

MILESTONES

EUROLAND!



1998

MILESTONES TO THE KINGDOM

***A Review of the
World Events of
1998 in the Light
of Bible Prophecy***

Don Pearce

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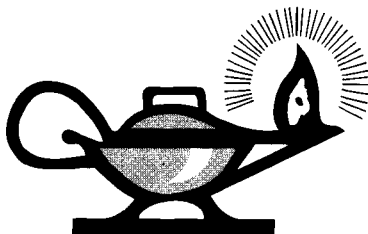
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Preface

A brief perusal of today's newspapers may lead one to think that the most important matters in the world must be the international sporting events. For many years they have been reported on the back of the newspapers, but of recent years they are frequently the main theme on even the front page. It is therefore refreshing and stimulating to read this edition of *Milestones*.

When Daniel depicts the destruction of the 4th Beast Power, it is noteworthy that it is linked with the great words of the little horn. See how precise this is in Daniel 7:11, "I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame". In this very distinct manner, Daniel was informed that the 4th Beast Power would perish and the instigation for the punishment would be the arrogant and assumptive mouth of the little horn (see again v. 20 and v. 25). Now, we know that the 4th World Empire was that of Rome and the little horn was the Papal System, which though small in the actual number of its soldiers, is yet without equal in presumption and blasphemy.

It is quite arresting that Revelation 17 portrays the same facts. We have the same beast system with the 10 horns, unmistakably Roman, and we have an ecclesiastical power riding the beast, a woman of blasphemy (v. 3) and "drunken with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus" (v. 6).

So again the 10 horns are in some form of unity in the final phase of the Roman world. Later, in the same chapter in verse 13, this feature is stressed in a way that is becoming increasingly fascinating.

"These (ten horns) have one mind and shall give their power and strength unto the beast".

Now let us stand back and see how utterly remarkable these words are. The Apocalypse is saying that against all expectation (surely that is the inference) mature nations that have had a long, significant, and independent history would at the end relinquish their autonomy and throw their lot in together, the Papacy riding them and holding the reigns of their direction.

Yet this picture is **exactly** what we are witnessing today. It was the principal theme of 1998, and the evidence of this growing and exciting move to unity among the modern nations of Europe, east and west, is the principal feature of this edition of *Milestones*. Lovers of the prophetic word are in for a treat in the reading of the following pages. The new unit of European currency—the 'Euro'!—began trading on the 1st January, 1999 and over the next 2–3 years is planned to take over all intra-European money transactions between and within participating nations. The leaders of these nations are enthusiastic about this dramatic step. Germany and France are leading the charge forward. The nations are rushing in for European incorporation and seem uncaring about the loss of genuine

national identity. Already many of their laws are initiated by the European Parliament. Who would ever have imagined such a thing! Proud nations, many of them world leaders in many things, are lining up in feverish enthusiasm to surrender their national aspirations to the common good of Europe.

But where is Britain? From our earliest observations we have seen Britain as the mother of another family of nations, traditionally Protestant and separated from Europe by a narrow channel of water, so symbolic of her independence from Catholic Europe. Will England be without her Pound? Will Westminster, the standard bearer of all Western democracies, be reduced to a rubber-stamping offshoot to Brussels and Frankfurt?

Readers will know that there are Biblical reasons to expect that Britain at the end will not be part of the EU. She and her family of nations have other roles to play requiring her independence from a European union. Repeatedly she has aggravated Western European nations by her reticence to go further.

Now the crunch is upon her. The EU train is moving and the drivers are enthusiastic to press the pace. They are **already** speaking of one European super state. Europe feels she may be again the prominent power in the world and no-one loves this concept more than Pope John Paul. The reinstitution of the Holy Roman Empire is on their minds and the name of Charlemagne, its ancient architect, consistently heard in their words.

With the year 2000 only twelve months away and these things happening before our very eyes, we are a very blessed people. But the pressure is on for us too, brethren and sisters. The world wants our children and is contending in every channel of the media for our own hearts and minds. Yet we are among the little number who know the signs and their seasons. The saying is again true:

“...many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them” (Luke 10:24).

Let all our families, all our members, everywhere, in the established areas of ecclesial life and in the many new fields of our growing Brotherhood, be diligent in gathering around the living Word day by day, night by night. Let us fervently use our time in the interests of Christ and the Truth he has given us. Let us refuse the allurements of the world.

B. N. Luke
Secretary
15-1-1999

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Abbreviations used

- BIPAC** Britain Israel Public Affairs Centre. Newsletter published generally fortnightly. £35 a year UK. Overseas rate on application. Tel: 0171 387 5444; Fax 5535. Rates for ecclesial parcels from *Milestones*.
- CH** Catholic Herald. Weekly
- DT** Daily Telegraph
- EC** The Economist magazine, weekly. News-stand or subscription. Fax 0171 839 2968
- EJ** The European Journal, the journal of the European Foundation. Very valuable euro-sceptical journal. Minimum 10 issues a year. £25 UK. (£12.50 students & OAP's) Phone 0171 930 7319; Fax 9706
- EU** European Union. Was the EEC, then the EC, now the EU
- ID** Intelligence Digest, Intelligence International Ltd. Excellent background 01452 864764; fax 864848. 46 issues. £134 (but contact *Milestones* if interested)
- Israeline** A free e-mail service, giving you 2 pages of news about Israel, 5 times a week. To register send an e-mail message to: listserv@pankow.inter.net.il with one and only one line saying: subscribe israeline first_name last_name [i.e. subscribe israeline donald pearce. Don't put anything in the "subject" box, except you may need to click on to it, press space bar, then click onto main message section].
- JP** Jerusalem Post International edition, published weekly.
- LOR** L'Osservatore Romano. The official Vatican paper. English weekly edition.
- ST** Sunday Telegraph, sister paper to Daily Telegraph.
- TE** The European. Now ceased.
- Time** The Time magazine, published weekly.
- TR** The Reformer. Published bimonthly. "The Official organ of the Protestant Alliance". A valuable source of information on matters of concern to Protestants. Min. subscription £4. overseas £6. Tel/fax. 01525712348
- TT** The Times. London. Daily.
- []** Author's notes.

\$1 million = £660,000, \$1 billion = £660,000,000 approx. \$ are always US\$.

Many of the books referred to are available at special prices from ***Milestones*** - please ask for book list, address page 2.

Author's notes

I would like to thank my family for their help, also Bro. Alan Clarke for his helpful advice and comments.

I am grateful for items which readers have sent me. The sources above 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 acknowledgement.

Conventional religious terminology is used, occasionally I put them within “ ”, but generally not. Readers will appreciate my understanding on the falseness of many of these terms. Conventional names are also used to describe parts of Israel etc.

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. 23-11-98.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

*Last year we reviewed events through the perspective of **the Woman** who sat upon the Beast as described in Revelation chapter 17. We saw the Papal power behind the building of a United Europe—this work has continued apace. This year we want to see the fast-moving and sometimes dramatic events of 1998 more from the standpoint of **the Beast**. However, as we shall see, these two elements are very much entwined.*

What is being recreated in Europe is the old Holy Roman Empire of Charlemagne fame. Only it goes further back than this. This is the building of the modern-day Babylon. Babylon was founded by Nimrod—the words Babel and Babylon are identical. The desire to build an empire has lain at the roots of the thinking of men for millennia. The contest down the ages has been The Kingdom of God versus The Kingdom of Men. Babel, Babylon, and Rome have in their turn, sought to control the lives of their subjects.

*The feature of Nimrod's Kingdom was that it had a **City** and a **Tower**. Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon exhibited this same concept—the blending of political matters—the city—with religious matters—the tower. The Kingdom of Men has continued to blend these two elements, setting up its own religious system of false worship, with the political control of peoples. Under the various aspects of the Beast system in the past Church and State have worked hand in hand.*

*1998 saw the signing up of the core European nations to the euro. Like the Babel built by Nimrod, this currency inexorably binds the nations together. They have willingly entered into the agreement, which is what **Revelation 17** would lead us to expect.*

:12 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.

:13 These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.

*This is a picture of events **after** the Battle of Armageddon; never-the-less this is the developing situation that we are seeing now.*

Let us start with a look at the original foundations of Babel, then over the next few chapters we can see how recent events are laying the foundation stones of this modern-day City and Tower of Babel.

“Let us build a city and a tower”

We go back some 4,500 years to Noah and his family emerging from the ark to rebuild. The Truth had been preserved, and Noah would continue to be *a preacher of righteousness* (2 Pet. 2:5). It is therefore very sobering to contemplate just how quickly the way of Truth was corrupted. **Cush** was born to Ham after the Flood, and it was his son **Nimrod** who was the founder of the Kingdom of Men. It fact we can be fairly certain that he was aided in this work by his father Cush. So this is an indictment of the power of the thinking of the flesh—the 2nd generation, and certainly the 3rd generation, had turned their backs on God. Genesis 10:8-12 outlines the exploits of Nimrod. He is termed *a mighty one in the earth...a mighty hunter before* (against is one of the translations of this word) *the Lord*. He was also a great city builder. Babel was the chief centre, but a long list of cities is given, spread over a large area of Mesopotamia.

We are given more details of the construction of Babel in Genesis 11. The chapter indicates that it was a collective act of city building. Nimrod was the chief architect, the motivator, but the people were willing participants. Nimrod was not a conquering despot, but a leader of the people, organising their activities.

What they were building had a two-fold element. A **city** and a **tower**. The latter was to reach to heaven. It was to be the centre for the false worship that Nimrod and Semiramis his wife originated. Ziggurats became a feature of Babylonian worship, with their stepped structures elevated high above the surrounding land. It is a feature which continues to this day with the association of towers and steeples with places of worship. In mythology, Nimrod had many names—one of which was the king of the Cyclops—who were known as the inventors of tower building. Under his name Kronos, it is recorded by Percydes that he was “first before all others that ever wore a crown”.¹

Their purpose in building this city and tower was to defy God’s command to travel outwards in order to repopulate the earth. They wanted to stay put in this fertile Land of Shinar, and there *make us a name* (Gen. 10:4). Yet there was a “name” already there—but they had turned their backs on him. Noah’s son Shem was a witness to the Truth. His name means *name!*

Nimrod’s ambitious plans

Just as the true way was intended by God to embrace, not only man’s worship, but also his work, so Nimrod organised both aspects of his contemporaries’ lives. He was their king and instructor in worship. His aim was to unite and protect his contemporaries and to satisfy their needs in the way of worship. He was known for being a hunter. Probably the effects of the curse were being felt, but his skills freed them from the fear of wild

¹ *Two Babylons*, Hislop.

animals. Cities provided ideal protection. Four are listed in the Land of Shinar and four in the land of Assyria. The focal centre was Babel. This was the showpiece.

Nimrod's defiance of God's commands eventually received summary judgement. The confusion of tongues was a very effective means of breaking up his system of government. We witness today the barriers that languages cause. *From thence did the Lord scatter them upon the face of all the earth (11:9).*

Nimrod had "thought big"—it was the first world empire, where individual cities were prepared to work together centrally, bound together in their worship. Many times since, Babel builders have come and gone. Normally they used force to conquer and rule.

What we are witnessing today, in this latest manifestation of Babel building, is as it was in Nimrod's day—a matter of convenience rather than conquest. It is not a literal city that is being built, but a binding together of nations under one currency—to protect them more effectively—they hope—against the wild economic beasts that lurk the globe. Europe too has world empire ambitions. What is planned will stretch from the Atlantic to the Urals, linking Western and Eastern Europe. In other words, this is the equivalent of the Assyrian-Shinar empire of Nimrod's day. The key element, the binding force, was the false worship, for which Babel, Babylon, became a byword. The same force is present today, as we shall see.

Chapter 2

TODAY'S EMERGING TOWER OF BABEL

In this chapter we concentrate on the political aspect of the newly emerging Europe. The dominant power of Germany is of such interest that we devote chapter 3 to this, and then in the following chapter we look at the importance of the euro to this newly emerging political Europe. In chapter 5 we see the vital part played by the Roman Church. We start by going back to Charlemagne.

Charlemagne's empire

The British *Economist* magazine started a special weekly page at the start of 1998, to look at key European personalities and issues. It chose the by-line of **Charlemagne** and in its first issue concentrated on his reign.

We do not invoke Charlemagne to parade him as some shiny exemplar of togetherly European virtue, but because of the uncanny way in which so many of the geopolitical puzzles of his age still tantalise today. It is striking, for a start, how closely the imperial Carolingian contours match the lands of the founding six members of today's European Union, and how often, for the 12 centuries that have elapsed since his death, Europe's big unifiers, from Frederick Barbarossa and Louis XIV to Napoleon and Hitler and on to Jean Monte and Helmut Kohl, have uttered his name as they have sought, variously, to emulate his achievement. Even his administrative methods are mirrored by those of today's Eurocrats. And, more pacifically, [in a peace-making way] the EU's current image-makers intone his name as they award their annual prize to someone who has "furthered the cause of European unity". Charlemagne, it seems, was the prototype "good European."

Charlemagne had other qualities beloved of modern Euro-builders. He was a great planner. He tried to link the Rhine and the Danube. He built a bridge over the Rhine. Though questionably literate (he read a bit, but barely wrote), he was an avid spreader of learning. With Latin as his lingua franca, a multinational clergy acted as his civil service, the abbots and bishops akin to EU commissioners: he found them less susceptible to "selfish national interests" than the assorted dukes whose domains he broke down into 300 or so more manageable counties.

And how Charlemagne loved the law—and laying it down. Through his clergy he poured out a torrent of "capitularies", great clutches of directives. Subsidiarity? Not too much of that. Harmonisation of taxes? Yes; he it was who instigated the pan-European collection of tithes, not to mention a system of weights and measures. He also tried, in vain, to impose a single currency. *EC 3-1-98*

A role model indeed—especially as he worked with the papacy of his day. He certainly ensured it had a strong “Tower” element! It was Pope Leo III who crowned him at Rome in AD 800 as *Imperator Romanorum*—Emperor of the Romans. He worked with the popes to ensure the strength of his empire, though he was ruthless with the sword, enforcing his will by the sword.

He was proclaimed *Rex Pater Europea* (King Father of Europe) and espoused the ideal of a unified Christian Empire—albeit christianised at sword-point—in close alliance with the Pope. The fact that Charlemagne received his crown from the Pope was seen by the populace as equal to a divine bestowal. . . . By this there had been formal linking of the Pope’s spiritual power with the Emperor’s temporal power, and the two had become joint sovereigns on earth, in a Holy Roman Empire which was the political foundation of the Middle Ages. Throughout this era, the memory of the once-great Roman Empire lived as a vital tradition in the hearts of many Europeans. The entire future of the Continent was bound up in this coronation, and the alliance between the papacy and Germany has been of great significance ever since.

Andrew Hilton, *Principality and Power of Europe*

He built his palace at Aachen—though now nothing remains of it. Aachen, or Aix-la-Chapelle, came under German control after the 2nd WW. It is only a short 15 mile (25km) drive away from Maastricht in Holland where the Maastricht Treaty was signed some 7 years ago. This is the key treaty of the New Europe.

The new united Europe

The new German foreign minister Joschka Fischer caused a storm in the British newspapers when he announced that Germany was pushing for a single European state. It hardly went reported in Germany—after all that’s what they have been saying and planning for a long time! Now the single currency was “under-the-belt”, the logical next step was political unity.

Germany prepares to push for single European state

Germany is to push for significant further transfers of sovereignty to Brussels in order to turn the European Union into a single political state.

Turning the EU into an entity under international law, with a common constitution, was his [Fischer’s] personal goal. “It is the decisive task of our time,” he said. “Just as we worked together on the first real transfer of sovereignty in the field of currencies, we ought to work on a common constitution to turn the European Union into an entity under international law.” *DT* 26-10-98

It was rapidly backed up by the new German chancellor, Gerhard Schröder, who the next day confirmed his support for his foreign minister.

Mr Schröder spoke of the ambition of all mainstream German political parties for “an ever [more] integrated Europe, growing together . . . A united Europe, one which does not stop at Germany’s eastern borders, remains a vision to which we are all fully committed.” *DT* 17-12-98

For Germany, this has been the fulfilment of a long-held dream. In the past she has tried by force—once in the last century and twice in this—to attain this goal.

A financial controller at a Berlin-based telecommunications firm said: “Nobody wants to talk about it, but the thing our politicians are doing now is what they tried to do 50 years ago, but failed. Europe will be dominated by Germany, and this time it includes Ireland, Spain and Portugal as well”.

“We’ve found a peaceful way to create an empire. We have discovered that political manipulation is better than tanks.” *DT* 28-3-98

Another commented:

“History tells us that empires have never been created without force of any kind, so what do you do if military force is either ruled out or has failed? Then another force must take over, given that Europe must be united if it is to face the rest of the world. That is the force of economics.”

“But wasn’t this new empire achieved by people manoeuvring beneath the surface like political U-boats?” “Yes, but it was very well thought out, wasn’t it and much less bloodshed than a normal U-boat.” *DT* 28-3-98

Germany and France the driving force

As soon as the German election results were known, the new leaders sought to take up the traditional close relationships with their French counter-parts. Chancellor Kohl had held special Franco-German talks every 6 months for many years. With the change in leadership, many queried whether that entente cordial would be cooler. So far it does not seem to have lessened. In fact both France and Britain sent invitations to Gerard Schröder to visit them. He chose the French invitation. As he remarked “I want the relationship between France and Germany to grow and touch both societies.” *DT* 19-8-98

Britain has had to take a more distant place. France and Germany are working to the same goal, Britain isn’t.

“It’s not chance” that brought him to France so soon, he said: “It is clear that my new government and I are aware of the current historic and current values of the Franco-German relations”.

On Britain, singled out by *Le Figaro* as “the real problem”, they fixed on a suitably enigmatic formula. Franco-German relations, they said, were

not “exclusive”. Both leaders, said aides were alike in wanting stronger links with Britain. *DT* 1-10-98

The German foreign minister was in France the very day after the elections, visiting his counterpart. Interviewed in a French newspaper, he set out his government's foreign policy:

“The commitments and the values which have characterised the foreign policies of our country in recent decades remains the same in all their essentials: the push for European unification, the introduction of the euro, the enlargement of the European Union to the east, the achievement of the institutional reforms which were not completed at Amsterdam”.

“But we will also give some new emphases: the question of human rights, durable development, the democratisation of Europe, the relaunch of disarmament, ending the wars in the former Yugoslavia.” *TE* 2-11-98

The German finance minister Oskar Lafontaine has long been a fan of the euro—unlike Schröder. His nickname is Napoleon(!) and he loves France. Educated by Jesuits, he is intellectually a more rigorous debater than Schröder, who normally defers to him. *EC* 3-10-98. In fact he wields more power than Schröder who, although he defeated Kohl, is not the party leader. Schröder only became the Social Democratic challenger to Kohl in March. Lafontaine has been party chairman for the past 3 years—“a post he was able to seize because of his strong appeal to old-fashioned Left-wing activists and trade unionists.” *DT* 26-12-98

Not that they do not have their differences. Germany is keen to slash the huge EU expenditure on farmers, from which France benefits greatly. They are looking at reducing Germany's contributions and want France to shoulder a greater proportion of the burden.

Both the central European finance ministry and the European Central Bank are situated in Frankfurt in Germany—incidentally the site of another of Charlemagne's palaces. These two institutes will be the controlling forces. Germany was not going to let them out of her grasp! As a senior German financial journalist remarked:

“If you think that we Germans are prepared to let control of our currency and our economy pass into non-German hands, you underestimate us”.
TE 26-1-98

Chapter 3

GERMANY'S DOMINANT ROLE

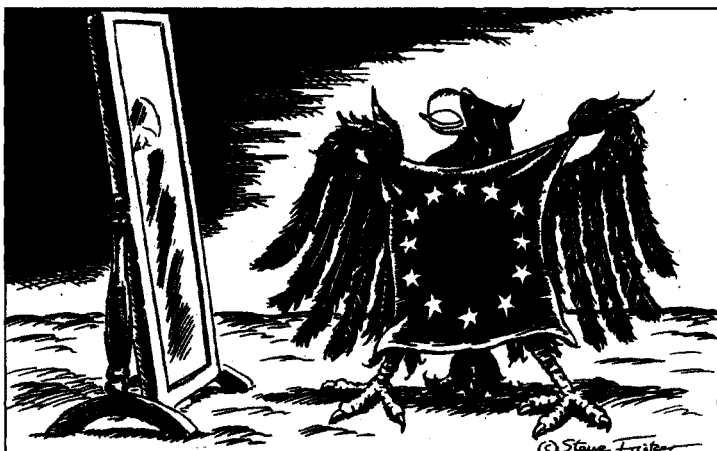
Germany's key position in the drive to a united Europe is of great interest to us. From Ezekiel's prophecy in chapter 38 we expect that Gog, who arises as the great head of the confederacy of nations who invade Israel, to have Germanic connections. Gog is described as "of the land of Magog". Magog has traditionally been associated with Germany. It was to this region that the Sythians migrated, whom Josephus identifies as the descendants of Magog. Herodotus places the Sythians north of the Black Sea between the Don in Russia and the river Danube in Europe. Diodorus Siculus traces them to the Baltic, when writing about 100 BC. Magog is also identified by Jewish sources as the Goths, who were a Germanic people. Indeed the Jewish Targum Yonasan refers to Germania in Genesis 10:2.

Germany's drive for control of Europe

We quote from a Daily Telegraph review of Nicholas Boyle's book "**Who are we now**" (1998).

Boyle argues that the Weimar Germany [1919 – 1933] was a dress rehearsal for the post-imperial, post-modern globalised world in which we live. He sees present-day Germany's advocacy of European federalism as a natural resumption of its medieval role as the cultural heart of a Catholic Europe. Mr Boyle describes the future European Union as unprecedented, neither a united states of Europe nor *Europe des patries*, but having a unifying function comparable to that of the medieval Church. It will, he believes, be the testing ground for the politics of the globalised economy. DT 14-11-98

This significant cartoon, the imperial German eagle trying on the EU for size, illustrated the above review.



An Intelligence Digest Report

The *Intelligence Digest* publishes occasional “Intelligence Backgrounder” reports where it examines in greater depth issues of concern. The October 1998 report was entitled **“What world leaders don’t want you to know”**. It looked at 5 topics, the 4th of which was entitled **“Germany’s drive for control of Europe”**. Fascinating reading it makes!

The received opinion is that the harsh peace terms imposed on Germany after World War I were unwise and contributed directly to the rise of the Nazi party and World War II. In contrast, it is argued, the magnanimity of the post-World War II Marshall Plan helped bring Germany back into the fold of civilized nations—and there has been peace in Europe ever since.

There is another view, and it is that Germany would not have been able to start World War II if the terms of the Versailles peace treaty had been imposed more rigorously; and that, in fact, after World War II, far from being treated leniently, Germany was treated far worse than previously because the country was partitioned with the eastern portion remaining under Soviet domination for nearly 45 years, and that is why Europe experienced its longest-ever period of peace.

There is something in this, and it is now occasionally whispered at the highest levels in France, Britain, and America that it is no coincidence that Europe's first war for 50 years (the Yugoslav civil war) followed on directly from German unification. The performance of Germany over the Yugoslav question opened the eyes of at least some policymakers to the possibility of future trouble with Germany.

There is little doubt that it was Germany's precipitate recognition of the independence ambitions of Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, without any corresponding concern for the fate of the Serb minorities, that sparked the Yugoslav civil war. What is worrying is that this was not just a German misjudgement, but a deliberate policy to create a German sphere of influence in post-communist Eastern Europe.

There is also evidence of a secret deal with Russia over spheres of influence in post-communist Eastern Europe which, if correct, demonstrates conclusively that the period of German quiescence in foreign policy is over.

[The report deals with Germany's Yugoslav policy and concludes with:]

Germany was able to get this policy through because of Russian weakness, American indifference (or ignorance), and the fact that Germany dominates the European Union through its political alliance with France and its economic might (which ensures that the poor states almost always support it).

Germany's ambitions in Eastern Europe are not confined to Yugoslavia.

The great British geographer Sir Halford Mackinder once described the countries of Eastern Europe as that "tier of dependent states between Germany and Russia". In Mackinder's view, the geostrategic significance of Eastern Europe could not be overstated.

As he put it: "Whoever rules East Europe, commands the Heartland; who rules the Heartland, commands the World-Island; and who rules the World-Island, commands the World."

Americans would certainly dispute that control of the European landmass automatically confers world hegemony [ascendancy or domination of one power or state within a league, confederation etc.], but few would dispute that control of Eastern Europe gives significant power over the European landmass. And if it is Germany that inherits Soviet control over Eastern Europe this is doubly significant as Germany already controls most of Western Europe through its financial and institutional dominance of the European Union. This is an advantage that the Soviets never had during their 50-year period of dominance in Eastern Europe.

The deal with Russia

Germany has been able to make progress in Eastern Europe only because of Russian weakness, but there is strong evidence to suggest that Russia has also colluded in the process, by striking bargains with Bonn, in a partially successful attempt to make a virtue out of a necessity.

The key Russian-German bargain was reported to have been struck in Geneva in September 1990. According to the reports, which we believe to be accurate, the Soviets (as they then were) agreed to German hegemony in Eastern Europe in return for economic assistance and a German hands-off promise on the Baltic states and Ukraine.

According to a report (which originated in Czechoslovakia) of the Soviet-German talks in Geneva in September 1990, the Soviets agreed to the following:

- Not to hamper the division of Czechoslovakia.
- To allow the Czech and Moravian regions to move into the German economic sphere of influence so as to facilitate the region's further political incorporation into Germany within 12-15 years.
- In return, Germany would compensate Russia for the economic damage suffered as a result of these processes.
- Hungary would be allowed to pursue its aim of regaining territory ceded after World War I in the 1920 Trianon Treaty, under which Transylvania was incorporated into Romania, whilst Ciscarpathian Ukraine and the Danube-adjoining lands went to Czechoslovakia,

and Vojvodina went to Yugoslavia.

- Germany would increase economic aid to Hungary to ensure that living standards there would be higher than in Slovakia, thus making the idea of Slovakia joining Hungary more attractive.
- Russia would not object to the division of Yugoslavia, would agree to Croatia and Slovenia entering Germany's sphere of economic interests, and would agree to Ciscarpathian Ukraine joining Hungary if the Ukrainian nationalists pursued “destructive activities”.
- In addition to German economic assistance, the payback for Russia would be a German undertaking “not to be active” in issues concerning Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, and not to consider them part of the German economic sphere of influence.

While it has never been possible to verify the exact terms agreed between Russia and Germany in September 1990, this report makes remarkable reading today. Czechoslovakia has split; calls for a return to pre-Trianon boundaries have been heard at the highest level in Hungary; Russia has acquiesced in the dismemberment of Yugoslavia; and Germany has not been as active as might otherwise have been expected in the Baltic states and Ukraine.

Conclusion

Germany's position in Europe is of unparalleled importance because of its geographic location, the size of its population, and its economic strength. None of these things can be altered and none are worrying of themselves.

What gives cause for concern, however, is the evidence, outlined above, that since unification in 1989 Germany has been pursuing (albeit subtly and largely unseen) an aggressively chauvinist foreign policy in Eastern Europe. The fact that neither America nor Russia has been either willing or able to counter this has increased German confidence.

One consequence of this policy was the bloody civil war in Yugoslavia. It might have happened without German encouragement, but German policy made it inevitable.

Unless this German approach to post-communist Eastern Europe is checked now, further disasters could occur with possibly incalculable consequences.

Berlin—Germany's capital moves east

1999 marks the move of the German capital from Bonn to Berlin. This move has much significance to it, both for Germans and Bible students! Hitler chose Berlin as the capital of the Reich. After the war Berlin was divided up amongst the allies, and was for many years after 1949, kept as

an isolated pocket within East Germany. Bonn became Germany's seat of government. Berlin was further physically divided when in 1961 the Berlin wall was erected, isolating the Russian sector from the other three. Following the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989, it no longer was out of reach of Germany. And with reunification in 1990, the two Germany's became one. Chancellor Kohl determined that Berlin was to be the new centre for a united Germany. It fitted with his plans of eastward expansion, being much more central within an expanded Europe.

. . . the predominately German idea of a single currency will have taken root throughout most of the continent with its base at the new European central bank HQ in the German city of Frankfurt. On top of that, in a little more than a year's time, Germany's ruling political elite will have shifted lock, stock and barrel from the cosy confines of bourgeois Bonn to the former capital—brash and brazen Berlin. With its 4 million inhabitants, it remains the largest city between Paris and St Petersburg, and one which is destined to become the de facto capital of a new post-communist European Union that will stretch almost as far east from Berlin as it does now west. *TE* 8-1-98

The move was scheduled for autumn 1999, but when Schröder came to power, he let it be known that he wanted to leave Bonn as rapidly as possible, and hopes to be in the rebuilt Reichstag by next spring. We thus have strong confirmation that the plans have not changed with a new government. If anything they have been strengthened.

Britain, America, France and many others are busily erecting new embassy buildings, many on their former sites. There are even plans to rebuild the Kaiser's Palace, blown up in 1947.

The costs of moving all the Government offices is astronomical. As well as the new buildings, new communications, roads, and railways have been needed. This display of grandeur for the area contrasts sharply with the general poverty of the former East Germany. Its unemployment rate runs at 20%—twice that of Western Germany. Many fear that the divisions between east and west are deepening in Germany, giving rise to Neo-Nazi groups with their anti-Semitism and anti Moslem feelings. *Time* 27-4-98

Before concentrating on the **Tower** aspect of the emerging Europe—the role of religion in the New Europe—we must take a look at the euro. The single currency is the stepping stone for this political Europe. As our cover picture shows, the Euro is seen as the one of the binding forces to unity.

Chapter 4

THE EURO COMES TO BIRTH

Central to the great drive to unify Europe has been the desire to have a common currency for all of Western Europe. Our cover illustration, taken from the special Newsweek edition on the euro, shows it as the capstone to the building. To be strictly correct we have been talking of the Tower as indicating the religious aspect of the city. So we look upon this illustration as representing Babel, the city!

There is an adage in economics, which runs:

“If you once control the currency, you control the economy; and if you control the economy, you control the country” TE 26-1-98

In the end not all the 15 members signed up to adopt the euro, but eleven members have, creating a huge area of Europe where eventually one can travel and trade using a common currency.

May 1998 saw the birth of the euro. In this chapter we examine the long gestation period, and look at the ambitious plans that have been made for the early childhood of the euro.

The troubled pregnancy

The European Journal gave a brief summary of its early history:

The origins of the proposed European Monetary Union¹ can be taken back almost as far as one wants. The story could be picked up in the nineteenth century when the beginnings of European nation states and unions got under way. But it became much more specific in the world after the Second World War as a variety of schemes for co-operation in Europe were put in place. According to Duisenberg, the first Governor of the ECB, the first president of the Nederlandsche Bank was told when taking office in 1946 to provide a sound silver guilder, “...which will in time become part of a single European currency”. And it is now almost 30 years since the Commission published a proposal for EMU in three stages. At The Hague Summit in 1969 a committee was set up under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister of Luxembourg, Pierre Werner. It is of interest to note that in March 1970 the Council of Ministers set up a working group to report on political co-operation in Europe. EJ 9-98

In 1971 the plans drawn up under Pierre Werner were adopted, agreeing to full monetary and economic union “over the coming decade”. It was

¹ EMU actually stands for **Economic** and Monetary Union, thus recognising that the drive to one currency is part and parcel of the drive to one economy.

proposed to set up maximum margins for currency variations—known as The Snake. Because of currency turmoil, the start was postponed until 1972. The Yom Kippur war and the energy crisis that followed stalled any progress towards monetary union. The idea was re-floated in 1977, and in September 1978 at a summit meeting at Aachen—Charlemagne's ancient capital—the French and German leaders established the European Monetary System, whose ERM—Exchange Rate Mechanism—was designed to keep currencies in alignment. This worked reasonably well during the 80's, but the currency speculators wrought havoc in the early 90's.

During the 80's few believed in monetary union. Jacques Delors, the French finance minister, smuggled a reference to an eventual single currency into the Single European Act of 1986. He declared:

“It's like the story of Tom Thumb lost in the forest, who left white stones so he could be found. I put white stones in so we would find monetary union again”. DT 3-12-98

In 1988 M. Delors was asked to draft what was to be the Maastricht Treaty. His committee set out how EMU would be achieved, through setting up a Central Bank, fixing exchange rates, and converging the economic performance of member states. Before the drafting of the Treaty had been completed, the first stage of monetary union was started in July 1990, with the lifting of restrictions on the movement of capital and increased co-ordination of members' economic policies, and co-operation between central banks.

At the Rome summit October 1990 all members, except Britain agreed to move to stage II of EMU in 1994. The wording was changed at British insistence from a “common” currency, to a “single” currency—the start of the euro.

Eventually, in 1991 the Maastricht Treaty was finalised. It came in two parts. A blueprint for economic and monetary union made up one half; the second half outlined progress towards monetary union. The Germans insisted on strict criteria being built into the Treaty to ensure the strength of the new currency. In order to give up the strong mark, this new currency had to be solidly backed, by sound economics.

During 1992 and 1993, currency speculators brought chaos to the markets—Britain was forced out of the ERM, together with Italy. In 1994, as agreed, Stage II began with the establishment of the European Monetary Institute—the forerunner of the European Central Bank. At the December 1995 summit, the name “euro” was chosen together with the symbol for it €. During the following years great efforts were made by those keen on qualifying for euro membership, to ensure they passed the economic tests. It eventually became a farce as all sorts of accounting tricks were used to ensure that all, with the exception of Greece, qualified. Britain, Denmark, Sweden opted not to join the first wave. The other 11 members signed up on May 2nd 1998. The euro was born!

The plans for infancy

Signing up to the euro was but one step on a long road towards monetary union. The next milestone was on Jan. 1st 1999 when stage III of monetary union was reached. On that day the euro exchange rate for each currency was fixed and the newly established European Central Bank assumed control of monetary policy in the euro zone. In Euroland many things will be shown in euros, such as stock prices and government debt. Bank statements, credit card statements and shop prices will begin to show dual pricing. For some time firms will be able to trade in euros only through the banks. Foreign exchanges will still continue their conversion of currencies as at present, as coins and notes will not be available until Jan. 2002. Only then will the general public start using the euro, and existing currencies will be phased out over a 6-month period. There will not be any fluctuations though in the exchange rates between countries during this transition period—the rates having been fixed on Jan. 1st 1999.

The euro countries, or Euroland as it has been nicknamed, will be the world's largest importer and exporter—up to 30% of world trade will be in euros. Its population will be 289 million, compared with the USA at 263 million. And with a gross domestic product of \$6,400 billion, it is only a little short of the United States at \$7,400 billion.

Various dreamers have been trying to unite Europe since Charlemagne; the euro will tie Europeans together more profoundly than any of them, and without a shot being fired. "The euro is the event of the century", says Helmut Kohl. *TE* 4-5-98

What its long-term future will be we can not say. There are many pitfalls ahead for it, and there is no past history to indicate what the outcome will be. The Euroland countries are so diverse in their economic strengths and weakness, that it is hard to see how a "one-size" currency can suit 11 very different economies. The Central Bank has yet to show its colours.

Euro propaganda

One remarkable aspect, from which we have largely been shielded in Britain, is the level of propaganda for the euro and political union. Characters have been created (by a British firm!) to convey in cartoon form the coming delights of the euro. Captain Euro is the new super hero.

The captain will be accompanied in his adventures by his loyal female sidekick Europa, as well as Lupo the wolf. Both help him in the epic fight against the evil Dr D. Vider, whose intention is to divide Europe and create his own empire.

It will be launched on Internet next month and will be used in promotional material in schools across the Continent as well as featuring in a television cartoon series and on mugs, caps and pens. *Sun. Times* 1-3-98

Euro-sceptics have likened it to Goebbels-style propaganda. They claim that it has racist and fascist undercurrents by branding opponents to federalism and the single currency as enemies of white Western civilisation. Captain Euro is Aryan, Europa blonde, while Dr D. Vida and his cronies are drawn as swarthy, non-European types.

In fact it is estimated that the EU spends more than £45 million every year on such propaganda to promote itself.

Its blatant one-sidedness has caused an outcry amongst teachers here, and it would seem little is being used. British protest caused the EU to pulp 75,000 copies of a children's propaganda comic for 7–16 year olds, which spoke of Britain as being in the 'dark ages' because it didn't share the common currency. *ST* 18-10-98

Earlier in the year 30,000 schools in Britain received copies of a classroom guide to the EU. Aimed at 11–14 year olds, it again is blatantly one sided. It again has been condemned as propaganda rather than information. The *Reformer* magazine highlighted the fact that it claimed a zero number of Protestants for Britain.

To downplay Protestant percentages, the Lutherans and Anglicans are listed separately from the Protestant heading. Children are asked to look at the table and see which religion is the most common for each EU country and then across the EU. The Commission has agreed to amend future copies. *TR* 3-98; 9-98

What prospects for Britain?

For countries like Britain outside the euro group, things will not change much. Firms will be able, through their Banks, to convert £'s to euros to pay any bills presented in euros, or continue to pay in francs, marks, etc. Exchange rates will fluctuate as at present. Not until 2002 will travel in Europe be simplified, only needing to convert to one currency.

What effect will the euro have on Britain's trading position? Potentially here is another currency that she can deal in, alongside the dollar and the yen. She is recognised as being very skilled in such matters, and London is set to become one of the foremost traders in the euro. One does not have to be signed up to the currency to be able to trade in it. Potentially, with British interest rates being considerably higher than in Euroland, Britain should be able to offer attractive rates to investors.

40% of Britain's trade lies outside Europe, so for much of her business, the euro will have no effect.

The mark of the beast

The last time a common currency united Europe was under the Romans. The euro will be an effective means of uniting the members of the Beast system. It is the greatest step undertaken so far to promote political union. Now it is virtually a reality, France and Germany have pushed ahead with

the call for further integration. Tax harmonisation is one such field. Britain's low taxes and relatively easy labour laws, makes investment in Britain still very attractive. They are keen to eradicate these advantages, to prevent the continuing outflow of investment. They are pressing that such matters should be decided by a majority vote, effectively preventing Britain from stopping them. The British are very sceptical about joining the euro. The latest polls indicated that the talk by Germany of tax harmonisation had turned many against the idea. Only one in five people support Britain joining the euro; 28% favour withdrawal from the EU and only 55% support continued EU membership—down from a high of 77% in 1991. *TT* 6-12-98

The euro is a very divisive mechanism. It will rapidly distinguish between those who are in and those who are out. Bernard Connolly was head of the ERM and Monetary Policy Division of the European commission in Brussels for eight years and is the author of *The Rotten Heart of Europe*. He wrote:-

Will it not be possible for countries in difficulty to leave euroland, just as Britain left the ERM? No. If the single, Franco-German oriented monetary policy sooner or later causes recession, unemployment and swollen government deficits, firms and ordinary people in the afflicted countries will face bankruptcy if they leave.

Why? Because everybody's debts will be in euros. For the unfortunate family in Spain, Ireland or Finland, for example, recreating their own currencies to get out of euroland would force their burden of debt to shoot up if the currency fell against the euro.

Thus the euro puts the peoples of the economic colonies entirely at the mercy of the Franco-German political and bureaucratic elites who really run Europe. Once in euroland, financial collapse looms for the so-called "peripheral countries"—everybody except the components of the original empire of Charlemagne—unless the elites agree to force the European central bank to bail them out...

EMU is intended to destroy the nation and to create an empire. This is a double disaster. The empire will not be based on freely given assent and allegiance to a set of democratic, national political institutions. It will destroy those institutions.

In their place, its anti-democratic dynamic will foster a set of ugly nationalisms feeding on race, language and religion. Externally as well as internally, the European empire will be a dangerously negative force. *Sunday Times* 3-1-99.

Chapter 5

"CHRISTIANITY"—THE HEART OF EUROPE

From a study of the Book of Revelation we know the importance of the events of the French Revolution. It marked a turning point in European history. Historians also recognise this fact. History is often studied from a pre or post French Revolution standpoint.

The French Revolution broke the power of the Roman Church and the aristocracy, and yet at the same time it laid the foundations for modern Europe. Revelation describes a strong Beast system ridden by the scarlet Woman. She is depicted as having suffered so much when God's judgements were poured out 200 years ago in the French Revolution. Yet at the time of the end she is in a dominant position. She rides or controls the Beast. Is this what we are seeing?

A fascinating book by a Roman Catholic writer¹ sketches the changes made possible by the Revolution. With the breaking of the power of the monarchy, it led to the establishment of centralised planning under the power of the Assembly. Although an emperor was soon re-instated, Bonaparte enabled capitalists to thrive. A wider vision than just that of the local community opened up. Here was born the global strategy of many companies today. They span not only countries but also continents. Boundaries are barriers to be removed as they hinder global trade. Not that this was something new—the Roman Church too had spanned boundaries, had thought globally. Malachi Martin, a former Jesuit priest, with a deep insight into the workings of the Roman Church commented:

What captures the unwavering attention of the secular leaders of the world in this remarkable network of the Roman Catholic Church is precisely the fact that it places at the personal disposal of the Pope a supra-national, supra-continental, supra-trade-bloc structure that is so built and orientated that if tomorrow or next week, by a sudden miracle, a one-world government were established, the Roman Church would not have to undergo any essential change in order to retain its dominant position to further its global aims.²

*In Revelation 17 the Woman is representing the Tower element of this latter-day Kingdom of Men. Let us sketch the religious element in what we see emerging in Europe today. We need to consider the symbol in Revelation 16 of the False Prophet. This chapter paints a picture of the scene prior to the Battle of Armageddon. There is a **Beast**—Western*

¹ Who are we now? Nicholas Boyle, 1998.

² *The Keys of this blood* (Subtitled Pope John Paul II versus Russia and the West for the control of the New World Order) 1990.

*Europe, a **Dragon**—Eastern Europe and Russia, and a **False Prophet**—the papacy. They all speak with Frog-like voices. We can easily see the effect of the French Revolution on Europe and Russia. We must consider its effect on the False Prophet. We refer readers to last section of chapter 1 of Milestones 1997 where the link between Babylon and Rome is set out.*

The False Prophet and the frog like spirit

This new symbol on the prophetic page of Revelation is especially relevant to the modern-day papacy. A new symbol reflects a change in outlook. The **image of the beast** of Revelation 13 had lost his own little empire and all that was left was "the mouth". So in chapter 16 the image of the beast becomes **the false prophet**. We must not lose sight of Jesus' label of **false** that was applied to this prophet. A false prophet claims to speak for God, to speak His words, convey His message. Yet if he is false, then so is the message. Indeed he is found in opposition to the Lord Jesus, and is in fact destroyed at his hand (Rev. 17:14).

Part of the changes swept in by the French Revolution was the rights of man. People no longer tolerated being chattels under the power of a Lord, but sought their freedom of thought and actions. The Church in the past had been a very tyrannical power.

The Vatican once roundly and regularly condemned "human rights" as an invention of the French Revolution¹.

Has the church changed its message?

Its recent conversion to propagating them [human rights] through international diplomacy is nevertheless wholly consistent with the ancient Catholic view: that the unity of the human moral conscience can be expressed only through the utterances of a religious authority, which has at the same time a recognised standing in the secular, temporal, world.¹

The Roman Church's Social Teaching

A book was published at the end of 1998 entitled "**The New Politics—Catholic Social Teaching for the 21st century**", edited by Paul Vallely. In this book seven Roman Catholic writers show the transition in the Roman Church's teaching in the wake of the French Revolution. Quoting from its cover:

For more than a century the Catholic Church has closely scrutinised the economic certainties of capitalism and communism. As a result, it has slowly developed an entirely new position from which today to survey the capitalist leviathan. What this book sets out to do is to chronicle that development and highlight the insights it has formed which have a particular resonance for the world as it enters the twenty-first century.

¹ *ibid.*, page 9

It has been a fascinating transition in outlook. The very thinking that led to the Church's punishment, in the French Revolution, has been turned around and taken on board. The French Revolution gave rise to both Capitalism and Communism. Looking at Europe and Russia today we can see that both systems have been abandoned to some lesser or greater degree. The talk is of a **Third Way**—a way where religion is allowed to influence political thought. The power behind this Third Way is the Roman Catholic Church.

The above book lists 16 papal encyclicals since 1891 that have developed this theme. The most vigorous exponent is the present Pope who has published seven of them.

To see the practical outworking of this doctrine we look at its effect on the British Labour Party.

The British Labour Party and the Roman Church's Social Doctrine

An interesting article in *The Independent* under the headline "In the name of the Father and the Holy Vote", revealed that Mr Blair had written to Cardinal Hume expressing his views on the Labour party and the Catholic Church.

It is not generally known that Tony Blair wrote to Cardinal Hume shortly before the last general election. The Catholic bishops of England and Wales had just published a document entitled "The Common Good", which the newspapers reported with headlines such as "Catholic church says Vote Labour". Officially, the Bishops denied that was their intent. But Blair's letter to the cardinal, which was decidedly warm in tone, acknowledged the common agenda between his vision for New Labour and the social teaching of the Catholic church. The letter has never been published.

...But, more than that, as the exchange of letters between Blair and the cardinal indicated, the principles of Catholic Social Teaching are already deep within New Labour policy. From stakeholding to the minimum wage, devolution to welfare-to-work, from union recognition in the workplace to action on Third World debt, Tony Blair's agenda runs closely parallel to the social doctrine of the church of which his wife and children are members and which insiders say he may one day join himself.

Ask most members of the public what they know about the teaching of the Catholic church and they will probably reply with something about sex—contraception, abortion or enforced celibacy. But over the past century, under five different popes, Rome has also developed a raft of doctrine known as Catholic Social Teaching which has been so little publicised it has been dubbed "the church's best-kept secret". Tony Blair's much-vaunted search for a Third way between capitalism and communism is bringing him, and the secular political theorists at the heart of the New Labour project, to venture tentatively onto territory that

has already been well-explored by the church over the past 100 years.

...Yet there is nothing tentative about the work that Catholic Social Teaching has already done here. Of course, the church has always had views on social issues, but such thinking shifted gear when the Industrial Revolution brought a new dimension to the ordering of the world of work and the political economy in which it is sited.

When battle was joined between labour and capital at the turn of the century, the Pope, Leo XIII, afraid that he might lose his flock to the attractions of the new religion which was communism, issued in 1891 a critique of the exploitative excesses of industrial capitalism. Called *Rerum Novarum* (Of New Things) it was to prove the first of 16 major social encyclicals in which the church went beyond the realm of personal morality and scrutinised the ethical behaviour of institutions and social structures.

None of this constitutes, in the words of the present pope, "a third way between liberal capitalism and Marxist collectivism. . .The Church does not propose economic and political systems or programs," he wrote in the encyclical, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*. Rather it is a "set of principles for reflection, criteria for judgement and directives for action". If it is not a Third Way; it does provide the moral compass...to plot one.

...In any case, for Blair it goes far deeper: His policies on devolution, decentralisation and the minimum wage are all directly rooted in Catholic Social Teaching. So is the idea of a "stakeholder economy". So is the New Deal policy of "welfare to work", which brings together two key Catholic ideas—human dignity and subsidiarity—acknowledging the inalienable right of every individual to "everything necessary for leading a truly human life: food, clothing and shelter..." but also warning against the danger of robbing people of the incentive to work.

...What is clear; however, is the extent to which the Prime Minister's policy-making is guided by the tradition of thinking which Catholic Social Teaching embodies—a convergence that both political analysts and pressure groups might usefully explore. The Third Way, it turns out, may not be a new economic policy but the moral tool-kit to assist politicians to fix what is wrong in the old one. *The Independent* 17-11-98

"Christianity" at the heart of Europe

Andrew Hilton in his book *Principality and Power of Europe* comments:

"All these successors of the Roman Caesars understood the vast importance of the Papacy in European affairs. Even at the close of the 20th century, we witness Europe's leaders and the Roman Catholic Church still working together towards the common goal of unity. Many of Europe's political leaders, including Commissioners and MEPs, see a crucial role for the Roman Catholic Church in their efforts, providing a powerfully cohesive common religion to hold Europe together

politically. The vision of a Holy Roman Empire under a Roman Catholic aegis is a favourite theme of the present Pope, John Paul II. Indeed, he believes it is his literal calling from God to preside over these crucial immediate years in order to witness it...In 1982, in a speech in Spain, he proclaimed:

"I, Bishop of Rome and Shepherd of the Universal Church, from Santiago, utter to you, Europe of the ages, a cry full of love. Find yourself again. Be yourself. Discover your origins, revive your roots".

The Pope has repeatedly stressed that Europe must seek religious unity if it is to advance beyond political division, and he has prayed for "all the Christians of East and West, that they become united in Christ and expand the Kingdom of Christ throughout the world."

Adrian Hilton. *The Principality and Power of Europe*

The False Prophet speaks

Does the Roman Church claim to be Christ's prophet to a modern world? Whilst visiting Austria in June 1998 to celebrate the work of Cyril and Methodius—who brought "Christianity" to the Poland/Austria region—the Pope said that the:

"Challenge for believers today is to help Europe return to its Christian origins"

"The foundations of Austria were built by martyrs and confessors during the decline of the Roman Empire. Then came the Irish monks and Scottish missionaries from the Christian West. Sts Cyril and Methodius, apostles to the Slavs, brought their evangelizing work to the area around Vienna. Therefore, during my visit to your country, at the site where the Danube unites the West with the East—two worlds that were formerly divided—it was appropriate to speak about the *Europe of the future*. After the "velvet revolution" and the fall of the Iron Curtain, Europe was restored to us".

"This gift is a challenge and an obligation. *Europe needs a spiritual face*. With all the political programmes and economic plans that dominate current discussions, we must not forget that Europe owes much to Christianity. But Christianity also has many reasons to thank Europe. In fact, Christianity was brought from Europe to many other parts of the world. Even today, Europe cannot and must not forget its spiritual responsibility. A prerequisite for this is a return to its Christian origins. Here is the great challenge that Christians of the future Europe must face".

LOR 8-7-98

Earlier on his visit to Austria he had spoken of the building of the European house—how it must be built upon christianity. Under the long headline **"Europe needs hearts that beat not only for money, but for the love of God and man"**, he said:

"True peace comes from the heart. 'You are in the centre of the continent like a strong heart', states your federal anthem. In past years, this *land in the heart of Europe* has joined the community of those who have set out on the way which has the unification of the continent as its goal. To build the new Europe many hands and especially many hearts are needed that beat not only for profit and money, but for the love of God and man. My hope is that the heart of Europe will remain strong and healthy. Precisely for this reason, I pray that the thoughts and actions of all Austrian citizens will be inspired by a firm will to respect without reservation the dignity of each person and to welcome life in all its forms and phases. In fact, among the treasures of the Christian heritage it was especially *the concept of man* which had a decisive effect on European culture.

"An accurate ruler is necessary for properly drawing the blueprints of a house. Those who do not know the measurements fall short of the goal. The architects of the European house have at their disposal the image of man which Christianity has impressed upon the continent's ancient culture, laying the foundations for the heights of creativity and achievement which are so much admired. Thus *the concept of man, created in the image and likeness of God*, is not a museum piece, but represents the keystone of contemporary Europe, in which the many building stones of various cultures, peoples and religions can be held together for the construction of the new building. Without this standard, *the European house under construction* is in danger of collapse and cannot last.

"With these sentiments, I extend my gaze beyond this country's borders to *the whole of Europe*, to all the nations on our continent with their history from the Atlantic to the Urals, from the North Sea to the Mediterranean. Austria, in particular, has shared in Europe's fortunes, exercising a decisive influence. It shows in an exemplary way how many ethnic groups in a limited space can live together in fruitful tension, working creatively to build *unity in diversity*. In the national territory today, small in comparison to other countries, the characteristics of Celts and Romans, Germans, Hungarians and Slav have put down roots, and these characteristics are still alive in the population. Thus Austria is becoming the *mirror; and model of a united Europe* which does not want to marginalize anyone but to make room for all." LOR 24-6-98

So we see the determination of the present Pope to be at the heart of the new Europe; to ride the Beast. His is the religion of the new Babel being built. The Tower is his!

We now turn to Britain and see her continued battles with Europe.

Chapter 6

BRITAIN

Tony Blair thought that he could handle Europe. He would not get bogged down as his predecessors had! The reality has proved to be very different. France and Germany especially do not think like the British, and Blair soon found himself put to the worse by his opposite numbers. Britain at the heart of Europe was his dream. Britain very much marginalised has been the outcome.

Like the rest of the world, Britain has suffered economically from the world-wide fall in trade, yet, in spite of—or because of—her position outside the Euroland block, investors have continued to place their money here. As we saw towards the end of chapter 4, a recent poll showed that many are seriously talking about leaving the EU. The ever-tightening noose of regulations is sapping enthusiasm for Europe. The prospect of Europe dictating tax levels and VAT levels is not a pleasant prospect!

Entangled by Europe

Britain is being attacked from all sides! With the prospect of enlarging the EU to take in more members, the terrible costs involved are beginning to sink in. As a result the EU is being much less generous with her regional aid policy. These grants helped redress the vast sums that Britain pays into Brussels. They covered such things as new roads and railways, theatres, retraining schemes. In many places one can see signs displaying the European circle of 12 stars, denoting that this is a Europe assisted scheme. Britain is now seen to be too prosperous to receive such extensive grants—instead they are to be redirected to poorer regions.

Then has come the possibility that the £2 billion a year rebate which Mrs Thatcher won in 1984 is up for discussion. Germany has grown tired of paying in so much more than she receives out of the EU, and is looking at ways of making other members pay more.

Another battle area is tax “harmonisation”. This word sends shudders down the British spine! The Conservative government worked for many years to drive down taxes here and increase jobs through low taxation.

Again Germany is keen to see taxes rise to the stiffly high German rate—it would reduce the investment which Germany firms are making in Britain. Low taxation is bound to be attractive to investors. France and Germany are determined to erode Britain’s advantages.

Another taxation area that is being looked at is on the earnings of overseas firms within an EU country. Of course this again is aimed at Britain, where many overseas firms set up their headquarters. There is talk of imposing extra tax on their earnings. Its effect would be to drive firms to non-EU.

havens like Switzerland. So it would not benefit the EU but would penalise Britain! Another area is taxing the earnings from international bonds—a widely used investment by EU members to avoid taxes, as well as the chief means whereby governments, large corporations and banks raise capital. London is the great bond centre. There is talk of a 20% or even 40% tax. Again, such taxation would have the same effect.

Yet another area being looked at is the judicial system. Britain has a system, built up from Magna Carta, of rights for an accused individual—innocent until proved guilty—*habeas corpus*. The continental system is the opposite, and in the main does not involve a jury who decides the outcome of a trial. *Corpus juris* as it is called is based upon the Napoleonic code. Although Britain would normally have a right of veto over such a dramatic change to her judicial system, there are signs that it is being introduced through the back door under a procedure that can not be vetoed. The proposal is to introduce it as a Europe-wide means of fighting fraud against the EU budget and perhaps VAT fraud by establishing a European Public Prosecutor with the power to instruct national judges to issue a “European warrant for arrest”. It would enable anyone to be extradited to the continent who is accused of fraud, without any appeal to a hearing in this country.

The EU Parliament’s president said in a written message that “*corpus juris* is the embryo of the European Criminal Code”. DT 7-12-98. This has implications, which we shall consider later in looking at religious freedoms.

Blair follows Thatcher and Major

The last three British Prime Ministers all felt that they were able to resist the powers of Europe. Britain at the heart of Europe was a favourite refrain. Mrs Thatcher was eventually defeated because of Europe, and John Major had a humiliating defeat at the hands of the electorate, mainly over Europe.

Mr Blair immediately signed up to the European Social Chapter. He declared to the French Assembly that “*Je suis un homme d’Europe*” [I am a man of Europe]. Now some 18 months on, Britain is being effectively marginalised—France and German rule the roost. A steady stream of headlines illustrate the drive to a federal Europe, not what even Tony Blair wants!

Schröder plans a federal Europe DT 11-1198

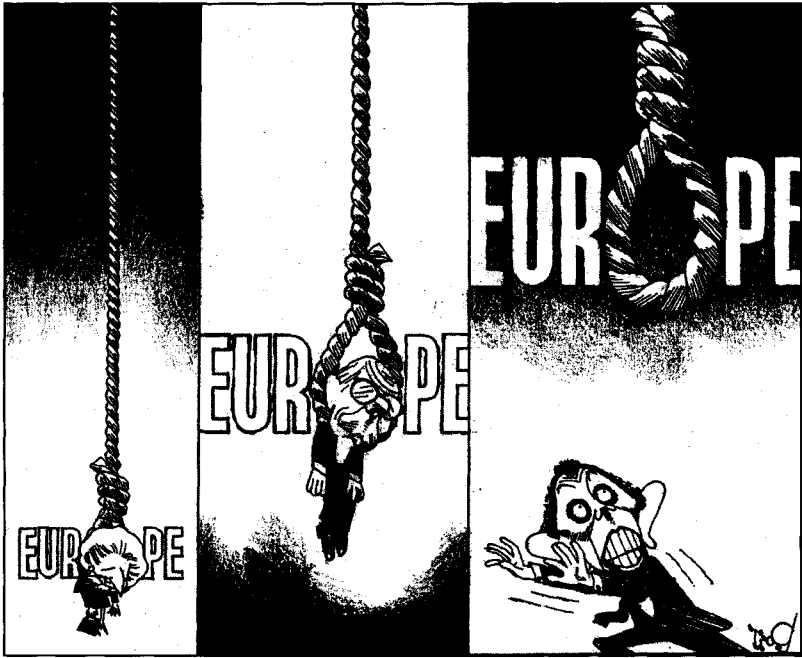
Schröder to strive for European integration DT 11-11-98

At last the real truth on union DT 1-2-98

The choice—nation-state or superstate TE 26-1-98

Now the penny starts to drop on Europe ST 29-11-98

The following cartoon sums up the matter!



Thatcher, Major, Blair, with noose *ST* 29-11-98

Blair's interest in Rome

Tony Blair is heavily influenced by the Church—his wife and children are Roman Catholics, and he frequently attends mass with them. There has been much speculation in the press as to whether he will convert.

One writer said:

I can think of times, not long past, when the Prime Minister's relations with the Roman Catholic Church were the subject of legitimate public concern. A Prime Minister caught flirting with "The Scarlet Woman of Rome"—a phrase we have dropped—would have been deemed scandalous, at least by some.

But we have moved on. The Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches are still apart, and will so remain as long as women priests are an issue; but they have drawn closer together, and there has developed a mutual respect which replaces a lot of past mistrust. W. F. Deedes, *DT* 9-3-98

This was in response to a visit that Tony Blair made to the Westminster Cathedral without his family.

While on holiday in Italy in the summer, he attended mass with his family and was said to have taken communion. He and his wife had an hour long meeting with the Archbishop of Siena. In an interview, the Archbishop said

that Mr Blair had expressed how close he felt to the Catholic Church and the world of Catholicism. *CH* 21-8-98. He attends mass with his family most weekends, and was said by worshippers there to have taken communion for ten years, only stopping about two years ago when the matter became public. He is also a regular reader at the church and “is treated as a Catholic”. *Daily Mail* 5-3-98. He regards himself as an Anglo-Catholic, and joined the Christian Socialist movement in 1991.

A double game??

We have commented in earlier *Milestones* that Britain does not seem to feature largely in the plans that the present Pope has. It is perceived that Britain is more of a nuisance when endeavouring to be “at the heart of Europe”—preventing the rapid drive to unity.

A recent documentary on Hitler, using newly revealed sources, showed how that early on in the War, Hitler had given up plans to invade Britain. The problems were too great. Operation Sealion was allowed to continue as a bluff. Instead he initiated aerial bombing of Britain, convinced that soon the British would throw out Churchill, and elect a leader who would negotiate peace.

It was revealed that early on Hitler had made the choice between tying down troops trying to conquer Britain, or turning eastwards against the Soviets. By mid 1940 this eastward drive was concentrated on. If Russia were crushed then Britain would have lost her ally. If Russia was destroyed then Britain would submit, was Hitler’s reasoning.

This documentary illustrated that things don’t really change. One can imagine their reasoning today:

The battle-effort to win over Britain to political union will be high. It will tie down a lot of effort. Don’t give up the plan, but concentrate the efforts on the eastern battlefronts. Better for Britain to withdraw or be on the periphery, in order that the eastward plans are not hindered. But continue the many battles to weaken Britain—throw out her ancient historical ways and associations, divide off Scotland and Wales, reduce competitiveness, reduce the Protestant power, and promote the Roman Church. Britain will eventually submit on Europe’s terms!

Well, Hitler was wrong. Britain did not submit. Britain needs another Churchill. We are convinced that soon Britain will be forced to look elsewhere for her trade, and this will in some measure be as a result of anti-European writings in the British press!

“Britain, Europe, and flaws in the British character”

At the same time as the documentary, came a report that seemed to dovetail these matters. Under the above blunt headline, the editor of the *Intelligence Digest* commented:

Britain's Prime Minister Tony Blair has been suffering some unaccustomed political difficulties in recent weeks as a result of Britain's uncomfortable relationship with the European Union. . . .

The uncomfortable truth is that the British people, perhaps like most others, are not much without strong leaders. It should be remembered, for instance, that in the lead-up to World War II they overwhelmingly supported Neville Chamberlain's appeasement policies, with 11m people signing the peace pledge and Chamberlain welcomed back from Munich as a hero.

Churchill eventually came to power not because the people called him to power but because events propelled him there, and, whilst it is true that the British did in time respond well to his leadership, it was the *leadership* that was the essential factor.

The same can be said about the Thatcherite revolution in Britain in the 1980s. . . .

So it is with the EU question today. Year after year, British governments surrender to Brussels more and more of the very rights of self-government that the British so pride themselves on having defended through thick and thin, and against all comers, for nearly 1,000 years—and the British people acquiesce in this.

...But, if the fact remains (as we would maintain, and as both Churchill and de Gaulle recognised from the outset) that the European Union is essentially a continental construction in which Britain is a misfit, what does the future hold for Britain and Europe? [My emphasis] *Intelligence Digest* 18-12-98.

Is there an alternative to Europe?

Is there an alternative for Britain? Yes—America and the Commonwealth. At the moment the EU only attracts less than half Britain's trade, in fact Britain's EU trade has constantly been in deficit. She is still a global player. Britain was the largest single foreign investor in the US, and American companies were the biggest investors in Britain. *EC* 25-4-98 Several articles appeared during the year appealing for Britain to turn away from Europe. Conrad Black, the owner of the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Jerusalem Post*, in a speech to the Canada Club in London spoke of Britain slackening her political ties with the EU, retaining the trading ties, and joining the North American Free Trade Area (Nafta). As he remarked it would have every commercial advantage over the EU, being based on the Anglo-American free market model of restrained taxation and social spending. He pointed out that the US and Canada between them had created two million more jobs a year than the EU combined in the past decade and a half. *DT* 15-10-98.

Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the US House of Representatives, also called on Britain to join Nafta. *DT* 21-4-98 The Canadian leader of the opposition,

Preston Manning also wrote in the *Daily Telegraph* urging Britain to consider this move. The Americans are alarmed at the anti-American feeling that is growing in Europe, at odds with the special relationship that Britain and America shares, as shown by their close co-operation in the Gulf—repeated again in December, with no help from “Europe”.

Interestingly the EU looked at a linkage with America to create a free trade area. Under a plan drawn up by Sir Leon Brittan, all industrial tariffs would be abolished between the two areas by 2010. However at the last moment the EU bowed to French pressure and shelved the plan. *DT* 28-4-98

Britain's world trading position

At the close of the year Britain seems set for a rocky year ahead, with talk of falling asset values and rising unemployment. It will be interesting to see whether Euroland can withstand the financial slowdown any better. The strength of the £ has attracted imports while making exports more difficult.

Yet amid the gloom, nations are still seeing Britain as a good place to invest. With our lower rates of taxation, and far less regulated employment conditions, Britain is well placed should the economy pick up. Sterling is widely regarded as a “hard” currency, i.e. dependable, hence the high rates of exchange for the pound, because so many want to invest in sterling. Bill Jamieson, the *Daily Telegraph* economics editor, published a book at the end of the year on the British economy. He illustrates with many charts Britain's growth over the past 25 years. He says:

Not only is the UK an outstanding global investor; she also succeeded in attracting more inward direct investment than any other country in continental Europe, capturing some 10% of global corporate capital flows, or more than twice her share of global gross domestic product.

Meanwhile, Britain's relative economic performance improved, with gains in value-added product quality and service, and in productivity. By the end of the period not only was the UK first choice for all American and Japanese investment in the EU, but her unemployment rate fell substantially—this throughout a period of restructuring and adjustment—to become the lowest of the major economies in the EU.

Britain now is the 5th largest world economy, with a gross domestic product of \$1.29 trillion (1997 figures—they take some time to come out!) having overtaken Italy at \$1.13 trillion, and now snapping at the heels of France—\$1.38 trillion. *EC Yearbook* 12-98

Chapter 7

OLD LEADERS—A TIME OF CHANGE

We certainly seem to be in for a time of change—and not just old people. Today as I write two British Ministers have been forced to resign, on a day declared the blackest for Tony Blair since he took office. Often these matters are a case of time and chance, but sometimes it is a step that the angels have had to take in order to change the course of history. Now it will only be with the gift of hindsight that we will see this. Peter Mandelson—one of those who resigned—was the bright young thing of the British Labour Party. He was very close to Tony Blair, who relied greatly on his advice. Now Mandelson was very keen on joining the euro, and was taking Blair down that path. Is this an indication that the tide is turning? We await further developments.

We sketch a few of the people who have changed or are getting to what would appear the end of their active, political lives.

Chancellor Kohl

It was hard to contemplate that there would be a time when he was not Chancellor. He has dominated German politics since 1982. Staunchly Roman Catholic, he pursued the dream of a “christian” united Europe. Yet he was clearly defeated in the polls in September. He had not been able to fulfil the dreams that he had promised to the East Germans on reunification. Against the advice of the Bankers he had insisted on a 1:1 exchange for the old East German currency to the Mark. This made unification a very expensive business indeed, upsetting the West Germans. The East Germans expected that they would soon be sharing the same lifestyle as their countrymen in the west. This was not achieved. Unemployment runs at twice the rate of the west, and incomes are much lower. Much of the industry was hopelessly out of date. So it bred dissatisfaction and unrest, and the voters grew tired of Kohl.

His challenger, Schröder, is a Protestant, and therefore would be less likely to have the same vision for Europe. But as we have seen, the real driving power is Lafontaine, who was Jesuit educated, and was strongly in favour of the euro—Schröder is a recent convert—and with his position as finance minister, he seems certain to push ahead with eastward enlargement.

Yasser Arafat

He is a frail man, and there is speculation that he is suffering from Parkinson's disease. He recently shocked his audience by remarking he didn't know whether he would still be here in a year's time. He suffered neurological damage as a result of a plane crash in the late Eighties. Doctors want to remove a blood clot from his brain, but he refuses to have the operation. He is at times forgetful, and is frequently very shaky and has

trembling lips. There are several contenders for his position, but he has said that his brother Abu Mazen would take over. This is his 'nom de guerre'; he was born Mahmoud Abbas, and is nominally Arafat's deputy. He was a key player in the PLO negotiating team at the Oslo talks. *BIPAC* 18-2-98

Prime Minister Netanyahu

He is an unexpected entry into this list. Towards the end of December the Israeli opposition passed a motion of no confidence, bringing about the need for fresh elections. They were hoping for elections in early March, well prior to Arafat's feared declaration of an independent state on May 4th, but the date of May 17th is being discussed.

The outcome of the election will influence the progress of the Peace Talks. It will be the opportunity for the people of Israel to make a judgement on the progress to date. Ultimately all their plans will fail, as Gog storms into the land in the not so distant future.

President Yeltsin

In recent months, Yeltsin has rarely been at his office desk. Several times his failing mental and physical powers were seen in public. When Mr Clinton was visiting he was asked a simple question and the problem he had answering was there for all to see. At one stage Mr Clinton had to grip his hand and guide him. In October he had to cut short a trip to Kazakhstan. The 67-year-old leader may be suffering from Parkinson's disease, or perhaps emphysema. He insists he will remain in office until the elections in 2000. His weakness has enabled Mr Primakov to exert far more power than would be the normal case. Probably there are angelic hands behind this situation, as we shall see when looking at Russia.

Pope John Paul II

This is another person showing signs of Parkinson's disease, perhaps triggered by the assassination attempt in 1981. He still wishes to visit Israel for the Millennium, but realises that with the present political situation, this would not be practical. There are several successors being discussed. It is again hard to contemplate anybody succeeding in transforming the image of the Roman Church as well as he has, and increasing its influence in the politics of the world. Yet doubtless there are younger men, trained and skilled to complete the work.

King Hussein of Jordan

It is sad to see so ill this man who has done so much for the Jews in recent years. He was for many months undergoing cancer treatment in the States and was thought to have but a few months to live. However a report at the end of the year said that the treatment was now finished and that it had been successful, and he was returning home. *DT* 30-12-98.

His efforts at the Wye Summit were very valuable—both the Israelis and the Palestinians respect him. He has loosened his hold on power in favour

of his younger brother, who is 12 years his junior. Crown Prince Hassan is a highly educated man, but lacks his brother's Sandhurst training which bolsters King Hussein's standing with the army. Crown Prince Hassan was educated in Britain at Harrow and Oxford, and appears to have smoothly stepped in and is continuing his brother's work. He is particularly interested in building a relationship with Turkey and Israel that would alter the diplomatic balance of the region. There is a growing tide of discontent beneath the surface in Jordan, channelled increasingly into Islamic groups who oppose the peace treaty with Israel. It remains to be seen how well he can control his people. *DT* 26-10-98

President Clinton

Until he finally goes, one cannot write him off! In spite of the deep hurt he has done to his family, they seem determined to help him fight back. Faced with impeachment—only the 2nd President to face this during office—he is determined to fight on. He did not allow the breaking of the impeachment proceedings to hold back his plans for Desert Fox, but it seems hard to see him having much authority while the trial is under way. Maybe we shall again see this as the hand of the angels. Israel was dismayed at his closeness to the Palestinians when he visited in December. At the same time Netanyahu's hand is held awaiting election results.

Other Middle East leaders

President Assad of Syria has been suffering from a combination of diabetes and heart problems for many years. Aged 70 he is appearing increasingly frail. He has been giving greater responsibilities to his son Basher, who is not very popular.

The Egyptian leader President Mubarak has also turned 70. King Fahd of Saudi Arabia has been admitted to hospital for the second time in a year. The 77-year-old has been allowing his half brother to handle most of the affairs of state.

As the writer of an article in *The Jerusalem Report* remarked on surveying the health of the Middle East leaders:

Everything that could once be taken for granted will, within a short space of time, become clouded. Most of the somebodies of today will become the political nobodies of tomorrow. And as the players change, so might the game itself. Quoted in the *Australia/Israel Review* 27-8-98.

Chapter 8

ISRAEL AT 50

During 1998 Israel celebrated 50 years in the land. Contests, talks and exhibitions had been arranged and world leaders invited to share the celebrations. Yet behind the rejoicing for 50 years in the land, there were many who wondered in which direction Israel was heading. The early hopes of a land of peace and plenty had not been realised. Plenty—yes for most people, although help for refugees is still warmly welcomed by Israel. It is the living with uncertainty that worries most Jews. More have been killed with terrorist atrocities since the 1993 Oslo Accord, than during the previous fifteen years.

In mid December, a vote of no confidence was taken in the Knesset and Mr Netanyahu's government failed to get a majority. This means new elections have to be called, and as the year ends they are talking of the date May 17th. With the threat of a Palestinian State being declared on May 4th 1999, all parties wanted earlier elections so that the new government could be settled in before this important deadline, but this does not seem possible.

This will be the country's opportunity to indicate which way they want the government to go—to continue the hand over of land to the Palestinians or to call a halt. The Peace Talks are largely on hold, until there is a newly elected government.

50 years of history

In New Testament times it is estimated that Jews were 10% of the population of the Roman Empire. If today they held the same percentage population of the non-Asian world population, then they would number 200 million. Instead they number some 13 million only.

Many and varied are the achievements of Israel since 1948. Then there was a population of around 650,000; now it over 9 times greater at 6 million. For a small country this is a tremendous rate of growth that has come as a result of its immigration policy. Israel is open house to any Jew who wants to return to their homeland. Many Jewish communities have disappeared—they have returned to Israel. Few Jews now remain in Yemen, Ethiopia, Poland, Hungary and Romania. Even in the former Soviet Empire, numbers are falling, and with the recent problems in Russia, many of those who remain are contemplating aliyah.

Israel was born in war when it was given 1/6th of 1% of the 7.5 million square miles of Arab land. Israel has faced 5 major wars (1948, 1956, 1967, 1973, and the 1969-70 war of Attrition).

If peace be understood, as it should be, as more than the mere absence of clashing armies, Israel has never known a moment of it. BIPAC 13-5-98

Israel's economy has prospered beyond recognition. Israel in 1998 agreed with the US that she no longer needed civilian aid. She was a mature economy, with a standard of living ranking her among the top nations. Indeed her total GDP stands at \$100 billion, which is higher than all of her neighbours put together—Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt. She has seen her territory expand and shrink over that time. Jerusalem has become her capital.

She has made peace agreements with Egypt, Jordan and the Palestinians. Yet peace eludes her. 279 Israelis have been killed in terrorist attacks in the five years since the Oslo Accord was signed in 1993, compared with “only” 254 in the fifteen years prior to the Accord. *BIPAC* 16-9-98. Anti-Jewish rhetoric continues to flow out of the Palestinian press¹ and TV. Many in Israel question whether there ever can be peace with the Palestinians. They claim that little effort has been made by the Palestinians to keep their side of the agreements. Among the points they make are:

- Failure to amend Palestinian Covenant [This seems to have now been done - see later.]
- Failure to respond to any of Israel's 38 requests to transfer terrorists.
- Failure to limit the police force to 25,000 as agreed. It now stands at 40,000—one policeman for every 60 Palestinians!
- Failure to curb inflammatory rhetoric.
- Failure to root out the terrorist infrastructure. *BIPAC* 29-4-98

Many of the Jews are non-religious Jews. Many pay a nominal allegiance to the God of Israel, but by their lives ignore their responsibilities. There is a core of religious Jews, who keep alive the hope that the Messiah will return. There are some who oppose Israel having a government, stating that this should be left to the messiah, when he comes.

¹ A religious programme broadcast by the official PNA television on 3rd November included the following:

The [Jewish] Torah is just a collection of writings in which these people wrote lies about God, His prophets, and His teachings...The Jews are the seed of Satan and the devils...The Book of Genesis lies about God and about the day of Creation...To their prophets they attribute the greatest of crimes: murder, prostitution, and drunkenness. The Jews do not believe in God or in the End of Days... They invented the Torah as their history book, full of promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that they would be given the land of Palestine...They have distorted the faith of God into heresy, rebellion, and prostitution...

As the correspondent commented this is hardly the language of good and peaceful neighbours! Quoted in *ID* 11-12-98

So we have a divided society. There are rich and poor in Israel. There are many unemployed and others, through their enterprise, who are flourishing. There are deep divisions among the religious Jews.

Israel remains the only democracy in a sea of nations whose leaders bear rule with little opposition. There is little prospect that if, as expected, the Palestinians set up a state it will be any more democratic than its Arab neighbours.

It is out of this mixture that the nucleus of the Kingdom will arise—the third who escape the coming destruction at the hands of Gog and his companions in the battle to deal with the Jerusalem problem. The picture that Ezekiel portrays is of a time of peace and prosperity prior to this invasion. The prosperity we can see. At the moment it is hard to see the peace.

We look with interest to the outcome of the 1999 elections. There are many contenders, threatening to set up their own parties to fight what all perceive as a vital election. The main opponent to Mr Netanyahu is the opposition leader, Mr Barak. One of the foreseen problems is that with so many candidates dividing the vote, it is more likely that Mr Netanyahu will get back in. Angelic hands will ensure that the right person is in the right position at the right time for God's plan and purpose to continue unfolding in the midst of His as yet unfaithful people. We await the day of Israel's redemption.

Mr Netanyahu summed up Israel's past 50 years with these secular words.

In the 50 years of the State of Israel we have gathered and integrated Jews from 100 countries, revived the Hebrew language, created a unique culture, established a place in the forefront of art and literature, made immense strides in science and technology, and built a solid economy.
BIPAC 26-11-98

The slow progress with the Peace Talks

It was 5 years ago, in September 1993, that Israel and the Palestinians signed an Accord on the White House lawn. Under the watchful eye of Mr Clinton, Mr Rabin and Mr Arafat placed their signatures on the 22-page document, and then shook hands. Much has happened since that document was signed, but much still remains unsolved. The Accord involved Israeli troop withdrawals from certain areas, and a gradual 5-year programme, ending on May 4th 1999, of handing control of areas to the Palestinians for self-rule. So far the Palestinians have complete control over 3% of the West Bank area and civilian control of a further 26%. They have full control over 60% of Gaza. Under the latest agreement hammered out at Wye, Israel would hand over a further 13% of the West Bank. However this last stage is unlikely to be completed now until the new elections. Mr Netanyahu did promise that if the Palestinians kept their part of the agreement, he would

go ahead with the staged handover, but there is little likelihood of Palestinian compliance.

There had been little progress in the peace talks in the early part of the year. In January Mr Netanyahu was invited to Washington, but he was snubbed by Mr Clinton, and given a frosty hour-long talk. The Americans accused the Israelis of dragging their feet over coming up with firm proposals for the next handover of territory. Normally Mr Netanyahu receives a full welcome in Washington, but this time he wasn't even invited to stay at Blair House, where visiting dignitaries normally stay. He had come with a plan indicating a withdrawal from a further 9% of the West Bank, but it was accompanied by a long list of matters with which the Israelis wanted the Palestinians to comply—matters which had been agreed the year before when Israel agreed to withdraw from Hebron. Israel claimed to have fulfilled all her obligations, but the Palestinians hadn't started to fulfil their commitments. Mr Clinton then had talks with Mr Arafat, who described the 9% offer as "peanuts"! He wanted Israel to withdraw from 90% of the area!

The following month Mr Netanyahu addressed the American Jewish Congress. He spoke of how the Palestinians were launching activities to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the State of Israel, although they were using the term *Naqba* —"the great disaster". He pointed out that they had brought these problems on their own head. They had rejected the State of Israel and fought against it in 1948. They had not absorbed back their refugees. They had backed terrorism. They had backed regimes like Iraq and Iran who wanted to destroy Israel. They had refused to rescind the Palestinian Covenant that calls for the destruction of Israel. They had claimed that they were frustrated living under Israeli occupation. Mr Netanyahu pointed out that 98% of the Palestinians population now lives under Palestinian administration. There were more Palestinians working in Israel now than at anytime since the beginning of the intifada. The Palestinian income from work and business in Israel was more than double what it was in 1995. They could have peace, if they would live up to their commitments to combat terrorism, instead of aiding it. The "great disaster" was largely of their making. *BIPAC* 18-2-98

In early April Mr Netanyahu stopped over in London on his way back from Oslo, and discussed ways of breaking the current deadlock. The following week, Britain's foreign secretary, Robin Cook made a 6-nation tour of the Middle East. This was part of Britain's role as EU president. Tony Blair was keen that Britain should play an active role in Middle East affairs during his presidency. The trip, however, was noted for its bungling and he greatly upset the Israelis by his evident bias towards the Palestinians. One matter that was agreed with the Palestinians was for a British security expert to be appointed as a counter-terrorism liaison officer, between the Palestinians and the EU. Alistair Crooke will help the Palestinians to control radical groups responsible for suicide bombings and other attacks on the Israelis. *DT* 28-3-98.

In April Tony Blair followed up this disastrous trip with his own visit, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Israel. The visit went well and Mr Blair obtained agreement from Mr Netanyahu and Mr Arafat to meet face-to-face in London in May. He also launched a British-Israel youth-exchange programme. Youngsters from both countries will be assisted to help in volunteer programmes. The grants will be known as UJIA-Blair Fellowships. The UJIA is the United Jewish Israel Appeal, which is Britain's major fund raising organisation for Israel. *BIPAC* 20-4-98

During these London talks in May, the handover of more land, as well as the building of a Palestinian airport at Gaza and a new road to connect Gaza to Jericho and the West Bank, were discussed. The American Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, was the chief negotiator between the two sides. She shuttled from one side to the other. In spite of every effort, the face-to-face meetings did not take place. Moreover the Americans insisted that Mr Netanyahu accept the American plan of a 13% handover.

During the talks Mrs Albright invited both parties to meet in Washington the following week. Mr Arafat readily agreed, Mr Netanyahu declined. He had been shocked at American's efforts to steamroller him into agreeing to a higher percentage of land to hand over. Mrs Clinton's remarks that she supported the creation of a Palestinian State did not go down well either.

Later in June, the Americans modified their plan to involve a three-stage hand-over of land, the second and third stages being dependent on the Palestinians honouring their obligations. The Israeli defence minister met with Jordan's King Hussein to seek his assistance in persuading Mr Arafat to be more flexible. By July Mr Netanyahu had agreed to this plan, but stressed that everything hinged around Mr Arafat's commitment to combat terrorism. He should:

- Confiscate unauthorised arms
- Prevent the transfer of funds to Hamas
- Ban anti-Israeli incitement in the media and at meetings.

He did however agree that the change to the Palestinian Covenant would be accepted if authorised by some 90 key members, rather than the whole 500 members of the council. This time it was Mr Arafat who seemed reluctant to proceed with talks. He intended to address the UN general assembly in late September and was expected to press international recognition for a Palestinian State. He also hoped that, by delaying, America would increase her pressure on Israel. The Americans agreed that it was Mr Arafat who was now holding things up and Dennis Ross, the American Middle East peace negotiator, returned to the region in early September to try to move him along. Mr Clinton invited both sides to attend a meeting in Washington in October.

It was Madeleine Albright, visiting the region in early October, who brought Mr Arafat and Mr Netanyahu together for face-to-face talks on the Egyptian-Gaza border crossing. Both sides agreed to attend the open-ended summit meeting in Washington on October 15th.

Mr Netanyahu announced that he had appointed Ariel Sharon as his foreign minister, and he would be attending the talks. Sharon is regarded as a hard-liner, and this appointment was seen as reassurance to those who feared Netanyahu would hand over too much.

The Wye River Memorandum

The summit duly commenced on the 15th, at the Wye River Conference Centre in Maryland. President Clinton spent many hours encouraging the two parties to talk and compromise. Even King Hussein twice left his sick bed in the Mayo clinic in Maryland where he was undergoing cancer treatment to throw his efforts into reaching a settlement. After 9 long gruelling days of talks an Agreement was thrashed out and this was signed at the White House on October 23rd. King Hussein attended and gave a speech.

The Memorandum does not replace any of the earlier agreements; rather it sets out a framework to enable the Peace Talks to proceed, in preparation for the much more difficult step of discussing the future of Jerusalem. It firmly focuses the Palestinian obligations to uphold the former agreements reached with Israel. The Memorandum commits both sides to the following:

- A 13% handover, but phased in three-stages—a 2% handover, then 5% and finally 6%. All three stages dependent on Palestinian compliance on security matters.
- The CIA to assist in combating terrorist activity.
- A “zero-tolerance” for terror and violence against both sides.
- The prevention of incitement to violence.
- The cancellation of the Palestinian Covenant’s call for the extermination of Israel.
- Both sides to arrest and transfer terrorists when requested.
- The opening of the Gaza Industrial Estate, and the operation of the International Airport in Gaza.
- The prohibition of a unilateral declaration of a Palestinian State, requiring the final status of the territories to be achieved by negotiation between the two sides only.
- A reduction in the Palestinian police force to 24,000.
- Israel to release 750 Palestinian prisoners.

The final date for implementing all these elements is the 4th May 1999.

By late October the Palestinians had handed over to the Americans their plans to counter terrorism, which were approved. They had imprisoned 10 wanted fugitives, had confirmed that the Covenant would be amended, and had drafted an anti-incitement decree. There had however been terrorist attacks. On the 6th November two suicide bombers killed themselves and injured 21 in a Jerusalem market. The day before an army jeep rammed a suicide bomber's vehicle as it was preparing to blow up a school bus. The army driver was killed, but the children escaped uninjured. In spite of these attacks, the Israeli cabinet narrowly agreed to implement the first stage of land withdrawal, which took place in late November. They also released 250 prisoners. The Gaza Airport was also opened on November 24th and named the Arafat International Airport. It will enable Gaza residents to fly in and out the country without needing entry permits for Israel. It will facilitate the direct import and export of goods. It will have cost \$250 million when it is finished. Israel personnel will be stationed at the airport for security control, but will be hidden behind screens and so be "invisible" to the public. *JP* 7-12-98

Mr Clinton's December visit

Mr Clinton and his family visited Israel and the Palestinians in mid December. It came against a background of Palestinian unrest at the fact that most of the prisoners that Israel had released had been petty thieves rather than political prisoners. Also Israel had refusal to move to the next stage of withdrawal until the Charter had been amended, and Yasser Arafat had stopped talking about a Palestinian State being set up next May.

From the Israeli point of view his visit was a disaster. His visit to Gaza should have been to witness the assembled Palestinian National Council amend their charter calling for the destruction of Israel. Instead, the Palestinian Council—a lesser body—assembled 105 of its 124 members shortly before his visit and voted by 81 to 7 (the rest abstaining), to remove the offending clauses. There was however a symbolic show of hands to indicate the changes to the Covenant when Mr Clinton attended the Council. When his helicopter landed at the new Arafat International Airport, he was feted as one head of state visiting another. Only American pressure prevented the band playing the Palestinian national anthem as well as the American anthem. American and Palestinian flags flew side by side. Although Mr Arafat terms himself a president, he is not a head of state; he is chairman of the Palestinian Authority. President Clinton officially opened the Airport in a colourful ceremony. At lunch Mr Clinton declared that they should view America as their friend. He added:

“For the first time in the history of the Palestinian movement, the Palestinian people and their elected representatives now have the chance to determine their own destiny on their own land.” *DT* 15-12-98

It was seen as support for the establishment of a Palestinian State. Hillary Clinton was widely feted by the Palestinians. She had said in May:

“The territory the Palestinians currently inhabit, and whatever additional territory they will obtain through peace negotiations, should be considered, and will evolve into, a functioning modern state.”
DT 15-12-98

During his visit the Karni Industrial Park was officially opened by the US Secretary of Commerce. Situated on the border between Gaza and Israel, the park is planned to house jointly owned Israeli-Palestinian ventures.

At full capacity, it is expected to provide jobs to some 20,000 Palestinian workers. Israeli sources say that Calvin Klein and Benetton have both expressed interest in setting up sewing workshops at Karni, though no Israeli or foreign companies have yet committed to establishing operations in the park. *Israeline* 15-12-98. Later the *Jerusalem Post* announced that Coca-Cola would be the first American company to open operations there. *JP* 28-12-98

At the end of the visit a three-way summit was arranged between Mr Netanyahu, Mr Arafat and Mr Clinton, but it broke up after 90 minutes, with the three men going their separate ways, not stopping for a group photograph. It is thought that before leaving on the 15th, Mr Clinton told Mr Netanyahu of his proposed bombing of Iraq, which took place on the 16th. Interestingly Mr Clinton had arranged for a small number of Patriot missiles to be in Israel during his visit for “brief exercises” There were three groups of missiles, each with their launchers, which were sent from Europe. They were moved to protect Tel Aviv and Haifa against possible retaliation when the Desert Fox attacks later took place. *JP* 21; 28-12-98

The Palestinians reacted angrily to these attacks and the American flags which they had a few days earlier waved to celebrate Clinton’s visit, were now burned in protest at America’s action in Iraq. However Mr Arafat’s criticism was very muted, in sharp contrast to his reaction to Desert Storm 10 years earlier. As they say “a week is a long time in politics”!

On the day after the ending of Desert Fox, Mr Netanyahu’s government was defeated in its attempt to secure broad support for his peace policies. The opposition moved a Bill calling for early elections, which was passed by a substantial majority. The second stage of the pullback, which should have taken place a few days earlier, was now effectively on hold, although Mr Netanyahu did promise that it would go ahead provided that the Palestinians met their obligations.

A Palestinian State?

Mr Arafat is emphatic that “statehood is close, that the Palestinians will build their state brick by brick, and that Jerusalem will be its capital.” *JP* 21-12-98. This is disturbing to the Israelis, but is a logical outcome of the steps that have been taken so far. With apparent American support, together with European support and Vatican support, Palestinian Statehood is a matter which the Israelis have to face up to. The new elections will largely

revolve around this issue. Can they withhold statehood from the Palestinians? Would it not be better to let them rule themselves? Israel's great concern is that that this could bring on their doorstep a hostile organisation, which may be dedicated to the eradication of Israel. This was one of the reasons why the Israelis delayed approval of the new airport. It could be used to launch attacks on Israel, and would allow very little warning. As far as handing over more land is concerned, Israel feels the need for a relatively broad buffer zone in the east - the Jordan Valley, and a narrower one in the west, the so called seam line between the West Bank and the Jewish areas. With advancing technology, comparatively simple weapons fired from the West Bank could cause havoc in Tel Aviv, or Ben Gurion Airport. The Israeli nightmare is how to contain the growing aspirations of the Palestinians.

Ariel Sharon, the hard-line foreign minister, sees the inevitability of a Palestinian State.

"I would rather have a Palestinian state on part of the territory, than autonomy on all of it." *JP* 30-11-98

His pragmatic change in attitude is reflected in much of Israel's thinking. The one certainty is that there is to be a time of peace before the Gogian invasion. At the moment it is not easy to see the steps to that peace. In any case the call to judgement will presumably come before that time of peace prevails.

Chapter 9

ISRAEL'S ECONOMY

Israel has been affected to some extent by the global turndown, but she is in a strong position, with a sound economy. We look at some of the highlights that indicate that Israel is certainly in a position to attract unwanted attention from the Gogian forces.

Israel's population has grown steadily, reaching 6 million at the end of the year. The even more rapid growth of the Palestinians is concerning Israel. As many are concentrated in the Jerusalem area, it threatens Israel's Jewish majority. Israel moved to increase the area of Jerusalem to take in more of the existing Jewish areas that lie just outside Jerusalem.

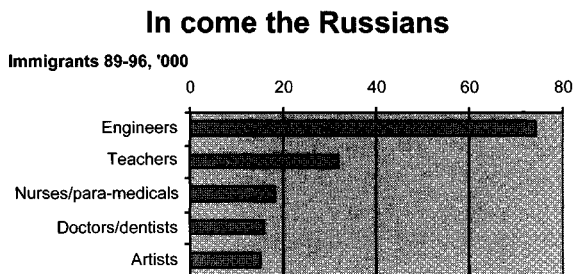
“High-tech hothouse”

In a very upbeat interview Mr. Netanyahu predicted that ***“We will make Israel one of the richest societies on earth.”***

“Every aspect of the information economy offers great potential to Israel. We have the highest concentration of knowledge workers per capita of any society on earth. We have more scientists per capita than any other nation in the world, 110 per 10,000 compared to the next country, the US which has 85 per 10,000. If you think of the wealthiest people in the world today, 10 years ago they had nothing. Their success has been achieved by the manipulation of knowledge, not by, say, the manipulation of raw material of gold or oil.”

“Israel has this kind of intellectual raw material in abundance. We have a perpetual-motion machine called the defence establishment, which is increasingly high-tech and exceptionally sophisticated in the areas of communications, encryption, decoding, lasers, computer simulators and robotics. In this way the curse of maintaining a national defence has turned into an economic blessing... We will soon be entering the field of biotechnology as well. Any industry without exception, any product without exception, is susceptible to knowledge manipulation and design improvements that can make the material more effective to consumers.

This is what Israel can offer: great versatility and high-tech expertise.” *BIPAC 13-05-98*



The returning Jews from Russia have brought great intellectual experi-

ence to Israel. There have been many engineers, teachers, nurses and doctors. Israel has decided that it needs to create high-tech jobs. Many low-tech jobs have now moved, under Israeli control, to Jordan where wage rates are 1/10th that of Israel's. It is in the field of software, communications and computers that Israel has thrived. Many US and Japanese firms are setting up Research and Development divisions in Israel, to make use of these skills. Its liberal market reforms, open market, wide use of English and stable economy have attracted worldwide investments. This year the shekel was allowed to float and it has become an attractive currency for European investors. Israel's high interest rates backed by a sound economy, contrasts with Europe's sluggish economies and falling interest rates because of the coming in line for the Euro.

With a GDP¹ of \$16,100 it is similar to many European countries, and stands out amongst her neighbours. (Egypt \$1,400; Jordan \$1,500; Lebanon \$4,400; Saudi Arabia \$7,100).

One of the great sources of skills lies in the Defence Forces. All Israelis have to serve in them. Because of the high-tech nature of Israel's army, it is the training ground for many of Israel's new entrepreneurs.

Several hundred new companies spring up each year in "Silicon Wadi", as the Israeli technology sector is sometimes called. Analysts estimate that three-quarters of them grow directly out of army service.

Technology is arguably Israel's most important industrial sector, accounting for a third of the country's exports and absorbing half the foreign investment in the country.

Electronics exports totalled \$5.7 billion in 1997 and are growing at 17% a year; software exports at \$500 million in 1997 are growing at 25%.
BIPAC 16-12-98

It is all a far cry from the agricultural efforts of the early Jews. Agriculture now only accounts for 3-4% of Israel's economy. However Israel is busy investing abroad, setting up companies in Asia and Far East, bringing her agricultural skills to the huge markets of the east. Her skills in irrigation and plant breeding enable her to turn barren areas into productive fields. Israel sees India and China as vast markets for her products and skills.

In the short term we know Israel is to be rich and prosperous to fulfil Ezekiel's words in chapter 38. It is exciting to see this continuing development. We also know that Israel's wealth will be swept away—they will be brought to see the folly of trusting in man and will turn at last to God for help.

¹ Gross Domestic Product. Measure of the income generated per person.

Britain and Israel

A £15.5-million fund to encourage Israeli-British joint high-tech research and product development was launched in London during December. The fund—known as Britech—will operate initially for 5 years. It aims to bring cutting-edge firms in both countries together, particularly in the fields of information and communications, life sciences, software and electronics.

Both countries will contribute equally to the fund. Its aim is to encourage smaller firms to look to Britain for help in launching their products, rather than turning to the US. Already on the British Alternative Investment Market there are more businesses of Israeli origin than any other non-British nationality, but the numbers are small.

The London financial community has at last woken up to Israel's business potential. Only one Israeli firm is quoted on the Stock Market and only seven on the Alternative Investment Market, whereas there are 70 companies quoted on the American Stock Market. The problem was that Israel had been lumped together with emerging markets. The London financiers now recognised that Israel is a fully emerged market. In December the mayor of London hosted a seminar in Israel on the City of London's financial services. *JP* 28-12-98

In November Britain and Israel signed a memorandum of understanding on joint weapons research and information exchange. *BIPAC* 16-12-98

The US and Israel

Israel is the US's eighth-largest trading partner, ranking her above Russia and Ireland. Figures for 1997 showed that Israel's trade with the US reached \$13.3 billion. *BIPAC* 29-7-98

Israel and Jordan

This is the one area where the benefits of the Peace Talks can be seen. The two countries are working on many schemes. Trade between Israel and Jordan showed a 36% increase over last year.

There are many joint projects under discussion:

- A railway line between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Akaba, with branch lines to Eilat and Akaba.
- A joint hospital and several clinics spanning the borders staffed by medics from both countries.
- A £280 million joint venture industrial park straddling the border just south of the Sheikh Hussein Bridge based on Israeli management and Jordanian labour.
- The creation of a 125 acre tourism area between Eilat and Akaba.

The two countries have started work on constructing a \$2.8 million weir on the Yarmouk River, which will hold back flood waters and increase

Jordan's share of the river's water from 140 to 160 million cubic metres each year. *Cyprus News* 27-10-98

Royal Jordan Airlines are flying Israeli cargo to places where El Al does not operate. The Eilat /Akaba Airport now handles "mixed flights" so that visitors to either country can travel on the same flight.

Oil

As reported last year, the last issue of the *Jerusalem Post* for 1997 carried news of an oil find. An Israeli company, Givot Olam, claimed to have found a reservoir of oil in northern Israel. It matched the type of oil found in Syria and other Middle East oilfields.

It was in the last issue of 1998 that the *Jerusalem Post* carried more news of this find. It reported that it had successfully extracted commercially viable oil and gas from this site. Pictures of gas flames shooting out of the well led to a sharp increase in the company's share prices. They hope to start drilling within a year to recover what they estimate to be a reservoir of 1 billion barrels of oil and 4 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. As we said last year—we await further news!

International gas companies operating in Egypt have begun the construction of a pipeline that will provide natural gas to Israel. The construction of a pipeline from the Nile delta fields to el-Arish near the Israeli-Egyptian border is scheduled to be completed by the end of 1999. By that time, negotiations between Israel and Egypt, which are to begin next week, should be completed, and the pipeline will be extended along Israel's seashore. Experts predict that the use of natural gas will drastically improve the environment and will save Israel an estimated \$150 million a year. *Israeline* 30-12-98

Her defence industry

Israel is a big player in the arms race. She exports her defence equipment around the globe. One of her specialities is a pilotless drone which can be used for reconnaissance, without the risk of losing pilots over enemy territory. She is also highly skilled at upgrading aircraft, refitting them with the latest Israeli technology.

She has successfully developed with America the Arrow anti-ballistic missile. Test firings were successful in 1998 and Israel aims to have it in service in 1999. This will form the backbone of Israel's defence against the ever-increasing threat of missile attacks. Travelling twice as fast as the Patriot anti-missile, it should intercept incoming missiles, well before reaching Israel. This should overcome the problem with intercepting missiles with nuclear or chemical warheads where the debris can still do much damage.

America's increased defence commitment to Israel

1998 marked a new era for the American CIA. They had been working extensively in Israel, and sharing information with the Israeli secret service and also with the Palestinians. The Wye Talks committed the active employment of the CIA in countering terrorist activity. The CIA is to be involved in actively hunting down Hamas terrorists and seeing that the Palestinians deal with them. There are to be formal meetings between the CIA and the Israelis and the Palestinians at least every two weeks to deal with security matters. It marks a much greater involvement of the US in this area. There was concern in Israel over the American involvement in this role, in that it would restrict their ability to act on their own. The Americans were concerned that they would be "piggy in the middle" between Israel and Palestinian authorities on security disputes.

In early November, shortly after the Wye talks, America and Israel signed a new document, which marked an important step in relations between the two countries.

JERUSALEM and Washington added another thread to their complex web of agreements and understandings when they signed a new strategic memorandum of understanding last week.

The memorandum, signed separately by President Clinton and Prime Minister Netanyahu, is aimed at strengthening Israel's deterrent capability against the threat of long-range missiles and non-conventional weapons.

The memorandum commits the US to enhancing Israel's defensive and deterrent capabilities against missile threats. It also upgrades strategic and military co-operation between the two countries.

In addition, the memorandum—the first to be signed between the two countries in a decade—calls for "upgrading the framework of the US-Israel strategic and military relationships, as well as the technological co-operation between them."

Netanyahu said the memorandum marks the first time the US has pledged to enhance Israel's "deterrent" capabilities.

"This is a major step forward in Israeli-American strategic co-operation," he said at the Jerusalem signing ceremony, which was attended by US Ambassador to Israel Edward Walker.

A senior US official said that while the pact was not a guarantee of US military assistance in the event of a ballistic missile attack against Israel, "it is a rock-solid commitment to Israel's security".

Officials added that while the memorandum upgrades Israel's status as a US ally, it should not be interpreted as constituting a *defacto* military alliance between Israel and the US.

Beyond calling for the upgrading of the strategic and military relationship, the document states: "The United States Government would view with particular gravity direct threats to Israel's security arising from the regional deployment of ballistic missiles of intermediate range or greater."

"In the event of such a threat," it adds, "the United States government would consult promptly with the government of Israel with respect to what support, diplomatic and otherwise, or assistance, it can lend to Israel." *BIPAC* 12-11-98

Earlier in the year the two countries had taken part in secret joint exercises to improve the co-operation between the US and Israeli forces, in preparation for a time when they might have to fly on missions together, such as against Iran or Iraq. These exercises were conducted in strict secrecy for fear of upsetting the Arabs. *BIPAC* 3-4-98

In December some 2,000 US Marines carried out routine annual training in the Negev. Since 1983 the Americans have carried out over 90 exercises in Israel, mostly at the army training ground in the Negev. *JP* 14-12-98

Israel's population

It has now risen above the 6 million level. One in five of this number are Arabs, the Jewish population is 4.78 million. This shows a 1 million increase over the past 7 years. About 59% of this increase was due to natural increase, with the remainder the result of 520,000 immigrating and 110,000 emigrating. With the problems in Russia and the Ukraine, the Israelis are gearing up for a steep increase in immigrants. There has been an upsurge in enquiries about going to Israel within these countries. *JP* 16-11-98

The estimate of the total number of Jews worldwide is now put at 13.5 million, with the US home to 5.6 million. Within a few years it is expected that Israel will have the largest Jewish community. Jews are to be found in more than 100 countries. Outside Israel there is no natural growth in any of the communities. Some 500,000 have left Israel since 1948, most going to the US. *JP* 3-10-98

One of the problems facing Israel has been the high birth rate among the Arabs. In Jerusalem, the Arab population is growing 4 times faster than the Jewish. At present the Arabs represent about 30% of the city's population, compared with 25% in 1997. They forecast that it would grow to 45% within 20 years. This is one of the reasons why this year the Israeli government annexed Jewish areas to the west of Jerusalem, and brought them within the boundaries of Jerusalem, to increase the percentage of Jews. *JP* 20-6-98

Chapter 10

ISRAEL, TURKEY, GREECE, AND CYPRUS

Last year we saw the remarkable partnership between Israel and Turkey. This has continued to flourish and is changing the balance of power in the area. It provides Russia with an excuse to move down into Turkey, thus controlling Constantinople, prior to her coming down into the Middle East.

Israel, Turkey, and Jordan

A new element in this friendship between Israel and Turkey has been that Jordan has joined in. Crown Prince Hassan is particularly keen on increasing Jordan's ties to the two countries. *DT* 10-9-98

At a conference in London organised by BIPAC entitled *Strategic Perspectives in the New Millennium* Mr Netanyahu sent a message saying that the relationship between Israel, Turkey and Jordan should serve as a model for the entire region.

He stressed that the relationship between the three countries "is by no means a military alliance and threatens no one."

"It is based on mutual respect for the political imperatives of each country, the shared understanding of the primacy of security, and the urgent need to combat terrorism and fanatic regimes from possessing non-conventional weapons."

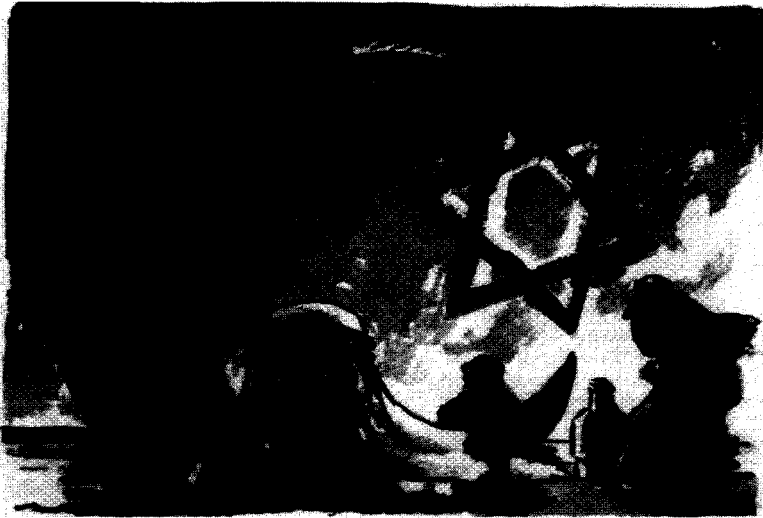
"It is primarily a relationship whose goal is to promote peace, stability and prosperity. We would consider it a salutary development if others joined us in working towards this goal." *BIPAC* 12-11-98

In January, Israel, America and Turkey held joint naval manoeuvres in the Mediterranean, with Jordan sending a senior military advisor. They hope to repeat these exercises next year with Jordan playing a more active role. These manoeuvres were said to have sent a wave of alarm through Arab capitals, worried about the changing balance of power in the Middle East. Most worrying was that Jordan had broken ranks with her Arab "brothers". *DT* 10-1-98

In September Israel and Turkey held their first joint air exercises. Aircraft from both countries have trained in each other's airspace, but this was the first time they had held joint exercises. *Jane's Defence Weekly* quoted a report that battalions from Jordan and Turkey will participate in a 20-day training programme next May. This is planned to be followed by an exercise in Jordan supported by aircraft from Jordan and Turkey with possible participation of the US forces. *BIPAC* 16-9-98 Israel has allowed Turkish troops to carry out anti-S-300 exercises on Israeli territory. These are the missiles which had been sold to Cyprus, which Turkey is very opposed to. *Cyprus Mail* 31-10-98

Israel won another contract to upgrade Turkey's planes worth \$75 million. It had been expected to go to France, but politics played a part—Turkey is still smarting from the EU's refusal to consider its entry into the EU. Turkey now seems to be filling the vacuum left by South Africa, which was Israel's main defence client in the '70's and '80's. She is hoping to secure an order for an early warning radar system, and to manufacture in partnership with Turkey 1,000 tanks and some helicopters.

Turkish businessmen see Israel as a means of breaking into the US market. Israel sees Turkey as giving access to the central Asian republics of the former Soviet Union, where Turkey has a strong foothold. Israeli economists see the two countries economies as complimentary. Israel is high-tech, Turkey low-tech. *JP* 28-3-98



The Turkish Prime minister visited Amman and Jerusalem in September, accompanied by 100 Turkish businessmen. *The Economist* spoke of the relationship between Israel and Turkey as "not yet quite a marriage though the two are certainly going steady and are no longer cagey about it as once they were—it is being cemented as one of the Middle East's most serious geopolitical axes¹." *EC* 19-9-98. The surrounding Arab countries view this partnership with disdain, especially Syria and Egypt. The Arab League, meeting on September 16th, condemned the Israeli-Turkish bond which, it says, "exposes Arab national interests to real danger and brings the region back to the policy of axes and alliances." Both Greece and Cyprus have expressed their concerns, though when President Weizman visited Cyprus

¹ Plural of axis - "an alliance of states to co-ordinate their foreign policy".

in November he was at pains to say that this linkage no way negated the traditional bonds that Israel had with Cyprus. Unfortunately a few days later the Cypriots caught red-handed two Mossad agents on the island listening in to radio transmissions!

Greece, Turkey and Cyprus

There has been a long running hostility between Greece and Turkey, which finds its focus on the island of Cyprus. Cyprus gets its name from Cuprous—copper. This was the ancient copper island; remains of the old mines are still visible. Its ancient name was Kittim, the remains of the original settlement of Kition can be seen at Larnaka. Kittim was the grandson of Japheth. One of his brothers was Tarshish. In order to produce bronze the ancients needed tin from the “tin island” England—ancient Tarshish, and copper from Kittim. Thus the two brothers were united in trade. Kittim or Chittim appears to cover not only Cyprus, which was visible from northern Israel, but also the northern Mediterranean coastline, and the islands that lay out of sight to the west. Chittim appears in two prophecies.

One of these is in Daniel 11:30, which was fulfilled in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, the King of the North, who was expanding his empire right down into Egypt. An embassy from Rome was sent against him and arriving on the island of Delos in the Aegean, found Greek or Macedonian ships, to take them across the Mediterranean to Alexandria to confront and prevent Antiochus in his drive to conquer Egypt. Thus the *ships of Chittim came against him*.

The other is the last of Balaam’s prophecies and lies in the future.

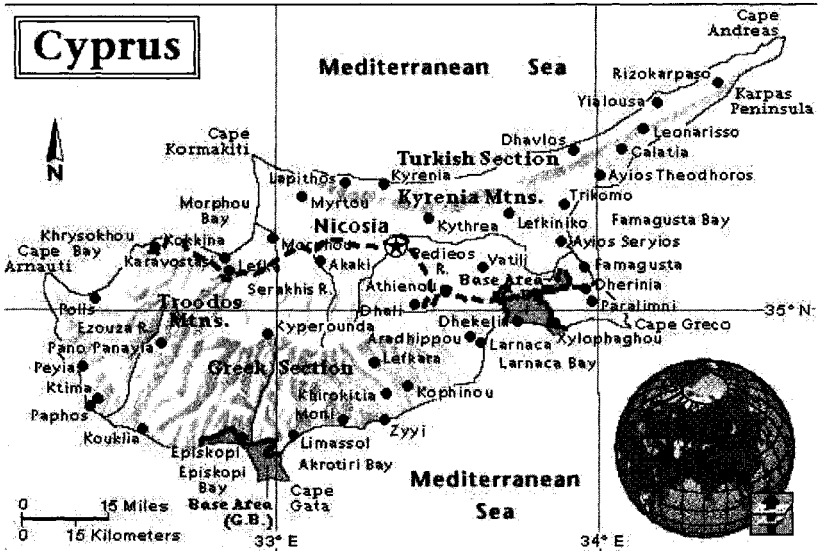
And he took up his parable, and said, Alas, who shall live when God doeth this! And ships shall come from the coast of Chittim, and shall afflict Asshur, and shall afflict Eber, and he also shall perish for ever.
Num. 24:23, 24.

Asshur is Assyria and Eber is the family name for the Hebrews, covering the Jews and their relatives. Daniel later in chapter 11 speaks of the King of the North in the latter-days:-

*...and the king of the north shall come against him [the king of the south or perhaps the occupier of Constantinople] like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and **with many ships**; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.* Dan 11:40

It is a time when the opposing ships of Tarshish are broken. (Psa. 28:7, Isa. 2:16). So if we link Balaam’s prophecy with that of Daniel, then we are to expect the Gogian King of the North to come with ships from Chittim. We would link this time with the move south by Russia into Turkey and the Aegean region. At the present Britain has a strong presence on Cyprus. She has listening posts on the high Troodos mountains, which enable her to

eavesdrop on communications in Syria, Iraq, and Iran. An invading force would have to secure this island to have mastery of the Eastern Mediterranean. We would expect this area to be a military flash point.



Turkey invaded the Island of Cyprus in 1974 and captured the fertile northern half. Cyprus is now a divided country, the north controlled by the Turks, and the south by the Greek Cypriots. This division is expressive of the divisions between Greece and Turkey. Both Turkey and Greece are members of NATO. Greece is a member of the EU, but Turkey is not and her applications to join have been rebuffed - she is not a "christian" country. There have been many skirmishes over disputed territory between Greece and Turkey.

In January 1997, the Greek Cypriot government announced the purchase from Russia of a consignment of S-300 anti-aircraft missiles, worth an estimated £200 million. These missiles are said to be superior to the Patriot missiles used by the US in the Gulf War and would bring much of Turkey within their range. The delivery of these 38 missiles has been postponed because of Turkey's threat of war to prevent their delivery. Cyprus is said to be paying Russia a million dollars a month in storage charges since November. About half the cost of the missiles has already been paid. To cap it all, there has been talk of Turkey putting missiles on their occupied northern region of the island in retaliation!

At the end of the year, just one day before they were due to be delivered came an announcement from the Cypriot government that after intense pressure from the UN, the EU and America, they had agreed to the missiles being relocated to Crete. As this would put Turkey out of their 150-km

range, all parties accepted that this was the best compromise. It opens up the way for movement over the division of the island. So far Russia has not reacted, Athens and Nicosia have yet to negotiate this change with her. Crete is part of Greece, and as such is in the EU. *Cyprus Mail* 30-12-98

Crete is home to the US Mediterranean 6th fleet. The naval air station can handle ships of any size, and land all types of aircraft. With all that American firepower available on Crete, the need for more missiles seems unnecessary!

Russia's excuse to invade Turkey

The safe delivery of the missiles lies in Russia's hands. We know Russia's dislike of Turkey, and it is not difficult to see the potential powder keg that could explode in the Middle East if and when deliveries to Crete commence. Russia is friendly towards Greece—they share the orthodox religion. In any conflict between Greece and Turkey, Russia will side with Greece and Israel with Turkey. Turkey has given a blunt warning to the EU of war if the EU proceeds with the application of the Greek Cypriots to join the EU, especially after her own application was firmly rejected. She has also talked of taking steps to bring closer economic ties with the Turkish Cypriot part of the island. This would risk triggering a new conflict between Greece and Turkey. *DT* 27-3-98

With new elections due in Turkey in April 1999 there is further potential for trouble. The military banned the largest party—the Islamic Welfare Party in 1997, but it regrouped under the banner of Fazilet or Virtue, and remains the largest party. The Islamic party is set to take control at the next elections, a situation that the military will not allow. It points to a troublous time for Turkey. If the Moslems did seize power, this would increase Russia's desire to invade, if she can find an excuse. To the Russians the Moslems are infidels! The sacking of Constantinople in 1453 still awaits revenge!

And then there is the friendship between Turkey and Israel which we have seen. Russia is no friend of Israel, and so she will seek to break that partnership, prior to the invasion of Israel.

Before looking at the other parties in the Middle East, we need to take a look at the events in Russia, to get a background picture.

Chapter 11

RUSSIA

It certainly has been a disastrous year for Russia. Her president has been sick for much of the time, her economy has collapsed, and she has been politically sidelined on many occasions.

Yet the illness of Mr. Yeltsin has brought Mr. Primakov to the fore. Although weakened economically at home, Russia continued doing what she has traditionally been well known for—the arms dealer of the world. Her efforts in the Middle East are of greatest interest to us.

The growling bear

Russia's decline from superpower to second-rate power has been very rapid. Her GDP [gross domestic product] according to The Economist Yearbook has declined to \$240 billion, a mere 16% of its figure for Britain, yet Russia's population is 2.5 times bigger. It is expected to have fallen to 45% of its 1989 level.

But although the Russian bear is wounded it is not without claws, and however sharp Russia's economic decline might be, it still possesses enormous inherited military power, including 1.2m active armed forces. Apart from its huge conventional forces, the latest edition of *The Military Balance*, published by the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies, lists Russia as having 756 inter-continental ballistic missiles, 26 operational nuclear-fuelled ballistic-missile submarines (with 412 missiles), and 66 strategic bombers.

Russia also still harbours ambitions to become a great power again, and whilst it knows it can never again mount a *global* challenge to the United States it does believe it can capitalize on US unpopularity in the Middle East to boost its strategic position in one of the world's most sensitive regions.

Moscow is doing this by building an anti-US alliance with Syria and Iran which involves arming both countries in general and providing Iran, in particular, with the wherewithal to develop long-range ballistic missiles and a nuclear capability.

Moscow also clearly exploited the November 1997 Iraq/US stand-off to boost its diplomatic standing in the Middle East.

And in another sign of how deeply Russia is now involved in challenging American interests in the Middle East, Moscow is taking on US-ally Turkey in Cyprus by arming the Greek Cypriots with modern air-defence missiles (due for delivery by end-1998 [but see later]). This move is designed to take pressure off Syria, which has felt threatened by Turkey ever since it signed a military pact with Israel in February 1996. But

Turkey has said it will do anything to stop the delivery of the missiles to Cyprus, with former Prime Minister Tansu Ciller even saying that a war with Russia is possible.

It is clear that America has not heard the last from Russia.

Intelligence Digest Background Report 10-98

Russia's growling at America can be seen clearly in the Middle East. Mr Yeltsin regarded the fact that the Desert Fox attack on Iraq in December took place without Mr Clinton warning him, as a deep snub. He also expressed "outrage" that he was not warned of America's attacks on terrorist targets in Afghanistan and Sudan in August.

In Kosovo, Mr Yeltsin has managed to hold off NATO from attacking Yugoslavia to bring President Slobodan Milosevic to heel. His threats of intervention if NATO attacked caused them to tone down their plans. He also threatened to pull out of the Russia-Nato Founding Act, which she joined last year. Russia also threatened not to ratify the Start-2 arms reduction treaty. NATO is being held to ransom, and sees little it can do. Russia of course backs the Serbs—they share the Orthodox religion, and have a common dislike of the Muslims. Russia has given Serbia advanced air defence missiles and has offered her a loan of \$160 million!

The collapse of reform



The Russian rouble has fallen in value to less than a third during the year—from 6 per \$ to around 21. This cartoon reminds us of the words in Haggai 1:6: **He that earneth wages earneth wages to put into a bag with holes.** For the ordinary Russian citizen—and our brethren and sisters included—it has been a bleak year. The harvest was the worst for 40 years. Food

supplies are rapidly running out, with poor prospects for seed for next year's sowing. Yet Russia was until late in the year busy exporting food which was needed at home. The lower rouble has increased the cost of imports beyond the ordinary person's reach. Even the well to-do have seen their savings wiped out. Mr Gorbachev has seen all his savings disappear in a bank collapse. Furthermore there were predictions that this winter would be the coldest for 30 years.

The west is sending food parcels. The Red Cross launched a \$15 million

appeal in September. In early October the Russian governor of Murmansk, where many of the former Soviet nuclear submarines are stored, phoned across to his counterpart in Norway, pleading for humanitarian aid. Norway responded by donating more than \$500,000 of food and clothing, in addition to that donated by churches and charities. Apart from sympathy for these northern Russians, Norwegians fear chaos across the border from the collapse of Russia banks, unpaid wages and the absence of food in the shops. *TE* 12-10-98



The collapse of the rouble has been followed by the collapse of many of the reforms. Wages are still being paid many months late, tax gathering has slipped back, the privatisation program is behind, and corruption is endemic. The government is stepping up state intervention, is printing roubles to reflate its ailing economy, and is discussing passing measures calling for price control and restrictions on capital movements. "All police with a distinct whiff of the late Soviet era about them." *DT* 2-10-98

The prospect of Russia defaulting on her repayments has caused alarm in many countries. She owes at least \$125 billion, over half of which has been loaned by Western Banks. One of the worst affected is Germany with a \$30 billion exposure. *DT* 12-9-98. At the end of the year Russia sent shock waves through the international markets after failing to meet a £215 million interest payment due under the restructuring last year. *DT* 30-12-98

Russia is endowed with the richest natural resources in the world. She sits on one third of the world's known gas reserves and about 5% of the known oil reserves. With oil priced in dollars, Russia's costs against the dollar have fallen with the fall in value of the rouble, helping to counteract the effect of the steep drop in world oil prices. Gasprom, the Russian gas giant supplies much of Europe's power. New pipelines are being built to Germany (via Belarus and Poland) and to Turkey (under the Black Sea). Russia supplies 40% of Germany's power. *EC* 29-8-98; *DT* 2-1-99

A vast reservoir of oil and gas was discovered in Siberia, which has the potential to be as large as the major Alaska fields. Its estimated value is put in the region of \$4 to \$8 billion. In the same region BP is investigating a gas field potentially three times as large as western Europe's largest gas field. *ST* 11-1-98

While Russia has resources, it needs a strong person to lift the country out of the mire—the work of Gog?

Primakov—Middle East expert

In September Yeltsin abruptly sacked his Prime Minister. It took some time before what amounted to his second choice, Mr. Yevgeny Primakov, was accepted by the Duma. He was Russia's Foreign Minister and has long political experience. For 5 years he was head of Russia's foreign intelligence services under the communists and has never concealed his links with the old KGB. At 69 he is older than Yeltsin. He started life as a journalist in the 1950's and rose to become *Pravda's* Middle East correspondent. He speaks fluent Arabic, is an expert on the Arab world, and is a friend both of Saddam Hussein and President Assad of Syria! He has been the main architect of the Soviet Middle East policy since the 1973 Yom Kippur war and the oil crisis. He has appointed as his deputy a communist—Yuri Maslyukov—an expert on the old Soviet style planned economy with one of his talents being in "the defence industry"! *DT* 12-9; 13-9-98

Primakov is not overtly anti-US, but he is a *gosudarstvennik*, a proponent of a strong, centralized Russian state, in foreign and domestic affairs. His opposition to American policies stems from this world-view. And it wins him the support of nationalists and communists in the Duma, who share his sense of resentment at the world's lack of respect for their country. *Time* 21-9-98

The Israelis are worried!

The appointment raises the spectre of a return to the bad old days of confrontation between Moscow and Washington and the Middle East. *BIPAC* 16-9-98

In a fascinating article, Helen Davis, the Director of BIPAC (Britain Israel Public Affairs Centre) sketched out the pro Arab roots of this new Prime Minister. It was headed "*The Kremlin chameleon*" because he is adapt at switching allegiances and serving different masters. He served under the Communists, first under Brezhnev, then under the reformer Gorbachev, then under the post-Communist leader Yeltsin. Now he has tremendous power. His Middle East policy has however been unswervingly consistent—to promote Russia's influence in the region, to seize what opportunities come his way and continue friendship with Moscow's traditional Arab allies.

His personal friendship with both President Assad of Syria and Saddam Hussein spans 20 years. He is keen to see the UN embargo lifted on Iraq, as well as American influence in the area reduced. This wish is driven by more than just his innate antagonism towards the US; he has an eye on the potentially huge contracts for refurbishing Iraq's military and civilian sectors. With the embargo in place, Saddam has little money—get the sanctions lifted and Iraq's oil flowing on the world markets, then there will be business to be done.

The Arab world welcomed his appointment—it promised to be back to the “good old days” of Soviet support for the Arab countries of the Middle East. The Israelis expect that he will downgrade Moscow's relations with Israel.

Her Middle East influence

In spite of her home problems, Russia continues to pour arms and technology into the Middle East. She sees Israel's growing friendship with Turkey as a threat to herself and her Middle East allies. A BIPAC article painted the background, under the heading:-

Resurgent Russia—back in business after 8 years

Two developments are currently underway in the Middle East that are likely to redefine the geo-political and geo-strategic contours of the region, perhaps for generations to come.

The first, described by one of Israel's leading strategic analysts as the most significant event in the region since the visit to Jerusalem of the late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in 1977, is Israel's emerging alliance with Turkey.

The ties that bind Israel and Turkey, two major non-Arab regional powers, are based on mutual political, strategic and economic interests, and they have elicited storms of protests from another pair of allies: Iran and Syria.

The second development is the gathering pace of Russia's return to the region, where it is picking up the pieces, notably in Syria and Iran, which slipped from the grasp of the dissolving Soviet Union.

[The Russian Ambassador to Damascus] confirmed that Syrian and Russian forces had conducted joint military exercises in Russia last year and that many Russian military experts were still working in Syria. But he declined to confirm reports of new arms sales to Syria, including anti-tank missile systems, and an agreement of future sales of S-300 surface-to-air missiles.

According to the Russian newspaper *Segodnya*, a Russian arms plant in the city of Tula had started supplying Syria with more than 1,000 Cornet anti-tank guided-missile systems. The newspaper did not give a figure, but the sale of the mobile missiles, which have a range of 5.5 kilometres,

would be the largest deal concluded between Russia and Syria since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The Israeli daily *Ha'aretz* quoted security sources as saying that Syria is renewing its anti-tank missile alignment and is negotiating the purchase of anti-aircraft missiles. It also quoted Israeli officials expressing concern at the latest development, noting that the new anti-tank missiles were a "big step forward" for the Syrian army.

Meanwhile, Russia's *Segodnya* also reported that Syria would soon receive S-300 missiles and Khризantema anti-tank guided-missiles. According to some reports, Syria and Russia are negotiating a \$3 billion arms package, which will also involve the supply of advanced aircraft and the upgrading of Syria's air-defences and tanks.

It is clear that even while calling for the resumption of peace talks, Assad is continuing, ominously, to devote huge scarce resources to building his military arsenal. *BIPAC* 26-6-98

Russia was laying off some 45,000 workers from the nuclear and military industries at the end of the year. The US is worried that many of these will find employment in Iran, Iraq, North Korea, Libya, or Syria. America is responding to this threat with a financial aid package aimed specifically at the "nuclear defence industry." *ID* 2-9-98

Russia and Iraq

In the early part of the year, Britain and America built up their forces in the Middle East and threatened Saddam Hussein with further air strikes because of his non co-operation with the UN weapons inspectors. America was within days of striking when Kofi Annan brokered a deal with Saddam, which permitted the inspectors back, provided diplomats accompanied them. A *Jerusalem Post* report stated that it was Primakov who was the driving force behind this deal being brokered. At the end of January he sent his deputy to advise Saddam and co-ordinate Russian attempts to prevent further war. Primakov's campaign was carefully orchestrated with President Chirac, as we shall see in the next chapter.

America viewed the added layer of having diplomats with horror. "If they were French, Russian or Chinese, then you could be sure they would reveal where they were going to the Iraqis," commented an Israeli expert on Iraq.

Russian diplomats have routinely leaked secrets about international arms inspections to Iraq...Senior sources in Washington accused Russia's Ambassador to the UN, of being Saddam Hussein's source of information about decisions taken in closed Security Council meetings. *DT* 14-2-98

It is not surprising then that when the weapons inspectors left Iraq in mid December; America struck within a few hours, without consulting the French or the Russians. Before the raids had ended, President Chirac had a

long telephone conversation with Mr. Yeltsin, who was supposed to be sick, before issuing a scarcely veiled condemnation of America and Britain for raiding Iraq. Mr Yeltsin expressed his anger by recalling Russia's ambassadors from London and Washington, a political move without precedent even at the height of the cold war. *DT* 19-12-98. They were reinstated before the end of the year. Mr Yeltsin was reported to have been very frosty towards Mr Clinton during their annual exchange of New Year messages.

The air strikes have provoked the most serious crisis in US-Russian relations for years. *DT* 31-12-98

Russia and Iran

America prevents her own companies from trading with Iran, and has been actively discouraging other countries from trading. Europe has largely ignored this position. Iran is immensely rich in oil and gas. She has reserves of 93 billion barrels of oil and 810 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. Although the price of oil has fallen dramatically, cutting oil revenues, Iran's production costs are comparatively low—around \$4.70 per barrel, compared to the oil-industry average cost of \$6.75. In June, Total of France and Gazprom of Russia signed a \$2 billion deal to develop Iran's southern gasfields. *TE* 15-6-98; *ID* Background Report 11-98.

Russia has sought to make trade with Iran a centrepiece of her foreign policy, especially with Mr Primakov in virtual control. The new foreign minister told his Iranian counter-part that the "expansion of relations with Iran is the strategic policy of Russia." Iran needs weaponry and technology; Russia wants to reassert itself at the expense of America. So it is a policy based on self-interest. Russia has built an \$800 million nuclear power plant in Iran and is preparing a feasibility study to supply 3 more. She is also busy supplying three Kilo-class submarines. The 1,500 km-range Shehab 3 ballistic missile, which Iran tested in July, was probably supplied by North Korea, but was certainly developed with Russia help. Russia is helping to develop the Shehab 4, which will have a 2000-km range. In return, Iran has promised not to spread Islamic fundamentalism in Russia's backyard. *ID* 2-9-98

Russia is said to have supplied several nuclear warheads to Iran in the early 1990s and has Russian experts maintaining them, according to *The Jerusalem Post*. *JP* 18-4-98

Russia and Syria

Russia is also active in Syria.

Recent intelligence reports indicate that she [Syria] has far more Scud-C missiles (armed with advanced-type chemical warheads) than had previously thought. Most important, the latest intelligence shows that Syria has an unusually high proportion of launchers to missiles (1 to 2

instead of the usual 1 to 10). This will enable Syria to launch a barrage of missiles at Israel in one go. *ID Background Report 9-98*

It would seem that Syria has, with Russian assistance, set up missile production lines. The Russians are developing chemical cluster warheads for the Syrians, as well as improving the accuracy of the missiles with a new “terminal homing” computer system, similar to that used on the US Tomahawk cruise missiles, enabling them to land within a yard of their target. *BIPAC 27-5-98*. She is also buying accurate long-range anti-tank missiles.

Chapter 12

THE MIDDLE EAST

In chapter 9 we saw the American and British influence in Israel, and in chapter 10 we saw the Israel-Turkish axis of influence in the Middle East. In our last chapter we saw the Russian axes of influence: Russia-Iraq; Russia-Iran; Russia-Syria—aimed at countering American and Israeli influences in the area. We will now see the EU's influence, led by France, in the Middle East. It has the same rationale—to try to reduce American and Israeli power in the area. We will then be able to see the growing King of the North and King of the South grouping within the Middle East.

The French influence in the Middle East

France is a very Roman Catholic country—she is considered “the daughter of the church.” Ezekiel speaks of her role in the latter-days under the name of Gomer, the eldest son of Japheth. The Greeks knew them as the Galatae or Gauls. They migrated to Western Europe, occupying what we know as France and Spain. It is highly significant to see her leading the EU's foreign policy towards the Middle East, a policy that aims to counter American influences.

In the November 1997 confrontation with Saddam, France was greatly opposed to any American and British action. Earlier in 1997 President Chirac had visited Boris Yeltsin and they committed themselves to a “grand partnership” dedicated to reducing American authority in the Middle East. He said:

“Like you, we want a grand partnership between Russia and France, Russia and Europe, and a leading place for a strong and peaceful Russia in tomorrow's multipolar world.”

Multipolar is the codeword used by all those states, such as China, Russia and Iran that want a world with a much diminished American influence. Shortly after this meeting, Mr. Yeltsin went to the French city of Strasbourg for a Council of Europe summit. He addressed journalists before he left:-

“We do not need an uncle [Uncle Sam—the USA] from elsewhere. We can unite ourselves and live normally.” *ID Background Report 11-98*

It was France who, in March, scuppered talks between the EU and the USA about negotiating the New Transatlantic Market free trade agreement. This was in spite of the approval of negotiations by all the other EU members. France's enthusiasm for the euro and a united Europe are expressions of this same desire. It is a policy which works on building strong links towards Syria, Iraq and Iran. We will consider her activities on these three axes.

Syria. France was a colonial power in the Middle East in the past and she is actively seeking to rebuild her former influence. She aims to rebuild her former prestige and play a pivotal political role, via the EU, in the region. In 1996 Chirac brokered an agreement which ended Israel's *Operation Grapes of Wrath* in Lebanon. The importance of this step was made clear in an article in BIPAC (29-7-98) which had the heading:-

The French Connection

Syria and France aim for strategic partnership.

The events of 1996 [ending the Operation Grapes of Wrath] had a catalysing effect on the Paris-Damascus axis, ending their profound rivalry over Lebanon, where each had perceived itself to have an exclusive role.

BIPAC explained that last year President Chirac visited Syria as well as Israel and other Middle East countries. He agreed to expand French cultural activities in Syria and to initiate "cultural and civilisational dialogue". Half of Syria's FF1.8 billion debt was written off, and Syria agreed to purchase \$300 million of French airliners and trains.

This year President Assad made a rare overseas visit. He went to France in July where he was warmly fêted - he last visited 22 years ago. His visit was to "forge no less than a strategic partnership between Syria and France, with the aim of correcting the great imbalance [of America's influence] in the region", declared the Syrian Foreign Minister. Both countries share a common aim to end sanctions against Iraq, a shared antipathy against Turkey, and pressure on Israel to withdraw from Southern Lebanon and the Golan.

France represents a particularly attractive ally for Syria, not only because, like Assad, it is viscerally [instinctively, rather than intellectually] anti-American but also because its policy makers have a deserved reputation for viewing the Middle East through an Arab prism.

Moreover, France is an attractive partner because it is a serious economic power and can offer Syria the promise of economic support, while facilitating its political rehabilitation within the international community.

President Assad planned to visit Moscow later in the year—he was last there in April 1990, shortly before the fall of the Soviet Union. BIPAC continued:-

While France can offer Damascus political and economic advantage, Moscow can close the circle by satisfying Syria's other elemental need: military technology and hardware. *BIPAC* 28-7-98

The Russian Defence Minister, Igor Sergeev visited Syria in November and "expressed Moscow's desire to promote relations on the basis of the deep-rooted ties between the two countries".

President Assad affirmed Syria's keen interest in continuing bilateral cooperation and the desire to promote relations in a way that serves the interests of both countries and peoples. *Reuters* 15-11-98

Iraq. With the threatened air strikes against Iraq in February, France declared that:-

A military strike against Iraq "would cause significant loss of life without threatening the power of Saddam Hussein". France had no intention of associating itself with any such attack. *DT* 6-2-98

We mentioned in the previous chapter that France largely brokered the visit of Kofi Annan to Iraq in February, which suspended America retaliatory raids. Before Annan's visit to Iraq, President Chirac sent a personal letter to Saddam Hussein.

That led to the Iraqi foreign minister's visit to France—the first time since the Gulf War that an Iraqi representative had been received at such a high level in a leading western country. This enabled Chirac to spell out the grave risks Baghdad was taking and to urge co-operation with the last-ditch diplomatic initiative of the UN Secretary—General Kofi Annan. It was a French proposal that Annan took to Baghdad, outlining a face-saving formula in which diplomats would accompany the UN weapons inspectors. *TE* 23-2-98

The *Jerusalem Post* gave these details about the visit:

Kofi's ego was caressed too, in the traditional way of French diplomacy, who know better than anyone else how to handle dignitaries. The smaller the power base of such visitors, the bigger the display of flags, visits to the Elysee palace, a gourmet meal, warm handshakes for the cameras. This time Chirac outdid himself. There was the French presidential plane flying Annan to Baghdad. A red carpet on arrival back in Paris. A motorcade through the streets of the French capital with wailing police sirens to boot. The presidential suite at a prestigious hotel and so on.

And then to top it all, back to New York aboard an Air France supersonic Concorde plane. Little wonder Kofi Annan looked pleased on his return. In his hand he clutched his piece of paper made kosher by Saddam Hussein's signature. *JP* 3-98

After the attacks against Iraq in December, France voiced her condemnation of them.

Iran. In August, the French foreign minister visited Teheran.

By the time he headed back to Paris, analysts were talking feverishly of a "diplomatic partnership" between France and Iran—indeed between the European Union and Iran.

Iranian officials, who have been adamantly opposed to a diplomatic settlement with Israel and unyielding in their support for Hizbullah, were

clearly prepared to modify their position in exchange for the benefits of such a “partnership.”

...Iranian officials suggested they “could help resolve a number of regional conflicts.” And as an example of how this might translate into practical action, the Iranians volunteered to exert a “positive influence” on Hizbullah [active in Lebanon against Israel] if France and the EU were to recognise Teheran as a “diplomatic partner.”

Iranian President Mohammed Khatami was promptly handed an invitation, hand-written by French President Jacques Chirac, to make an official visit to France, the first such invitation to a senior Iranian leader since the 1979 revolution. It was gratefully and immediately accepted. *BIPAC* 3-9-98

Again in the last chapter we saw France’s involvement in the gas exploration in Iran, in spite of America maintaining sanctions against Iran, as far as US firms were concerned. America maintains that Iran still conducts terrorism abroad, and is committed to undermining the Arab-Israeli peace process, as well as developing nuclear and chemical weapons. EU however has declared that such sanctions “were not appropriate”. They agreed that efforts must still be taken to prevent Iran obtaining weapons of mass destruction.

Iran has been vigorously campaigning for foreign investors to develop her oil and gas industries, and to increase her production figures from the present 4.1 million barrels to 7 million. It is the first time since the 1979 revolution that Iran has opened the country to foreign exploration. At a meeting in London in July, Iran unveiled plans for 43 projects worth over £3 billion. *DT* 2-7-98.

The Vatican and the Middle East

The third player in the area is the Pope. In 1997, the Vatican forged diplomatic ties with Col. Gadaffi’s Libya. There are also close ties with the Palestinians—Yasser Arafat made his 6th visit to the Pope in June. Also in June was announced “**Pope poised for summit with Saddam**”. He plans to visit Iraq next year. February or October have been pencilled in.

Iraq fits well into the Vatican’s new foreign policy, which began recently to diverge from and therefore have a greater influence on the foreign policy of the United States, as the Pope’s visit to Cuba has shown. The Vatican has also demonstrated that in the run-up to the Millennium in which the Pope is setting so much in store, it is keen to court friends and extend the Church’s influence in the Middle East and Arab world. Last year the Vatican forged diplomatic ties with Tripoli, upsetting Washington.

The Holy See has justified its friendliness with the Libyans and Iraqis by saying it is concerned with the rights of Christian minorities living in their countries. But diplomats say the improvement of relations between

the Vatican and such regimes also serves to “burnish” its and the Pope’s own image in the Middle East.

Equally important is the embargo against Iraq. In the Pope’s eyes, the only real effect embargoes have is to increase the suffering of the country’s weak and poor. Moves to end the embargoes against different countries have now become a key factor in Vatican foreign policy.

In his homily in Baghdad, Cardinal Etchegaray spoke of the “injustice” of the economic weapon of sanctions that hurt civilians, especially children. He also had talks with Saddam’s deputy Tariq Aziz, and told him that the Church could play “a big role” in freeing his country from the embargo.
CH 19-6-98

The King of the North and King of the South powers

It is interesting to see how the Middle East is slowly being drawn into a North-South divide. In the past it was an East-West divide. Now countries are grouping around northern allies and southern. A few years ago in Desert Storm, many countries were happy to assist the US against Saddam Hussein. The picture has changed appreciably.

From Bible prophecy we know that the US, Britain and her Commonwealth friends will support Israel and be a power in the south of the Middle East with the southern Arab countries. In the north we witness the growing linkage between Europe, Russia and the northern Middle East, but including Libya as foretold by Ezekiel in his listing of countries in ch 38.

At the moment not all the southern Arab nations are happy for America to use their land for attacks against Saddam Hussein. They are fearful of what their position would be if America gave up and withdrew, leaving Saddam in power. In the December attacks, only Kuwaiti bases were used. Saudi Arabia was not happy for theirs to be used. Egypt opposed these strikes. Kuwait received a lot of criticism afterwards from fellow Arabs. Britain has sent an aircraft carrier to the Gulf, so that she would not be so dependent on land-based airfields if another strike is necessary.

Interestingly Britain is building up her naval forces again. In a far ranging strategic defence review, the Labour government committed itself to building up Britain’s naval power, to regain the Royal Navy’s position as the main strike force in future conflicts. It is proposing the building of three new-generation, giant aircraft carriers, which could give Britain the most powerful navy in the world after the US. *DT 8-2-98; ST 8-3-98*

In February the Queen launched the largest naval ship for 40 years - a helicopter assault ship. It has been planned from scratch to maximise the speedy delivery of Marines with their artillery, mortars and vehicles to battlefields. It has space for 20 attack helicopters. It is a highly efficient carrier, which is scheduled to enter service in 1999. *DT 20-2-98*

Interestingly Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates are low cost oil producers—typically around \$2 a barrel, and so are able to withstand low oil prices better than many. However, for every \$1 drop in oil price, Saudi loses \$2.5 billion a year in revenue. Prices have fallen around \$6 this year, and she is running a big budget deficit. Oman, Qatar, Yemen together with Algeria and Libya are classed as medium-cost producers—in the region of \$4.70 per barrel. Their revenues have been worse hit by the low prices. Libya is even thinking of turning to the IMF for a loan for the first time ever. *ID* 18-12-98. Many Arab countries are cancelling new projects, foreign workers are being sent home and nationals are having to do the menial tasks. The stock markets in the region have seen sharp falls this year.

With 75 year old King Fahd of Saudi Arabia being so ill, his half brother Abdullah is taking virtual control of the country. Although American troops were not allowed to launch attacks against Iraq from her territory, he is far from anti-American. In fact in October he was in America and met with US oil executives from companies who had been ejected two decades ago, when the industry was nationalised, and invited them to return and help develop new petroleum resources. About 5,000 American troops are permanently stationed in Saudi, which he is happy to retain. *Time* 19-10-98

Chapter 13

THE PAPACY

We have considered in earlier chapters the role of the papacy in the shaping of Europe. In this chapter we look at a few other matters.

The approaching jubilee

The Vatican has made extensive plans for the Year 2000 celebrations. They estimate that 30 million will congregate on Rome. The city is chronically unprepared for such numbers. In spite of a lot of talking, not many of the large-scale projects have got off the ground. Only about 55,000 beds are thought to be available.

For the Vatican this is a big celebration. The year 2000 has been declared a “Holy Year”, only the third this century. It will also be known as the “Holy Jubilee”, and the “Millennium Holy Year”. A total of 140 events have been planned spanning from December 24th 1999 to January 6th 2001. One of the most important events is one where the Pope is to seek “forgiveness” for “the sins of the church”, over the matters of the Inquisition and its role in fermenting anti-Semitism leading to the Holocaust.

Great planning has gone into these events. 1997 was dedicated to Jesus Christ, 1998 to the Holy Spirit, and 1999 to God the Father. What he hasn’t made plain is to whom the year 2000 is to be dedicated. It makes sense to assume that it will be Mary, it is after all the birth of her son that the world is supposed to be celebrating. In his “Apostolic letter *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*” published in 1994—an indication of the planning put in – the Pope looks back at the previous “Holy Year”—the *Marian Year* of 1986/87:

The Marian Year 1986/87 perhaps struck a more resounding chord; it was eagerly awaited and profoundly experienced in the individual local Churches, especially at the Marian Shrines around the world. The Encyclical *Redemptoris Mater*, issued on that occasion, drew attention to the Council’s teaching on the presence of the Mother of God in the mystery of Christ and the Church: two thousand years ago the Son of God was made man by the power of the Holy Spirit and was born of the Immaculate Virgin Mary. *The Marian Year was as it were an anticipation of the Jubilee*, and contained much of what will find fuller expression in the Year 2000.

Last year we reported on the plans to declare Mary as Co-redeemer. No more has been seen about this matter, but I am sure it will be unveiled next year. The published timetable of events lists the 15–24th September 2000 as the *International Marian-Mariological Congress* in Rome.

The Pope has re-introduced indulgences. These “enable the partial

cancellation of the penalty of one's sins." One of the traditional ways of gaining an indulgence is to take "Mass" at one of Rome's basilicas.

The Pope has made 84 foreign trips, created a bumper crop of 157 cardinals, beatified 805 people and canonised 280 "saints", and written 13 encyclicals in his 20-year reign. *DT* 15-10-98. One of those he beatified this year was the Croatian cardinal, Alojsije Stepinac, the wartime bishop of Zagreb. He was a prominent supporter of the Nazi regime. Any who have read Edmond Paris's books, *Convert...or Die!* or *The Vatican against Europe* will have some inkling of the atrocities that this man was party to. The Ustashi government was responsible for the deaths of some 750,000 Orthodox Serbs, 60,000 Jews and 26,000 gypsies, between the years of 1941—1945 in the former Yugoslavia. An estimated 240,000 Orthodox Serbs escaped a brutal death by "converting" to Roman Catholicism. A photograph shows an entry in Stepinac's own handwriting, in his diary for 1934. Translated, it reads "If we had more freedom and sufficient number of workers, Serbia would be catholicized within 20 years." The war gave him the freedom that he desired to impose his wishes on the hapless inhabitants of the country. The Roman Church has denied these atrocities, but her action in recognising the new state of Croatia indicates her involvement.

The Holy See was the first to "recognise" Croatia and Serbia in 1991; however, the precipitate act confirmed Serbian suspicions that the Ustashi—the wartime Nazi supporters—had the Vatican's backing. *Sunday Times* 18-10-98

We have already mentioned in chapter 3 that Germany's precipitate action in also recognising these states led to an inflaming of the Balkans contest. In choosing to beatify this man, who only died in 1960, the Pope will be putting him on the road to "sainthood" in near-record time. It normally is a fairly short step from beatification, to being declared a "saint".

Stepinac's forcible conversion of so many, and the expulsion or murder of the rest, contrasts with the Pope's words about religious freedom in the latest issue of *L'Osservatore Romano*—the official Vatican paper:

Religious Freedom—the Heart of Human Rights

Religion expresses the deepest aspirations of the human person, shapes people's vision of the world and affects their relationships with others: basically it offers the answer to the question of the true meaning of life, both personal and communal. Religious freedom therefore constitutes the very heart of human rights. Its inviolability is such that individuals must be recognised as having the right even to change their religion, if their conscience so demands. People are obliged to follow their conscience in all circumstances and cannot be forced to act against it. Precisely for this reason, no one can be compelled to accept a particular religion, whatever the circumstances or motives.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognises that the right to religious freedom includes the right to manifest personal beliefs, whether individually or with others, in public or in private. In spite of this, there still exist today places where the right to gather for worship is either not recognised or is limited to the members of one religion alone. This grave violation of one of the fundamental rights of the person is a source of enormous suffering for believers. When a State grants special status to one religion, this must not be to the detriment of the others. Yet it is common knowledge that there are nations in which individuals, families and entire groups are still being discriminated against and marginalised because of their religious beliefs.

Nor should we pass over in silence another problem indirectly linked to religious freedom. It sometimes happens that increasing tensions develop between communities or peoples of different religious convictions and cultures, which, because of the strong passions involved, turn into violent conflict. Recourse to violence in the name of religious belief is a perversion of the very teachings of the major religions.

This from the church that practises religious discrimination and intimidation, where it has the power, but calls for freedom where it does not. This is the False Prophet speaking, with “frog-like” words, who deceives the nations, causing them to drink of the wine in her cup.

The role of Mary

The present Pope was described as having an “ardent and unfashionable devotion to Mary” at the time of his election, 20 years ago. He has made that worship very fashionable. He constantly appeals for her help and guidance, esteeming her “motherly” instincts of more certain action than of her son—not that of course she is alive! As is his tradition, he assembled on December 8th to celebrate her “immaculate conception”, in the Roman Piazza di Spagna. Here in 1854 a giant statue of Mary was erected on top of a high column. Around her head is the circle of 12 stars—the EU symbol. After a long prayer addressed to her, he added:

We entrust our city, the Church and the whole world to you. May you be the “*Tota Pulchra*” [the all beautiful] who guides us in hope through the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000 towards the future, because you, O Mary, are the Mother of hope. *LOR* 16-12-98

A few days earlier he had spoken of Mary’s work:-

Mary intercedes for the Church as a mother and leads her on the path of holiness and docility to the Paraclete [advocate; intercessor; spirit]. At the dawn of the new Millennium we can joyfully discern the “Marian profile” of the Church which epitomises the deepest meaning of conciliar [issued by a council] renewal. *LOR* 2-12-98

Chapter 14

TROUBLOUS TIMES – THE LORD IS AT HAND

We close our Milestones review with words of encouragement, surely the Lord is at hand. Jesus instructed his disciples in the signs that their generation would see, leading to the AD 70 destruction. He warned of famines, pestilences and earthquakes. He also warned of persecutions. Surely we should expect similar troubles as the momentous day of the Lord draws near.

“The world is a far more disastrous place to be”

That was the very appropriate headline in *The Times* in their last but one issue of 1998.

Large-scale natural disasters are three times as common as they were in the 1960s, experts said yesterday as they declared 1998 the most calamitous on record.

Damage from catastrophic storms and floods is also costing many billions of pounds more, according to Munich Re, one of the biggest re-insurance companies, which has been monitoring natural disasters for a quarter of a century.

...The cost to the world's economies, after adjusting for inflation is nine times higher [than in the 60s] and for the insurance industry three times as much. *TT* 30-12-98.

This year around the globe there have been ice storms in Canada, heat waves in the US and Greece, floods in Britain, Europe, Bangladesh and India, fires in Brazil, Greece and the US, many hurricanes in America, earthquakes in Afghanistan, mudslides in Italy. These are but some of the 700 “large-loss events” that claimed the lives of some 50,000 people across the globe in 1998. This made the year the most expensive on record for all disasters, apart from the 1995 Kobe earthquake in Japan.

Religious freedom, do we take it for granted?

There are signs that with increasing power accruing to it from the political union in Europe, the Roman Church will increase pressure on non-conformists. We already see the pressures the Vatican is exerting on Israel at the moment over Jerusalem. A *Jerusalem Post* article highlighted some of the actions against Israel, and it asked a question:

These actions raise the question of whether the policies of the Vatican have changed fundamentally. Is the Vatican ready to accept the Jewish religion on the basis of mutual respect and full equality, as is the case with Islam or Buddhism, or is conversion, whether by threat or other means, still its dominant goal? In Rome, across the street from the

central synagogue, a Hebrew inscription on a church wall, where Jews were once forced to attend sermons on Catholicism, still calls on Jews to abandon their religion.

The Vatican did not establish formal relations with Israel until 1994, and since then, its leaders have often joined the chorus of one-sided criticism of Israeli policy in negotiations with the Palestinians. JP 11-1-99

The article points out that when Jewish “holy” sites were under Arab control, up to 1976, the Vatican did not raise a protest at the systematic desecration and destruction of these sites, nor the barring of Jews from them. Now Jerusalem is under Jewish control, the Vatican wants it to be “the common patrimony of the whole of humanity”. It also points out the rising anti-Semitism in Russia.

In Germany too, there are growing signs of anti-Semitism. Interestingly it is not just the Jews who are suffering. In the British House of Lords there is a committee which keeps a watch on “human rights”. In 1996, this committee went to Germany on a fact-finding tour, after receiving reports about religious and minority discrimination there. They published the third edition of their first report on this visit, and their subsequent investigations, in March 1998.

We have to say from the outset that we were completely unprepared for the sheer scale of prejudice, discrimination and even persecution, which our witnesses recounted. What has astonished us is that in a rich, democratic country certain rather unpleasant things seem to have been happening to members of what are officially categorised as sects or *Sekten*—religious and *Weltanschauung* (world view) groups which are not part of the rather narrowly defined religious establishment.

...Christian and non-Christian, new religions or long established minority denominations, face a wall of bureaucratic obstruction and official hostility, fuelled also by a hostile media. The rising statistics of anti-Semitism are profoundly depressing.

The committee came to the conclusion that Germany is beginning to tread a dangerously similar path to that which she has trodden once already this century. One of their several recommendations was that the hierarchies of both established churches [R.C. and Lutheran] should “urge and educate the priests and pastors under their responsibility to respect the religious beliefs of others.” They also added:

Our inescapable conclusion is that significant elements within the state and church apparatus have been brought to bear on these minority religions and philosophies in an attempt to destroy them. It dawned on us that we can only make sense of this intense effort if it is the prelude to something else, something far bigger and more important. We were unable to work out in the short time available what this bigger project

may be. *The First Report of the Ad Hoc Committee to investigate discrimination against religious and ethnic minorities in Germany*. 32 pages.

A report from France indicates the government is considering a permanent independent body to study sects which would have the power to initiate court proceedings against them. They want to change the law so that sects, which can register as civil associations, will in the future be able to be penalised or dissolved if the Government can prove its activities “trouble public order, endanger human life or the security of the state.” *CH* 1-5-98. These powers can easily be misused. The EU is drawing up its own rules:

The EU is considering a resolution that could restrict religious freedom in Europe by ignoring the special status of religion in society and equating it with goods or services from which consumers need protection and by establishing an information centre to collect data on so-called cults. *TR* 3-98

In Britain the government was forced to make last-minute changes to the bill to incorporate the EU human rights convention into British law. Without the amendments it would have allowed prosecution for discriminating against, say, women priests, homosexual preachers, etc. We as a community are viewed as discriminatory; we would have been open to prosecution. Other countries have not built in the safeguards that Britain now has. It seems that Australia hasn't. It also appears that America is hoping to introduce a bill to establish an Office of Religious Persecution Monitoring. It sounds harmless, but it would allow sanctions and penalties against individuals, churches and organisation who do not comply with federal guidelines, including those who assert “their religion” or “their scriptures” or “their deity” is exclusive or superior to all others.

Then there are our brethren and sisters in Eastern Europe and Russia who are facing real persecution. What they face now, we might experience here. How rapidly religious suppression spread in Germany in the time leading up to and during the 1939–45 War!

The Lord is at hand

Surely we can lift up our heads and rejoice as we see the abounding signs that the Master is at the door. Many events still need to unfold, but every one of them can be during our stay at the Judgement seat. Let us stir ourselves up and patiently wait for the Master's call. This is the only thing that really matters in life; the world of every-day is soon destined to perish. It will be rolled away to reveal the new heavens and earth wherein dwells righteousness. So come Lord Jesus!

Milestones 1998

1998 has proved to be another year of action! In so many ways our traditional understanding of Bible prophecy has been reinforced.

Milestones pulls together so many stands, from the Iraqi situation, to the birth of the euro; the faltering peace talks, to the growth of anti-Semitism; Israel's ties with Turkey, to France's drive to oust American influence in the Middle East.

This year our review centres around **the Beast** and **the Harlot Woman** who rides the Beast as outlined in **Revelation 17**.

- This year has seen the birth of the euro €, - likened to the Tower of Babel by the media. We trace the origins of Babel and Babylon, and see how today's drive is recreating the Latter-day Beast system.
- France and Germany move into overdrive to attain their dreams of a united Europe
- We see the growing reluctance of Britain to be drawn into this Federal Europe
- Russia is suffering, but her hand is growing in the Middle East
- Israel is boasting that they would soon be one of the richest societies on the earth! Does this not remind you of Ezekiel 38:12?
- We update the threats to the religious freedom we currently enjoy.

Let us be warned by this invaluable review of current events that herald the nearness of the Master's return.

