the White House lawn in September 1993, and the subsequent Peace Agreement signed in Cairo in May 1994, had as its first steps Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho. This was completed by the end of May and Yasser Arafat moved from Tunis to the Gaza strip in July 1994. Step by step, Israel handed control over to the Palestinians for running the affairs of these areas.

The next step was the more contentious one of withdrawal of Israeli troops from Judea and Samaria—the West Bank. Israel was unhappy with the lack of control that Arafat had over the terrorists and was very concerned for the safety of the settlers who would be left behind.

This year saw the negotiation of that withdrawal, and the pull-out from all of the main towns by the end of the year, except for Hebron which is time tabled for March 1996.

By September 1995, frantic and lengthy talks brought both sides to agreement. Israel agreed to withdraw troops from Hebron and many smaller matters were cleared up. “Oslo II” was ready for signing in the White House on September the 28th, paving the way for withdrawal of Israeli troops from the territories. The ceremony was attended by many

Middle East representatives, including King Hussein, President Mubarak, the Foreign Ministers of Saudi Arabia and the six Gulf states.

Mr Rabin asserted,

“We are not retreating. We are not leaving. We are yielding. And we are doing so for the sake of peace.

“... we are not alone here on this soil. And so we are sharing this good earth today with the Palestinian people, in order to choose life.

“Together, we should not let the land of milk and honey become a land flowing with blood and tears. Don’t let it happen. Rivers of hatred will overflow again and swamp the Middle East. We, gentlemen, will not permit terrorism to defeat peace. We will not allow it. If we do not have partners in this bitter, difficult war, we will fight it alone. We know how to fight. We know how to win.”

Arafat declared,

“From this day on we do not want to see any waste of or threat to any innocent Palestinian life or any innocent Israeli life. Enough killing, and enough killing of innocent people.” JP 7-10-95

Because of the speed at which it had all come together and the sheer size (314 pages) of the agreement, the matter was not debated by the Knesset until after the signing ceremony. After a marathon 15 hour debate, the Knesset gave a 61-59 vote for approval (JP 14-10-95).

Redeployment began in October, with army positions being dismantled in 12 of the larger villages, and civil control of some of the villages was handed over.

After an initial period of mourning for Mr Rabin in early November, the withdrawal continued. The first pull-out under Area ‘A’ was from Jenin—this took place quietly, with the last military vehicles slipping out before daybreak. Palestinian flags flew from roof tops around the city. Later in the month Yasser Arafat visited the city (DT 14-11-95; BIPAC 6-12-95).

The second pull-out was completed in the early hours of December the 11th, from Tulkarm. Nablus, Kalkilya and Bethlehem followed shortly afterwards, again with little incident. Bethlehem was at one time predominantly Christian, with only five mosques in 1970. Through intimidation and violence that population has dwindled. Two-thirds of the 40,000 strong population are now Muslims and the number of mosques is now more than 70. The Vatican sponsors the university there, where 68% of its 2,100 students are Muslims. Mr Arafat and his young Catholic-born (but now converted) wife, Suha, paid a visit, amid jubilant scenes. The withdrawal from Ramallah was completed at the end of the month (DT 11-12-95; 28-12-95; TE 21-12-95; TT 21-12-95).

## **OSLO II**

This 314 page interim self-rule agreement between Israel and the Palestinians is complex. It agrees that:

- **Area A.** All 8 Palestinian cities (with the exception of the Jewish part of Hebron) will be under total Palestinian Authority control. The Israeli Defence Forces will only be allowed in these areas as joint patrols, and then only on the main roads. These cities cover about 3% of the area of the territories.
- **Area B.** Virtually all the 450 Palestinian villages will be able to run their own affairs. The IDF has “overriding” authority and can enter if necessary to combat terrorism. The PA police to be in charge of “public order”. There will be 25 PA police stations established to cover the areas. There will also be 8 IDF and PA coordinating offices established. These areas cover about 27% of the total area.
- **Area C.** Any area not covered by ‘A’ and ‘B’. Consisting of Israeli settlements, military installations, areas of strategic security value and uninhabited rural areas. These will be entirely under Israeli control. Covers about 70% of total area.

Further pull backs are planned once the PA Council has been elected and inaugurated. Three more, unspecified pull backs at 6 monthly intervals are planned. The IDF will be in charge of all main roads, and bypasses to be built around Ramallah, Bethlehem and, next year, Hebron. Israeli cars are to be allowed to travel throughout the region, but can be stopped in areas A & B for identification purposes only.

- The Palestinians to amend their charter which calls for the destruction of Israel within 2 months of the inauguration of the new council.
- Israel to release up to 3,000 Palestinian prisoners in phases.
- Individuals or groups who support terrorism to be excluded as candidates from the Palestinian elections.

## **Peace and the Jordanians**

There has been good progress on this front, as Israel was dealing with a friend. King Hussein has, in the main, been friendly with the Israeli leaders, since 1948, meeting them in secret, often in London. As we shall see in the next chapter, good progress is being made on the economic ties between the two countries. Israel has handed back to Jordan the 1,200



acres of land as agreed. Israeli farmers will be able to cultivate this land for “at least 25 years” (JP 18-3-95).

Having signed a peace treaty with Israel, Jordan’s relations with America are much improved, no small thanks to Israel’s insistence that America help Jordan, so that she can play an important role in the Arab world. Israel would rather deal with a stable King Hussein, than with an unstable Mr Arafat! Israel has been doing all she can to improve American-Jordanian relations.

A Jerusalem Post article at the end of the year entitled “**Old friends, new setting**”, gave an interesting summary of Israeli-Jordanian relations.

King Hussein fears a strong Arafat, he sees Jordan’s stability lies with strong Israeli and American links, rather than links with the Palestinians. In the past he has had to take courses which have gone against his pro-Western stance, but these have been because of economic circumstances. During the establishment of the State of Israel, Israeli-Jordanian clandestine cooperation made possible the defeat of the Palestinians and the establishment of King Abdulla (Hussein’s grandfather) in the West Bank and Jerusalem, rather than the Palestinians.

Both countries secretly helped to defend each other. Even in 1973, the king secretly visited Golda Meir to warn her of the impending war and only entered the war on Syria’s side after clearing it with her! Jordan was alarmed at the progress that Israel was making in the peace talks with Mr Arafat, fearing his growing authority. He decided to take a major risk and plunge into a fully-fledged peace with Israel. Over the past year, Israel’s closeness to Jordan, rather than the Palestinians was clear, and King Hussein hoped that he could make up lost ground. The death of Mr Rabin came as a great shock. Mr Peres’s relationship to Jordan is not quite as close as was Mr Rabin’s. With the rapid pull-out from the West Bank and the establishment of Palestinian rule, the king’s hopes of any influence in the area have, for the time being at least, been dashed. The article concluded:



“Peres is by no stretch of the imagination an enemy of Jordan, and may yet reconsider some of his policies when their damage to the king and their domestic political costs become clear. In any case the overall picture for Jordan is still very positive. Under Hussein’s experienced leadership, the country may benefit more than any other Arab party from the new reality emerging in the Middle East.” JP 23-12-95

King Hussein met members of the Iraqi National Congress (INC) in London in November. The INC is a London-based umbrella body for Iraq’s opposition groups. He told them of his intention to take measures against Iraq. He wants to bring down Saddam Hussein, without hurting the Iraqi people. He is wanting to use his extensive links with the country to prevent it disintegrating in the event of Saddam being overthrown. (Iraq used to be under Hashemite rule). He is reported to convening a conference in Amman involving the INC, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states to discuss a “regional consensus” (BIPAC 6-12-95; 20-12-95). A possibility of a “king of the south confederacy” (Daniel chapter 11) of the southern Arab nations with Israel, backed by America and Britain? We await developments!

### **Talks with Syria**

President Assad of Syria is another man who wants to be the leading light among the Arab countries. Syria is heavily armed, although much of the equipment now is very dated. It is estimated that half of Syria’s budget goes to the military—a very heavy price indeed. Syria is the home to many terrorist organizations which attack Israel, though Israel has claimed some notable successes in eliminating some of the leaders (BIPAC 26-4-95; ST 24-9-95).



At the start of the year talks between both sides had been deadlocked for some months. Syria, Saudi Arabia and Egypt held a summit meeting in Cairo in January. A week later Peres visited Cairo and discussed the situation. Syria had been pressing for a rapid withdrawal from the Golan, and there seemed little prospect for an agreement. Later in the month, talks should have resumed in Washington between Israel and Syria, but they did not materialize, though there were reports that President Assad of

Syria had been preparing his people for the possibility of an eventual deal with Israel. Assad had ceased to negotiate; what was on offer was not acceptable to him and he was prepared to wait until more acceptable proposals were put forward (JP 14-1-95; 28-1-95; BIPAC 8-2-95).

The Americans decided in March to take a more active role and Warren Christopher made an eight day peace-making trip to the region, holding two days of talks with Assad. Talks were to be resumed at ambassadorial level. Meanwhile Saudi Arabia indicated that she would give aid to Syria if she made peace with Israel (BIPAC 22-3-95). Again talks soon petered out, and it was not until June that America made another effort to get them restarted. Mr Christopher toured the region and announced that Israeli and Syrian military chiefs would open talks in Washington. These commenced, making some progress, but were then suddenly cancelled by Assad, because of Israel's instance that she must have early warning stations on the Golan, and matters were at a standstill again (JP 22-7-95).

In September Washington tried again to get talks under way. After the signing of "Oslo II" it was assumed efforts would now be concentrated on getting a peace treaty with Syria. America was willing to share her early warning station information with Israel, thus satisfying the demands of both sides. Assad didn't seem interested in talks; in fact Hizbullah attacks intensified on Israeli troops in South Lebanon (BIPAC 25-10-95).

It took the death of Mr Rabin to restart the talks. Knowing that Israeli elections were only a year away, and that if the opposition party came to power there would be little chance of success, it appeared that time was running out for peace. Also elections are due next year in America, where also the political will for talks could change.

At the Barcelona summit at the end of November, the new Israeli Foreign Minister appealed to his Syrian counterpart to make peace. Mr Peres announced in December, having visited President Clinton, that he was willing to allow America to broker a peace deal and that he would be willing to discuss all aspects of peace, rather than just concentrating on the Golan. Assad responded positively. Warren Christopher announced that Israel and Syria would meet at a secluded site near Washington for three days of round-the-clock talks on December the 27th, with a second session scheduled for January the 10th. Warren Christopher and Dennis Ross would be on hand to help. The Syrian press, which is controlled by the President, was upbeat about the forth-coming talks (BIPAC 6-12-95; 20-12-95; DT 13-12-95).

Initial reports indicated that the first round of talks had gone well, although Israel was shaken by the firing from Lebanon of 12 Katyusha rockets which hit Kiryat Shmona just after the first talks had finished (JP 6-1-96). It is not certain from scripture that Syria will make peace with Israel—we expect to find Syria on the side of the King of the North in the coming contest. As with all things, we have to wait and see!

## Chapter 2:

# ISRAEL'S ECONOMIC GROWTH

### Introduction

*The continuing rapid growth of Israel's economy continues apace. She is being described as the Middle East tiger! How our brethren and sisters of earlier generations would be thrilled to see the progress in the Land. From slow beginnings over a long period, Israel has now grown to an important player on the international economic stage.*

*Yet, as we say every year, it is with a mixed heart that we trace all this. Prophecy is being fulfilled; we **are** in a peace and safety era, Israel is growing prosperous, **but the end** will be the utter devastation of all we see. On holiday in Israel in October, we stood in Jerusalem looking at the Mount of Olives and pondered the mighty power that will split this solid mountain in two. Shortly after we left, the region was shaken by an earthquake which did damage to the pyramids in Egypt, to hotels in Eilat, and caused damage in Jordan. A sister who was in Eilat at the time spoke of the fear as things crashed around them—the floors above them were substantially damaged. And this was a minor quake!*

*The coming King will have no need for Israel's sophisticated technology. A clean sweep will usher in a new era of **peace and righteousness**.*

### Economic growth—the M.E. “tiger”

The transformation of Israel in 20 years from a poor country with a minuscule, unimportant economy, to one of the world's 12 most highly developed economies has been remarkable. She is now in the same class as the “Asian tigers”, the Pacific Rim countries where growth is booming without the crippling effects of the recession felt by Europe and America.

There are three main strands to this transformation. The **peace dividend**, **immigration** of skilled labour, and **growth**. And a fourth, the work of the angels bringing about a situation to make Israel a desirable spoil, and Jerusalem a burdensome stone.

**The peace dividend.** Twenty years ago Israel spent 33% of its GNP<sup>1</sup> on defence; 45% of this spending was on arms imports. A crippling burden. Now defence takes just 9% of GNP and arms imports are just 16% of defence costs.

In 1975 the Arab boycott was still strong and caused most companies and countries to concentrate their activities in the Arab countries. After all, Israel's GDP<sup>1</sup> was 50% below that of her neighbours, Egypt, Jordan and

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<sup>1</sup> See Abbreviations p. 7.

Syria. In 1995 the boycott is largely in tatters and Israel's GDP has increased seven-fold and is now 50% greater than that of her neighbours.

**Immigration.** Twenty years ago Israel's population stood at 3.5 million; it now stands at 5.6 million. The over 1 million immigrants, mostly from the former Soviet Union, have changed and are changing the face of Israel. She has been able to successfully absorb them and tap the wealth of skills and business contacts which they brought. Unemployment is below 7%.

**Growth.** Twenty years ago Israel exported \$1.8 billion of goods; her foreign reserves were slightly more than \$1 billion. In 1995 she expects to have exported \$18 billion and reserves stand at around \$9 billion. Shortage of water has caused her to concentrate on high-tech areas, such as communications, electronics and computers, which are not dependent on water like agriculture. The proportion of engineers and technicians among industrial workers has risen from 5% to 18% and productivity has doubled in this period.

(The above was taken from "*The economic revolution*" BIPAC May 95).

Israel is poised for even more growth. She now has free-trade agreements with the US, the EU and EFTA. She is expanding fast into the Asian markets, and to some extent the Middle East markets are beginning to open up.

Major markets that have until recently been closed but are now open:

- Most-favoured-nation status with **China** and **India**
- **Tunisia** and **Morocco** have established trade relations
- **Japan** has opened a trade office in Tel Aviv
- **Oman, Qatar** and **Canada** are expected to establish trade relations in 1996.

Israel now has diplomatic and economic relations with 148 countries!

## Trade with the Arabs

The major fear of the Arab world is that Israel is set to dominate the Arab economy. Israel had high hopes that a benefit of the peace talks would be the opening up of a vast market of 80 million people right on her doorstep. The reality is that her neighbours are more likely to benefit than Israel. They have no history of importing and exporting. Only 10% of their trade is foreign trade. They are still largely autocratic and economically underdeveloped. While Israel has a GNP of \$16,000 per person, the average amongst her neighbours is \$1,000, with Egypt less than \$600. Even in the former territories the market has shrunk. The Palestinians in Gaza suffered a lowering of living standards by some 30% when Israel withdrew—they did not have the expertise to run the economy efficiently.

Much of what Israel has to offer is too sophisticated. However, one of Israel's great skills which is of value to every Arab country is in the field of water: from efficient, water saving irrigation equipment, to desalination plants; from breeding plants tolerant of poor, brackish water, to the reuse of sewage and waste water for crops. The other field is in health care. The Deputy Israeli Foreign Minister recently visited one of the Arab Emirates and spoke to a highly educated member of the Royal family. He asked what they wanted from Israel.

"There are two areas in which Israel is virtually the only country that can help us, and we have waited years for this moment.

"Here a glass of water costs four times as much as a glass of petrol. This is our greatest problem. We don't have water. Imagine an entire country that lives on desalinated water. If you could desalinate water for us at a third of the price, this would be a life saver. If we can fly there [Israel] to get [health] treatment in three hours instead of flying to the US in 14 hours, we will solve a major problem." BIPAC 22-2-95

**Jordan.** There are still those in Jordan who are opposed to peace with Israel. With a GNP 1/15th of Israel's, there is a feeling of inferiority. The King and his brother, Crown Prince Hassan, have been pushing things ahead. One year on from the signing of the peace treaty, nine of 15 planned bilateral agreements have already been reached, and the remainder are on the way. A key transportation pact is expected to be signed at the end of the year. This will allow for Jordanian use of the Israeli ports of Haifa and Ashdod, and allow Israelis to drive their own cars into Jordan. Bus services will also link Tel Aviv, Haifa, Eilat and Nazareth with Jordanian towns. When this agreement is signed, customs duties will be reduced (JP 28-10-95; 4-11-95). They are already looking at a rail connection between Haifa port and the chemical industries on either side of the Dead Sea. Other projects being examined are a rail/road link between Haifa and Irbid in Jordan and a new road from Ashdod to Amman (JP 6-5-95). The US has agreed to a \$500,000 feasibility study for the expansion of Akaba airport to allow Israeli flights to land (JP 16-9-95).

**Jordan-Palestinians.** Jordan and the PA meet in Amman and signed a co-operation treaty. This should increase Palestinian exports. It will regulate economic, finance, banking, education, transport, telecommunications, etc. between Jordan and the Palestinian autonomous regions (BIPAC 4-2-95). The first trade pact between them was signed at the end of April—the first step, it was hoped, towards the goal of free trade between them (JP 6-5-95).

**Egypt.** Although Egypt was the first Arab nation to make peace with Israel, there has been a reluctance to be seen to be doing trade with Israel. It was only the occasion of Mr. Rabin's funeral that brought President Mubarak to Israel for the first time. The cooperation on the Alexandrian oil refinery marked an important step forward and things seem to be

steadily improving this year. More Egyptian businessmen are visiting Israel to study particularly their electronics and computer businesses.

One unexpected side effect of Middle East peace is the decline in the Suez Canal traffic. With Jordan shipping goods across Israel, rather than around Israel, and 2.3 million barrels of oil a day now being pumped along the Sumed pipeline to Egypt, rather than transported in tankers, the canal traffic has declined dramatically. Tolls are being cut by 20% in a drive to halt the decline. One candidate in the recent Egyptian elections even proposed it should be filled in and a railway built instead to transport goods! (DT 24-11-95).

Doubtless it will in any case disappear in the day when "*the LORD shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dryshod*" (Isa. 11:15).

## Agreement with the EU

The renegotiation of the terms of Israel's associate membership of the EU dragged on for most of the year—it should have been ready by December 1994, but was not hammered out until July 1995 and formally signed in November. It strengthens the ties between the two sides. In the past Israel has imported far more from the EU than she exported to it (\$12.7 billion cp. \$4.9 billion—1994 figures). With lower tariffs, and now access to European public and government procurement markets, Israel hopes to substantially improve her exports to the EU. She also became only the second non-EU country (after Switzerland), to be accepted as a full member of the EU's Research and Development programme (BIPAC 21-11-95).

## Oil exploration

Over 400 wells have been drilled in Israel since exploration began in the 1950's. A few have led to hopes that there will be commercial reserves found. Many more are being drilled and more overseas companies are getting involved. Tests at one well in January revealed commercial quantities of gas. In April drilling started near the Dead Sea. Gas wells are in production near the northern town of Kiryat Shemona (JP 28-1-95; 21-10-95).

The European Investment Bank approved a \$300 million credit for the \$1 billion joint Egyptian-Israeli refinery at Alexandria. Work is expected to start shortly with an expected finish by the end of the century. Interestingly, it involves, in a small way, Saudi Arabia which, as a member of the board that controls the Sumed pipeline in Egypt, gave approval for the guaranteed supplies of crude oil to the refinery (JP 1-7-95; BIPAC Jan. 95).

## **Her defence industry**

Israel's technological skills as well as her own defence needs have spawned a thriving defence industry. Many nations are now beating a path to her door. Among the projects is updating other countries fighters, fitting them with the latest in weapons systems. Russian-built MiG-21's are being converted, it is believed, for India which has a large fleet of MiG's. Romania has signed up for its 100 MiG planes to be updated over the next 4 years. They will be upgraded to NATO standards so that they would be able to perform flight missions in cooperation with NATO (JP 9-9-95).

Israel gathered her MiG-21 experience from captured planes! She has also recruited several of the original designers who have now emigrated from Russia to Israel. This plane formed the backbone of the Soviet and her allies. There are plenty of planes in service, potential candidates for upgrades! (TE 5-10-95).

Israel successfully launched her own spy satellite from her own space rocket in April. The satellite transmits pictures sharp enough to "make out number plates in Baghdad"! With America she is developing her own anti-missile system, hoping to have the first batteries operational by the end of 1997 (JP 15-4-95; 12-8-95).

## **Tourism**

One peace dividend has been the increase in tourism. 2.5 million visitors are expected this year, generating around \$3 billion in revenues. Hotels on the Dead Sea are booming and wondering how they will cope as the infrastructure is not prepared for such numbers of people. The 1,500 rooms are expected to grow to 5,000 within 5 years. They are wondering where the workers will come from to staff these hotels (JP 26-8-95). Israel, Jordan and Egypt have agreed to make Eilat-Akaba-Taba a free tourist-zone, so that tourists can move between the places without formalities (JP 25-10-95). Air Canada began non-stop flights between Toronto and Tel Aviv in April.

## **Infrastructure improvements**

In many fields Israel prepares for continued expansion. Bezek, a leading Israeli communication company, is investing \$1.5 billion in a new fibre optic network to cover the country. \$3 billion has been earmarked to expand and develop Ashdod and Eilat ports to cope with the increased traffic from Jordan. Also unveiled were \$1Billion plans to expand the railway network to double the passenger capacity and to carry 10 million tonnes of cargo a year (JP 25-1-95). Work has begun on the foundations for the first junction on the new Trans-Israel highway (JP 30-10-95).

One of the problems Israel is facing is a shortage of manual workers. With growing living standards, no one wants the humble, low paid jobs.



The Palestinians used to supply this need, but the government often bans their entry into Israel following violence. A ban was imposed in January following a suicide bombing which killed 21 Israelis. When the ban was lifted a month later, only a trickle of workers returned to their jobs. To avoid dependence on the Palestinians, Israel has been bringing in workers from Thailand, the Philippines, Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey, Yugoslavia, China and Poland. Around 70,000 came in February and March. Israel recognizes that it is not in her interest to have a large number of unemployed Palestinians on her borders. With American and British support, she is planning to build seven industrial parks, straddling the borders. Both Israelis and Palestinians will be able to enter work from their side of the border, without needing to go through the other's checkpoints. Two are planned on the edge of the Gaza Strip and 5 on the border of the West Bank. These have worked successfully on the American-Mexico border. It would marry Israeli capital and technological know-how, with Palestinian, lower-cost labour which is used to working to Israeli standards (DT 16-3-95; JP 3-6-95; JP 9-12-95).

## **Immigration and population**

At the end of the Jewish year in September, population statistics were issued showing a total population of 5,570,000 of which 81% were Jews (4,510,000); 14.4% Moslems (805,000); 2.9% Christians (160,000); and 1.7% Druse (95,000). The population had increased 2% during the year, over half being due to natural increase. Immigration accounted for 82,000, with 68,000 of them from the CIS—a 9% increase over last year (JP 30-9-95). The figures for the Palestinian population of Gaza, Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem was put at 1,993,000, but these figures related to the end of 1993 (JP 18-3-95).

Since the establishment of the Jewish state in 1948, 2.5 million immigrants have arrived in Israel, 32% being from the former Soviet Union. Of concern to the Israelis is the alarming rate of assimilation in the CIS. Nearly 70% of the remaining Jewish population in the Slavic and Baltic republics have intermarried. Birth rates are falling so that of the estimated 1,300,000 remaining Russian Jews, only 115,000 are under 18.

### **Chapter 3:**

## **BRITAIN & AMERICA'S INVOLVEMENT WITH ISRAEL**

### ***Introduction***

*Britain and America have an important role not only in Israel but in the Middle East. As we draw nearer to the return of the Master, the players are moving closer to their final positions—a King of the North and King of the South situation. Britain and America form part of that southern power. Since the first World War, both countries have played an important role amongst the Arab countries, which were set up following that war, and among the returning Jews. The need for oil coloured relationships with the Arabs, under whose territory the world's largest reserves are found. With Britain becoming largely self sufficient in oil from the North Sea, and with the rapidly changing Middle East situation where Jewish/Arab tensions are easing, Britain has found herself once more a friend to Israel.*

### **John Major's visit to Israel**

Israel is Britain's third largest trading partner in the Middle East, after Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, with trade running at £1.5 billion a year. Britain sees Israel as a valuable partner for trade, with growing benefits from the peace dividend. "Trade and investment go hand in hand, and Israel is a prudent investment for the future", John Major declared in Israel. It is nine years since Margaret Thatcher became the first British leader to visit Israel.

"John Major's visit to Israel in March symbolized the close bilateral relationship between the UK and Israel. Embarking on a historic tour of Israel, the Prime Minister stated that 'I have looked forward to this visit for a very long time'. Travelling with Mr Major was a 28-strong business entourage, the most high-powered business delegation to travel overseas with a British Prime Minister". CFI 3-95

It was indeed an historic visit. In two days he met Israeli and Arab leaders and industrialists, visited the Knesset and Yad Vashem, as well as a high-tech Industrial Park in Galilee, and the Golan Heights. Although its declared aim was to help the peace process—there were aid packages for the Palestinians—trade deals were at the heart of it. The business delegation of top-flight British executives represented companies whose combined turnover exceeded \$100 billion. As the Prime Minister stated:

"I have no doubt that there are remarkable prospects for new and improved trade and investments between Britain and Israel. We are ready, willing and able to seize those opportunities". BIPAC 22-3-95

He announced that the joint science and technology fund which was founded the previous year was to double to £600,000. He announced the creation of a Britain-Israel business to business council to accelerate trade relations. In all a nine point programme of trade cooperation was agreed between the two countries (BIPAC 22-3-95).

He also committed Britain, in principle, to help with the seven industrial parks which would act as a bridge between the Palestinians and the Israelis (see chapter 2). Bovis, who are already involved with the building of business parks around the world, and who are currently constructing the extension to Ben Gurion airport in Tel Aviv, would take the lead in their construction (DT 16-3-95).

The Prime Minister's speech at the State dinner is of interest to all who love Zion and watch developments there with great interest. A few extracts:

"To come to Israel, to come to Jerusalem at any time is a very special event...Jerusalem exerts a very powerful sense of history stretching back through many thousands of years, a proud history, in many ways a tragic history, but above all a history of hope...

"Let me speak for a moment about British-Israel relations, the seven strands of our shared interest: politics, defence, culture, education, science, trade and investment.

"Our countries have had their disagreements in the past...Those differences, I believe, are behind us and we are bound now by friendship, respect, co-operation and understanding. Our political relationship has never been as warm as it is tonight. It has never had so much content and so much common ground, and it is my wish that we build on it in the future...

"Britain welcomes investment from abroad and Britain likes to invest abroad. I believe the chance to boost mutual interests is very great. Investment in the British economy, of course, is not only profitable in itself, it gives access to the largest single trading market in the world, and I believe investment in Israel is a prudent investment for the future...Israel's contacts in the region are widening, the Arab boycott is visibly decaying, the international community supports your search for peace. Of course, difficulties will arise, setbacks will be inevitable and steady nerves will be needed as you carry the process forward. The United Kingdom will stand shoulder to shoulder with those who continue that search for peace."

BIPAC 22-3-95

He also revealed the role of the British SAS in defending Israel from Scud missile attacks during the Gulf War. In what he described as the biggest SAS operation since 1945, the SAS had a remarkable success in pinpointing and eliminating Scud missiles before they could be launched against Israel. He had personally authorized the covert operation (DT 13-3-95).

Many *Milestones* readers will be aware of the *Jewish History Atlas* and other works by Martin Gilbert. He accompanied the Prime Minister throughout the tour, keeping him briefed on historic and current Middle East matters—a “major asset” as the Daily Telegraph put it! (DT 16-3-95).

On the prospect of the Queen making a state visit he said “I have no doubt that, in due course, the Queen will visit Israel”.

He became the most senior world leader to go to the Gaza Strip to visit Yasser Arafat. His visit was in part to hand over 50 new police cars as Britain's contribution to the Palestinian Security forces. He also announced an extra £7 million in aid—reflecting Britain's view that, unless Palestinians see an immediate improvement in their daily life, it will be difficult to sustain popular support for the peace process. This aid will be used for public administration, health, water, education, private sector development and infrastructure projects. Britain has already pledged £75 million in aid which is being channelled through EU agencies. 20 Palestinian police officers have received training in Britain (DT 15-3-95; JP 22-3-95). Britain is already giving £85 million over 3 years and more now that Oslo II has been signed (DT 28-9-95).

In June it was reported that 20 new joint research projects had been given the go ahead. £1.8 million has been assigned to them. “Here was further proof of the high regard that scientists from both countries have for each other”, said the British Science Minister (BIPAC 21-6-95).

In August the Israeli government chose a London law firm to handle a \$20 billion line of credit in Europe. This will enable the government to raise short term loans in different currencies. These loans will take over when the American loan guarantees come to an end shortly. A further \$250 million syndicated loan was signed in London in December. A consortium of 43 international banks was involved.

In November, while the Queen was in New Zealand, Mr Rabin was shot. She sent Prince Charles to represent her at the funeral—becoming the first member of the Royal family to visit on government business.

In December, the business to business forum, mooted in the PM's March visit, became a reality. Israel's Trade and Industry Minister visited Britain to inaugurate the Israel British Business Council (IBBC). It will have 16 members, 8 from each country. It is designed “to encourage joint projects, both bilateral and multi-national, and to develop common approaches to science and technology, education and vocational training”. The Minister was also seeking closer cooperation between British and Israeli companies in the areas of biotech, pharmaceuticals, lasers, electro-optics and telecommunications (BIPAC 6-12-95).

America continues to be Israel's No.1 trading partner. Imports and exports are expected to exceed \$10 billion this year. Many American

companies are investing heavily in Israel. Intel the computer chip manufacturer announced Israel's biggest ever inward investment—\$1.6 billion. Intel has existing plants here and around the world, but Israel won this investment largely because of her available skilled labour force. It will produce reprogrammable memory chips for world markets. Production is planned to start in 1999. Already Intel conducts one third of its global research and development in Israel (TME June 95; JP 28-10-95). Motorola is also considering building a \$1 billion plant in Israel (JP 25-11-95).

## **Defence links**

Since Britain lifted her arms embargo of Israel last year, she has awarded a contract to Israel worth \$60 million to purchase “tens of thousands of cluster shells” for the British army. An Israeli company has purchased a British engine manufacturer, Alvis, in order to make engines for Israeli pilotless drones. The potential market for engines alone is estimated at between \$200 and \$300 million. Britain is studying the possibility of purchasing these reconnaissance drones for her own army.

Israeli firms have been winning lucrative maintenance contracts from America. Israel Aircraft Industries has been awarded a contract worth up to \$200 million to service a US cargo firm's planes. Israeli shipyards are repairing American destroyers from their 6th Fleet which is based in the Middle East—saving them the long haul to and from America.

US marines and other units spent a week or two training in the Negev desert, practising rapid deployment. 7,500 troops were involved with ships and aircraft (JP 25-3-95). America has pledged to continue its \$1.8 billion military aid at least to the fiscal year 1997. The pledge was given after three days of military-strategic talks in Washington (JP 28-10-95).

## **An Israel-US defence pact?**

With the Syrian peace talks restarting at the end of the year, the prospect of Israel facing withdrawal from the Golan is increasing likely. If there is to be peace with Syria it will involve a substantial withdrawal, a land for peace swap, similar to that with Egypt when they relinquished Sinai. There has been speculation that Mr Peres obtained American guarantees for security, before launching these latest talks. Warren Christopher had promised:

“Americans will carry on with you, step by step...to ensure that your struggle for lasting peace with security is secure” JP 23-12-95

Two writers from the Jaffee Centre for Strategic Studies (in Israel), gave details of an old proposal which has been resurrected by Robert Dole, a Senate majority leader and possible Republican presidential candidate. It involves the US and Israel making a defence treaty, in place of their long standing, but informal strategic alliance. It would involve a commitment

by America to defend Israel if she was attacked. American troops would not necessarily need to be positioned on the Golan. Their presence, even in small numbers, in Israel would be a clear signal to surrounding nations, that America would come to Israel's aid where necessary (JP 16-12-95). Both Mr Peres and US officials have denied that Israel has asked for a mutual defence pact, or for US troops to be deployed on Golan, which indicates that the matter might be a possibility (JP 16-12-95; 23-12-95).

This interesting concept would certainly fit with the picture of Ezekiel 38, that Tarshish and the young lions stand ready with the intention, at least, of opposing those who threaten Israel (Ezek. 38:13).

## **Britain and the Middle East**

British companies are forging partnerships with Middle East firms to build manufacturing plants, as a means of establishing themselves in the area. The six Gulf Co-operation Council states import all their tyres. The region's first manufacturing plant is being built in Saudi Arabia, a £140 million joint venture between local partners and Avon Tyres of the UK. Tate and Lyle, in a joint venture with a local firm, have set up the United Sugar Company to produce sugar in Saudi, to replace imports.

Other snippets: Westland are in talks with Saudi about a £1 billion helicopter deal (DT 30-6-95). Talks continuing for the sale and lease of 20 ex-RAF Tornado aircraft, together with a missile jointly being developed by GEC-Marconi and the Arab Emirates (DT 26-2-95). UK exports to Kuwait have been rising steadily since 1992, 1994 figures were £312 million. The UK is currently Kuwait's fifth largest supplier (ET July-95). Kuwait has spent \$60 billion on paying for its defence by the coalition forces during the Gulf crisis, and reconstruction work since. She is now virtually back to "normal", with buildings reconstructed and the oil wells back in full production (TE 28-7-95).

The Queen welcomed the Emir of Kuwait on his first state visit to Britain in May. The visit was billed as a further cementing of ties between the oil-rich state and Britain.

"Britain is a major supplier of military equipment to Kuwait, which has bought 250 Warrior armoured vehicles and a missile air defence system worth £600 million since liberation.

"There is also a permanent British military mission in Kuwait helping with the rebuilding and training of the military." DT 24-5-95

## **Chapter 4:**

# **JERUSALEM—THE BURDENSOME STONE**

## **Introduction**

*Last year in Milestones chapter 5, we looked at the growing conflict over Jerusalem. Next year marks the official start of talks with the Palestinians over the status of Jerusalem as required under the Oslo agreement. We briefly update the situation in this chapter. It is Zechariah in his 12th chapter that describes Jerusalem as a burdensome stone.*

“And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.” v3

*It is very heavy and difficult to lift, and has sharp edges so those who try to lift it, badly cut themselves. We must therefore expect the issue of Jerusalem to become increasingly troublesome.*

## **Jerusalem 3000**

An extensive, 17 month, programme of events to celebrate the 3,000th anniversary of David taking Jerusalem is taking place in the city. The chronology for the dating is disputed, but it has suited Israel to hold these celebrations before the talks on Jerusalem begin. The Vatican, the EU—Britain included—boycotted the opening celebrations in September, claiming they were too one sided, focusing on the city’s Jewish history, with little about Christian and Arab interests. Israel protested that both Christian and Arab items were included (though as it has turned out some of them have had to be cancelled through lack of support). In fact only 17 of the 70 ambassadors invited attended. It focused the eyes of the world on Jerusalem, but it also drew attention to the “burdensome” nature of the “stone” of Jerusalem (Time 18-9-95).

Mr Rabin in his official opening speech declared that

“undivided Jerusalem is the heart of the Jewish people and the capital of the State of Israel. Undivided Jerusalem is ours.” JP 16-9-95

## **Moving the US embassy to Jerusalem**

Ever since 1989 a three hectare plot in Jerusalem has been growing weeds. This is the site of the proposed embassy for the US, which like other countries has its present embassy in Tel Aviv. Moves to press ahead with moving have been suppressed, for fear of the effects such a recognition of Israel’s claim to the city as its capital would have on the peace talks. However the American Senate majority leader, Bob Dole, (a front runner as Republican presidential candidate) moved a bill to proceed with the transfer. This was passed at the end of October, but it was watered down, giving the President the power to determine when this

should happen. There was predictable Arab protest, but it did not affect the peace talks as had been feared, and no one heeded Arafat's call for an Arab summit meeting (JP 4-11-95; 11-11-95).

## **Israel yields to the Vatican**

In May the Israeli government decided to expropriate 130 acres of Arab land in two areas of East Jerusalem for building a further 7,000 houses for Jews. Since Jerusalem was taken in 1967, more than 5,000 acres have been expropriated for building. Israel has created a ring of settlements on the high ground around the city - the hills from which, in the past, Jordanian guns could fire upon the Israeli part of the city. Jewish settlers now outnumber Arabs in East Jerusalem 160,000 to 155,000.

The disputed land was derelict and one area had been used as a dumping site by the locals. The dispute aroused world wide hostility - it even came to the UN! Israel was surprised at the reaction. In the end she backed down (JP 13-5-95; DT 28-5-95; JP 3-6-95).

More interesting was another piece of land which she wanted for the construction of new road to a settlement near Bethlehem. It involved land owned by the Vatican, part of the Cremisan Monastery. The Vatican reacted swiftly, there were "angry meetings" in Rome between the Vatican's foreign affairs department and the Israeli Ambassador. The monastery threatened "an international scandal that will draw in the entire Christian world". Within hours the route was modified to avoid the Vatican land! "It just shows that it is much easier to beat back the Israeli bulldozers if you have the weight of the Vatican behind you," commented an Arab (TT 13-5-95).

It does not need much imagination to see what the Vatican reaction will be when Elijah is sent to work a reformation in Israel. When Elijah had demonstrated on Carmel the folly of any other than the God of Israel, they slew the false prophets (1 Kings 18:40), but then Jezebel turned on Elijah. A future outburst of zeal for Israel's God will rouse the wrath of the false prophet who will rally the nations against Jerusalem.

In March Cardinal Keeler, president of the US Catholic Conference and archbishop of Baltimore, led a delegation of eight American church leaders to see Mr Clinton. They were urging him to press Israel to stop expanding its presence in Jerusalem. The Jerusalem Post editorial was puzzled at this move. It was not Jews who were threatening the Christians, but the Muslim's. The Christian population of Israel has risen fourfold since 1948. In the Arab towns, such as Bethlehem, and from the Arab areas of Jerusalem, Christians are being intimidated and threatened and driven away. This process can be seen in other Arab countries such as Lebanon and Egypt (JP 11-3-95). The Vatican is happy to work with the Palestinians. It located its embassy in Jaffa, rather than Tel Aviv. It has sponsored the university in Bethlehem, used mainly by Arab youth.



This fits with the co-operation seen in the former Yugoslavia, where the Croats have worked with the Muslims. It is all part of the steps which lead to the final invasion of Israel.

According to a letter in the *Jerusalem Post*, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem was reported in a Vatican newspaper to have stated in a message to the Catholic Church in Lebanon that,

“a new reality has inserted itself in the Holy Land - the Jewish factor. The Church of Jerusalem, as the entire Church in the Middle East, is worried about this new reality.” JP 30-12-95

The letter writer surmised that this Arab, Catholic dignitary, would like to see Israel free of Jews. But, as he points out, without the “Jewish factor” there would have been no Christianity.

## **Jerusalem and the Muslims**

King Hussein and Yasser Arafat have been at loggerheads over the control of the Muslim sites in Jerusalem. They reached a compromise in January.

“The row has been settled, temporally at least, with a Jordanian promise to hand over the shrines once Palestinians take control of East Jerusalem. Until then, the Palestinians will accept Jordan as custodian.

“It could be many years before Palestinians achieve their goal, given Israel’s insistence that East Jerusalem, annexed in 1967, will remain part of Israel’s indivisible capital.” DT 27-1-95

Recently Muslim tourists from many parts have been visiting Jerusalem. Rather than welcoming this move, the Palestinians have opposed such visits because, they claim, accepting Israel’s control of the city has harmed their struggle to gain control. “Peace and normalization with Israel constitute an abandonment of Muslim rights and a revolt against Allah.” (BIPAC 8-3-95).

Other snippets. On the eve of the Jerusalem 3000 celebrations, Mr Arafat’s senior religious adviser claimed that Jerusalem has always been an Arab city! (JP 9-9-95). Arafat declared that Jesus was a Palestinian and Paul was a Palestinian who defied Rome! A Jordanian TV production once claimed that the Jews murdered Jesus, the Palestinian prophet! (JP 13-3-95; TT 21-12-95). The promised millions from Saudi reported in last year’s Milestones were said not to have materialized (JP 4-3-95).

## **Oslo III**

Talks on the status of Jerusalem are due to start in May 96. This aspect has been left till last, because of the difficulties that it will raise.

“If we fail to reach a solution on Jerusalem, we will be heading for a religious war over the city”, said a Palestinian official”. JP 16-12-95

The Palestinians want Jerusalem as their capital and Israel has no intention of relinquishing its hold. Mr Peres is probably more strong-willed than would have been Mr Rabin. Mr Peres has declared that he will not tolerate the city being divided, like Berlin used to be. It must remain united (JP 12-12-95).

There are many Arabs who do not want to live in a Palestinian controlled part of Jerusalem. Having seen what has happened in Gaza, they fear their living standards will fall! Many thousands have applied for Israeli citizenship. Apparently talks have already started in secret, being conducted on the Israeli side by the team that started the secret negotiations in Oslo in 1992 (JP 16-12-95).

EU leaders continue to upset the Israelis by going to Orient House in Jerusalem to pay official visits to the Palestinians. This is in contradiction of the Oslo agreement, that the Palestinians should not use Jerusalem as a political base until its future has been settled. John Major respected the Israeli feelings and visited Mr Arafat in Gaza.

Russia is also supporting the Palestinians. She has laid claim to property belonging to the Tsars—see chapter 9. This includes 37 sites in Israel, land and property including Orthodox Churches worth many millions of pounds. Russia hopes that the Palestinians will help them in their claim.

The 1996 Oslo III talks will certainly be interesting. It is thought that Israel and the Vatican have agreed that the Vatican can control the “Christian churches”. This would remove one area of responsibility. Israel would be happy to see King Hussein continue to control the mosques. This would then leave Palestinian aspirations for the capital to be dealt with.

Scripture makes it clear that, at the time of the end, the nations gather against a Jerusalem that is still in Jewish hands. They will then lose control, when Jerusalem is trodden down by the Gentiles, one final time, until freed by their Messiah (Luke 21:24; Zech. 12:2, 8).

We close with a very recent quote from the Syrian Defence Minister! He declared that Israel was

“a burden to the US and the rest of the world.”

JP 6-1-96

## **Chapter 5:**

# **BRITAIN'S MOVES AWAY FROM THE EU**

### ***Introduction***

*Last year we looked at the way Britain was moving away from the desire by the rest of the Community to become more deeply integrated. Britain joined the "Common Market", for just that purpose. Here was a **market** on her doorstep of many millions. Here was an opportunity to increase her exports in a friendly market. The reality turned out to be different. Britain imports more from the EU than she exports back! It has not proved the bonanza that she expected. Furthermore her partners are increasingly endeavouring to tie her down with bureaucratic decisions taken in Brussels and Strasbourg. Last year's picture of discontent has increased in 1995. The value of membership is increasingly questioned. At the heart of the debate is the community's wish for a common currency.*

### **Political union—a move too far**

France and Germany are pursuing a path towards greater political unity. The main plank in this scheme is to have a common currency for Europe. This would be a giant leap upon the path to unity. It would remove control of financial matters from the individual countries and bring them under a central umbrella. In the past, a country's ability to devalue its currency in order to compete in the export market, is a mechanism that has been used many times. Interest rates are frequently altered to control the value of one's currency.

Britain is firmly against political union. Many would see a possible advantage in a single currency, but giving up the power of parliament to control Britain's destiny, is a step too far. This past year has been an important one as far as the single currency is concerned.

### **Single currency—fact or fiction**

Under the Maastricht Treaty there is to be set up a common European currency. This was seen as a master plan to bring the nations of Europe together. Instead of having to change currency as one travelled from one European country to another—and losing money at every change—all would have a common currency. Firms buying and selling would not have to worry about fluctuations in currency exchange values.

The starting date for this "Utopia" was set for the 1st January 1997 at the earliest, or 1999 at the latest.

It had the appearance of being a wonderful scheme. It would unite Europe in a very practical way. EMU—European Monetary Union was seen by

those keen on an integrated Europe as being a step on the road to a full political union.

Unfortunately (for the pro-Europeans), the path to such a union has been very rocky. Not all the EU members are keen on the idea. Britain does most of her business outside Europe. The ECU (European Currency Unit) would be of little value outside Europe. Much international trade is done in US dollars which would still remain the world's most important currency. The people of Germany have been proud of the strength of the German Mark. They view with distaste giving up the mighty Mark for the Euro—the name chosen for the new currency.

The problems go even deeper than that. Each country has to fix the rate of exchange of its own currency against the new. At the moment Banks and Governments allow their exchange rates to float, according to market forces. As part of the preparation for EMU, countries were set an allowable band of fluctuation, outside which they were not allowed to go. To prevent rates falling below their allowable band, interest rates are raised to make the currency more attractive. This was termed the Exchange Rate Mechanism—the ERM. It was due to the high interest rates forced upon Britain in 1993 to maintain the value of the pound within the ERM limits that caused such damage to businesses and compounded the recessionary trends. It was on “black Wednesday”, September 16th, 1992 that Britain pulled out of the ERM. She was not the first, nor the last to give up the struggle.

It was recognized that it would not be possible for all the EU members to be ready for monetary union at the same time. It was expected that about 8 would be. Various criteria were laid down to act as a bench mark as to whether a country was ready to link. They covered exchange rate stability, inflation and interest rates close to the average of the lowest 3 countries, and a budget deficit held at a low level.

As time has passed, fewer and fewer countries seem likely to meet the criteria. In January only 2 countries met the criteria—the UK and Luxembourg! Britain is not so sure she wants to join anyway. During the Maastricht Treaty negotiations, Britain (and Denmark) negotiated an opt-out clause. They will only join if they want to. All the other countries are bound to adopt the new currency, when they meet the qualifying criteria.

The difficulties of meeting the timetable became apparent, so that even Mr. Kohl stated that he thought a single currency would not occur this century (DT 2-10-95).

The thought of Britain outside the currency union brought concern to other European countries. Britain would not have to bear the huge costs, could set her own exchange rates, even devalue and, having already opted out of many of the expensive social regulations, would enjoy an “unfair” commercial advantage! So European leaders were mobilized to prevent Mr Major trying to turn Britain into a European Taiwan or Hong Kong—

a place of minimal rules and regulations, inside the European Union but outside a single currency (DT 24-7-95).

Germany needs to have France as a partner in this venture. Hence the desperate measures that France took this autumn to try to get within sight of the necessary position to qualify. The turmoil of the French strikes in December make it extremely unlikely she will be ready in time.

## The Euro

At the December Madrid summit, the new name for the proposed new currency was announced—the Euro. A new PR symbol has been dreamed up to publicize the new currency, backed by a £30 million publicity campaign. In the top are 15 coins to represent the 15 members of the EU, and in the bottom the 12 stars of the EU flag.

The time scale agreed was as follows:

1998—selection of those countries who qualify;

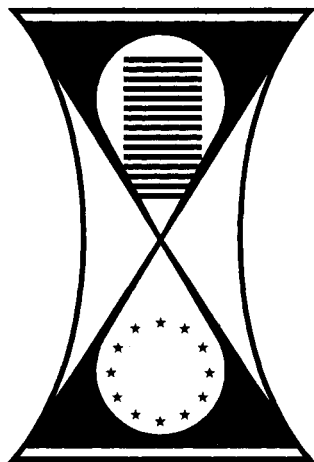
1999—the starting date for EMU. Countries irrevocably lock their exchange rates and monetary union starts on a governmental level, with three year phase-in;

2002—general public circulation of coins and notes (TE 24-12-95).

They now have to design the notes and coinage. Euro is short for Europa. She, in Greek mythology, was the daughter of Tyre, who was carried off to Crete by Zeus, who disguised himself as a bull. In designs on some of the present coin—the Ecu—this theme has been used—the woman riding on the back of a beast surrounded by the 12 stars! Revelation chapter 12 and 17 come to life. The **mark** of the beast, may yet come to have an additional, modern day, slant (Rev. 13:16,17).<sup>1</sup>

## Britain's opposition to political union

The drive to a single currency is seen as a necessary part of the process of integrating Europe politically. Once control of one's currency has been handed over to a central Bank, it prevents a country from steering its own path. It is shackled to the whim of the majority. Many in Europe are keen



Timely: the Euro symbol

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<sup>1</sup> See The Ecu - the Deutsche Mark of the Beast? John Ramsden *Testimony* Feb. 95

on this. They are happy to merge and be a united Europe once more. As we shall see when looking at this political union from Europe's point of view in Ch. 10, the hand of the Papacy lies behind this integration.

John Major is not willing to give up such control, and is determined to oppose the moves. We know that the moves will take place—the 10 horns will give their power to the beast (Rev. 17:12, 13)—and we have always seen Britain's path as being outside such a union. It is not difficult to see that Britain will increasingly become isolated. She will be pushed to the outside track, leaving France and Germany and others in an inner core. Economically this makes good sense. She will have the best of both worlds. The freedom to run her economy as she desires, and yet trading still on favoured terms with Europe. This may yet be a path to her increasing prosperity. There may soon be a time when she chooses (or is pushed!) to break free altogether.

In January, the political editor of the Sunday Times newspaper reported on a meeting with Mr Major, where he outlined his plans for the next two years. Some of the editor's comments about his policy were interesting.

“...His remit at the last Chequers [brainstorming] session was ruthlessly practical—to assess the risks and the opportunities for Britain as a global power and to plot a course to meet his demand that ‘we must single-mindedly pursue our interests around the world, politically and commercially—we must all put Britain first’.

“... Further afield, a new ‘east of Suez’ policy is being crafted. Britain's role as a two-way Asian investment base grows apace. Trade with India and the Far East is being vigorously promoted. India has been rediscovered and China continues to be courted.

“The challenge for Major is to avoid relegation to Europe's slow lane by taking Britain into the world's fast lane.” ST 22-1-95

In March John Major survived a critical Commons vote on his stance on Europe by a slim majority of five votes. He hinted at the possibility of holding a referendum over the matter of joining the single currency, and underlined his “wariness” about giving up the pound (DT 2-3-95).

Internal wrangling in the party and the cabinet between the pro and anti Europeans reached a head in June. In a bold step John Major resigned as leader and threw down a challenge to “put up [a rival candidate] or shut up.” John Redwood, who is a strong Euro-sceptic, was the only candidate to stand against him. Was this the step that would firmly change the course that Britain was taking? It was not to be—at this time anyway. John Major emerged the strong winner. However, one began to see a firmer line taken in public against the single currency and political links.

The cabinet changes that followed saw the retirement of Mr Hurd as Foreign Secretary, who was replaced by Mr Rifkind. He is of Lithuanian-Jewish origin, able to “speak a little Biblical Hebrew”. He was regarded as the most intelligent of modern defence secretaries (his previous post).

Interestingly he has become increasingly more sceptical on Europe. He holds a very powerful position in the cabinet, and it remains to be seen whether his interest in Israel influences his actions. He is the first Foreign Secretary to be a practising Jew since the creation of the state of Israel. Some of his relatives were early settlers in Palestine in the 1930s. He was a founder member of the CFI (Conservative Friends of Israel) in 1974 (DT 7-7-95; 24-7-95).

Just prior to the Madrid summit in December, Mr Major declared his willingness to risk isolation within the EU.

**“Major prepares to block closer European links**

Mr Major is making clear well in advance [of the Madrid summit] that Britain is prepared to use its veto to prevent Brussels taking control of foreign and defence policy.

“He also plans to warn fellow EU leaders of the dangers to the cohesion of Europe of rushing ahead with single currency in 1999, when only an inner core of member-states are likely to qualify”

DT 6-12-95

When Britain joined the Common Market it seemed to some as if we were wrong in our understanding of prophecy that Britain would be outside the confederation of nations that would come against Israel at Armageddon. Time has justified those old expectations of an independent Britain. What seemed highly unlikely but a few years ago, now seems not only possible, but even desirable!

**The odd man out**

There has been several run-ins with the EU this year. It started off and finished with disputes about fish. Spanish fishermen were allowed by the EU to fish in traditional British waters. EU laws over-rule the UK's.

The European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg ruled against Britain in the matter of the SAS killing of three IRA members. This has caused much anger in Britain. The majority of the countries which ruled against Britain were Roman Catholic or Orthodox.

Britain also lost a battle against the European Court of Justice, which declared that her procedures for expelling terrorists were unlawful.

Then Britain was forced to adopt metric weights and measures for a wide range of things. The new rules backed by the threat of fines involved much expenditure on new equipment.

## Chapter 6:

# BRITAIN—THE LATTER-DAY TYRE

## Introduction

*Ancient Tyre, situated to the north of Israel, had a long history of being a trading power. Friendly with Israel for most of the time of the kings of Israel and Judah, it was Hiram the king of Tyre whose friendship with David and Solomon caused him to provide valuable resources and materials for the building of the Temple.*

*Last year (pages 61, 62) we looked at the prophecy of Tyre in the latter-days in Isaiah chapter 23. Psalm 45 says that “the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour”. The Psalm is speaking of the time of the Kingdom. Who is the latter day Tyre to fulfill Isaiah’s prophecy and Psalm 45? We believe that Britain fills this role, as we shall see in this chapter.*

## Tyre in the past

The best description of the trading power of Tyre is found in Ezekiel 27. The previous chapter has graphically described the fall of Tyre and ends with the prophecy that she shall never be found again. The ancient city was scraped off the rocks. Yet as we have seen, there must be a latter-day Tyre who arises elsewhere, after the pattern of the former Tyre.

What can we glean from chapter 27? The prophecy paints a picture of Tyre being like a boat, constructed through the work of many agencies. Boards from here, masts from there, others supplied oars and still others benches to make this boat. Many also from different lands were her sailors and her army. Interestingly it is wise men of Tyre who are her pilots (v. 8). To help this boat with her trade was a multitude of merchant ships from other lands (v. 9).

Then in verses 12-25 is a fascinating list of trades and traders. Over two dozen places are named and a wide variety of goods. From metals to horses, from cloth to precious stones, from foods to spices.

Note the produce of **Tarshish** in verse 12, **silver, iron, tin and lead**, all materials we now know to have been found in Britain and traded in those far off times.

Tyre was evidently a cosmopolitan state whose wealth was derived from her worldwide trade. She was a maritime power.

“And say to Tyre, *O you who dwell at the entrances of the sea, a merchant of the peoples for many coastlands...*” Ezek. 27:2 TIB

The **entrances of the seas**—“a place or way of entrance to the seas”; **Merchant**—a “trafficker or trader”. She is associated with many



merchants who (in terms of v. 9) **occupy**—“take on pledge, give on pledge, exchange”; thy **merchandise**—“articles of exchange”. **Their** goods they also **traded** in **her** fairs.

Britain sits at the cross roads of a network of routes to many coastlines. Trade “on pledge” is typical of much of what she does—the futures market. She imports from many places and exports all over the world. The seas are her riches—not only trade wise, but the black gold under her seas. Many nations have their trade bases in her.

Let’s look at various aspects of Britain’s trade last year that fits this Tyrian trading picture. First a general picture.

## Trading with the nations

### “A truly great Britain”.

This was the headline to a full page article in the Sunday Telegraph (26-3-95) listing “50 things to shout about”. Here a few of them.

- “• Although accounting for only about 1% of the world’s population, Britain is the fifth largest trading nation in the world.
- “• She exports more per head than America or Japan. Exports account for 25% of GDP (Japan 10%, US 10%, Germany 21%, France 22%).
- “• Her exports of manufactured goods increased 90% between 1991 and 1994.
- “• The daily turnover in the London currency markets in 1992 was \$300 billion (cp. New York \$192b., Tokyo \$128b.)
- “• The city of London has the greatest concentration of foreign banks in the world, handling a fifth of total international bank lending.
- “• Nearly 13,000 overseas companies—3,500 from America, 1,000 from Germany, 200 from Japan, are operating in Britain.

## Oil

The success of Britain’s oil exploration continues. North Sea oil production was reported at the highest level for almost a decade, as two new fields came on stream (DT 30-11-95). This is one of her sources of wealth to fuel her overseas investments. This “black gold” seems set to continue flowing.

Many new wells are being sunk to tap supplies of oil and gas. Here are some of them:

- £90m being spent developing the Beaufort gas field off East Anglia  
DT 23-11-95

- The Foinaven oil field is expected to come on stream in 1996, the Schiehallion the year after. These remote wells to the west of the Shetlands are expected to yield 500 million barrels each. TE 10-8-95
- A further 26 areas have been licensed for development in the Shetlands. This should result in 25 new wells being drilled in this promising area in the next 3 years. DT 19-5-95

This has brought increased revenue into Britain.

“Britain emerged as the world’s ninth biggest oil producer last year. Production averaged almost 2.5m barrels a day. ... Oil and gas revenues were £37m a day.” DT 1-2-95

The prospects “look good for the boom to continue”. [From the world’s point of view—for when God shakes terribly the earth there won’t be much left!]

“The North Sea will continue as an oil and gas province for at least 25 years, a report said yesterday.

“Over the next 15 years, 80 new fields are likely to be developed as new technology and cost-cutting help companies tap smaller reservoirs and the new province in deep waters west of Shetlands opens up. Fifty fields could be developed between 2002 and 2011.” DT 9-6-95

## **Inward investment**

Countries are queuing up to invest in Britain rather than the other European countries. Just as traders from all over the then known world did business in Tyre, so in Britain. Even the Germans have seen the value of investing in Britain! More than 270 German manufacturers are producing in Britain.

Siemens, a German firm, announced it was to invest £1.1 billion in Britain for a microchip plant. This is the largest single foreign investment in Britain by far. It “reinforces Britain’s emerging role as Europe’s silicon valley, thanks to Japanese and American assembly operations”.

“This investment is a coup for Britain and a poke in the eye for our partners, where a combination of over valued currency and social costs of employment quickly outweigh the impact of large capital bribes.

“It will make a substantial contribution to the balance of payments, with exports of £700 million a year and imports reduced by £200 million. Round the clock working and a low cost base was a key factor in Siemens decision.” DT 5-8-95

There have been a string of other investments: Ford of the US investing £500m in Jaguar cars; Chunghwa of Taiwan; Lexmark of the US; Fujitsu of Japan; Samsung of South Korea; Nissan of Japan; Daewoo of Korea; CPT of Taiwan. These investments give new jobs replacing those lost to traditional areas such as coal mining, steel, ship building.

“What Britain does offer is a highly competitive combination of reasonably low costs and taxes, with adequate transport, good communications, a sympathetic government, excellent industrial relations and enthusiastic, well educated workers. These qualities are proving just as attractive to companies from Germany, France, the Netherlands, and the rest of Europe, as they are to the Americans and the Japanese.” TT 5-8-95

## Export successes

In July one of Japan's largest conglomerates sent a team of 50 buyers in an aim to increase its purchases from the UK to £80m this year. It was described as the “biggest ever shopping expedition” to Britain.

In November, Rolls-Royce received a £1.2 billion order to supply engines for 77 Boeing aircraft for Singapore Airlines. With lighter engines than their rivals, 20 more passengers could be carried in each plane.

The British car industry now exports over 42% of production, thanks to the heavy overseas investment, to make Britain an export base (DT). Having overtaken Italy's car sales, Britain is expected to overtake Spain shortly.

With British exports growing at around 14% a year, ports are booming. Freed from the high costs and labour problems of a few years ago, the newly privatised ports are expanding and looking to take over smaller ports. Britain is the first country to privatise its ports, and investors are happy to plough their money into them.

## Banking

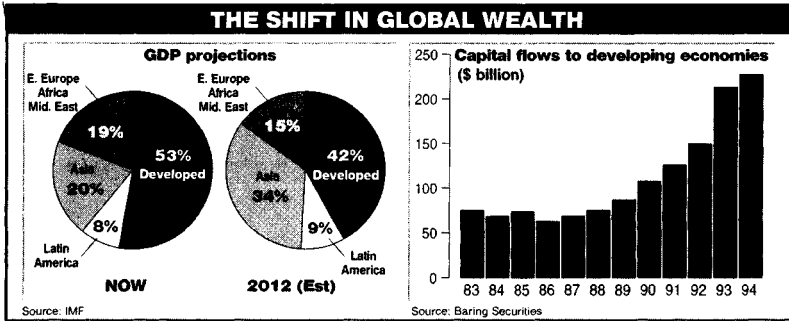
Many European Banks are moving to London as their home markets are not large enough. The **daily** currency deals in London exceed £300 billion—more than the combined total of the two main rivals New York and Tokyo. This helps to make the financial sector Britain's largest contributor to the current account, earning about £20 billion last year (ST 24-9-95).

We see the echo of life in Tyre—**occupy thy merchandise**—“take on pledge, give on pledge, exchange”, thy “articles of exchange”. Their goods they also **traded in her fairs**.

## Trading position

As we saw in last year's *Milestones*, Britain is a global investor—in fact the world's second largest investor. Europe only accounts for a part of her trade. More than 70% of her overseas direct investment is outside the EC, much of it in developing countries. This is just as well. Europe is only growing slowly, still feeling the effects of recession—Britain's home market too is still feeling these effects. But exports are growing faster than in other European countries. Her exporters are finding growing markets in the Far East which have not suffered from recession.

Those companies which have overseas factories and offices are bringing home growing company profits.



The gross total of Britain's overseas investments exceeds £1,400 billion. This is bringing back £79 billion in income from those investments, which is greater than the value of Britain's exports of finished goods. The Commonwealth and the developing countries are responsible for some 88% of this income. No wonder Britain has a different attitude to Europe. Why should she get tied into the high costs of this small market, when the world is at her feet?

Bill Jamieson, the deputy City Editor of the Sunday Telegraph (many of whose articles have been the source of the information in this chapter), recently published a booklet for the Bruges Group entitled *Worlds Apart*. It outlines the greater market that Britain is finding away from Europe. His opening phrase is significant.

"An invisible hand is redefining Britain's place in the world. In contrast to the re-definition planned by the Treasury and the Foreign Office, it does not show Britain moving inexorably and irreversibly towards economic and monetary union with the European Community. Rather, it points to a renaissance and expansion of British financial and commercial activities around the world".

The "invisible hand" is a reference to the changed circumstances in world trade which has pushed Britain along this world-view path. We know that there is indeed an invisible hand that rules in the kingdom of men moving the players along the fore-ordained path.

So, like Tyre of old, Britain has a global outlook. Like Tyre she trades with the world, and the merchants of the world flock to have their representatives in her midst.

## Chapter 7:

# BRITAIN AND THE COMMONWEALTH

### *Introduction*

*Milestones* readers will be aware of our great interest in the Commonwealth. Many articles have appeared tracing the binding influence of this institution. It brings together the young family of nations who still look to Britain as a “mother”. “The Merchants of Tarshish with all the young lions thereof” (Ezek. 38:13) stand with **Sheba** and **Dedan** in opposition to the Gogian forces. In the Commonwealth and the special relationship with America, we have a “**young lion/mother**” relationship. They are independent, but when the need arises, they are happy to work together.

### **The Commonwealth still grows**

Every two years the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) is held. In November this year the venue was New Zealand. The heads of all but 12 of the 52 members gathered to build links between themselves and the Republic of Cameroon was welcomed as the latest member. With the French nuclear tests being strongly opposed by the host country and many others—several members stayed away because of John Major's support of France—the British Prime Minister found himself isolated on the issue. The death sentences on human rights protesters in Nigeria—a member—also cast a shadow.

The nettle of Nigeria was firmly grasped—she was suspended. And what had started “as a crisis of credibility” ended with the Commonwealth set firmly on its democratic path. The Daily Telegraph headline ran:

“Summit marks a turning point for the Commonwealth” 14-11-95

It is traditional for the Queen to make a State visit to the host country and to give the end of summit speech. This was no exception. It was the 22nd CHOGM she has attended! It brought to a close another successful Royal Commonwealth Tour. She remains a remarkably effective and respected head of the Commonwealth. Earlier in the year she had been made welcome in South Africa, which had rejoined the Commonwealth the previous year.

In a fast changing world the Commonwealth might appear an outdated institution. Far from it.

“The Commonwealth remains an important international institution, particularly for smaller countries. It gives them a window on the world and an understanding of the international community that is not readily obtainable from other sources.

"The Commonwealth has not only endured over the years; its membership is increasing, and it continues to reflect a diplomatic utility to the countries involved...."

Letter from Sir Geoffrey Palmer, DT 2-11-95

Countries around the world are keen to join—"the Commonwealth is a desirable club to be a member of". No longer is it confined to the former members of the Empire.

"The Commonwealth now embraces some of the fastest growing economies in the world, and these high growth markets are 25 times as large as those of the European Union. Looking ahead the Commonwealth may be no longer the useless anachronism portrayed by the liberal press." ST 12-11-95, quoting the Times

The Commonwealth differs from other international organizations in that it "shares a common set of democratic values, a common set of legal systems and a common language which bound people together" (Commonwealth Currents Oct. 95).

They all speak in one language—English. How well this picture fits of that given by Ezekiel: *Tarshish and all the young lions*. Independent, yet linked by a "family" bond of language and culture.

## Ties with America

Although America is not a member of the Commonwealth—she has no need—yet she is part of that "English" family. The "special relationship" between America and Britain continues to flourish. It certainly has its ups and downs, disagreements and misunderstandings, but it is far from dead. The countries co-operate on many levels.

1994 was a low ebb, with the Clinton administration angry at the apparent Conservative support for the rival Bush campaign. A new British Ambassador was appointed early this year and relationships have greatly improved. Douglas Hurd, the Foreign Secretary, spoke of this relationship as a "friendship made of solid stone, not the dust of sentimentality...The bonds between the two nations hold strong, even though a few chips fly from time to time" (DT 30-3-95).

President Clinton's visit to Britain in December was a great success. As a mark of the friendship between the two countries, he proposed to name an American battleship after Winston Churchill. He underlined "the enduring alliance" between the two countries, and the warmth and the friendliness between the two leaders seemed to mark an end to previous disagreements.

"'Britain and the US', he said, 'glory in an extraordinary relationship that unites us in a way never before seen in the ties between two such great nations.'"

The paper commented:

“Written down in cold print the speech might seem effusive, ...But spoken with cool dignity, it sounded considered, poised and entirely fitting. It brought a new warmth to the much abused ‘special relationship’ between Britain and the United States.” ST 3-12-95

## A Transatlantic partnership?

In January, Mr Rifkind, the then British Defence Secretary, called for a new Atlantic Assembly of 150 American senators and congressmen and 150 European parliamentarians. It would deal with wider issues than NATO, which is a defence alliance, such as trade and economic issues as well as security. There are several areas where the US and the EU differ in outlook, and he thought that such a forum would bring the two halves of the developed world more in touch with each other (DT 31-1-95).

Two months later, Sir Leon Brittain, the European Union's Trade Commissioner called for a similar thing—a formal North Atlantic Treaty. France, however was not in favour, not wishing to see it being dominated by America (DT 28-4-95).

The matter came up again in September, with the visit to America by Mr Redwood, the unsuccessful challenger to Mr Major earlier in the year. He is opposed to the EU having a common currency and political union. He sees this US-EU alliance as a means of creating a bigger market and an alternative to ever closer union within the EU. Newt Gingrich, the powerful Speaker of the House of Representatives, was impressed with the idea. He too sees that European federalism could give rise to protectionism and be a threat to liberty. He too values the special relationship that exists with Britain (DT 17-9-95).

At the Conservative Conference in October, Mr Rifkind, now the Foreign Secretary, unveiled his plans of creating a transatlantic free trade area, an “Atlantic Community” of 700 million people. This is to become a central objective of British foreign policy (DT 9-10-95). Euro-sceptics were disappointed that this was not intended to be at the expense of Britain's participation in Europe (DT 12-11-95).

In November:

“EU foreign ministers backed an ambitious co-operation pact with the US aimed at forging closer political and economic links, including the possibility of creating a transatlantic free trade area.” TE 30-11-95

Our interest is in the possibility of France and possibly Germany, vetoing such a plan because of their fear of being dominated again by America. Britain, on the other hand, could possibly see the advantage of an **independent** linkage with America, which would develop their mutual interest in trade, and give America a back-door into the EU through Britain, while she is still a member. It will be an interesting area to watch.

## Chapter 8:

# PEACE IN NORTHERN IRELAND?

### Introduction

*Although the situation in Northern Ireland does not directly impinge on Bible prophecy, yet we have here an interesting insight into the working of the **False prophet**, seeking to establish total domination of power and politics. We all need to be constantly reminded that we have to look at this evil system from the Master's viewpoint—a harlot whose hands are filled with the blood of his saints and his people.*

### Peace in Northern Ireland?

Although the peace has held for nearly 18 months, the vital question of the disposal of arms is the great sticking point to the setting up of meaningful talks. The IRA has a vast arsenal of weapons. An estimated 2 tonnes of Semtex explosives and between 70 and 100 tonnes of weaponry, including machine guns and surface-to-air missiles. IRA training and intelligence gathering still continues (DT 9-12-95).

Behind it all is the might of the Catholic Church. The Unionists (the Protestant side) want to remain part of Britain. The Republicans (the Catholic side) want to rejoin the south and have a united Ireland. As the Irish-born former Prime Minister, Chaim Herzog, explained in an interview broadcast on Israeli radio, Ireland is a country in which the Vatican has probably more influence than any other (20-6-95). Whoever tackles this question is taking on the might of the Vatican!

For years the Catholic Church has been actively providing support for the IRA, while publicly condemning the atrocities. An interesting snippet on Catholic influence in Irish affairs appeared in the Reformer, the informative magazine published by the Protestant Alliance.

“The claims of a former apostolic nuncio in Ireland that he used his position to subvert the pluralist plans [keeping north and south separate, DP] of the elected government of the day, prove that the Irish state is Rome-dominated. In a series of interviews Gaetano Alibrano, who was Nuncio in Dublin throughout the Seventies and Eighties, voiced his admiration for Gerry Adams who speaks for Sinn Fein and the IRA. Dr Alibrano clearly identified Roman Catholicism with Irish nationalism. The Dean of St. Patrick's in Dublin has said ‘It confirms what we who were trying to bring about a pluralist society in Ireland knew all along: what he really wanted was a nationalistic, Roman Catholic, conservative Ireland, totally submissive to Rome and papal rule’.”

The Reformer Jan/Feb. 95



Indeed the Irish government fell in December 94 over scandals revolving around its attempts to shield miscreant priests from prosecution.

Although the killings have ceased, the intimidation and threats and maimings continue. The city of Belfast has over the years been divided into Catholic and Protestant areas. People are driven out through a campaign of intimidation and violence, if they happen to live in the “wrong” area.

“A total of 223 people have been beaten up in the 14 months following the ceasefires, 148 by republican groups, and 75 by loyalists [cp 45 total in the 14 months before the ceasefire.] Sectarian arson attacks have more than doubled in the same period—137 cp. 65.” DT 7-12-95

One of the worries for the Protestants is their reducing majority in Northern Ireland. There is a falling Protestant birth rate, and a slow down in Catholic emigration. On present trends they foresee they will be in the minority within the next 20 years.

In February the British and Irish Prime Ministers launched their joint Anglo-Irish framework document. It was the end result of over two years of discussions. It put forward a framework for peace, involving the Irish government formally revoking its territorial claim to the North and the British making no territorial claim to the North as of right, but leaving it to the majority to decide whether they wish to remain part of the UK.

It is easy to appreciate the fears that the Protestants have, that slowly the South will increase its influence were these measures to come about. An essential part to the Framework plans is the giving up of terrorist arms—the sticking point at the moment.

One of the chief government negotiators in the talks about talks has been Michael Antrim, who is the number two in the Northern Ireland office. He is a Roman Catholic. In May he became the first British government minister to hold talks with the Sinn Fein—the political wing of the IRA. After a 3 hour meeting they shook hands and agreed to meet again (TE 12-5-95).

For anyone doubting the Church’s involvement in the struggle to unite Ireland, the late Avro Manhattan’s book *Catholic Terror in Ireland* is available from *Milestones*. It was revised in 1988, but the events of the past few years have not altered the situation. The Vatican is determined to make Ireland entirely Catholic, no matter what the cost.

## Chapter 9:

# THE GROWING POWER OF THE PAPACY

### Introduction

*Living in non-Catholic countries it is hard to appreciate just how involved the Church is in the everyday life of a Catholic country. Where the Church is not in a majority, then it campaigns hard to get its demands met—concessions on schooling, freedom of worship, its viewpoint to the fore. When it has power in a country, then those who find themselves in a minority are not given such freedom. The Church's viewpoint is that she is the only true church and non believers should not enjoy freedom of speech.*

*We will look at her growing power in Britain and in Europe. In many ways she is reaping the rewards of the great efforts made this century to present an acceptable face. The voice of Protestantism is muted and our own community more muted still.*

### A “respectable” religion

The visit of the Queen to Westminster Cathedral at the end of November to attend a Catholic service broke with centuries of tradition. It was the first such visit since the time of the Stuarts! It was an ecumenical service of vespers—not a mass. Never-the-less it gave respectability to the Catholic church. As Cardinal Basil Hume put it:

“In 1982, Your Majesty received Pope John Paul into your London home. That was for many of us, the healing of many ancient wounds. We were so grateful. The presence of Your Majesty in this Cathedral is for us a further affirmation of the place that we Catholics have in the nation.”

DT 1-12-95

The headline to an article in the Daily Telegraph on the day of her visit was “**Can Catholics now be trusted?**”. The Church has been working unceasingly to promote her (R.C's) image in this country. From the amount of coverage she receives it would be difficult not to think that she was the state religion of this country.

The *Catholic Yearbook* lists Catholic members of the Lords and Parliament. In the 1995 edition it lists 22 members of the Privy Council; 80 members of the House of Lords, 52 members of the House of Commons; 6 Euro MP's. This Yearbook will doubtless be found in the reference section in your public library—a look through its many pages wonderfully illustrates the well-organized approach it has to making Britain Catholic. There are organizations to cover virtually everything!

The drive to increase converts continues. The Protestant Reformer details the activities of “Father” Michael Seed, who was brought up in an evangelical Protestant family, but adopted Catholicism when 17. He is

said to be a “celebrity priest” who likes to spend his weekends in stately homes “trawling for souls” among the aristocracy and the Tory party. He is said to have been instrumental in the recent “conversion” of three MP’s. The Queen is reported to have said to him when introduced to him on her visit to Westminster Cathedral, “Oh yes, the one who’s been poaching members of my Government!” (DT 5-1-96).

### **The move to Rome**

The growing movement of Church of England clergy and congregations going over to Rome continues. The issue of women priests was the catalyst in many cases. The matter has been helped by the Pope, who, while enforcing the rules on celibacy for the priesthood, has approved rules to allow the cases of married Church of England priests who desire to convert to be examined quickly. They will not be allowed to become full parish priests, but could serve as full time assistants. In December 11 priests defected to Rome—the largest number to do so at one time.

“Since the ordination of women in the Church of England, five bishops, 300 clergy and 2,500 lay members have converted to Rome.”

DT 5-12-95

### **The much travelled Pope**

The Pope went on four trips this year. In January he undertook an 11 day, 33,000 km tour of Asia and the Pacific. In May it was to the Czech Republic, in September to Africa, in October, America. It was in America that he addressed the United Nations General Assembly, urging the rich nations to help the poor. (Any who have read Avro Manhattan’s book *The Vatican Billions* will know the great wealth that the Vatican has accumulated. Revelation chapter 18 portrays this latter-day wealth). The 75 year-old Pope still shows his charisma, in drawing and holding the crowds. There is growing speculation as to how much longer he can keep going. He had to cut short his Christmas speech. Two of the favourites to succeed him are the Italian Archbishop of Milan, Cardinal Martini, and the German, Cardinal Ratzinger.

A video of the Pope “celebrating Mass from some of the world’s most spectacular locations”, released in May sold 50,000 copies in the UK and Ireland in the first week and was expected to reach the “top 10” in the video release charts. This follows the success of the CD of *The Pope’s Rosary* which sold around 150,000 copies since last year, and his book *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* which was the 7th best selling hard-back in Britain last year, selling 300,000 copies in Britain and around 3 million round the world! (DT 14-5-95). In October it was announced that in a further commercial move, the Pope had given permission for items from the Vatican library to be reproduced on items from luggage to bed linen! (DT 30-10-95).

Frantic preparations are taking place in Rome to get ready for the Church's planned "Great Jubilee" to welcome in the new Millennium and "2000 years of Christianity"! It is costing the city of Rome some £5 billion in grand preparations for "an estimated 30 million pilgrims who will descend upon the Eternal City". Church and state are co-operating together to renovate ancient ruins, improve museums, pedestrianise areas, build a Metro underground railway extension to link St Peter's and the Colosseum! (TE 26-5-95).

The following month there were interesting observations about the instability of the area.

### "Rome volcanoes 'waking up'"

"According to Italy's National Institute of Geophysics, the famed Alban Hills near Frascati, nine miles south-east of Rome have started rising like a sponge cake".

"The area (which includes the Pope's summer residence) has risen by 18 inches this century—one foot of this growth in the last 15 years." DT 23-6-95



Rome's volcanos

Water temperatures are rising significantly in wells. Hundreds of minor tremors have been felt. They were told there was "no imminent danger, and no immediate cause for alarm"! If only the experts would believe the scriptures! When God arises to shake terribly the earth, Rome is to disappear.

*"And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all".* Rev 18:21

### The "iron" lives on

Daniel chapter 4 describes the startling downfall of the mighty King Nebuchadnezzar. Lifted up with the pride of his achievements, he was brought down to the level of the beasts, turned out to live like an animal for seven "times"—doubtless a period of 7 years. What we briefly want to look at is the long-term prophecy that was contained in these dramatic events.

The might of Babylon was likened to a tree which would be cut down (v. 14). Yet the stump was to be protected.

“Nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass....” v. 15

Because of this preservation of the stump, Daniel was able to reassure the king that he would recover and regain the kingdom, and Babylon would flourish again (v. 26).

The time of being protected was to be “seven times”, v. 16. How long is a time? As far as Nebuchadnezzar was concerned it would be a year, so 7 times would be 7 years, or 2,520 days (360 x 7). Using the usual scriptural year-for-a-day principle, then this would represent 2,520 years. If we take the fall of Babylon at BC 539, then 2,520 years later would bring us to 1982. Babylonian chronology is not that accurate to pinpoint a particular year, but it gives us a period, the significance of which we will draw out later when we have look at the **iron** band.

The might of Babylon is to be revived at the end of the times. Not under Saddam Hussein in Iraq, but in Rome. The bands of iron and brass indicate how the power of Babylon was to be preserved. From Daniel chapter 2 we know the iron speaks of Rome and the brass of Greece. The mysteries of Babylon, which take their origins from Nimrod have been preserved in the Roman Catholic and the Greek Orthodox churches.

So when Daniel saw in chapter 7 the details of the 4th beast he noted that it had “iron teeth and brazen claws” (v19), which it used effectively in its career of wearing out the saints. This 4th beast was to continue right up to the return of Messiah, to be destroyed by the saints (v18, 21).

The two legs of Daniel’s image were of iron. Its feet and toes of “iron mixed with clay”. We see the division of the Roman empire into East and West being representative of the two legs of iron. What then of the feet and toes upon which the image will finally stand when it “stands upon its feet” in defiance of the God of Israel?

Iron and clay are quite different materials. We would not normally expect to see them used together. Indeed the prophet spoke of this. First he described the hard power of Rome with its all conquering legions:

*“And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.”* Dan. 2:40

He then looks at the feet and toes.

*“And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters’ clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay.*

*“And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken.*

*“And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.”* v. 41-43

If iron was the symbol of Rome, then we see in the Roman Church the latter-day representation of that metal. It is an appropriate symbol. The Church is hard, unyielding and ever seeking to expand her power. Ruthless in dealing with her adversaries. Much of the barbaric ethnic cleansing in Bosnia has its origins in the horrific butchery carried out by the Croats, with the support of the Church, during the 2nd WW. The Serbs, Jews and gypsies suffered terribly. Reference has been made earlier to this process continuing in our time.

Daniel speaks of the clay element of this mixture as *the seed of men*. Have we not here a picture of the power of the iron working with the people to govern. Not a monarchy, not necessarily a republic, but a Church (iron) power giving stability (for a while) to a democracy (“Government by the people or their elected representatives”). The very kind of picture we glean from Revelation 17 and 18. There we have a harlot woman (the Roman Church) riding upon a scarlet coloured beast. Note well the linkage to Babylon.

*“And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.”* 17:5

The beast had seven heads. The different heads represent different phases of this beast. At the time of the end, this beast is under the control of an eighth head which is described as a revived form of the sixth head. The seventh, which was only to continue for a short time (17v10), was the Gothic head that ruled Rome in the 5th and 6th centuries.

In *Milestones* chapter 9 last year we traced the development of this revived sixth head. We look for a German-led revival of the Holy Roman Empire. We shall see the growing moves to this in our next chapter. There has to be a correspondence to this Empire, but in the East. Daniel’s image had two legs and two feet. Europe only accounts for one leg. We shall see in chapter 11 how well the iron/clay mixture is developing in the East. How well are the East and Western churches co-operating?

## **Continuing reconciliation moves**

The Pope has made it a goal of his ministry to achieve a reconciliation with the Greek Orthodox Church by the year 2000. The Russian Orthodox Church is a branch of the Greek Orthodox. They are not fully reconciled, but have much in common and regard the Patriarch of Constantinople (Istanbul) as “the first amongst equals”. The gulf between the Roman and the Russian Churches is wider, but progress is being made on that front.

At the end of May the Pope published his 12th encyclical. It was an 117 page treatise on ecumenicism and was entitled *Ut Unum Sint* (yes! Latin,

the language of Rome is still used for such matters), which translates as "May they all be One". In it he urges the Orthodox Churches to unite with Rome by the end of the century. The biggest barrier between them is the matter of the supremacy of the Pope. He is not willing to secede that position, but is willing to find ways of bridging the gap. His wish is to welcome the next millennium in on Mt. Sinai with the Patriarch of Constantinople!

In June the Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew I visited the Pope.

"The leaders of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches began a series of meetings and events today intended to pull their faiths closer nearly 1000 years after they split.

"Many of the public ceremonies seek to display the similarities of the two faiths, including a joint Mass in a church used as the centre of Roman Catholicism before the schism with the Orthodox in 1054.

"The Pope also has made improving Catholic-Orthodox bonds a principal goal for 2000. On Sunday he called Bartholomew a brother, and last month issued an encyclical urging all Christians to work towards unity." Sydney Morning Herald 29-6-95

In November there was a picture in *The European* which was captioned "The Russian Orthodox Patriarch Alexsy II leaves the Russian Orthodox chapel in Dachau concentration camp, western Germany, after celebrating Mass for the Nazis' victims with German cardinal Friedrich Wetter." This would indicate that they are prepared to celebrate mass together.

Tad Szulc's book, referred to earlier, has an interesting section of the Pope's meetings with the Russian leaders. With President Gorbachev coming to power in Russia, it was expected that he would clamp down on this religious freedom in Poland, but he gave it his blessing.

On the occasion of the commemoration of 1,000 years of Christianity in Russia, in 1988, Mr Gorbachev instructed the Russian Orthodox Patriarch to invite the leaders of the world's religions to come to Moscow. The Pope decided to send two delegations—the highest level that the Church could despatch. Both Gorbachev and Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze made a point of telling them they had been "baptized" at birth.

Diplomatic relations were established the following year. Although Gorbachev was ousted in 1991, he is always received with great cordiality by the Pope when he visits Rome.

It may well be that links with the Russian Orthodox Church may be strengthened in the light of the December elections in Russia. With a growing emergence of many parties including the Communist, all sharing the same Orthodox faith, the Roman Church could see the need for urgency in bringing reconciliation, in order to share in the growing power of the Russian Church.

## **Chapter 10:**

# **WESTERN EUROPE—REVIVING THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE?**

### ***Introduction***

*In chapter 9 of last year's Milestones, we sketched the past history of the Holy Roman Empire where Church and State ruled the lives of the people of Europe for many centuries. What we are beginning to see emerging in Western Europe is a revival of this system. Germany was at the heart of this empire, and it is clear to all that Germany is emerging as the forceful leader of the changing European Union. Behind the scenes the hand of the papacy can be observed, seeking for the power she had hoped to gain in backing Germany in both World Wars. The present Pope was instrumental in the bringing down of communism in the Soviet Union. And interestingly, although we see the re-emergence of communism in Russia today, it is a different party—one that espouses the Orthodox Church, as we shall see in the next chapter. A fascinating biography of the Pope was published this year<sup>1</sup>, revealing the hand of the Pope in this and many other fields including the establishment of relations with Israel and moves to reconciliation with the Orthodox Churches.*

### **Political union**

January 1st 1995 saw the enlargement of the European Union from 12 to 15 members, with the joining of Austria, Sweden, and Finland. The former two have had second thoughts of the value of membership—it hasn't worked out as expected and, in opinion polls, a majority in both countries said they would have voted "no" if they had known what they now knew!

The majority of members of the EU want increasing union. Only Britain and Denmark negotiated an "opt-out" clause, so that they are not bound to take the step to single currency, which in all practical effect will lead to political union.

Why are they so keen? Firstly let us consider the religious aspirations of the community. The majority of the countries that want union are Catholic. They are used to being told what to do by the Church. Although the grip of the Church is waning, never-the-less it permeates so many aspects of their daily living. Living in a non-catholic country, it is perhaps hard to understand the grip the Church still bears. The book "The Sign of the Cross—travels in Catholic Europe", by Colm Tóibín, vividly describes the travels of a lapsed Catholic through many of the countries

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<sup>1</sup> Pope John Paul - the biography, Tad Szulc obtainable from *Milestones*



	Roman Catholic	Greek/E. Orth'x	Protestant
Austria	89%		6%
Belgium	90%		minority
Denmark	minority		94%
Finland		minority	90%
France	90%		minority
Germany	40%		45%
Greece		97%	
Ireland	95%		5%
Italy	90%		
Luxembourg	95%		
Netherlands	40%		30%
Portugal	98%		
Spain	99.9%		
Sweden			95%
U.K.	minority		majority

Source: Times Atlas of the World 1992; TE 12/92

of western and eastern Europe, and the influence he sees the Church still has in the everyday lives of the people.

As was commented last year in a review of another book on the Pope, Britain does not seem to exist in the world view of the Pope. That is borne out by this book. Britain does not feature. Britain has never fitted in with Europe and it would not seem unreasonable that the “behind-the-scenes” policy is that they

would be quite happy for troublesome Britain to be pushed aside, so that the others can move forward at greater speed.

Tad Szulc<sup>1</sup> traces the social aspirations of the Pope. His desire to bring down communism was because of its suppression of religion. He does not see capitalism as much better if it does not have a side which cares for the poor. What he has been striving for is to bring Catholic religion into the political framework, to work hand in hand with the state to influence its social policies.

What is interesting is the type of European union that is envisaged. It is a union of countries, sharing a common currency, with fiscal policies dictated by a central bank. This would set interest rates for each country as it saw the economic pressures demanded. It envisages a greater role for central institutions such as the European Parliament and the European Court of Justice. However, the countries of Europe are balking at giving up all political control. Led by Mr Major, there has been a pull-back from the concept of a federal Europe, similar to say the United States of America. It is moving more to a confederation, where each country, although giving up a fair degree of its power to the central authority, never-the-less retains some individual control.

This is of course the picture that Bible prophecy has been leading us to expect. Quoting from *Milestones* 1993, page 32,

“In the picture painted in Revelation 17, the power of the beast is in its 10 horns. The 10 horns represent 10 kings which do not then become one power, but rather as individual powers in a group they give power to the beast:

<sup>1</sup> See footnote on previous page.

*“And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.”*  
Rev. 17:12-13

“Hence it is not surprising that the move towards a federal Europe is punctuated by reverses and opposition. And the other factor of course is the misfit of Britain in the European group of (largely) Roman Catholic nations and the tensions which this brings.”

## **Maastricht II**

In March 1996 is the Inter-Governmental Conference (IGC) review of the Maastricht Treaty, referred to as Maastricht II. Here could be taken far reaching decisions concerning the future of the EU. Under Maastricht I, monetary union had been agreed. The opportunity now is being taken to look at the whole European set-up, especially as still more countries are seeking to join. Do the European institutions require root-and-branch change, or merely a little fine tuning. Britain is in favour of the latter, but most want the former. They would like radical changes such as doing away with the veto, and relying on majority voting; and abolishing the opt-out option.

The changing situation in Bosnia had eased the pressure for enlarging the community, and with it the need to streamline procedures, and curb the national veto in favour of majority voting. The other change has been the change in outlook that Mr Chirac has brought to French politics. He is no lover of increased centralization of power. What will finally be on the agenda for Maastricht II is not yet clear. For those countries wishing to join the EU, their hopes of a firm date were dashed. There was a promise that the EU would “aspire” to start talks with some candidates by the end on 1997, but no target dates for completion were set. (DT 14-12-95; TE 16-12-95; DT 18-12-95).

## **France and Germany at the heart of Europe**

France and Germany have had an uneasy relationship in the past century. Two World Wars have seen France occupied by Germany and having to be rescued by Britain. France was behind the forming, 40 years ago, of the European Coal and Steel Community—the precursor of the EU. This was done in the hope of preventing Germany ever again bursting over her borders. France is determined that she will not let Germany dominate the EU. France has a tradition of an independent army, which has not operated within NATO. She is keen to see Europe have its own defence force, not dependent on America, with France in charge of it. Hence the resumption of French nuclear tests as a signal to Germany of her intentions to be militarily strong.

France is keen on monetary union as a means of curbing Germany’s economic power, fearing that without it, the German mark will be so

powerful, that Germany will dominate economic and monetary policy. Germany will, however, resist any moves to dilute her power in this field. The Euro, the new currency unit, must be as strong as the mark, and with the central bank situated in Germany, she intends to remain in control. After reunion with East Germany, she now has 22% of the population of the EU and 30% of its GDP, contributing 30% of the Brussel's budget (DT 23-8-95; 7-9-95).

**France.** Britain had hoped that it might find a partner in France's new president, Jacques Chirac, to build a Franco-British axis to reshape the community, but in the main has been disappointed. Instead there has been a strengthening of French-German relations, coinciding with a cooling in British-German relationships.

**"Major and Kohl end their affair"** ran the headline.

Germany was insistent that Britain must give up the veto, if the community was to be enlarged successfully. Also Britain must join the others in giving up her sovereignty, if the community was to remain workable! (ST 28-5-95).

**Germany.** Chancellor Kohl has been in power for 13 years. No other European leader can match his experience—and enthusiasm for European integration. Helmut Kohl is determined to see a unified Europe—Germany is the role model, her several provinces and now East Germany are united under one central government. What he wants for Europe is but an enlargement of what he has at home.

He would like the EU to have its own commissioner in charge of foreign affairs and who would determine EU foreign and security policies, but he decided to drop this for the time being, knowing Britain's hostility to having to abide by EU policies, especially if not allowed to use a veto (DT 14-6-95).

With the lifting last year of the constitutional ban on her forces operating outside the Nato area, Germany agreed in July to despatch fighter cover to Bosnia. She already has the largest army in Western Europe and is taking steps to increase her military power. In conjunction with France she is building a spy satellite with radar imaging capable of detecting things smaller than 1 metre on the ground. France is developing photographic satellites and they will pool results (TE 24-3-95). She is keen that the Western European Defence organization should come under EU control and become the defence arm of the Union (DT 14-6-95).

The front cover of *The Economist* (13-1-96) featured a stout Chancellor Kohl wearing a cardigan emblazoned with a map of Europe showing the EU countries with the headline **"Europe's iron chancellor"**. The article spoke of the resentment his "pushiness" was causing and the concern over "the imperial airs" of Germany. Significantly, Chancellor Kohl ended his New Year 1996 speech with a reference to "the Fatherland", a

taboo subject since the time of Hitler. This coming year should certainly be an important year as far as the future of Europe is concerned!

## Papal involvement

We would refer readers to comments in *Milestones* 1993, page 86, and 1994, pages 72-74. The Pope has a vision of papal power from the Atlantic to the Urals (see extracts from his speech to the European Parliament in 1988 in *Milestones* 1992 pages 34, 35.)

Through the extensive network of priests, reporting to bishops, who report to archbishops and cardinals, who in turn report to the Vatican, there exists an efficient network to pass information up and down. Catholic leaders though, have a more direct link. With their standing they would not confess to a local priest, but to a Monsignor, who is directly controlled by the Vatican. The Church tirelessly champions its aims. Where it can, it has control of schooling. It has its own papers and radio stations. It has alliances to political parties—the Christian Democratic Party.

Let's see some examples of how it works to exert her influence over individuals and parties.

Under the headline **"The fall and rise of the Italian Catholic vote"**, an article outlined how, after enjoying uninterrupted power for 50 years, the Italian Christian Democratic Party *Democrazia Christiana* fell through corruption scandals.

"Its collapse...deprived the Italian Catholic Church at a stroke of the institution which had been its recognized political face since the Second World War."

It fragmented into several parties. Now two of them are uniting to try to re-secure the Catholic vote. They have renamed the party *Christiani Democratici Unity* modeled on Kohl's Germany CDU, whose name they have taken and Italianised. It will take some time to grow, but as the article commented -

"unified Catholic party may be dead for the moment, but the Catholic candidate is still alive, due to the Church's vast network of lay organizations.

"Roman Catholicism's presence in Italian civil life is still assured through a variety of associations, including a network of co-operatives, a trade union, recreation institutions in every parish, centres for teenagers and a huge Scouts movement.

"...the Church's vast organizational apparatus has taken on new political significance, and its leaders have become magnets for the religiously-minded voter in a confused political picture...Italy now boasts more Catholic mayors and regional presidents than ever..."

TE 23-6-95

Helmut Kohl, a devout Catholic, sent a message of support to the new party, saying **“Europe, and not just Italy, need a strong Christian democratic movement”** (TE 28-8-95).

The Italian press attacked the Pope for -

“publicly embracing the former Prime Minister, Giulio Andreotti, who received an ovation at a Vatican gathering.

“Andreotti, always thought of as the closest of the old Christian Democratic hierarchy to the Vatican, is standing trial for association with, and even membership of, the Sicilian Mafia and for authorising a contract killing.” DT 2-1-96

Mr Andreotti attends mass daily and goes to confession every month.

In June the German CDU celebrated its 50th birthday. The party was described as Europe’s most important political force, the political engine-room of European integration and the arch exponent of the federalist vision of the EU (TE 23-6-95).

M Chirac, the newly elected French President is due to pay a state visit to the “Holy See” on January 20th. He will be the first French President to do so since General de Gaulle went in 1959. He is hoping to receive the highest pontifical order, the Supreme Order of Christ.

“Chirac could thus, at one bound, become the newest and the most senior Knight of the Supreme Order of Christ. That would certainly encourage the faithful in French national life.” ST 31-12-95

We can readily see the influence that the Pope wields over the countries of Europe.

*“For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.”* Rev 18:3

The riches of the Church and the enriching of the “merchants of the earth” is yet another story! It is well documented in Avro Manhattan’s book *The Vatican Billions* which is still available from *Milestones*.

## **Chapter 11:**

# **RUSSIA—IN THE POST-SOVIET ERA**

### ***Introduction***

*As is the case for yet another year—things do not stand still in Russia! The Chechnya crisis rumbles on. Mr Yeltsin has been out of action twice due to heart troubles. And the December elections turned the clock back—but with an important difference: Communism has changed. This time it is no longer atheistic—it is Greek Orthodox! What an interesting development along the path towards the full development of the **dragon** power. When described under its pagan stage in the time of Constantine, it was a **red dragon**. Although no latter-day colour is given, it does seem an appropriate colour.*

### **Yeltsin**

It has been a difficult year for President Yeltsin. The crisis in Chechnya has rumbled on all year. Reforms have not proceeded as fast as he would have liked. His summit meeting with Bill Clinton in May was the frostiest since the break-up of the Soviet Union. Millions of dollars worth of aid was held up by the US because of Russia's support in the building of Iran's nuclear reactors. Twice he had to face a confidence vote in the Duma. He suffered two heart attacks and has spent many weeks convalescing. His party, "Our Home is Russia" fared badly in the December elections, when there was a communist revival.

He hasn't given up! At the year end he made a brief appearance in the Kremlin, after 2 months in hospital, looking leaner and fitter. He gave a strong, fist-banging speech to "prove that it is the president who runs the country, not the parliament, and that the incumbent is strong enough to impose his will on his opponents."

In June 1996 there are the presidential elections. Although he had been written off because of his poor health, he will wait until February, when he turns 65, before deciding whether to run for a second term or not. Even his wife has swung in favour of him standing again as the only man that can stop the growth of the communists. He is planning a major trip to China in March.

There are other presidential hopefuls who are waiting to see whether he stands. Mr Gorbachev is said to be "hesitating loudly in the wings," over standing (DT 30-12-95; TE 6-1-96).

### **The December Elections**

This was only the second time that the Russians have voted for seats in the Duma since the fall of the Soviet Union. These elections were noted for the re-emergence of the communists. What was interesting to see was

the changes in what are now termed the Russian Communists, compared with the former Soviet Communists. The table sets out the main differences. We shall look at the religious aspect more closely in the next section. What is also of interest is their more limited field of interest, which is not to conquer the world (at least for the moment), but to

	Soviet Communists	Russian Communists
<b>Economic:</b>	state controlled based on 5 yr plans	mixed economy of state & private owner-ship, foreign investment
<b>Ideology:</b>	Marxism-Leninism, anti-Western	nationalism with streak of anti-Westernism
<b>Religion:</b>	atheism	Russian Orthodox
<b>Foreign policy:</b>	world revolution	rebuilding the Soviet Union

build up a strong Russia. There is a distrust of the West's desire to embrace Russia within the politics of Western Europe. The scriptural picture is of a **beast**, western Europe, a **dragon**, eastern Europe, and a **false prophet**, the papacy. We would expect Russia to retain its independence, and to rebuild its military might. It is only when Daniel's image is ready to stand up on its eastern and western legs, that all three elements will unite in common purpose, to come against the mountains of Israel. As Ezekiel chapter 38 describes, Gog is of (or in association with) the land of Magog (Germany); prince of Ros (Russia); Meshech (Moscow) and Tubal (Tobolski). With her are allies, including Gomer (France).

The poll results gave the "Our Home is Russia" party 10% of the votes. Mr Zhirinovskiy's Liberal Democratic party won 11%, and the Communist party 22%. The large number of parties contesting seats—43—causes the low percentage of votes that these three main parties received. In the elections the voters cast two votes, the first for a party of their choice, and second for a local candidate. One half of the 450 seats in the Duma are allocated according to the size of the first votes, to those parties getting more than 5% of the vote. Less than 10 parties are expected to qualify. The other half of the seats are allocated as Westminster-style single-member constituencies based on the winners of the second vote. The Communists are expected to have 157 of the 450 seats, "Our home is Russia" is the next largest block with about 55 seats. The Liberal Democrats only achieved a small number of seats. The balance of power will lie in the coalitions that will be formed over the next few weeks (Time 8-1-96).

The Russian constitution does not allow government ministers to have a seat in Parliament. Andrei Kozyrev, Yeltsin's Foreign Minister, and longest serving cabinet minister, chose to take his seat, and so resigned. He was seen as very pro-Western and so many were pleased to see him go (DT 6-1-96). He has been replaced by Yevgeny Primakov, a former spymaster and specialist on the Middle East. US diplomats were saying that, given his background, he could hardly be friendly to the West (TE 11-1-96).

## **Economic growth**

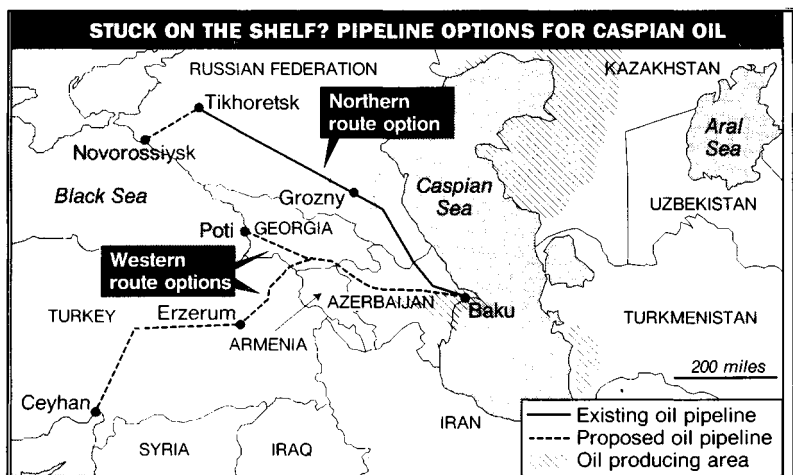
In certain areas things are improving. The downward flight of the rouble has been arrested. 10 years ago a rouble was worth a pound, now it is worth 1/100th of a penny! Many big Moscow shops stopped marking prices in roubles because they had to be constantly changed, so they used dollars. But now it is stable and rising in value, prices are back in roubles. Inflation has fallen from 800% in 1993 to around 110% this year and a forecast of 60% next. Still very high by western standards, but the battle is still being fought. "The economy is in better shape than most people outside the country believe. On the other hand there are problems and a lot of things that still need to be done," said the chief economist at the World Bank's Moscow office. In September, Jacques Santer signed a deal which would provide for a 60% increase in trade between the EU and Russia (DT 18-4-95; 8-6-95; 4-10-95; TE 5-11-95).

A problem area has been the harvest. The grain harvest was the worst since 1963, necessitating record imports. Drought and lack of machinery, coupled with few incentives to work, mean that Russia's grain production per person is lower than in 1913. In the 50's and 60's Russia exported grain, but collective farming proved a failure. There have been efforts to hand the land back to the people, but many have forgotten how to run a farm and they can not afford the capital equipment (DT 7-10-95; 1-1-96).

Russia is battling with oil companies over the distribution of oil from the reserves of oil—reputed to be the largest in the world—in the CIS state of Azerbaijan. Russia wants it piped through the existing pipeline which runs through her territory. It passes through Chechnya, and explains, in part, Russia fighting so ruthlessly—losing 30,000 lives—to retain this breakaway republic within the Federation. The West, whose firms have invested billions of dollars to develop these fields, favours a westerly route to the Black Sea, and eventually extending to the Mediterranean Sea in Turkey. Compromise was reached—oil is to flow through the existing pipeline and the new westerly one is to be built. Meanwhile, Russia, Bulgaria and Greece have signed an \$1.2 billion agreement which will involve extending the Russian pipe-line to the Black Sea, shipping the oil 900km to Bulgaria's Black sea port, then through a proposed new 300km pipeline through Greece to the Aegean. This would neatly reduce Russia's dependence on Turkey's cooperation in shipping through the



crowded Bosphorus -Turkey has already cut back on the number of tankers allowed on “environmental” grounds (TE 7-4-95; DT 10-10-95).



Russia's desire to control these exit routes for these vital oil reserves, may possibly be the excuse for her eventual move into Turkey, when once again Istanbul—the modern day Constantinople—becomes her forward headquarters.

## Military power

Russia settled her dispute with the Ukraine over the siting of the Russian Black Sea fleet at the Crimean port of Sevastopol. This allows her to develop her presence there.

She has increased the length of military service back to 2 years. It was cut to 18 months in 1993, but senior officers complained that this was not a long enough training. The Chechan operation highlighted not only the weaknesses of the conscripts, but also equipment shortcomings. Only 20% of her tanks are usable, 1/3rd of her artillery systems and armoured vehicles need renovation. 3/4's of the armed forces' equipment is out dated and there is a chronic shortage of spares and money! One of the problems is that the repair centres set up near the Warsaw Pact's operational area, now lie outside Russia (DT 20-2-95; 1-5-95).

In April Russia announced she was setting up a new army of up to 18,000 men to be stationed on her southern border. The move breaks the 1990 Conventional Forces Treaty, but Russia argued that is now obsolete, the situation having changed since Russia signed (DT 27-4-95).

To the surprise of the West, at the year end Russia sent a carrier task force into the Mediterranean. It was led by its latest and most powerful aircraft carrier, complete with SU-33 fighters—one of the most powerful

and agile planes in the world—and helicopters. Accompanying it on its journey from northern Russia was a frigate, a destroyer, and a fuel supply ship. A total of 3,500 sailors are involved. This is the first long range deployment of this aircraft carrier and the most powerful deployment seen in the past 5 years. NATO forces are keeping a close eye on its movements. Its destination is not known—it may be going to the Adriatic as support for Russian troops in Bosnia. (DT 6-1-96).

## **The *Dragon*—the Orthodox Church's growing power**

We continue from chapter 9, our look at the iron/clay feet of Daniel's image. We find that the iron/clay mixture is proceeding apace in the eastern leg. With the overthrow of Communism, the Orthodox Church has flourished. The number of Orthodox monasteries in Russia, a country rich in mystical traditions, has soared from 16 to 300 in three years.

One of the significant changes is how the political parties have espoused religion. As was found in Poland, religion is a great binder of people. Throughout the Soviet communist era, religion was suppressed, but not eradicated. With the change of attitude by the political leaders, the Russian Orthodox Church has blossomed, now claiming 40 million members.

Although Zhirinovsky's party showed a big fall in the elections, it is interesting to recall one of his visions -

“the sound of Russian Orthodox church bells on the shores of the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea would proclaim peace to the peoples of the region, brotherhood to the nations, prosperity, happiness...”  
*A Last Bid for the South, Zhirinovsky*

As we saw at the start of the chapter, even the Russian Communist party has espoused religion. Notice what has replaced the **old iron**:

“His party [the Russian Communist Party] wants to rebuild the old Soviet Union, but he has abandoned the party's right to the iron monopoly of power which kept the old empire together.

“While the Communist Party of the Russian Federation still uses the hammer and sickle, it has abolished the doctrine of atheism and endorsed free speech and the right to private property. **It now sees its ideological partner as the Russian Orthodox Church.**” DT 15-12-95

The Russian Orthodox Church celebrates Christmas in early January. There was an revealing article:

### **“Atheists queue up to embrace the faith”**

“...when the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church holds Christmas Mass this evening, former atheist communists will be queuing to attend. After sweeping victories in the parliamentary elections, the Communist Party is keen to show that it has embraced Orthodoxy as fervently as its democratic opponents.

“The communists know that the Orthodox faith is not just a belief, but also a powerful political tool, having enjoyed a dramatic revival after 70 years of persecution.

“This Christmas, everyone in Moscow has been eager to associate with the city’s most important project: the rebuilding of one of the world’s biggest churches, the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, which Stalin ordered be blown up in 1931.

“During the Orthodox Christmas services tomorrow, the Patriarch will consecrate its bells and unveil a plaque bearing the names of the biggest donors.

“The Orthodox Church’s powerful role leaves little room for any other religious groups that make up the Russian federation, such as the millions of Muslims. Patriarch Aleksy II has made it clear that Russia can accommodate only one religion.” DT 6-1-96

Rebuilding work of this cathedral commenced with foundation work in October 1994. In January 1995 the foundation stone was officially laid, with the Orthodox leader, Patriarch Alexsy II joining hands with the Russian Premier, Viktor Chernomyrdin! Work continues apace at an estimated cost of £200 million! 4,000 workers toil day and night on this structure destined to be as big as St Paul’s. In September the walls were 130 feet high, and they were preparing the supports for the vast gold covered dome which will cap this 338 foot high “Cathedral of Christ the Saviour”. It is aimed to be finished by 1997 in time for the 850th anniversary of the founding of Moscow. Services are already being held in part of it. It was originally built in 1812 to celebrate Russia’s defeat of Napoleon. It came to symbolise the union of Church and Tsarist autocracy (ST 3-9-95).

Russians are also reviving their imperial Tsarist past. They are planning to re-bury the exhumed remains of the last Tsar in St Petersburg (Time 9-10-95), though the Orthodox Church is considering canonising the Romanov family and so would want to display the bones for “public veneration”! (ST 14-1-96). Russia has laid claim to property worth more than \$9 billion in more than 100 countries, including Orthodox Churches in Israel and Italy and villas around the Mediterranean, that once belonged to the Tsars. The legitimacy of the claims will be hard to prove. When in 1917-18 Lenin nationalised all foreign assets in Russia and repudiated Tsarist foreign debts, he waived all rights to Tsarist property abroad in exchange (ST 9-7-95). Our interest lies not in the legitimacy of the claim, but in the desire for Russia to go back to its imperial, Tsarist, and religious roots.

We are going to see the re-emergence of a strong independent Russia, a **dragon** power.

## Chapter 12:

# THE DIVIDING LEGS AND FEET

### Introduction

*Daniel's image finally stands up on its iron clay feet. We have looked at the Western and the Eastern legs and feet, and will briefly conclude this aspect with a look at some of those countries on the dividing line. Some, like Turkey, although part of the eastern leg, have been westernized for some time, so we must expect a movement in outlook back to the east. At the heart of this east-meets-west lies Bosnia Herzegovina—still politically a most volatile area.*

### Bosnia

After a year when the peace which had been negotiated at the end of 1994 proved elusive, and the area was plunged once more into war, we once again have an uneasy peace settling on the region. The significant part has been the role played by America which, using air power, brought the sides to the negotiating table. By taking the warring leaders to an isolated spot in America, and more-or-less saying that they wouldn't go home until something has been agreed, a settlement was reached. It was ratified at a signing ceremony in Paris on December 15th. It proved a triumph for President Clinton. We wait to see the practical outcome.

Further news came out of the American CIA behind-the-scenes involvement helping the Muslims, as revealed in last year's review. Reports of covert shipments of advanced weaponry were reported several times, with the Nato forces seeming to turn a blind eye. America was known to be using unmanned drones to take pictures and to eavesdrop on radio messages. This information would prove invaluable to the commanders on the ground if passed on (DT 11-2-95; 28-2-95; 3-6-95).

The Americans have also been helping the Croats, with intelligence and training. This was said to be behind the enormous improvement in the performance of the Croat troops in the past 18 months. The Croats want to align themselves with the west rather than the east. In March 1994 they approached the Pentagon for help in transforming their army from an Eastern-style communist Army, into one based on democratic principles that can work in the western security area. A training contract was signed and the skills of some of the top American generals from the Gulf war were used to train them (ST 15-10-95). Significant too has been the assistance from Bonn, and also the Pope's involvement in negotiating a settlement, sending secret emissaries to deal with Serbs, Bosnian, Muslims and Croats.

The new settlement involves the deployment of Nato instead of UN troops. 60,000 are involved. Bosnia is to be preserved as a single state

divided into two republics, a Muslim-Croat Federation and a separate Serb entity, sharing the land roughly equally. The Catholic Croats and Muslims have been working together for some time. Apart from a large Serbian “island”, the area has been divided up between east and west. It follows very much the dividing line between the Eastern and Western Roman Empire in the 4th and 5th centuries. One feels the hand of the papacy lies behind the American involvement which has helped to bring about this settlement, and also the co-operation with the Muslims. There have been many previous settlements in this tinder-box, where east meets west; how long will this last?

## **Poland**

In spite of a Church-backed campaign, Lech Walesa lost the election for President in November. Poland is divided into two—in the south and east which is still backward, the Church is strong, but in the booming west and north-west the Church has less influence. The new president, by a slim majority, is Aleksander Kwasiewski, a former communist minister in the last communist government, but now leader of the Social Democratic Left Alliance, SLD. In the current Polish government his SLD party leads the governing coalition. He is a much more polished performer than Walesa—an American-style negotiator, who looks to link Poland with Nato and the EU, and is committed to market reforms. He speaks fluent English and German, and pays lip-service to the important role of the Church in Poland. We could well see Poland linked to Germany (TE 9-11-95; DT 21-11-95; Time 4-12-95).

Former communists—all “reformed” and having abandoned their Marxist past—are also back in power in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia. They all feel let down by the West.

“During the initial post-1989 euphoria, many east Europeans believed that largesse from their new friendly neighbours would pour in to help them on the road to capitalist prosperity.

“The actual aid forthcoming was on a much meaner scale than had been hoped. There was advice and not all of it helpful”. TE 7-12-95

Most have seen their real wages fall by 30-40%, even 70%, since 1989. Birth rates have fallen dramatically to an all time low, and the mortality rate for the 20-39 year olds has sharply risen. Life expectancy for a Russian male is now only 58.2 years—the same as in Pakistan! (TE 7-12-95). All of this helps to shape the East in moving back from the West, in preparation for the final stage of forming the two, east and western, legs and feet, upon which Daniel’s image stands.

## **Turkey**

An interesting situation! In the December elections the Muslim Welfare party gained 21% of the votes—the largest party. The two main parties, Tansu Cillar’s Truth Path Party and her political arch rival Mesut

Yilmaz's Motherland Party took 40% of the votes between them. How well they could possibly work together and form a coalition remains to be seen. Turkey is regarded by Europe as an important member of Nato—she provided a valuable outpost in the Gulf War. The EU signed a custom's union with Turkey with effect from January 1st 1996—a key step towards full membership. It was to have been postponed because of protests against Turkey's human-rights record, but in December MEP's agreed to ratify the agreement (TE 11-1-96).

We have traditionally anticipated Turkey falling under the power of Russia as Gog sweeps downwards into the Middle East. The Sunni Muslims are in the majority, with a Greek Orthodox minority. What it is that brings Russia down we wait to see—though this will probably take place **after** the call to Judgement. Constantinople will be a desired prize—part of “the leap South” to the Mediterranean that Zhirinovsky dreams of, giving Russia control of the vital passageway of the Bosphorus.

### **Nato membership**

Many of the countries of eastern Europe are seeking membership of Nato. No longer willing to depend on the might of Russia, they prefer to cast their lot in with the West. They reason that Nato membership will give them assured defence if Russia tried to dominate them again. Russia is hostile to such moves, even though she herself had been wishing to build links—though that desire will probably fade. The map on the inside back cover gives both possible links with the EU as well as Nato. To link with Nato or not may well roughly determine which “leg” a country falls into.

## Chapter 13:

# THE SETTING STAGE FOR CHRIST'S RETURN

### Introduction

*As we stand at the start of another year, we can see the Hand of God working. Prominent men and women rise and fall according to His foreknowledge. Nothing is hidden from His eyes. The God of Israel slumbers not nor sleeps. All things move towards the end goal—God glorified in His saints. How privileged we are to understand and **be part** of that plan. To be able to discern a thread of events which we know is leading inexorably to that grand finale when the nations shall see and know that there is a God in heaven; and that He is the God of Israel—the Creator of the heavens and the earth.*

*We don't know every detail. We can't interpret fully every prophecy. We are caught off guard at the speed and turn of events. Never-the-less we can be quietly confident in the general outline and aim. Our traditional understanding of the events at the time of the end has stood the test of time. Our privilege, which earlier generations couldn't have, is that being so much closer to the end, we can see more clearly the rapidly approaching day. The call to Judgement must be very, very close. The years that this event will occupy, will be more than sufficient to bring the earth to that darkest hour that Isaiah described in chapter 60:*

For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. v. 2

*Let us briefly pull our review together, encouraging ourselves in the certainty of the Master's return, and the nearness of that call. Lifting up our heads let us discern the angelic hands setting the final pieces on the world stage, for the last act to be played out in the Kingdom of Men—its utter destruction before the righteousness of the reign of the Messiah, Israel's king and redeemer.*

### The Dragon, the Beast and the false Prophet

We await the forming of the latter-day "King of the North". We see the elements of this king power being developed. It involves, in the Apocalyptic language, a Dragon and a Beast and a False Prophet. We can see the growing power of the Russian Orthodox Church in Russia. We also see the movement away from the West, a token of which is seen in the new Foreign Minister, a KGB intelligence officer, a friend of Saddam Hussein, certainly with no strong leanings to the West like his predecessor!

The dragon power is developing well. Russia's economy is recovering, she has retained a vast arsenal of weapons, true they are ageing and not so very sophisticated, but she still has a vast army. The emergence of the Communist party, but in a new guise, is something to watch.

We have observed the development of the Beast in Europe for many years. Now it is rapidly taking shape. We see the growing power of the Papacy pushing for a powerful Germany, which will be willing to act so that Europe looks favourably to the demands of the Church, allowing the Church to control her schools, etc. The iron of Rome is able to work through such men as Chancellor Kohl, the "iron" chancellor, as the latest issue of the Economist describes him. He was bold enough to refer to the "Father-land" at the conclusion of his New Year message.

We watch the increasing grip the False Prophet has on the nations. A true prophet speaks for God. A false prophet **claims** to speak for God, when in fact he speaks for himself. Germany proved a broken reed in both world wars, but now there seems to be the opportunity to gain great power. We must expect that power and influence to grow rapidly. It may lie in the hands of the successor to the present Pope. Again, there will be time during the Judgement Seat period for these matters to develop. How dense will be the darkness upon the earth when the saints are called away!

We hear that Germany's economy is faltering, unemployment rising, she might not meet the criteria for single currency, without strong austerity measures! Britain on the other hand is now declared to be the cheapest country in Europe to live in. She is well placed, after years of austerity, to gain from world trade, as the merchants of the world seek to play a part in her markets. Once again Britain has just upset the French and Germans by contemplating buying into the American satellite intelligence system (which Israel also is seeking to share) rather than go in with the European spy satellite system. Mrs Thatcher's recent speech urges Britain to look outward rather than inward to Europe.

The growing level of anti-semitism is something we have not had space to look at this year—but it is there to be seen beneath the surface in Germany and other European countries. It ensures a steady flow of immigrants to Israel, by those who fear what the future holds for them in their present homeland.

## **The Middle East**

What a lot to encourage us. Syria and the Peace talks. The growing friendship between Israel and Jordan. King Hussein has just visited Tel Aviv; security was tight and much of the city was brought to a standstill, but traders accepted the disruption—the Israelis have a great respect for this man. The buoyancy of the Israeli economy. There is much to keep our eyes on—the Palestinian elections, and the success or otherwise of



the withdrawal from the West Bank. The Jerusalem discussions. The Vatican's involvement in Israel. Israel's growing links with other Arab countries. Britain and America's involvement, which will lead to a "King of the South" power.

## **The peace and safety cry, prior to the gathering to Armageddon**

The fragility of any peace has been illustrated in the latest events in Chechnya. Yet there is a remarkable window of peace around the globe. It encourages us to hold on. Paul informed the Thessalonian brethren and sisters that **peace** and **safety** heralds destruction for the world, but salvation for the saints. He later exhorted them

*"...God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught..."*  
2 Thes. 2:13-15

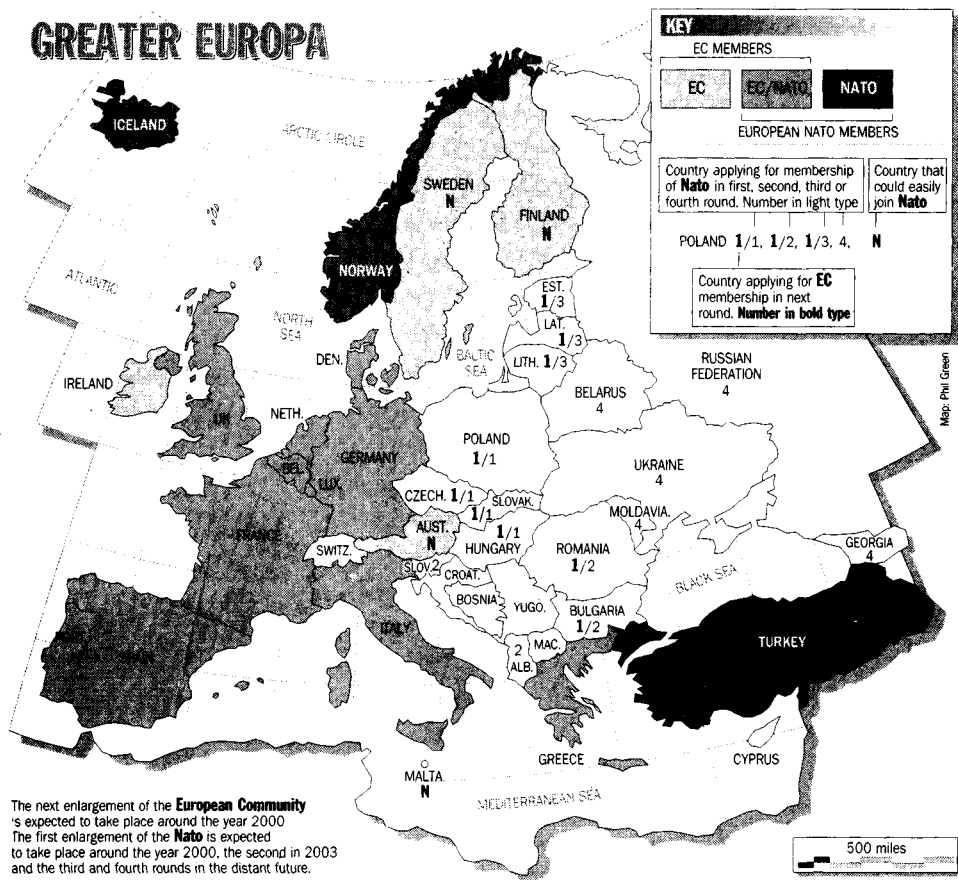
The Master is about to embark on the second stage of that revealing of the Father's glory amongst mankind. He is the firstfruits, in him the glory dwells. Now the time has almost arrived for that glory to be revealed in a multitude of called-out ones.

Glory follows on from Judgement. We must all stand before the King. This sobering fact must affect our thoughts and actions every day. We acknowledge the need for it. We recognize our own shortcomings, we marvel at the compassion of the One who has set our feet upon this Way. The work He has started, He can complete—if we allow His word to work His work in our lives.

For the world, there is the certainty that God's judgements will be poured out on a world that refuses to acknowledge His hand in its origin and daily sustenance; that refuses to allow its moral standards to be set by His word; that worships the creature in preference to the Creator. The power of the coming judgements is frightening. We know the destructive force of earthquake and volcano. The convulsions of the world, will bring to an end the might of man. It will sweep away the present, and give way to the Kingdom of God with Jesus as King on David's throne. Eventually there will be true peace. Peace and stability with justice and holiness.

The final stage of the revealing of God's glory lies at the end of the Millennium, when all will be immortal, extensions of the Divine nature. Then the whole world will indeed be a reflection of the glory and the goodness of God. Through His love and the love of the Lord Jesus, all who live will be one with God. One in mind and body. This knowledge puts into perspective the 7000 years of earth's travail—it will have been the necessary preparation for unending aions of immortality and sweet fellowship. Come quickly Lord Jesus.

# GREATER EUROPEA



The next enlargement of the **European Community** is expected to take place around the year 2000. The first enlargement of the **Nato** is expected to take place around the year 2000, the second in 2003 and the third and fourth rounds in the distant future.

## Edgy Russians fight their corner

## Milestones 1995

The most dramatic event of 1995 was the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin at the hands of one of his own countrymen. While sceptics of our traditional interpretation of prophecy may have thought this would put an end to the peace process, the opposite soon became apparent.

- His funeral brought together leaders of the world who—despite their differences or former hatreds—were revulsed by this act of treason against one who sought peace.
- It brought Mubarak of Egypt to Israel for the first time.
- King Hussein of Jordan came to Jerusalem for the first time.
- His successor, Shimon Peres, moved quickly to continue the peace process. His style is to move more swiftly but to give away less. Can we not sense the urgency of the times in this milestone?
- Israel was ready to give up the Golan Heights if America pays her some \$16Billion and agrees to defend Israel from attack from Syria [i.e. the north]! Surely this further entrenches this “young lion” in her proper place ready for Armageddon.

Israel's dynamic economic growth has earned her the title of ‘The M.E. tiger’. This amazing prosperity will help to provide the “spoil” which Gog seeks, as prophesied in Ezekiel 38.

Other milestones were:

- The mother lion—in the form of John Major—visits Israel
- Jerusalem 3000—3,000 years since David took the city
- Britain continues to move away from European Union
- The growing power of the Papacy.

There is just too much to mention here, so you are urged to prepare for Christ's soon return by reading the whole book.

