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FORECAST FOR 2004

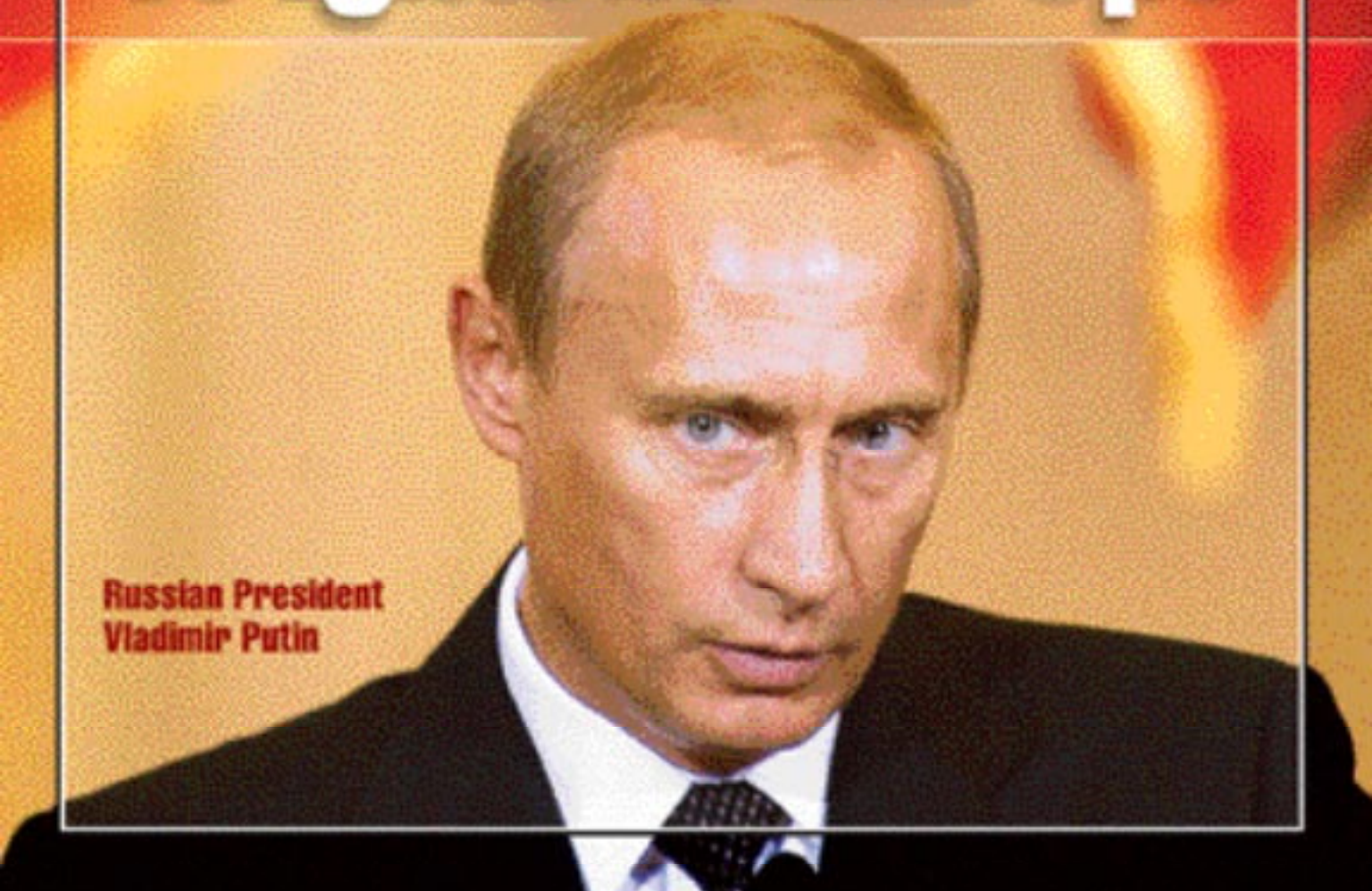
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The Philadelphia

Trumpet

Russian Election Frightens Europe

**Russian President
Vladimir Putin**



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and Fulfills Bible Prophecy**
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ON THE COVER: President Vladimir Putin is consolidating his power within Russia. (Reuters)



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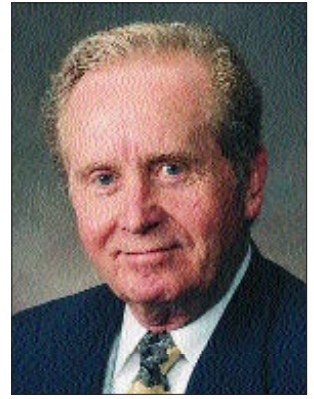
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Russia Frightens Europe— and Fulfills Bible Prophecy

RUSSIAN ELECTIONS HAVE RECENTLY MOVED PRESIDENT Vladimir Putin much closer to becoming a dictator. This strikes intense fear in Europe. The Europeans still remember how violent Russia was in World War II, and Russia is a close neighbor with massive piles of nuclear weapons.

Reading about the shocking election and Europe's acute fear caused a Bible prophecy to flash into my mind. It is a prophecy that is already building toward being fulfilled! It shows how these events fit into the framework of Bible prophecy. Therefore, I will discuss Bible prophecy a little more than I normally do in my Personal. World events almost demand that I do so!

The Russian election is triggering a fear that will hasten the uniting of the European Union. The Russian election will cause Germany and other European nations to want a stronger leader. Throughout history, Germany has often sought a strong leader. Bible prophecy says it will do so again—for the last time!

These events are about a rapidly approaching World War III. (You can prove this for yourself by writing for our free booklet *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire*.) The world must be warned. This is all very bad news, but is it leading directly to the best news we could ever hear!

According to the Dec. 9, 2003, *Wall Street Journal*, Putin “already has felt the sting of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe [OSCE], which said the weekend’s elections ‘did not meet international standards.’ Yet the OSCE was spot-on when it termed the elections ‘a regression in the democratization of this country.’ Mr. Putin has acquiesced to, if not instigated, some serious manipulation of the electoral process in assuring a victory by the United Russia party. The inequality of airtime on national broadcast media and the near-monopolization of city billboards in the immediate run-up, for instance, tells a story of a far-from-even playing field.

“To be sure, Mr. Putin has not moved liberal, market-oriented technocrats from key positions in the economics and finance ministries. What the elections foretell is a compliant Duma [lower house of parliament] implementing the agenda of an essentially liberal government, albeit one that wants more control of its SINGLE MOST STRATEGIC ASSET, OIL. But that parliament will be compliant there is little doubt. . . .

“This means that if Mr. Putin wants to take Russia in the direction of dictatorship (or, as fashionable jargon has it, toward ‘managed democracy’) the Duma could speed him on his way. If he wants to take Russia in the direction of liberal democracy, it is less likely to cooperate” (emphasis mine throughout).

Russia’s “single most strategic asset” is oil. Mr. Putin is going

to control that asset, no matter how much Western powers thunder in protest. Oil profits will help to place Russia back on the world stage as a dominant world power.

Russia has been outside the mainstream of world affairs for over a decade. But now it is moving back to the center of global events, and even the Russian people don’t understand why it is happening. But you can know. All we need to do is understand the Bible, which tells us to watch world events—not dates.

World events will date the Bible’s prophecies and reveal where we are in the overall time frame.

A more dictatorial Russian government is coming fast, and you need to know where it is leading. That power will be able to challenge Europe, when nobody else can, including the U.S. The EU is going to become the world’s number-one superpower. So says Bible prophecy.

Political Earthquake

“With the detention of Russia’s richest man and boss of Yukos [Mikhail Khodorkovsky], the country’s largest oil company, it is becoming clear that Russia is undergoing A PROFOUND POLITICAL CONVULSION. This amounts to nothing less than the birth of THE SECOND RUSSIAN REPUBLIC. . . . The new republic will continue to be a mixture of market and state-controlled economic forces. But it will be a country in which President Vladimir Putin controls both the political and economic levers of power. THE RUSSIAN PRESIDENT HAS STAGED HIS OWN COUP” (*Foreign Report*, Nov. 5, 2003).

Some journalists see that this is a political earthquake on the world scene! The world should take note. Russia is indeed “UNDERGOING A PROFOUND POLITICAL CONVULSION”—one that will convulse Europe and many other nations!

Mr. Putin has just changed the course of world history. And Bible prophecy reveals exactly where it is leading.

This article also discusses “the birth of the Second Russian Republic”! A new Russia has just been born. And Mr. Putin “HAS STAGED HIS OWN COUP”! He has taken over this new Russia. Now the world has another major reason to tremble!

And behind all these changes of such staggering magnitude is an invisible power, assuring that a master plan is being fulfilled. As Winston Churchill said, “There is a purpose being worked out here below.” The nations are blind to where these events are leading. But they should know, because this message has been proclaimed for over 60 years. Even if the nations fail to heed, you can have God’s protection, wherever you may live on this Earth. Individuals have an opportunity to heed this warning, regardless of what the leaders of nations do.

Russia is “undergoing a profound political convulsion”—one that will convulse Europe and many other nations!

This Earth is 10,000 times more dangerous than ever before! Now is the time to learn what is happening and where this world is headed and why—and what you can do about it.

NEVER IN THE HISTORY OF MAN HAS SO MUCH PROPHECY BEEN FULFILLED IN SUCH A SHORT SPAN OF TIME!

This is a time of supreme crisis. But it's also a time of unparalleled opportunity to know what is happening, and how you can be a part of the greatest work on Earth! Never has there been such a wonderful opportunity for so many people.

Russia has a vital role to play in World War III. You need to understand this urgent and world-shaking event. It will affect your life. (Write for our free booklet *Russia and China in Prophecy*.)

Russian politician Grigory Yavlinsky said, "A real and serious danger is not a return to the Communist past, but the CREATION OF A NEW AUTHORITARIAN OR TOTALITARIAN SYSTEM, which is based on different ideological principles and goes very well with a market economy" (Radio Netherlands, May 15, 2001).

This is "A NEW AUTHORITARIAN OR TOTALITARIAN SYSTEM," with many weapons of mass destruction! This should deeply concern every person on Earth. But most people are asleep.

We must heed the warning of Bible prophecy. If not, we will be jarred out of our sleep by the worst crisis in man's history!

God is sending His warning message through this work, and people should *tremble*. If they don't tremble now, they will tremble, and perhaps die, when these events come to pass.

While the world may think Russia is disarming its nuclear power under agreements with the West, the opposite is true. Note the new aggressive tone of Russia. Discussing Putin's defense and strategic policy, Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov said last October that the role of nuclear weapons remained "a key feature of Russia's defense strategy and that Moscow did not preclude the possibility of *pre-emptive strikes*, if the need arose, to defend its interests or those of its allies" (*Frontline*, Nov. 22 - Dec. 5, 2003). This was different from Putin's policy as stated in 2000, which "made no mention of pre-emptive strikes in the case of allies' interests" (*ibid.*).

In 2000, Russia publicly stated that its nuclear stockpiles were for defensive purposes. Now VLADIMIR PUTIN IS TALKING ABOUT "PRE-EMPTIVE STRIKES." THAT MEANS RUSSIA COULD STRIKE FIRST WITH THAT VAST NUCLEAR ARSENAL!

At the same time, experts tell us that once a nuclear war starts, it CANNOT be stopped.

Such a monstrous, Russian nuclear power is going to impact this world. The nuclear genie is out of the bottle. Have we already reached the point of no return?

How can these words and events not strike fear in all of us? Do we realize this Earth is like a ticking nuclear bomb, waiting to explode?

This world is in a kind of madness! It is precisely the way Christ prophesied that it would be almost 2,000 years ago. "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved [alive]: but for the elect's sake those days shall be

shortened" (Matt. 24:21-22). These words should cause us to tremble—and repent!

If Christ didn't intervene and stop the madness, there would be no flesh saved alive. Not one person or animal would be left alive!

Still, this world will yet see its worst suffering ever before Christ mercifully intervenes.

Do the major media carry more weight with us than Christ's own words? Do we listen to our political leaders more than we heed Christ's own warnings?

It's time for plain speaking and writing.

Putin Shaped by KGB

Stratfor wrote this about the Russian election: "What bothers the OSCE is less the hardball campaign tactics than the size of Putin's win. Putin has nearly a two-thirds majority in both chambers of parliament. The liberal parties have been devastated. The Communist Party is Putin's main opposition. Putin's ally is the right-wing politician [Vladimir] Zhirinovskiy. [He has already shocked the world with some of his dangerously

extreme statements. What if he should get control of Russia's nuclear weapons?] The shape of Russian politics is shifting as anti-authoritarian parties disappear. Increasingly, the choice is between mild or hard authoritarianism.

"MOST IMPORTANT, IF PUTIN DOES GET A TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY IN PARLIAMENT, HE WILL BE IN A POSITION TO PASS CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS. He can pass amendments, for example, on the length of a presidential term, or whether a president can run for a third term. Indeed, with the ability to change Russia's constitution, Putin could reshape the presidential elections scheduled for March, should he choose to do so.

"Putin is emerging with an interesting mix of positions. Certainly, he is determined to create a strong presidency that focuses on national security issues. At the same time, he continues to endorse free market reforms. In a sense, we are reminded of the KGB's position under Yuri Andropov. THE KGB—THE INSTITUTION THAT SHAPED PUTIN—sought economic modernization and institutional restructuring—not to weaken the state, but to save it. ...

"And that is why the OSCE is getting NERVOUS—not so much because of Putin's election practices as the magnitude of his victory and the way he likely will put that victory to use. Putin is, first and last, a Russian nationalist, utterly pragmatic (or ruthless) in the tools he will use to strengthen the Russian state. HE HAS GREATER POWER NOW THAN ANYONE IN RUSSIA SINCE THE COLLAPSE OF COMMUNISM. HE CAN RESHAPE THE REGIME. Consequently, the OSCE and Europe are NERVOUS about where Putin is taking Russia. They have every reason to be: Putin is slowly and systematically changing Russia's direction. When Russia changes direction, the rest of Europe should indeed be NERVOUS" (Dec. 9, 2003).

Europeans are not the only people who should be nervous. The whole world should be alarmed. MR. PUTIN WAS SHAPED AND MOLDED BY THE INFAMOUS KGB—RUSSIA'S RUTHLESS, MURDEROUS SECRET SERVICE ARM OF THE GOVERNMENT MADE FAMOUS BY JOSEPH STALIN.



MOVING AHEAD Putin discusses expanding Russia's military in Central Asia with his defense minister (right)

Obviously, people can change. But how often do we see people make truly radical changes in their lives? Has Mr. Putin now become a freedom-loving democrat? Not likely.

The Solution

Stratfor used the word *nervous* three times for special emphasis. Europe has not forgotten Russia's recent dictatorial history. It is *nervous* for good reason. And it is going to get a lot more nervous in a few short years.

Europe's becoming very nervous about the outcome of the Russian election gives us a flash of light into a terrifying Bible prophecy. It is building now—at this moment—to a spectacular fulfillment!

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. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon" (Dan. 11:40-41). The king of the north is a united Europe, and the king of the south is radical Islam led by Iran. (Write for our free booklet *The King of the South*.)

Europe will win this war. But that victory will trigger some other events. Europe will then ally itself with the moderate Arabs and attack America, Britain and the nation called Israel.

Many Bible prophecies thunder that truth. Only repentance can save our nations.

Then Russia will ally with China and other Asian nations. They know that they are next on Europe's hit list—the world's new number-one superpower, which likes to attack without warning. Germany has a history of such treachery—and Germany leads the EU. That is the ideal way to win nuclear wars. So Russia and China will gather their armies on the borders of Europe. This move will make Europe intensely NERVOUS! So much so that they will attack Russia and China.

"But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him" (vv. 44-45). This is where the rise of Europe and Russia is leading. It is building now even as I write.

The "tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him"—united Europe. That means the frightening news comes from the northeast. Look on any world map and see who is located northeast of Europe—Russia and China, which will soon unite.

Remember, this is an end-time book (Dan. 12:4, 9). We must understand who these nations are today, or Daniel will have prophesied in vain! So God gives us the specific time fac-

Europe's becoming very nervous about the outcome of the Russian election GIVES US A FLASH OF LIGHT INTO A TERRIFYING BIBLE PROPHECY. IT IS BUILDING NOW—AT THIS MOMENT—TO A SPECTACULAR FULFILLMENT! All of these events in Russia and Europe are working out according to God's master plan.

"And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him

tor and the direction of where Europe's enemy is located!

It gets even more detailed. When this World War III clash comes, God's very elect will be counting the days until Christ returns! "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand. And from the time that the daily sacrifice [God's work and warning message] shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up [the European armies], there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days. But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days" (vv. 10-13).

Can you imagine our being very close to counting the days until Christ's Second Coming? How magnificent! How wonderful!

These prophecies are being rapidly fulfilled before our eyes. It's all happening exactly as Daniel and other prophets prophesied thousands of years ago. Never have we seen so many prophecies fulfilled so fast. How many people are going to believe God?

Will you believe God?

CZAR PUTIN?

PRESIDENT PUTIN SEEMS TO HAVE DONE SOMETHING THAT would make him the envy of any national leader: He has won the trust of the majority of his people.

The December 7, 2003, parliamentary elections in Russia closed with the Putin-endorsed United Russia party winning nearly 37 percent of the vote. Combined with other Putin-supporting allied parties, the president's support totaled around 58 percent.

Half of the Duma's 450 seats are apportioned based on the vote for each party that receives more than 5 percent of the total. The other seats are determined by individual candidates in local constituencies. If Putin-supporting candidates gain in individual constituency votes, this could easily give the Kremlin the two-thirds majority needed to change the constitution. Rumors abound that Putin is planning to extend the presidential terms beyond the current two-term maximum, retaining his power for years to come.

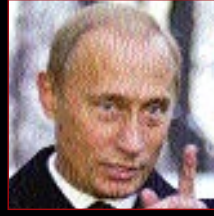
What does this all mean for Russia? Putin's enormous popularity—over 80 percent according to recent polls—and his near-certain re-election in the upcoming March presidential elections, mean that Russia's president has essentially been handed over a great deal more power.

What is astonishing is that he has amassed the trust of his people without telling them much about what he plans to do. "Analysts agreed what was most striking about the election was that so few people had the slightest clue what Putin would do next since United Russia's main plank has been simply to support the president—and no other serious issue had arisen" (Agence France Presse, Dec. 8, 2003).

Putin has demonstrated his willingness to wield a heavy hand, most recently in the arrest of tycoons on charges of tax evasion and embezzlement. Accused by some as authoritarian, this approach has nonetheless gone down well with the public. What is certain is that Putin's grip on power and his corresponding willingness to apply it will only increase

Return to Totali-

AUTHORITY
Ivan IV,



Perestroika, glasnost and the demise of the Soviet Union may have led the world to believe that a different nation has emerged than the one that threatened Western values for more than 40 years. But has Russia's leadership really changed?

The unique character of individual nations tends to remain constant and resurfaces repeatedly in history. As political scientist Hans Morgenthau wrote, "[C]ertain qualities of intellect and character occur more frequently and are more highly valued in one nation than in another" (*Politics Among Nations*).

Morgenthau described Russia's national character: "In Russia the tradition of *obedience to the authority of the government* and the traditional *fear of the foreigner* have made large permanent military establishments acceptable to the population" (ibid., emphasis mine throughout). By the same token, this Russian mindset has allowed totalitarian rulers to rise time and again throughout Russia's history.

For centuries, Russia's government was authoritarian. First under the House of Rurik, characterized by Tsar Ivan IV (the Terrible), through to the House of Romanov, Russia was ruled by an autocratic monarchy.

But by 1914, autocratic rule had taken its toll on the citizenry. Finally, Russia's staggering losses in World War I proved to be too much. The human suffering, years of deprivation, and absolute destruction of human hope in the Russian working class culminated in the October 1917 revolution, which ended Russia's monarchy. Imperial Russia was renamed the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).

Communism became the official state ideology, with Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin—all leaders in the revolution—struggling for power. In 1929, Stalin emerged victorious following Lenin's

death five years earlier and Trotsky's subsequent exile. He imposed a rigid dictatorship and, within 12 years of briefly flirting with rule by committee, returned to strong autocratic, dictatorial government. True to type, the national character of Russia gravitated toward submission to authoritarian rule.

In the decades following Stalin's death in 1953, various seeming attempts were made to de-Stalinize the country. Then, in 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev became the Russian premier.

Under Gorbachev's rule, it appeared to the West as though Russia was liberalizing its socio-economic structure. However, Gorbachev's weakening of centralized control, just as Ronald Reagan enacted his rollback policy, forcing the USSR economy into huge debt, brought the nation close to bankruptcy. Added to this, the CIA-Vatican initiatives in Poland broke the first link in the chain that bound the USSR together. By 1991, Gorbachev had dissolved the USSR.

Russia's next leader, Boris Yeltsin, was elected as the country's first president. Two years later, he strengthened presidential powers by introducing a new constitution. At the same time, he tried to transform the existing state-owned economy into a Western-style private enterprise system in order to revive the country. The ironic result was economic power and wealth falling into the hands of a few private owners of industry—the oligarchs. The failure of this restructuring led to Yeltsin's demise and the rise of Vladimir Putin.

Putin, elected in March 2000, immediately took action to move the country in the direction he wanted it to go. He stepped up governmental control over the various Russian administrative units, and gained the power to oust governors and dissolve legislatures that enacted unconstitutional laws.

At the same time, Putin actively pursued a close relationship with the West

in order to reverse Russia's tragic political and economic track record. U.S. President Bush has called Putin a man he can trust. But is Putin really different from Russia's past leaders?

The answer rests in the understanding of Russia's national character—the longing for strong authority, and the traditional mistrust of foreigners. The current form of government in Russia is termed a *presidential republic*—meaning, the *president* makes the rules. It is an autocratic form of government, and Putin is prepared to fight for it. When oligarchs initiated an official attempt last year to change Russia into a parliamentary republic, Putin strongly responded, "... I believe that for Russia in its present-day form, what with the complex composition of the federation, and Russia's multi-ethnic and multi-faith composition, *any system of government other than a presidential republic is unacceptable* and, moreover, DANGEROUS" (BBC, June 20, 2003).

This revealed Putin's true approach to government. Further, his more recent crackdown on the oligarchs when they challenged his oil economics policies reveals the extent he will go to to strengthen his own power. Basically, as Stratfor states, Putin will not tolerate a situation where he has to "share control with them" (Oct. 28, 2003).

Since coming to power, Putin has established a strategy of using the West in an arrangement of convenience to rebuild imperial Russia. To revive the economy, Putin invited Western investment into Russia—especially in the energy sector. Next, he moved to control the capitalists, and return to the old centralized authority. To get to this point, "Putin has spent much of his four years as president *whittling away at dissident voices* within Russia to both secure his rule and chart a path for the country" (Stratfor, Nov. 13, 2003).

Putin has learned a lot from his predecessors. By eliminating opposition and securing his political power, he has ensured he won't be brought down from within the country. In so doing, he is gaining strong support from the populace—a people who traditionally, for centuries, have tended to support autocratic leadership.

Under Putin, we can see Russia, once again, quietly, with the slow yet deliberate ponderousness of a bear, returning to strength under totalitarian leader-



Launch Into

SOARING

Students celebrate China's first manned space flight October 15.

Breaking from the shackles of isolation, China is rapidly becoming an integral player in the game of geopolitics.

How will its success impact global dynamics?

BY BRAD MACDONALD

UNTIL RECENTLY, ONLY THE UNITED States and the former USSR could boast of sending a man to orbit the Earth. That changed late last year, when, in October, the People's Republic of China launched the manned spacecraft *Shenzhou 5* into space. After orbiting Earth 14 times, *Shenzhou* ("divine vessel") landed safely on the plains of northern China. China now plans to build on this success and land a man on the moon within two decades.

What is the significance of this event? Its implications go far beyond the realm of science into that of global politics.

Shortly after the launch, the *Economist* wrote, "The first manned space shot will, China hopes, also advertise the reliability of its commercial satellite-launch services ... strengthen its claim to a seat at any future space-negotiation

top table; reinforce its influence in Asia; and through such heavenly exploits, put China firmly on the terrestrial great-power map" (Oct. 18, 2003).

In today's technology-oriented world, launching a man into space is one of the most dramatic demonstrations of a nation's power. Space travel is about far more than science and exploration. *It's about power.* An advanced space program indicates an advanced nation. Thus, the net geopolitical gains of space travel are well worth the costs.

Through its highly advanced space program, China is not-so-subtly informing the world that it desires more global respect—militarily, geopolitically and economically. China is now a force to be reckoned with.

So what does China's mounting regional and global influence mean for Asia—and for the world?

Trade and Economic Expansion

Traditionally, China has been a politically abrasive, isolated nation, reluctant to join the game of international diplomacy. Twenty years ago, to many nations, China represented famine, poverty, widespread unemployment, poor human rights, Mao Zedong and Tiananmen Square.

Chinese officials have spent the last two decades trying to dig China out of this hole. Although great economic strides have been made and conditions for the Chinese people have improved, this mission continues. Beginning with Deng Xiaoping in 1978, followed by Jiang Zemin in the early 1990s and now Hu Jintao, a new China is rapidly rising. These days, for many urban Chinese, famine and poverty are being progressively transformed into abundance and wealth.

Chinese leadership has primarily used two mechanisms to foster this resurrection. First, over the past two decades the Communist government has progressively privatized many government-controlled institutions and encouraged capitalist ventures by its citizens. Thus, private enterprise has increased significantly. Second, Beijing has strenuously engaged itself in international affairs, particularly trade and commercial negotiations. Even private companies have been encouraged to strike up relationships with other nations in almost every sector, including trade, finance, military, security, tourism, transport and agriculture. Abandoning the isolationist mentality, Deng and succeeding leaders have thrust Chinese diplomats into a range of international organizations, agreements, committees and bodies. China is now represented at most prominent international events and meetings. Bilateral and multilateral relationships are now a key part of China's foreign policy.

All this fancy diplomatic footwork is paying off in the form of growing economic and trade relations with other nations—particularly China's Asian neighbors. With a gigantic labor force, and an insatiable thirst for knowledge and advancement, China has become a net importer of technical expertise and grown into a massive exporter of a wide range of products from technological hardware to agricultural goods.

Foreign Affairs summarized China's economic and trade advancement in its November/December 2003 issue: "The world's most populous nation has radi-



tion Organization with its central Asian neighbors. In 2002, Beijing uncharacteristically made overtures to NATO, initiating communication with the American-led alliance. In October last year, China announced its Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity with the Association of Southeast Asian nations (ASEAN), focused on developing long-term peace and sustainable development in the region.

This is a China the world has never seen before.

Military

Although much more covertly developed, China's military program is expanding. With more than 200 million males fit for military service and an extensive inventory of military hardware, China has the potential for one of the largest militaries in the world.

A concern for China, however, is that much of this hardware is growing obsolete. Thus, Chinese officials have been upgrading, particularly naval hardware, over the past few years, including adding submarines and destroyers from Russia.

China's ability to put its military into action was made evident at the end of last year, although on a small scale, when it conducted joint naval exercises with India in the seas off Shanghai.

China's rapidly developing space program is possibly the most important of its recent initiatives, simply because of the strategic implications to the nation's security and prosperity. In war or peace, nations that control space control the world. (See "Space Wars" in the December 2003 *Trumpet*). "... China's objectives in space reflect broad commercial and military interests. [T]he PRC views the exploitation of space as an integral part of its modernization drive, a top priority on Beijing's national agenda" (*Washington Quarterly*, Fall 2003).

Through its highly sophisticated space program, and by working with the EU in developing the Galileo navigational system, China is now ready to be launched onto the global security scene.

Goodbye, America

Most news analysts are viewing China's systematic rise to power far too naively. Not that it is going unnoticed—this success story is being reported worldwide. Yet, too few understand the implications of increasing Chinese dominance for the

cally liberalized its economy and gone from producing low-quality and simple exports to sophisticated high-technology goods, while nurturing a vibrant private sector and attracting *nearly \$500 billion in foreign direct investment (FDI)*. The country has turned into a formidable exporting machine: China's total exports grew eightfold—to over \$380 billion—between 1990 and 2003; and its exports in the electronics industry now account for 30 percent of Asia's total in that sector. China's share of global exports will reach 6 percent in 2003, compared to 3.9 percent in 2000. [In 2002], *China accounted for 16 percent of the growth in the world economy, ranking second only to the United States*" (emphasis mine throughout). No nation or group of nations compares to China in terms of the rate of recent growth and expansion.

China's increasing international influence was demonstrated again last October when China and the European Union signed two important agreements: China's pledge of 200 million euros to support Galileo, the EU's satellite navigation project; and the relaxation of visa restrictions for Chinese tourists visiting Europe (*www.EUobserver.com*, Oct. 31, 2003).

At a joint news conference, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao said he hoped the EU would become China's "biggest partner in economic and trade relations" (*ibid.*). As it stands today, China is the EU's third-largest trade partner—behind only the U.S. and Japan—with annual trade worth 86 billion euros (us\$106 billion). If the EU displaces the U.S. as China's major trading partner, this would not bode well for the American bond market.

European newspaper *Deutsche Welle* said this about German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder's visit to China in early December: "The chancellor's main purpose in touring China is to promote business ties between the two countries Economic relations between Germany and China are flourishing. German exports to China doubled during the first half of 2003. While China has replaced Japan as Germany's most important trade partner in Asia, Germany has become the biggest European investor there" (Dec. 1, 2003). Schröder is even calling on the EU to lift its arms embargo on China so it can sell weapons to the nation.

Political Influence

Because of China's huge export-based economy and numerous trade agreements, red-carpet treatment can be expected by Chinese officials as they traipse the globe negotiating and meeting with fellow world leaders. Chinese President Hu Jintao was inducted into office less than a year ago and has already traveled outside Chinese borders more times than both of the presidents before him combined.

Backed by its burgeoning economy and trade, China's political clout has increased significantly over the past decade. Since the mid-1990s especially, Beijing has been working overtime to develop stronger relationships, particularly with those nations closest to its own borders. In 2001, the geopolitical success stories under China's belt included accession to the World Trade Organization, signing the Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation with Russia, and establishing the Shanghai Coopera-

rest of the world.

What plans does China have for Asia? How will China's increasing global influence impact the United States and the global balance of power?

As China's prestige increases, American power is being challenged, especially in Asia. Since World War II, the U.S. has had strong allies in Asia, particularly Japan and the Philippines. Even today, many Asian nations, including Thailand, work closely with America—especially in the war against terrorism. *But for how long?*

Concurrently, China is also working more intimately than ever with these same nations. The *Far Eastern Economic Review* presented the likely outcome of this Sino-American m  le: "China's feverish economic diplomacy has forged closer ties with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations [incorporating 10 Asian nations], Japan and South Korea, stimulating trade and investment that the United States warmly welcomes. *But behind Beijing's 'win-win' rhetoric of gains for everyone lies another agenda that Washington may find less palatable in the long run.* In a little-noticed 'Strategic Partnership' agreement, which China and ASEAN quietly signed in Bali in early October, are buried the seeds of *closer security cooperation* that analysts and officials say China aims to use to *dilute American influence in the region*" (Nov. 20, 2003).

The article quoted a senior ASEAN official: "They want a situation in Southeast Asia that automatically takes into account China's interests. *The whole objective of the policy is to avoid strategic encirclement by the U.S.*" (ibid.). China is finally acting on its long-held ambitions to unite East Asia and is squeezing out U.S. interests there.

Beijing's plans for its Asian brothers extend beyond the south and east. "*China's ambitions stretch farther than ASEAN.* ... China has a road map that envisages a Northeast Asia Free-Trade Agreement encompassing Japan and Korea, and a pan-regional East Asian FTA. Chinese commentators, reflecting official thinking, envisage an East Asian economic and security community with institutions like an Asian Monetary Fund and an Organization of East Asian Cooperation within five years" (ibid.).

Foreign Affairs wrote, "China is rapidly emerging as the engine of growth in Asia, which affords it increasing influ-

ence and leverage. Although the United States remains the strategic incumbent there, Washington needs to *pay consistent attention to managing relations with regional friends and allies if it hopes to maintain its pull*" (op. cit.).

Make no mistake: *China is quickly becoming the nucleus of Asia*, and an attractive alternative to America as an ally. From Kazakhstan to the Philippines, Japan to Thailand, and every nation in between, Beijing is forging a foreign policy aimed to increase *passively* its influence in the region. On its western borders, China has made such uncharacteristic gestures as conceding long-disputed tracts of land to historic rival India and other central Asian nations. Through warm gestures such as gigantic trade and commerce deals, Beijing is causing Eastern nations to grow more reliant on China.

The groundwork is being laid for Asia to grow into a tremendous coali-

Tussling

SITTING ASTRIDE THE SLEEPING ASIAN monster, Beijing is already beginning to brandish its influence more directly against the U.S.

At the top of the list of recent Sino-American agitations is America's massive trade deficit with China. Toward the end of 2003, the U.S. estimated that its deficit with China would rise 20 percent to hit \$120 billion for the year.

One of the main reasons behind America's large deficit with China, and a hot topic between Beijing and Washington, is China's fixed-currency policy.

When the Chinese yuan is fixed at a low level compared to the U.S. dollar, Chinese exporters are given a huge advantage, contributing to lower U.S. exports and hurting American manufacturers.

Washington has responded to China's fixed currency policy with trade tariffs. "The recent moves are reviving fears of some kind of trade war between the world's largest consuming nation and one of its largest suppliers" (*Christian Science Monitor*, Dec. 2, 2003).

As Washington and Beijing continue to bicker over such issues, their relationship will grow more fractious, and the U.S. will be ostracized slowly from

tion of nations that will rival the U.S. and Europe. China is at the vanguard of this movement.

Prophecy Being Fulfilled

America's loss of global influence, together with China's rise as the regional Asian hegemon, are both events that prove we are near the end of this age. These events were prophesied more than 2,500 years ago in God's Word—the Holy Bible.

God prophesied that He would break the pride of America's power (Lev. 26:19). The U.S.'s waning influence in Asia is a sign of this reality. Asian nations are beginning to realign themselves with their Chinese neighbor and away from the U.S. *Washington is losing its grip on Asia*—at a time when, in terms of trade and its war on terrorism, it needs Asian support more than ever.

In the Bible, God foretold of the Day of the Lord, a time when He will cause the Eastern blocs of nations to coalesce into an overwhelming army of 200 million personnel (Rev. 9:16), which He will then allow to attack a united European power (Dan. 11:40-44). In Ezekiel 38, God reveals who will be a part of this Eastern bloc of nations: Russia, China, Japan, India and the Southeast Asian nations. (To prove the identity of these nations in Bible prophecy, please write for our free booklet *Russia and China in Prophecy*.)

In verse 3, God tells us that China will be one of the leading nations in this great Eastern army. *Groundwork for this army is being laid right now!* On the scene is a China cleverly gaining influence and control of its East Asian neighbors and growing closer to its northern neighbor Russia. Just as prophecy revealed it would, the Far East is uniting. Continue to watch this region!

The fact that the prophecies about America's demise and China's rise as an Asian hegemon are coming to pass not only proves the validity of God's Word; it also tell us that Jesus Christ is about to return (Rev. 11:15). The Bible reveals that the timing of these prophecies is just *moments* before the return of Christ. Their progressive fulfillment should spur us into preparing for the return of Christ. It is not enough to simply hear and understand these prophecies—we *must act on them to prepare for the future!* ♦

Eu- rope's State

Some things
never change.

BY WIK HEERMA

HISTORICALLY, POLITICAL and social upheaval has tended to yield new thinking as to how society should be organized. This was the case leading up to the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century. Debate about religious reforms led to foundational liberties being recorded in the laws of many Western European nations.

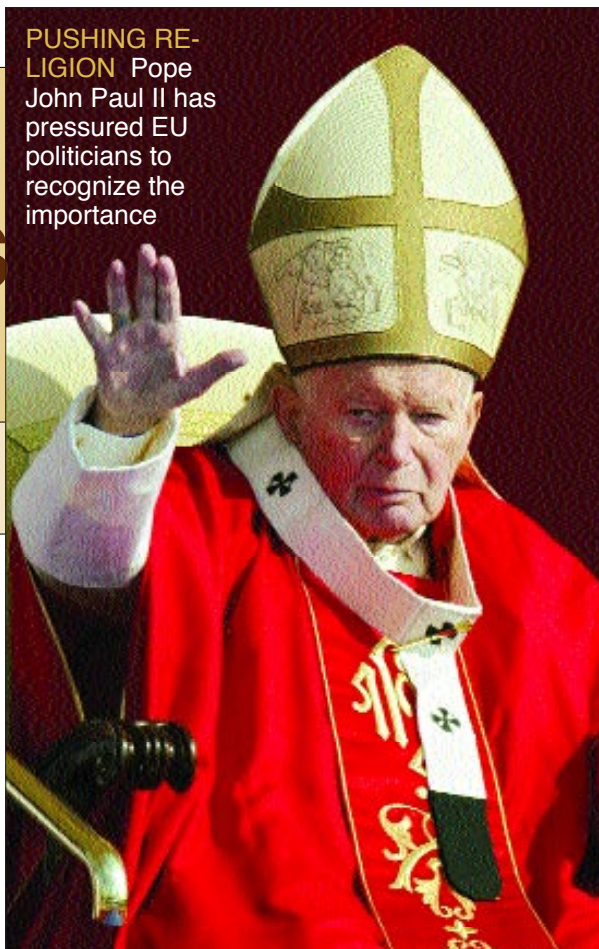
During recent bickering over the proposed European Union constitution, we again saw a debate about the role of religion. Few realize this debate is intent on undoing 400 years of religious freedoms and civil liberties—returning Europe into a dark age.

The issues surrounding the mention of religion in the constitution have evoked much emotional response from leaders in Europe. In November, almost two dozen influential Europeans, including former statesmen and Nobel Prize winners, urged the EU not to ignore the Continent's Christian roots in drafting its new constitution. "The question of religion is central because Christianity is at the root of the fundamental notion of the person in Europe," they declared in a statement printed in *Le Monde* (Reuters World Report, Nov. 13, 2003).

The most authoritarian and vocal objections however, have come from Europe's most prominent statesman, Pope John Paul II.

On November 7, the pope appealed to the drafters of the European constitution: "A society forgetful of its past is

PUSHING RELIGION Pope John Paul II has pressured EU politicians to recognize the importance



exposed to the risk of not being able to deal with its present and—worse yet—of becoming the victim of its future" (Associated Press, Nov. 7).

Why all this debate over religion in the context of drafting a political document? What are the real intentions? Are we seeing a push for a state religion in Europe—as has been the case throughout the Continent's long history?

Future Identity

French cardinal Paul Poupard claimed that "when the Holy Father tirelessly reminds of the importance of the Christian roots of Europe and ... mobilizes the Holy See to see that the future Constitution of the European Union includes a reference to these roots, it is obvious that he is not seeking a position of privilege for the Catholic Church" (www.zenit.org, Nov. 20, 2003). Is this true?

Anyone with any knowledge about European history can recognize this highly politicized statement as misleading.

Poupard continued, "The Catholic Church does not try to intervene in political questions that refer to the determination of the political society" (ibid.)

As the *Trumpet* has previously pointed out, contrary to Poupard's rhetoric, the Vatican has repeatedly intervened to influence the outcome of political questions in its sphere of influence (read "Unholy Union" in June 1998 *Trumpet* at www.theTrumpet.com in Issue Archives).

Getting to the key issue, he went on to say, "The defense carried out by the pope has, as its objective, THE VERY IDENTITY OF EUROPE and not just a position of advantage for the Catholic Church" (ibid., emphasis mine throughout).

The pope is indeed trying to shape the identity of Europe, but few realize what that identity consists of, or what its consequences are.

The cardinal emphasized that, "With its interventions, the Holy See, which is not foreign to the making of Europe given its past and present history, attempts to safeguard, for the benefit of all Europeans, its own historical identity" (ibid.).

So what is the history of the Catholic Church in the making of Europe to which this cardinal refers? What is it that the Holy See considers so critical to the shaping of Europe's future identity?

The truth may astound you! It shows that the debate surrounding the push to incorporate the words "God" and "Christianity" into the European Union constitution is an attempt to undo four centuries of civil liberties and religious freedoms. And despite the abysmal failure of the current draft constitution, it is the push for this terminology in Europe's political dogma that shows where its relationship with the Vatican is leading. It has exposed the thinking of the Vatican toward Europe and the attitude of Europe's Catholic states toward an increasingly influential Vatican.

If we learn from history, we can see the importance and *danger* of the debate taking place in the upper levels of political power in Europe intended to tie church and state together once again.

A Political Church

For centuries, major religious and political leaders have endeavored to combine church and state. From the time of Justinian's restoration of Rome in A.D. 554—known as the Imperial Restoration—we see that the Catholic Church has sought to extend its influence throughout the empire, which from that time onward became known as the *Holy*

Roman Empire.

Emperor Justinian realized that religious division limited the power and influence of his empire; he continued the process of syncretism (combining different forms of belief or practice) started by Constantine two centuries before. Justinian saw himself as God's agent destroying barbarian heretics. He effectively reunited the western and eastern legs of the Roman Empire in A.D. 554. And the historical fact stands: This geopolitical victory was welcomed by the church of Rome, which saw its sphere of influence grow to the largely pagan areas that were subjected to the newly revived and united empire.

For centuries to follow, the Catholic Church controlled the empire. Though the emperors ruled the secular realm, they pledged allegiance to the pope, providing him significant influence and control over the emperor and the realm. And, as Adrian Hilton wrote, "The vision of *one empire under one emperor, belonging to one church under one god*, has caused more bloodshed than anything in the history of the world" (*Trumpet*, February 2001).

Church leaders became more closely involved in the political rule of towns, districts and nations to the point that "worldly activities became in too many cases the chief interest. Political power, material possessions, privileged position in public life, the defense of ancient historical rights, earthly interests of various kinds were only too often the chief aim of many of the higher clergy. Pastoral solicitude, the specifically religious and ecclesiastical aim, fell largely into the background ..." (*Catholic Encyclopedia*, "The Reformation").

This politicizing of the church caused many to rebel against the authority of the pope and the clergy in the Middle Ages. People sought a restriction of the church's political influence and power. "In the course of the 14th and 15th centuries arose the modern concept of the state. During the preceding period many matters of a secular or mixed nature had been *regulated* or *managed by the church*, in keeping with the historical development of European society. With the growing self-consciousness of the state, the secular governments sought to control all matters that fell within their competence, which course, although in large measure justifiable, was new and offensive, and thus led to frequent col-

lisions between church and state" (ibid., emphasis mine throughout).

So until the latter half of the Middle Ages, the Roman Catholic Church ruled over both religious and secular matters, exercising control over the population of Europe. But this was all about to change.

Protectors of Safety and Welfare

Until the time of the Protestant Reformation, the political or monarchical rulers in Europe rendered their allegiance to the pope, limiting their power and influence and restricting the freedoms



REFORMERS Luther (left) and Tyndale helped break Catholicism's

of their subjects according to the will of the Vatican. The political reformers of 17th-century Europe realized this and exposed the Catholic Church for the political institution it was.

This revelation caused many Protestant nations to define by law their separation from Rome. The English Bill of Rights, for example, written in 1689, was worded as follows: "And whereas it hath been found BY EXPERIENCE that it is inconsistent with the SAFETY AND WELFARE of this Protestant kingdom to be governed by a popish prince, or by any king or queen marrying a papist, the said lords spiritual and temporal and commons do further pray that it may be enacted, that all and every person and persons that is, are or shall be reconciled to or shall hold communion with the See or church of Rome, or shall profess the popish religion, or shall marry a papist, SHALL BE EXCLUDED AND BE FOREVER INCAPABLE TO INHERIT, POSSESS OR ENJOY THE CROWN AND GOVERNMENT OF THIS REALM and Ireland and the dominions thereunto belonging ... and in all and every such case or cases the people of these realms shall be and are hereby absolved of their allegiance"

What was the "experience" that these lawmakers referred to as being a threat to the "safety and welfare" of the kingdom? Why was it so important to them that reconciliation of their sovereign with Rome would disqualify him or her from office forever?

One only needs to go back a few more years and read about the horrific atrocities performed under the Inquisition to fully understand.

The Demise of Influence

It was during the Spanish Inquisition that William Tyndale laid the foundation for the much-acclaimed King James Version of the Bible. This, and similar endeavors in other nations of north-western Europe, not only made the Bible accessible to the masses, but, in doing so, limited the political power of the church of Rome over its subjects, which had before been kept ignorant.

The Inquisition (an ecclesiastical institution for combating or suppressing heresy) consisted of a tribunal of judges, appointed by the pope, who would adjudicate and proclaim sentence on anyone found to be disloyal to the papal powers. It was an attempt to tie together church and state, securing the political influence of the clergy and its secular vassals.

Jews, Muslims and other non-believers were given two choices: Convert or face being burned at the stake. This persecution reached its peak in the 16th century, when multiple thousands who rose up against the state religion of Europe, seeking religious and civil liberties for the people, were incinerated.

Despite the pope's effort to crush opposition to the Vatican, the Reformation survived to greatly diminish the influence of a Catholic Europe.

At this time, Britain, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and the Netherlands successfully broke away from the Holy Roman Empire and proclaimed that the sovereign of a Protestant and free country could never owe any allegiance to the head of any other state. As, by its own admission, the Vatican is a *political institution still claiming universal legislative authority and jurisdiction*, these nations protected the civil and religious liberties of their peoples in their foundational law stating that royal succession had to be through the Protestant faith.

Catholic Christianity



POSITIONED Putin and the pope discuss church unity during a No-

From the Urals

POPE JOHN PAUL II HAS INDEED MADE extending his influence from the Ural Mountains to the Atlantic Ocean a priority of his reign.

This reality is exemplified in a recent visit from President Vladimir Putin to the Holy See. On November 5, the pope said this about the visit: "I want to thank President Putin for everything he has done to bring the Russian Orthodox and Catholic churches closer together ..." (Associated Press, Nov. 5, 2003). Putin too commented favorably on his meeting with the pope and declared that "he wanted to help end the dispute between the Vatican and the Orthodox Church" (ibid.).

Statements like these should not surprise us, considering the Vatican's desire to bring its daughter churches back under its control.

In May, the European Union is to expand to 25 member states, most of the new members being located in Eastern Europe. Now, more than ever, the Vatican will increase its efforts to regain influence over the Russian Orthodox Church, the Greek Orthodox Church, the Anglican Church, and many of its Protestant daughters, as the mediator in political union between East and West.

Christianity has often provided these former Soviet bloc countries "with decisive assistance on the path to freedom," according to the pontiff. But it is "always the same" when it comes to Rome's gestures of building bridges with Orthodoxy. Its objective remains to rule from

When we look at the current affairs surrounding the drafting of the EU constitution, we need to ask why there is so much commotion over the inclusion of the terms "God" and "Christian." Why does the inclusion draw favor from mainly Catholic member countries such as Ireland, Spain and Italy? Or why is it primarily Catholic prospective member states like Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Malta and Lithuania that support a Christian reference in the prologue of the new constitution?

Could it be that instead of Christian, the text would more accurately read *Catholic*? If one ponders on the motto of Rome, *Semper Eadem* (always the same), it doesn't take long to realize that this is a valid assumption.

Pope Paul VI declared in 1975: "Can it not be said that it is faith, the Christian faith, THE CATHOLIC FAITH that made Europe? ... It is there that our mission as bishops in Europe takes on a gripping perspective. No other human force in Europe can render the service that is confided to us, promoters of the faith, to re-awaken Europe's Christian soul, *where its unity is rooted*" (*The Principality and Power of Europe*).

In August 2000, the Vatican's Offices of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith—the modern-day successor of the Inquisition—issued the *Dominus Iesus* declaration. This document declared the church of Rome to be over all other Christian churches, which it said "are not churches in the proper sense."

A well-known Catholic dogma is the claim that the pope is "superior ruler of the world"—superior to all kings and presidents. Pope John Paul II is working toward that goal as he "is calmly preparing to assume the mantle which he solemnly believes to be his divine right—that of new Holy Roman Emperor, reigning from the Urals to the Atlantic" (*Sunday Telegraph*, July 21, 1991; see sidebar, left).

As the pope demands that "God" be mentioned in a European constitution, one cannot forget that the Vatican sees itself as God's infallible vice-regent upon Earth, according to the *Dominus Iesus* declaration.

Signing such an allegiance to the papacy would undo centuries of lawmaking for nations that fought for their religious and civil liberties 400 years ago!

Under the Maastricht Treaty of 1992, a common European citizenship was es-

tablished. This meant that the sovereign of any European Community (now EU) member state became a European citizen, a vassal to the federal government of Brussels and Strasbourg, subject to the past and future judgments of the European Court, against which there is no appeal. This treaty confirmed the authority of this court over that of monarchs like Queen Elizabeth.

In Britain, the debate has sparked questions concerning the legitimacy of many of its foundational laws like the Act of Settlement, the Coronation Oaths Act, the Crown in Parliament Act, the Act of Union, and the Royal Marriages Act. Many have called for the removal of the anti-Catholic provisions concerning the succession of the throne in the 1701 Act of Settlement, saying they are incompatible with the 1998 Human Rights Act.

Can you see the sinister nature of such an assertion? People in Britain—and in free countries around the world—should be alarmed!

Return of the Inquisition

Would it be possible that in our sophisticated society of today we could see a return to the Inquisition?

Bible prophecy foretells of a rising European power that will be ruled by a powerful religious institution. "Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. ... And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus ..." (Rev. 17:1-6). In Bible prophecy, a woman symbolizes a church. This immoral woman is pictured as being guilty of the blood of the saints. She is pictured as sitting upon a scarlet-colored beast, indicating her control over this monstrous political power we now see developing in Europe (v. 18).

"And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast" (vv. 12-13). Ten nations or groups of nations will render their power to this beast. If their constitution speaks of "God," they

will not realize that it is not the Creator God it refers to, but the god of this world—the unseen spirit power behind this dreadful war-machine soon to be unleashed on the world scene (II Cor. 4:4; Rev. 12:9; 13:4). And the term “Christian” that many are advocating go in their constitution refers to this religious woman that rides—or controls—the beast.

Avoiding Perception

Whether or not the debated words will form part of the European constitution is not the real issue. The real issue is that the Vatican’s overarching objective is to make Roman Catholicism Europe’s state religion. This aim among Catholic scholars to restate Medieval scholasticism in a manner suited to present intellectual needs is evident in today’s push to make Christianity—read Catholicism—the ONE AND ONLY legal religion in Europe.

It could, however, very well be that the debate over “God” and “Christianity” will create a wave of public opinion that demands their inclusion in a new European constitution and washes out the perception that it was imposed by either the Vatican or Brussels.

Study the historical facts concerning Europe’s state religion. Witness how current events indicate a return to its past behavior, and KNOW how Bible prophecy assures us that this city, this adulterous church, will rise to *control* the political union now forming in Europe.

God says He is raising up this final revival of the Holy Roman Empire to correct the lawless descendants of ancient Israel (Hab. 1:6). Its political leader rises to power by flatteries (Dan. 11:21, 23). He does not intend to bring utter destruction to nations (Isa. 10:5-6), until his mind changes (v. 7; Hab. 1:11) as he subjects himself to the power of Satan (Rev. 13:4). It is that same power, wielded through Europe’s state religion, that has caused unparalleled bloodshed for centuries—as the motto of Rome declares, *Semper Eadem*. ♦

To give you more information, we are pleased to be able to offer Herbert W. Armstrong’s booklet *Who or What is the Pro-*



Could Your Religion Be a Counterfeit?

The trade in counterfeit goods—music, software, clothing, toys, jewelry and, of course, money—costs \$150-450 billion each year. But did you know that the greatest deceptions to mankind are the result of counterfeit *Christianity*?

BY CARL HILLIKER

HAVE YOU EVER RECEIVED counterfeit money? The millions of people who have, no doubt *feel* ripped-off, angry, frustrated and suspicious of others for a long time—perhaps even foolish and ashamed of themselves. Those who pawned off the fake money *feel* excited to have made a quick buck at the expense of some unsuspecting chump.

On the other hand, most people do not think twice about willingly buying counterfeit (or pirated) merchandise. They *feel* elated by their “savings.” They may even brag to others about their luck in finding such a “great buy.” Instead of being deceived chumps, these people *feel* like smart shoppers.

But how do the original manufacturers *feel* to have knockoffs of Rolex watches selling for less than \$50 a piece, Gucci bags running from \$5 to \$20, or copies of QuickBooks, Microsoft Office and dozens of other major software

titles at \$5 per copy?

The point is, how we *feel* about counterfeiting often depends on whether we are on the winning end or the losing end of the transaction. But the fact that we may feel good about a transaction, that we are happy, not deceived by the counterfeit we now possess, does not change the fact that a crime has taken place.

As damaging as material counterfeiting is, there is a far more dangerous and insidious form of counterfeiting occurring on a massive scale—that of counterfeit *religion*. Could you be a victim?

One Source

Many similarities exist between counterfeit money and counterfeit religion—particularly Christianity.

First, there is only ONE source for genuine U.S. currency: the U. S. Treasury, as authorized by the U.S. government. Even if a counterfeiter could make absolutely identical bills in every detail, they would still be counterfeit

Over 33,830 Christian denominations claim to represent Jesus Christ on Earth.

What confusion! Paul said, “God is not the author of confusion, but of peace.”

bills because they would lack the authority of the U.S. Treasury and the U.S. government.

The U.S. dollar is the top choice among counterfeiters. It is the most commonly used currency in the world, with more than 60 percent of U.S. dollar bills circulated overseas. There are thousands of counterfeiters scattered all around the world, dumping untold millions of fake bills into circulation. With advancements in technology, counterfeiting has skyrocketed, doubling almost every year.

If everyone honored and respected the laws of the land, there would not be thousands of presses turning out illegal U.S. money taking advantage of millions of people. There would only be the one proper government-approved source for legal money, and almost everyone in the world would benefit.

Likewise, there is only ONE source for genuine Christianity: Jesus Christ, as authorized by God the Father. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6). He also said, “no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father” (John 6:65).

Even if someone could mimic the outward characteristics of a true Christian, without the workmanship of God the Father and Jesus Christ, he would still be a fake—a counterfeit Christian.

Christianity is the top choice among counterfeit religion. Christianity is the largest religion in the world: Over 2 billion people (one third of the Earth’s population) profess it. With the advent of TV, publishing and other media, the number of counterfeit Christian denominations has multiplied at an amazing rate. According to the World Christian Encyclopedia (2001) there are now over 33,830 Christian denominations claiming to represent Jesus Christ on Earth.

What confusion! Paul said, “God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches [congregations]” (1 Cor. 14:33).

The night before He was to die, Jesus prayed to His Father, asking that all future Christians “may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us ...” (John 17:21).

Did God the Father answer that prayer? Is there a group of people on Earth living at one with Jesus Christ and the Father?

What does it mean to be ONE with the Father and with Jesus Christ? Let the Apostle Paul explain: “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (Eph. 4:4-6). Paul spent his life “Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (v. 3) among the brethren of his day.

Jesus also said, “[T]he hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth [T]hey that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:23-24).

If everyone were worshiping Christ in Spirit and in truth, there would not be over 33,830 denominations; there would be only one unified Church of God, and the whole world would benefit.

Ignorance and Distractions

In the past, counterfeiters relied on two things: The first was ignorance. For example, counterfeiters quickly targeted Ecuador when its government shifted to the U.S. dollar in 2001. Since the people were unfamiliar with U.S. money, many were easily fooled by counterfeit bills.

In addition to ignorance, counterfeiters used to rely heavily on distractions. They would try to focus a person’s attention on other things, hoping they would not even check the money before it was too late. Most people were not even on the lookout for counterfeit money, so even if the bills were cheap imitations, the counterfeiters could most often get away with it.

Counterfeit religions do the same thing. They thrive on people’s ignorance of the Bible.

Prior to the advent of the printing press, few people even had access to a Bible. Since they were unfamiliar with what Christ had actually taught, the average person became easy prey for a counterfeit religion.

Most people today, even professing Christians, hardly ever read the Bible.

Rather than taking the time necessary to learn what the Bible really says and means, they just listen to what others say or preach about the Bible. Most professing Christians do not even attend church regularly, yet almost everyone has strong opinions about God and their own personal beliefs. If it is convenient, they may attend now and then. If they like the congregation, or if the minister is likeable and his sermons are inspiring or confirm what they think they already know, they are likely to go more often.

Counterfeit religions are also skilled at focusing their members’ attention on peripheral issues. They most often appeal to their emotions by talking about love and by getting people heavily involved in church-sponsored social events, or even missionary-type activities. If their members *feel* good about what they are doing, it makes little difference to them what they are being taught. Such people often remain loyal to a counterfeit church no matter what. Even when some are exposed as frauds, it doesn’t keep a loyal, but ignorant, few from continuing to support them.

Among those counterfeit churches that do study the Bible, many use only a small portion of it. They constantly refer to pet scriptures that can seem to support their beliefs. Often they have pulled these verses out of context and misinterpreted them, giving a far different impression than what the Bible actually means.

Proverbs 16:25 says, “There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death” (Revised Standard Version).

God expects all true Christians to become experts at identifying the counterfeiters. Paul explained how a true Christian can do that: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness” (1 Tim. 2:15-16).





Most professing Christians just want a church that they *like*.
Therefore, even the cheapest imitations are able to fool them.

Skillful Counterfeits

Eventually, counterfeit bills became so close to the real thing that the average person was being easily fooled. Even bank tellers seldom detected the counterfeits. It often took experts to scrutinize the bills with microscopes or other advanced testing devices to know with certainty. Such exact duplicates created severe problems within the banking communities. Besides the money that was being lost, there was also a growing lack of trust and confidence in U.S. currency in many places worldwide.

This forced the American government to update its money using advanced technology. These new features included watermarks, security threads woven into the paper, raised features produced by intaglio printing, and inks that show a different color depending on the angle from which they are viewed. All these procedures will not stop counterfeiters, but it will make it easier to identify the fakes. At least for a time.

While governments often change their money to foil the counterfeiters, God has no need for change. God already has a foolproof way for Him to identify genuine Christians. He places a secret ingredient within each and every one. Romans 8:9 says, "... Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Only God can give the gift of the Holy Spirit. No man is able to counterfeit that!

The sad truth is, every one of the thousands of counterfeit Christian denominations has succeeded in fooling people. Most professing Christians are not even on the lookout for counterfeits. All that most people want is a church that they *like*. Therefore, even the cheapest imitations are able to fool large numbers of people. But other

groups are so close to the truth that it may take careful examination to finally determine that they are fakes.

Notice what Jesus told His disciples shortly before His death: "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Matt. 24:24).

II Corinthians 11:13-15 explains how all but the very elect would become deceived: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works." Revelation 12:9 prophesied that Satan's deceptions would be so convincing that he would deceive "the whole world." Is it possible that you may be one of those deceived into attending one of Satan's counterfeits?

It's a Crime

People who accept counterfeit bills are being conned out of their hard-earned money. It is a serious crime, but even when a counterfeiter is caught and punished, the people who were conned never recover their loss.

The sad truth is, there are clearly many counterfeit churches in this world, and each one is dumping false and contradictory ideas about what Jesus Christ actually taught. Every person who accepts these false ideas is being spiritually harmed, conned out of a proper relationship with Jesus Christ and God the Father. Many have become disillusioned with religion altogether because they have been "stung" so often by false churches. When and if they do hear the truth, they are so confused, they are not likely to believe it.

Jesus said, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and MANY there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and FEW there be that find it. Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening

wolves" (Matt. 7:13-15). Notice, God's Church will have FEW members. It is referred to in Scripture as a "little flock." The MANY will not accept God's message.

People who pass counterfeit bills seem innocent enough. So do false ministers—but BEWARE, they will lead YOU to destruction! Jesus says so.

What About You?

How sure are you of your religion? How did you decide which church you would attend? Could you be in a counterfeit religion? With 33,830 Christian denominations in the world, the chances are very high indeed! Finding God's true Church among all those is like trying to find a needle in a huge haystack. The chances of finding the right religion by accident is zero, so how would someone go about finding the right one?

Just as government officials use certain identifying marks to determine if a bill is real or not, so must we use certain God-given signs to identify the Church that has Jesus Christ at its Head. It takes a spiritual examination of critical identifying signs to do that. No man can find God's true Church based on how he *feels* or by listening to his own thoughts (Jer. 17:9) or the thoughts of other men (v. 5). Finding God's Church has only to do with what God's Word teaches. It is not enough to believe IN Christ—a true Christian will also believe His message and live by every word of God! (Luke 4:4).

What are those signs? Request our free book *Mystery of the Ages* and read Chapter 6, "The Mystery of the Church"—or read it online at www.theTrumpet.com under Literature—for an in-depth biblical examination of this question. God expects all Christians to "prove all things" from the Bible, and "hold fast to what is good" (1 Thes. 5:21). If we do that, we will never be swayed into following one of Satan's many counterfeits. ♦

If you want information on one of the major signs distinguishing true Christianity, request our free booklet by Herbert W. Armstrong Which





PAT ANSWER U.S. president tells China's premier that Taiwanese moves toward independence

jing has periodically reminded Taiwan of its military and economic superiority over the island in order to discourage pro-independence movements. China has an estimated 500 ballistic missiles pointed at Taiwan and regularly conducts military exercises in the Taiwan

◆ CHINA

Preparing for war?

As a forerunner to Taiwanese elections in March, China is once again stepping up the rhetoric against Taiwanese independence. Taiwan's president, Chen Shui-bian— favored in the election—is campaigning on two initiatives: the drafting of a new constitution for Taiwan, and a national referendum for Taiwanese independence from China.

Chen's popular initiatives have infuriated Beijing and dramatically increased tension between the two nations to the point that news reports last month indicated *China was preparing for war with Taiwan*.

Last November, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao proclaimed that Beijing would be prepared to “pay any price” to prevent Taiwan's independence. A Chinese military official declared in an interview with Xinhua news agency last month that China would not be deterred from taking Taiwan by force if the island declared independence.

China believes Taiwan is part of China, while Taiwan refuses to submit to Beijing's rule. These two nations have existed in this fragile state for decades.

Over the past decade, Bei-

Strait.

With China's more recent militaristic rhetoric toward Taiwan, the question is, *what will America do?*

For over two decades, U.S. policy has been to delicately walk the fence to maintain a status quo where everybody was content as long as China did not overtake Taiwan and Taiwan did not declare its independence.

But with China's recent overt threats to Taiwan, a passive status quo will become harder to maintain—especially if President Chen is re-elected in March.

The U.S. may soon be forced into a decision. Will it continue as Taiwan's main arms supplier should Chen proceed to hold his referendum? To do so would infuriate China.

The U.S.'s response to China's recent bold moves is designed to maintain the status quo. Meeting with Premier Wen in Washington last month, President Bush reiterated long-standing U.S. policy, deeming any move by Taipei toward independence “unacceptable.”

Editor in Chief Gerald Flurry, in the August 1998 *Trumpet*, stated, “How could anyone fail to see that Taiwan is destined to become a part of mainland China? These 21 million people are going to be FORCED into the Chinese mold; and it is going to happen for one reason: *because of a pitifully weak-willed America.*”

◆ U.S.

Policy shifts on Israel

What is going on between the United States and Israel? These two long-time allies have in recent months exchanged some unusually biting criticisms. Israel's policies have undergone little change. Rather, it is the U.S. that has become more critical of its best friend in the volatile Middle East.

Two recent points of contention include the Bush administration's disapproval of the security fence—about a quarter of which is completed—built by Israel to screen out Palestinian terrorists, and the expansion of Israeli settlements for which, in late November, Wash-



HOLD UP Framers celebrate the dubious Geneva

ington administered a mild punishment by reducing loan guarantees.

The sharpest dissonance arose in December when the U.S. administration supported, in the face of Israeli opposition, the “Geneva initiative,” put forward as an alternative to the “road map to peace” process previously endorsed by the U.S. Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon warned it was subverting the democratic process.

As Charles Krauthammer wrote in the *Washington Post*, “[T]his agreement was negotiated in defiance of the democratically (and over-

whelmingly) elected government of Israel. If a private U.S. citizen negotiated a treaty on his own, he could go to jail under the Logan Act. If an Israeli does it, he gets a pat on the back from the secretary of state” (Nov. 28, 2003).

Why has the U.S. supported this charade of a “peace” effort? Former U.S. mediator Dennis Ross stated that “[I]n encouraging the project, the Bush administration is ‘trying to send a message to Sharon without saying so explicitly’” (Associated Press, Nov. 26, 2003).

It appears the U.S. is trying to build on the momentum of its war against terrorism, coupled with its significant presence in Iraq, by taking the middle ground to gain more regional support on the Middle East peace process. But is Washington compromising democratic principles to push through its own policies?

We can be certain that U.S. pressure on Israel to toe the American line, while risking the alienation of Sharon and increasing pressure on him from the Arab world, will only frustrate efforts for the long-term peace which Israel seeks. Refer to our booklet *Jerusalem in Prophecy on the Trumpet.com* under Literature. The chapter “Israel's Deadly Wound” will further explain why, whichever plan the U.S. and Israel follow, the “peace process” will end tragically. It will take intelligence

◆ EU

Moving south and east

far superior to that of which man is capable in order to bring peace to this historically troubled region.

For some time, the German-led EU has had strategic interests in lands to its south and east, and Germany is currently working hard to secure those interests on both fronts.

South: Germany recently moved to strengthen its defense cooperation with Tunisia and Morocco. "The present desire of Berlin for a strengthened cooperation in these areas is in order to provide an armed (and completely independent of the U.S.) component of German foreign policy in North Africa" (*www.german-foreign-policy.com*, Nov. 10, 2003, emphasis ours).

This makes sense. These countries, besides offering rich natural resources, form a doorway into Africa and are strategically located on the Mediterranean coast. They have plenty to offer a rich European country seeking to gain a foothold in them.

East: Subtle but persistent steps have been taken to improve diplomatic relations between the EU and Iran, with year-long talks of an EU-Iran free-trade deal still in the works, as well as serious talk of deeper cooperation.

EU Foreign Policy Chief Javier Solana plans to travel to Iran early in the new year to further these plans. It seems that, since U.S. President Bush labeled Iran part of the "axis of evil," the EU can hardly do enough to strengthen its relations with the terrorist-sponsoring country.

EUobserver.com reported that EU foreign ministers had examined plans for the EU to "launch a major security initiative with Middle Eastern countries." "[P]roposals are being considered to set up a security dialogue between the EU and countries to the 'south and east of Jordan,'

perhaps including Iran" (Dec. 5, 2003). While the EU has for some time been involved with the Middle East peace process, this represents a new, dramatic, aggressive step to increase its power and influence in the region.

Germany's geopolitical aims are also revealed in its response to Washington's recent request for NATO troops to help stabilize and secure Iraq. A German official stated that this was an "unreasonable demand" because, at present, there



TIGHT EU's Solana sees Iran's

is "no indication" that the United States would be willing to share power in Iraq (BBC News, Dec. 10, 2003). In other words, Germany is saying it will not support efforts in Iraq unless it gains some regional influence.

The Prophet Daniel wrote of a political power from the north that would seek to extend its rule to the south and east in the form of a resurrection of the ancient Holy Roman Empire, dominated by Assyria—modern Germany. Read it in Daniel 8:9, and refer to "Europe Marches

◆ ENERGY

Breaking the bottleneck

South" in our May 2000 issue (*www.theTrumpet.com*, under "Issue Archives").-

Watch for further EU, and particularly German, efforts to increase influence and

power in the Middle East and the Mediterranean region.-

Last November, the strategic sea gateway of the Dardanelles almost ground to a standstill from a lineup of 70 vessels seeking to transit through the narrow straits that separate the Black Sea from the Mediterranean. This gateway from north to south via the Turkish Straits is one of the most crowded sea gates in the world. The volume of oil flowing through has almost doubled since 1994 and will continue to grow in the early 21st century due to the high cost and long lead times involved in developing alternative routes.

Besides oil, the dense traffic includes liquid natural gas, chemicals and even explosives. The Bosphorus, which lies within the city and port limits of Istanbul, is at its narrowest point only 700 meters wide. Navigation is hampered by several sharp turns that are particularly difficult for large tankers to negotiate.

The need for a breakthrough to supply satisfactory alternatives to the shipment of oil, in particular to Europe, has reached crisis point. Enter Russia.

Two recent developments will help Russia gain a strategic advantage over Europe's traditional supplier, the Middle Eastern states. October saw the opening of a

crucially strategic alternative when the Caspian Pipeline Consortium started shipping oil from the giant Tengiz oil field in Kazakhstan to the Russian port of Novorossiysk. Then in December, the Odessa-

Brody Pipeline (OBP) in Ukraine became operational.

Both developments provide workable alternatives in the flow of oil from Russia's massive fields to the heartland of Europe.

With the EU increasingly dependent upon Russia for its energy supply, the OBP is particularly important to supplying an alternative to the Dardanelles logjam by easing the flow of oil to the northwest—a tie-in with the giant Russian Druzhba pipeline. "Today, the Druzhba pipeline can handle 14.5 million tons of crude a year, and with the addition of pumping stations, it will be able to pump up to 45 million tons. A strategic bonus is the easy hook-up of the [OBP] route to the refinery in Plotsk, Poland [due to join the EU in May], and a further link to the Baltic port of Gdansk" where oil could then go to Western markets. (*www.eurasianet.org*, Dec. 22, 2003).

One other pipeline project, although presently delayed due to environmentalist action, is the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline, which will bring oil from Azerbaijani fields to the Eastern Mediterranean for export to Europe, Israel and the United States.

These projects demonstrate that the Caspian Basin is emerging as a viable source of energy, creating an attractive alternative to the Middle East and other traditional oil



stage.

The United States of Europe

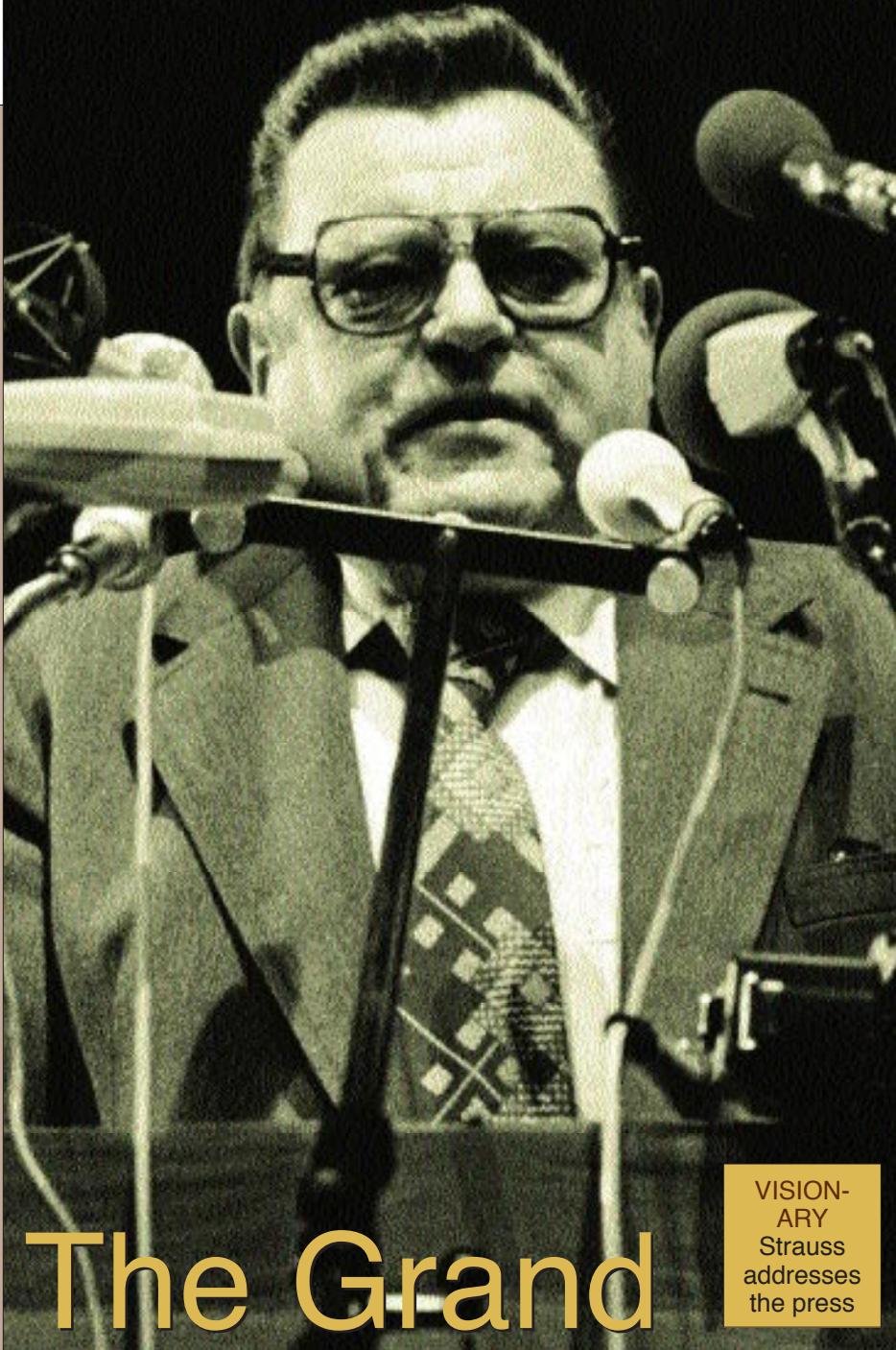
The central idea behind Strauss's vision was what he called "a massive drive to achieve, step by step, a European political federation." This aspect of his plan was to eliminate problems for Germany specifically, Europe as a whole, and even the United States on the other side of the ocean. Certainly the idea of a European federation has been pursued with tremendous energy on the Continent. When Strauss detailed his plan, the seeds had already been planted by the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community via the Paris Treaty in 1952.

Strauss's envisioned much more than a mere economic union though: He wanted Europe to become a global power as it had striven to be in the past. This is perhaps best illustrated by the direct comparisons he drew between the U.S.—the only Western superpower then—and what would become a newly federated Europe.

"Europe only needs to combine its material and intellectual resources to provide for America a partner of equal weight," he wrote. Strauss did not want Europe to be overshadowed by America.

Along those lines, Strauss also directly addressed America's role as the policeman of the world: "America as shield and protector of the free societies is faced by ever greater challenges which in the long run she cannot meet out of her own strength alone. America needs Europe, not only in her cultural role as a modern Greece, but as a second independent power on her side." Certainly, we can see how these words are applicable today as the U.S. increasingly turns to the United Nations and to Europe for global support. Europe, and Germany in particular, recently has been assuming more of the U.S.'s traditional role as regional policeman, acting as "peacekeepers" in the Balkans, Afghanistan and other regions.

This union would allow Europe to emerge as a military superpower. "Such a Europe should remain in close alliance with the United States. It should possess the means of self-defense up to and including the possession of the nuclear deterrent." This greater military strength would reduce the need for American



VISION-
ARY
Strauss
addresses
the press

The Grand

Forty years ago, Franz Josef Strauss had a vision for Germany. Today, this vision is largely reality.

BY MARK JENKINS

AFTER WORLD WAR II, FEW WOULD have envisioned Germany as a major power on the world scene again. Few Germans would have publicly admitted to national ambitions. Yet today, the German nation is at the forefront of global politics again. An accomplishment like that takes vision.

In 1965, just 20 years after the war, German politician Franz Josef Strauss

wrote a book titled *The Grand Design: A European Solution to German Reunification*. It is not a large book. It is written in a candid, straightforward manner. This book details how Germany could rise to power again: not simply as a nation, but as part of a federal Europe. In 1965, the idea of Europe as a federated, cohesive force probably didn't sound realistic to many nations. But less than 40 years later, though Strauss died in 1988, much of his grand design has moved from the planning stages to the world

troops overseas: "If we can slowly build such a Europe, it would still need to maintain the alliance with America, but it would no longer require the physical presence of American troops in the magnitude now insisted upon." The July 9, 1979, *Plain Truth* identified Strauss as the father of the Bundeswehr—Germany's army.

In addition to these reasons for having its own military framework, Europe simply would not have to rely on the U.S. for military defense. "There was also the additional reassuring factor of eliminating the remnant of suspicion that the Americans might not necessarily be prepared to incinerate themselves in a nuclear holocaust for the sake of European freedom" (*The Grand Design*).

Overcoming Obstacles

In 1965, the geopolitical climate of the world simply would not allow Europe to function this way. Europe was not united. Germany itself was split, its former capital divided by the Berlin Wall. Creating Germany's rise to prominence in the world again would not be a simple task.

In 1989, as communism was collapsing in the Soviet Union, the Berlin Wall was torn down. Though Strauss wanted a united Europe, his primary goal was the reestablishment of the German nation. When listing benefits of his grand design, he candidly stated, "Above all, it [European unification] would provide the one framework which would make possible the reunification of Germany and avoid all its latent dangers. Germany needs Europe more than any other country."

There were many reasons it would take so long to actualize his dreams; perhaps chief among them was distrust in Germany as a nation. "We must find some means of destroying the legend, which still enjoys wide currency in many Western countries, that Germany is a country congenitally devoted to acts of aggression." As part of a united Europe, Germany would no longer be individually feared because federal power would come before national power. This is why, for Strauss's plans to come to fruition, Germany would have to pursue its plans under the umbrella of a strong, united European community. "Germany would lose the need to fight for its national unity if the whole continent was

merged in a supranational European framework." In exchange for Germany's national sovereignty, the Continent, and the world, would gain peace of mind, knowing that Germany's national will would be subservient to that of Europe as a whole.

Clearly, Germany is a nation with strong national ambition. Why then, would Strauss seemingly be willing to abandon its national identity? "We must understand that our *European attitude was the only escape hatch we had*, the only approach that made a comeback possible" (emphasis mine throughout).

The "Concessions"

Strauss shrewdly spoke of Germany's helping to rebuild the European family as a form of reparation for the destruction that nation brought about in World War II. "Germany has made a fatal contribution to the dissolution and breakdown of the old family of European states. What form of reparation could be better than to contribute now to restoring that European family, to play an essential part in the process of European unification and, by abandoning national rights of sovereignty, overcome the past, construct a new European architecture and contribute to the progress and development of the whole Continent?"

In order to ensure that these plans would go forward, Strauss suggested Germany make certain concessions. It is important to note, however, that the concessions he suggests were not long term.

"I am perfectly prepared to accept that the prime minister, the foreign minister and the defense minister of a European government should not *during the initial period* be Germans. I make this suggestion as a contribution to the credibility of the joint effort, so that Germany should not *appear* to be the determining influence in foreign and defense policies." Strauss clearly realized that Germany could not be seen in a military position until its reputation for aggression was no longer an issue; it could not appear to affect policy.

Of course, not *appearing* to affect policy and not affecting it are two different things. After all, much of the plan for European unity is outlined in his book! He knew that, regardless of appearance, the German nation would continue to have a profound effect on the development of Europe. At that

point, Germany was already beginning to influence European politics again. The first chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Konrad Adenauer, was a strong supporter of the Schumann Plan, which launched the European Coal and Steel community in 1951. This formed the platform on which the EU evolved.

Strauss also recognized the role that Eastern Europe would play in the union. The May 2002 *Trumpet* pointed out Strauss's insistence that, in Ron Fraser's words, "No definition of Europe should be held to exclude Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and the other Eastern countries. When we talk of a European federation, Russia must accept that these countries are included." Initially, Strauss conceded that these nations must act as buffer states between the union and Russia. But ultimately, they must be included.

In 2004, *all* of these countries will be admitted to the European Union.

A Strong Man Is Rising

Over three decades ago, *Plain Truth* Editor in Chief Herbert Armstrong wrote, "The world appears bereft of 'great men.' But a world-recognized 'Strong Man' in all probability will now very soon appear.

A Religious

EDMUND STOIBER IS THE CURRENT head of the Catholic Christian Social Union in Germany. He is not only a strong political leader but a religious man as well.

The *Economist* of April 20, 1996, reported that as prime minister of Bavaria, Stoiber shows his training in the Strauss school of populism. He "blasts at Germany's constitutional court for telling his state that it could not oblige schools to hang crucifixes in every classroom (he seems to have found a way round that ruling and the crucifixes are still there)." Stoiber is not afraid to take strong political stances on religious issues.

While many European leaders may not favor religious participation, Stoiber not only favors it, he has even enforced it himself on occasion. Whoever will lead Europe will definitely have a religious mindset. This is a key element that will hold the union together (read "Europe's

... There will be 10 [kings], ruling 10 nations or groups of nations in the area of the once-great Holy Roman Empire. But there will be one super-king over the 10” (*Plain Truth*, May 1969).

Concerning that super-king, Mr. Armstrong wrote that Europe was “waiting for the *confidence*-inspiring leader—an international all-European Hitler, and it is on the way. That man is there somewhere” (*Plain Truth*, November/December 1954).

Mr. Armstrong was right! Though conditions weren’t quite ready for such a “strong man” to emerge then, the stage is set for his appearance today. That man is out there somewhere. Mr. Armstrong felt Franz Josef Strauss might be that leader. Though Mr. Strauss has since passed, his political dreams have not.

When Strauss first published his ideas, he knew he might not live to see his dreams carried out. “... I am under no illusions about the length of time it will take to set this sequence of events in train,” he wrote. “It might take a generation. ... If the process is to take time, then it must be time put to good use.”

Unlike most politicians, Strauss hand-picked a successor who would carry on his work: Bavarian Prime Minister Edmund Stoiber. To date, Stoiber has been following loyally in the footsteps of his political father.

German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder does not appear to be the man to lead Germany toward the future. Certainly Stoiber agrees: “All he wants is power—SCHRÖDER HAS NO VISION FOR GERMANY” (*Deutsche Presse-Agentur*, Feb. 13, 2002). Edmund Stoiber, however, has such a vision. As premier of the economically successful state of Bavaria, his public remarks about his vision are not isolated to Bavarian or even German politics. He has a vision for all of Europe, the primary ideas of which are rooted in the philosophy of his mentor, Franz Joseph Strauss.

The Grand Design Today

In fulfilling his vision of a German-led Europe, Stoiber does not face the same set of challenges Mr. Strauss did. The grand design has progressed to a point where Germany no longer “needs Europe” to the extent it did in Strauss’s time. The stigma Germany faced after World War II is gone, largely because of its place within the EU—just as Strauss desired.

The public perception of Germany has changed: Distrust of the German nation has nearly disappeared. Germany can now afford to be bolder.

Many of the reasons Franz Josef Strauss outlined for the necessity of a united Europe have been fulfilled: Ger-



BOLD GESTURES With Germany’s post-WWII stigma gone, Edmund Stoiber can be more vocal

many is reunited; the Eastern European states are about to join the Union; and monetarily, the whole of Europe is closer to a complete union every day. Nevertheless, Stoiber recognizes that Germany still does need Europe. If there is any doubt as to whether he supports a united Europe, let him put it to rest: “Europe has an historic opportunity to overcome the artificial division of our continent for once and for all and to make the European Union into a truly pan-European community,” he said in a Berlin speech two years ago. “That is what we want, without any concessions.”

Stoiber deeply believes, as did Strauss, that the economic and political union of the EU must be strong—in large part as a counterbalance to the U.S. Stoiber also very much supports a strong European military: “There is a gross imbalance between the economic and foreign-policy weight of Europe,” he said in a June 2002 speech. “That can be seen—along with many other things—

in the minor way in which Europe has been able to influence the Middle East conflict for example. Europe must assume greater responsibility for peace, freedom, law and justice in the world—politically in the first instance, but also militarily within a UN, NATO and EU framework if necessary.”

It is clear that the realization of Franz Josef Strauss’s grand design is Stoiber’s goal as well.

The Prophesied Leader

Bernard Connolly, in *The Rotten Heart of Europe*, said the European Union was only a “cloak for German ambitions.” Since we know that Germany (*Assyria* in Bible terminology) will be the driving force behind the end-time punishment of America and Britain (Isa. 10:5-6), we should carefully watch for a “king of fierce countenance” (Dan. 8:23), who rises to power “by flatteries” (Dan. 11:21), to appear in Germany. The future of Europe is tied to this man.

Strauss was once called the “Strongman of Europe.” Will his disciple, Edmund Stoiber, one day attain this title as well? Will Stoiber wield enough political strength to bring about Germany’s “grand design”? Simply put, we don’t know yet. But this we do know: At this time, no one else fits the bill more perfectly than he does. There is no doubt Stoiber is one of the most outspoken and visible men in Germany right now and its most successful state premier. He is also the political successor of the man who laid the groundwork for many of the plans that have brought the EU to fruition.

In this age of volatile world conditions, Germany—and Europe as a whole—is searching for a leader who can be a powerful voice in a world of escalating change, confusion, terrorism and impending cataclysm. Europeans want a man who can bring about security from such violence, provide them with economic and social peace of mind, and offer long-range stability.

A “king of fierce countenance” is rising somewhere in Europe, and time is rapidly running out! Though Franz Josef Strauss is dead, his vision for Europe is not—and soon a leader will arise to bring it to fruition. ◆

Establishing the link
between discipline and
a child's ability to learn

A

Himself

BY STEPHEN FLURRY

THE ROD AND REPROOF GIVE wisdom ...” A wise man wrote that more than 3,000 years ago. Now stop for a moment and *think* on that proverb. (That word *wisdom* means to become a *skillful learner*.) When is the last time you ever heard ANYONE connect—or even vaguely associate—a *spanking* with EDUCATION?

Look at the rest of the proverb: “... but a child left to himself brings his mother to shame.” In other words, a *neglected* child brings shame on the family because that neglect adversely affects his ability to learn—to grow in wisdom

and understanding. According to *Lange’s Commentary*, “left to himself” literally means, “he who is *exempted from discipline*, who is left to *his own will*” (emphasis mine throughout).

In that one proverb, Solomon actually described two opposite approaches to education. One is a disciplined, structured environment where children are corrected and punished in love. In the other, children are more or less left to themselves to decide right from wrong—an environment void of structure and discipline.

Let’s examine this biblical link between discipline and education. First of all, should there even be one? And if so,

why? And what are the consequences of the opposite approach in educating our youth—one in which there is no discipline?

Rise of Rationalism

Over the last two generations, much has been written about the removal of structure and discipline in education. The late Allan Bloom described this cultural upheaval in his 1987 book *The Closing of the American Mind*. There he detailed the broad substitution of an accepted standard of absolute good and evil with “more flexible values,” and the “longing to shuck off constraints and have one peaceful, happy world.” Bloom at-



If we would invest time, energy and money into teaching an animal how to behave in the house, isn't it a thousand times more important for a little human being made in the likeness and image of God?

tributed this 20th-century rise of value relativism in American education to the influence of *German rationalism* in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He blamed German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche most for obliterating the idea that there is good and evil or right and wrong, as had been traditionally taught in education.

Many years before Bloom authored his critical analysis, another commentator correctly identified the main problem emerging in education. Well ahead of his time, Herbert W. Armstrong wrote nearly 40 years ago, "The 19th and 20th centuries have witnessed the absorption of German 'rationalism' into the educational bloodstream. There has been a dangerous drift into materialism and collectivism. God is ignored. Revelation is rejected" (*Plain Truth*, August 1965).

Rationalism is the belief that *human reason is the final authority*—the chief source of all knowledge. *Encyclopedia Britannica* defines the term this way: "In its commonest use it is applied to all who *decline to accept the authority of the Bible* as the infallible record of a divine revelation, and is practically synonymous with free thinking. This type of rationalism is based largely upon

the results of modern historical and archaeological investigation. The story of the Creation in the book of Genesis is shown, from the point of view of chronology, to be a *poetic* or *symbolic* account by the discovery of civilizations of much greater antiquity" (11th edition).

Mr. Armstrong often pointed to the flawed foundation of modern education: the never-proven theory of evolution. Its underlying premise is one that rejects God's authority, if not His existence. The problem with this, as Mr. Armstrong noted, is if you remove God from the educational system, you remove the absolute SOURCE of all true, foundational knowledge.

You remove the final authority for right and wrong. You also remove much of the discipline and structure needed in the classroom.

Not surprisingly, then, God's saying "the rod and reproof give wisdom" doesn't much matter in the field of academia. In fact, *because God says it*, is reason enough for man to search for some other way—to rationalize around God's truth.

Paradox in Education

Last year in the *Salisbury Review*, Leon-

ard Irvine made the case for the scientific link between the older, more traditional system of education and good behavior in human beings. He wrote, "Although it is arguable that the modern style of teaching can produce a reasonable standard of education, it certainly does not appear to produce good behavior in boys and youths. In primary education, the gradual abandonment of the traditional style of teaching, in favor of a lax and more pupil-friendly style, has coincided with the period that took this country [England] from one of the most lawful of Western nations to one of the most violent and criminal of the present time" (Summer 2003). The same comment could well apply to America.

Mr. Armstrong, who died in 1986, often commented on this paradox in education. Why such a remarkable disparity between educational advancements on the one hand, and yet pitiful social ills on the other? Western education has produced minds capable of advancing technology to a point of what, only a few years ago, might have seemed like science fiction. Yet, all of this knowledge has not solved man's most basic problems. Scientific marvels in medicine have not ended sickness and disease. Advancement in communication, while dramatically changing the way we live, has not stamped out international wars, civil unrest or family strife. In fact, as Irvine notes in his article, the nations that *lead the world* in higher education are ALSO THE MOST VIOLENT!

What a paradox! How can a system of education so superbly advanced on the one hand be so inadequate in solving problems and eliminating evil?

The Scientific Link

Irvine continued in his article, "Various reasons have been put forward as to why crime is now so widespread. The 'permissive society,' decline of the nuclear family and the rise of the number of single mothers, drugs, etc. There is no basis for saying that any one, or all, of these reasons could have produced the increase in crime. What must be looked for is a change that made young boys and youths *less able to resist bad behavior, less able to say no* to the taking of drugs and less mindful of the consequences of their behavior for themselves and others. It is not violent crime that we must combat but the thing that makes a person a violent criminal. Although fighting crime

‘at the sharp end’ must continue, this society is PRODUCING MORE CRIMINALLY INCLINED BOYS AND YOUTHS THAN ITS LAW ENFORCEMENT STRUCTURE CAN POSSIBLY DEAL WITH.”

To his credit, Irvine attempts to get at the *cause* of our societal evils—especially that of crime and violence. “The paradox is that in the time up to the 1950s, discipline at home and at school was harsh. Then there was little crime. Today, with the ‘child centered’ style of education and the abolition of any form of smacking in school, children are more violent than they ever were.” He makes this point to attack the modern thinking that discipline either causes children to withdraw or else teaches them that violence is acceptable. In fact, what Irvine suggests, is that students need *more* discipline and structure at home and in school—not less.

To support his conclusions, Irvine offers a scientific explanation—pointing to the modern phenomenon of mental disorders among children in Western society, like attention deficit disorder (ADD). One in 20 children (in Western society, that is; seldom does one ever hear of ADHD sweeping across some, non-Western, Third World nation) is now diagnosed with an attention deficit disorder of some kind. By 2007, some experts say, the number will increase to a staggering ONE IN SEVEN. This is cause for sounding the alarm because, as Irvine notes in his article, “The link between antisocial behavior and a short attention span is acknowledged by all professional bodies concerned.” In other words, *most troublemakers were brought up in an undisciplined environment.*

So how ought we to go about improving the attention span of our children—to help bring more structure and discipline into their lives? Mr. Irvine suggests EEG Neurofeedback as one possible solution. This treatment consists of monitoring a child’s brainwaves with an EEG machine, while teaching the subject’s brain to function better through various exercises and games. (A number of athletes use these techniques to enhance their concentration skills in sports.) Treatment might typically involve two or three sessions per week over the course of six months or so. Irvine says it can sometimes bring spectacular results, though it is so expensive few people actually try it.

Instead, most people opt for mind-

altering drugs, like Ritalin. It helps regulate a child’s disruptive behavior at home and improves concentration at school. Understandably, many parents and teachers are avid supporters of the amphetamine-type drug.

But there are also an increasing number of critics who point to the drug’s many side effects: lethargy, depression, poor appetite, insomnia—not to mention the long-term effects which have yet to be determined, since the drug’s popularity only exploded in the 1990s. Aside from these side effects, the drug does not bring about permanent change. A change in behavior is noticeable only while the subject is on the medication.

Both of these “solutions” deal only with the *effect* of the problem, rather than its *cause*—which is another story in itself. But there is an important point to be made from the findings of scientists who spend their lives dealing with effects. Irvine stresses this point in his article: “Independent tests have shown *an increase in IQ of 23 points in children treated for ADD.* The really important point is that the treatment approximates [or brings one near] to normal learning. ... What the treatment does is to lengthen the attention span of the subject.” In other words, a student learns more—is, in

these traditional teaching methods with neurofeedback technology, for example, Irvine explains that the latter *helps correct* problems with short attention span, but without increasing one’s storehouse of knowledge. (Upon correcting the problem, however, a student’s cognitive ability to learn more, *from that point forward*, will undoubtedly improve.)

But there is no substitute for properly training and teaching children—from the point of infancy on up—to concentrate, pay attention and obey certain definite instructions! This, as Irvine explains, does increase the child’s storehouse of knowledge, because as the child’s attention span improves, year by year, he is learning along the way—adding on top of his previously acquired knowledge.

These early years in a child’s development—from infancy to about age 6—are his most formative years. This is when the child’s personality, character and intelligence are, in many ways, SET FOR LIFE! Child development experts will tell you that about half an individual’s intelligence—his ability to learn and grasp new concepts—is developed in his first three or four years of life! (About 80 percent of that ability is developed by age 8.)

Think on THAT for a moment! My

There is no substitute for properly training and teaching children—from infancy on up—to concentrate, pay attention and obey certain definite instructions.

fact, *smarter*—WHEN HE CAN PAY ATTENTION! Now that we can prove this scientifically, we should all be able to sleep better at night.

The Other Alternative

So what should we do if we want smarter children? Should we *ignore* the long-term damage and side effects of drugs and opt for a quick fix like Ritalin? Or should we mortgage the home to make sure our children receive their regular neurofeedback treatments?

Well, there is another, more practical, *much less popular*, alternative to improving the attention span of youths, which Mr. Irvine proposes in his *Salisbury Review* article: A RETURN TO THE MORE DISCIPLINED FORM OF TEACHING AND EDUCATING CHILDREN! In comparing

daughter will be four years old in a few months. To think that HALF her intelligence is already set—before she has even stepped foot into a classroom—is a sober, if not frightening, reality for me as a father. It makes me wonder, has my teaching and training really helped prepare her for what’s ahead? Has it brought discipline into her life? Is she gradually learning how to be more attentive so that she might learn more down the road—and at a faster pace? I suppose no parent would be completely satisfied with his responses to those questions.

But think about how many parents have never even asked those questions. How many have simply passed the buck—letting the responsibility of training and teaching their children fall upon

other individuals or institutions? How many parents have simply left their children to fend for themselves?

Train Up a Child

Writing for the *Daily Mail* in London, Colette Douglas Home asked, “How many dog owners do you know who check their pooch into kennels during office hours? I can’t think of any. Time without number I have heard people who would love to own a dog lament their inability. ‘It wouldn’t be fair on the animal because we both work,’ they say. ‘We can’t offer a dog the attention, exercise and established routine it takes to make them a well trained pet’” (Aug. 1, 2003).

Yet, she continued, many of these same people drop their kids off at daycare facilities without hardly batting an eye. “No doubt those parents will gnash their teeth in fury at the implication that using daycare is treating an infant worse than they would a dog. I don’t apologize. If we wouldn’t do it to a dog, it is something we all need to think about.”

She went on to explain that if a dog goes berserk and tears up the house, we discipline and train it. But if a child throws a tantrum and does the same, we put him on Ritalin. I’m not suggesting that child rearing is as simplistic as training a canine. *A child is not an animal.* But that’s the whole point! If we would invest time, energy and money into teaching an animal how to behave in the house, isn’t

pretty much fend for themselves.

Human babies are different. They are born utterly helpless—with no knowledge. Everything they do in life they must learn to do—eat, crawl, walk, talk, dress, tie shoes, read, write, sing, etc.

A little one must also learn to respect authority, to follow instructions, to pay attention, to think and reason. *That child must learn how to learn!* And parents—whether we accept it or not—are responsible most for preparing their children for education—to teach them how to learn. We are their most important educators in life. Not public or private schools, not higher education, not government programs or community organizations—and certainly not music or television programs.

God’s instruction on this subject is clearly outlined in another succinct proverb: “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it” (Prov. 22:6).

How many parents today view themselves as educators, first and foremost?

The Lesson of Obedience

Perhaps the greatest sin in the prosperous, highly educated nations of the West is that of omission—or neglect. We’ve certainly committed our share of sins against God’s law—*doing* things God forbids. But we are also guilty of *not doing* that which God COMMANDS. God says in James 4:17, “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it

lots of toys—*anything parents can think of to keep them occupied, or to prevent tantrums.* Then, when they enter the more structured environment of school at age 5 or 6, we can’t understand why they won’t pay attention.

Here is how Mr. Armstrong described every parent’s responsibility in raising children: “Always give your children an abundance of LOVE. *Show* your affection. Then, from tiniest infancy, by *loving* but unquestionable insistence, bring your child to absolute recognition of your AUTHORITY—and before he reaches the end of his first year! If spanking is necessary, use it—always being careful not to injure the child, yet making it smart enough to get results” (*The Missing Dimension in Sex*).

A super-abundance of love—and insisting on obedience. It’s not that complicated. But it is difficult to put into practice because it takes so much time and unselfish sacrifice. It takes parents who pay attention to their children—educating, teaching and training.

“Don’t be afraid of what the crackpot child psychologists fear,” Mr. Armstrong continued, “to make him feel ‘guilty.’ When a child disobeys, HE IS GUILTY, and must be made to realize it!

“When *we* disobey GOD, He tells us plainly, in the Bible, that we are GUILTY! Yet God *loved* us enough to give Christ to die for us, that the sin may be forgiven, upon repentance.

“So let the child *know* he is guilty—but he can be forgiven upon repentance—which means to *change* from the spirit of rebellion to an attitude of willing obedience.”

In other words, teach our children what God is teaching us! *That has always been God’s way.*

Man’s way is to let children do as they please. If they don’t want to listen, it’s just a passing phase—if they throw a tantrum, just let it run its course. Then, *hopefully* (with fingers crossed), they will turn out to be smart, well-disciplined, law-abiding citizens who raise happy families. That might be the way it works in movies. But not in real life.

God says if you have a foolish child, you drive out the foolishness with the rod of correction (Prov. 22:15). Here again, we find spanking and discipline closely associated with a child’s ability to learn. The rod and reproof, as we covered earlier, actually *give* wisdom and understanding.

That children cannot pay attention in school is not the real problem here. The problem is with *parents* who will not pay attention to the needs of their children.

it a thousand times more important for a little human being made in the likeness and image of God?

When animals are brought into this world, they are equipped with instinct. And while domesticated pets might be trained to behave a certain way, or perhaps perform a few tricks, they are still, in the end, just animals with instinct. They cannot learn to think or reason or acquire knowledge. Never will they be able to develop language or writing skills. Neither will they be able to appreciate fine culture. And yet, within just a few weeks after birth, sometimes days (depending on what it is) animals can

not, to him it is sin.” In Hebrews 2:3, God says we could miss out on salvation by mere neglect.

That children cannot pay attention in school is not the real problem here. The problem is with *parents* WHO WILL NOT PAY ATTENTION TO THE NEEDS OF THEIR CHILDREN. It’s with deadbeat dads who will not step forward and lead the family with loving authority. It’s with mothers who are too busy competing in the workplace to care for their children at home.

Too often, children are left with daycare, teen babysitters, television and movies, video games, sugary snacks, and

How is this even possible? How can administering discipline make a child more educated? *Because in order to receive knowledge, a child must first learn how to listen and pay attention.* (Remember, this has now been *scientifically* proven!) And nothing establishes this as habit in a little one quite like discipline and correction. How can a human being ever learn from those in authority unless he or she has first been taught to OBEY and LISTEN TO those in authority? If a child has never been taught that, why should we expect him to receive knowledge from an authority figure?

We find, then, that what Leonard Irvine set out to scientifically prove in his article on education is actually somewhat similar to a principle God revealed in Scripture millennia ago. He didn't quite get to the depth of the solution, however. In his view, a more disciplined and structured educational system will help to improve behavior in students, leading to a society with fewer criminals and thugs. In other words, let's return to the more traditional style of education and then we will see an improvement in human behavior. Certainly, that would help.

But with God, the emphasis is on CHANGING HUMAN BEHAVIOR FIRST—which then leads to becoming truly educated! Teach a child to honor and obey his parents first (Eph. 6:1-2; Col. 3:20)—then they can understand and learn.

Few commentators are willing to go this deep in proposing their “solutions” because it involves much more than changing a curriculum and the disciplinary measures at the local elementary school. In fact, it transfers most of the burden of responsibility to teach, train and discipline youths from the educational system to where it belongs—the parents!

This solution—*God's solution*—means fathers must regain control of their families with loving leadership—as provider, protector and educator. It means mothers should assume their primary role as helpmeet to the husband, keeper of the home and the daytime caregiver to the children. And it means children must learn the lesson of obedience first, while growing up in a loving family environment at home.

God Is Ignored

Let us return one final time to Mr. Irvine's *Salisbury Review* article. In it, he

described the upbringing young people used to enjoy *some 12,000 years ago*. The mother devoted her whole life to bearing and raising children, whereas the father was always out hunting and killing. This fortuitous predicament gave women more things to think about, whereas with men, their single focus was on finding food for the family. Thus, women came to think differently than men. They developed better communication skills between the two halves of the brain. Men, on the other hand, developed into more focused thinkers. As these special abilities evolved over time, the gap between *Homo sapiens* and all other species widened. We became far more intelligent.

These differences between men and women cave-people also necessitated

Also, human offspring, unlike animals, must be educated. This process, as we have explained, begins within the family. Children are first taught the lesson of obedience and honor to their parents. And in rearing their children properly, parents too will learn in the process. With everyone fulfilling his or her God-ordained role, we all come to better understand the way God's family is organized. This awesome purpose is clearly outlined in the pages of the Holy Bible.

To acknowledge any of this—not to mention *accept it* and LIVE BY IT—is simply NOT AN OPTION for the most highly educated of our day, whether “conservative” or “liberal.” To even suggest it is to admit that the great Creator God knew what He was doing when He created us. It would imply that the

How can a human being ever learn from those in authority unless he or she has first been taught to obey and listen to those in authority?

the need for different educational training for boys and girls. Boys, he said, need more discipline and structure because they are bigger and stronger and tend to be more violent. Our great patriarchs, after all, killed wild buffalo with sharp stones.

How ridiculous! After correctly identifying a huge problem in our society, he draws a conclusion based on the unproven theory of evolution. *Where in the universe is GOD?* He either DOESN'T EXIST, or He is COMPLETELY IGNORED.

The vast difference between man and animals is there because *God created it that way*. MAN ALONE, of all living creatures, was made in the image and likeness of the Creator God. Furthermore, the biological, emotional and mental differences between men and women are there because God created both to fulfill *altogether different*—yet EQUALLY IMPORTANT—roles within human marriage and family. Marriage, unimaginable between two creatures of any animal species, is unique to human relationships because GOD ORDAINED IT from the beginning. (If God didn't ordain it, when and how did it evolve? Which couple, if not Adam and Eve, was the first to “marry”?) Reproduction, though common in all species, is unique among humans because it is a physical type of spiritual salvation.

“Instruction Manual” God sent along with His creation, the Holy Bible, is the FINAL AUTHORITY—the foundation on which all knowledge would be acquired. It would mean that God's instruction would be the foundation of true education. And that educational system, first and foremost, would require total OBEEDIENCE on our part. It means we would have to behave and pay attention to what God taught. It would bring more discipline and structure in our lives.

But wait a minute. Isn't that what Mr. Irvine proposed in his article? In some ways, yes—*only without God*.

It's difficult to determine what's worse: The IGNORANCE of many liberals who unabashedly reject God and His way of life, or the ARROGANCE of many conservatives who, while they might advocate certain godly principles, never seem to credit their Source. Both are products of man's educational system. And modern education, at its worst, denies the very existence of man's Creator. At best, it simply ignores Him.

In either case, we don't want to pay attention to our Father. We would just as soon be LEFT ALONE. ♦

2004 A Look

WORLD

America's Asian suppliers continue to put up with receiving worthless paper in exchange for manufactured goods?

Added to all this is the toboggan slide of the U.S. dollar ripping great slices off the profits of international oil contracts. How long will it be before future oil contracts are denominated in euros, as some European-Russian contracts already are? Not only would that be devastating to the U.S. economy, it would result in turning global energy markets on their heads!

The purchasing power of the graying baby-boomers' retirement funds will continue to erode. The social chaos to which this will lead as this year merges into the next few years hardly can be overestimated.

It has been said that when America sneezes, the whole world catches cold. The U.S. is running an economic and financial fever that the basic laws of economics indicate will peak in the mother of all financial headaches—leading inevitably to a seismic global economic restructuring. Few realize the Babylonish origin of our fiat money system. It was ultimately destined to fail. The only question has been the timing. Read Revelation 18:9-11 for the outcome to which this year's trends will lead.

ANGLO-AMERICA

THE YEAR 2004 WILL SEE A RASH OF IMPORTANT elections in those nations tied by a common, once proud, now largely despised, Anglo-Saxon heritage. Two of the prime partners in the coalition against terror will each have a federal



Bush

election to decide their leadership this year—the U.S. and Australia.

Early signs were that the capture of Saddam Hussein augured well for the re-election of President Bush. Two major factors to watch on the American election scene remain the *war on terror* and the perceived *state of the economy*—hot political issues that can swing the polls dramatically overnight.

With Australians increasingly aware of their country's vulnerability to terrorism, and relations between the U.S. and

How will events predicted for the coming year affect you?

BY RON FRASER

THE YEAR 2003 WAS ONE OF MIXED and confusing signals. Stock prices rose, yet debt increased. The dollar sunk, but the Fed still printed more greenbacks. The Butcher of Baghdad was caught, yet voices continued to condemn U.S. strategy in Iraq. Experts said the economy was improving, but jobs remained scarce. It was the hottest year ever, but some regions broke records for sub-zero temperatures.

What's going on? Out of the confusion of 2003, is there any hope of making reliable predictions about 2004?

Yes, indeed, there is. The key is to *consider the trends*, relate them to history, and align them with an impeccable source of the vision of the future—infallible Bible *prophecy!*

ECONOMY

CONSIDER THE ECONOMY. RUMBLES OF trade war loom large on the horizon. Issues such as protective tariffs will continue to fester as the world continues to coalesce into separate free-trade blocs. It will be national economies, their global counterparts and how they relate to each other that will dominate our news this year, second only to foreign-policy issues. The finger is pointing to the out-of-control U.S. economy as a harbinger of global economic grief.

A little homework reviewing the past year's record levels in new debt, in federal deficits, in trade imbalances, in bankruptcies and the continuing corporate fraud which seems now to be endemic to the way we do business, does little to raise hopes for a bright fiscal 2004.

The fact that the hoped-for surge in

employment just has not materialized in America should lead anyone to conclude, as one Morgan Stanley professional actually did, that "there's something new and big going on that will continue to defy the optimistic spin that is now being put on a still very sluggish American labor market" (*Daily Reckoning*, Dec. 15, 2003).

Despite other positive signs, on December 12 Reuters ran the headline, "Consumers Turn Gloomy Despite Good News." A preliminary reading from the University of Michigan consumer sentiment index indicated that consumer spending will continue to drop in 2004 rather than rise as many economists had hoped. Even after the capture of Saddam Hussein, market watcher Addison Wiggin said, "Alas, the Butcher of Baghdad is no match for the two-headed ghoulish that has been stalking the dollar of late: the 'twin deficits—fiscal and trade.' Expect the dollar to begin running scared again. Soon" (*ibid.*).

We drifted into the year 2004 on the news that the U.S. needs to attract \$1.5 billion a day to offset the shortfall in the current account and maintain the dollar's value. The trouble is, international investors are *reducing* their previously high purchase levels of U.S. bonds, which are the only means of underpinning American consumer spending.

This year we shall continue to see the progressive dismantling of any remaining locally owned industries within the English-speaking nations as consumers maintain the fiction of a "quality" lifestyle, surrounded by Chinese, Japanese, South Korean and Indian manufactured goods. In return, Asian suppliers receive only IOUs (federal bonds). Something has to eventually give. How long will

Australia continuing to strengthen, the chances of Prime Minister John Howard's return to office look good.

In Britain, watch conservative opposition leader, Michael Howard. He combines a high degree of eloquence in debate with a much leaner, but stronger, shadow cabinet than has been the case in divided conservative ranks since, perhaps, the days of Margaret Thatcher, under whom he once served. As an EU member, Britain will be involved in the federal European parliamentary elections in June. Michael Howard has just six months to put the case for the Euroskeptics and promote candidates for those elections who will work for British interests inside the EU. His future may rise or fall on the consequences.

ASIA

THE DECK SEEMS STACKED IN FAVOR OF Vladimir Putin in Russia's presidential election this March. However, this will be preceded in January by Georgia's parliamentary election. This breakaway ex-Soviet state could yet prove a handful for the Russian leader as he seeks to rebuild the old Russian empire into an international force to be reckoned with.

Putin's attention will also be diverted to the renegade province of Chechnya, where parliamentary elections take place this month. The Chechen rebels seek a separate Islamic state. Russia is intent on holding the line on the northward incursion of Islam. Putin built his parliamentary campaign around this issue, which struck a chord with Russians tired of Chechen terrorism.

In East Asia, elections in Taiwan, Hong Kong and South Korea should be watched with interest as all three countries bear some influence on the situation of mainland China. Of greatest interest will be March's presidential elections in Taiwan. Will President Chen Shui-bian intensify his "separate Taiwan" rhetoric and risk the ire of China and severance from its main arms supplier, America?

The outcome of Indonesia's parliamentary elections in April and presidential elections in July could well have a bearing on how easily Australians breathe, being mindful of the terrorist



Chen

bombing that killed 88 Australian citizens in Bali two years ago. The war on terror will also be a continuing theme in the presidential and legislative elections to be held in the Philippines in May. Muslim terror cells still train and operate within its thousands of islands. Regional eyes will also be watching new Malaysia Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's leadership to follow through on his anti-terrorist rhetoric against Asian-based Islamic terrorists with assertive action. He will oversee legislative elections in December.

To the north, Japan will continue to strengthen its naval position, intent on keeping open the vital shipping lanes upon which it is so dependent for energy and natural resources. Re-elected Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi will press ahead to ease changes into the Japanese constitution to replace the clause which ostensibly prevents Japan from developing military force beyond homeland security—in order to realize a longer-term vision of reasserting Tokyo's influence within greater Asia.

Continue to watch the tussle between Japan, China and the Southeast Asian economies as each seeks to take the high ground in efforts to build a common market for Asia.

SOUTH AMERICA

PRESIDENTS VICENTE FOX OF MEXICO, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva of Brazil and Néstor Kirchner of Argentina face some hard choices to kick start their countries' economic and trade performance in 2004. The Bush administration's efforts to ink free-trade deals with various Latino countries may offer a stop-gap measure, but the European Union is working on the longer term maximization of investment in South America, luring the Latin economies away from the U.S. Keep your eye on the EU as we anticipate its increasing negotiations with MERCOSUR (the South American free trade association) in process of developing free-trade incentives between the two continents.

AFRICA

WHAT HOPE IS THERE FOR AFRICA IN 2004? Many write off central Africa as a basket case. The international community hypocritically has allowed Robert Mugabe and his ilk to literally get away

with murder. North Africa is a hotbed of terrorist cells, and South Africa's President Thabo Mbeki continues to play the ostrich on the AIDS issue. Expect more famine, more disease, more weeping over this still largely darkened continent, as slaving merchants, corporatists and bureaucrats in Europe bide their time until the price for Africa's massive resources is right.



EUROPE

IT IS IN EUROPE WHERE MUCH OF THE news of note, destined to affect you and your loved ones, will be written in 2004. Major events scheduled for this year are the accession of 10 nations from the east and south to EU membership in May, European parliamentary elections scheduled for June, and parliamentary elections due to take place in France in September. But it is the legacy of the failed constitutional convention of last December which will have greatest effect on Europe in 2004, for it is this event which has the potential to either slow down or spur forward fulfillment of the dream of European unity.

As we enter the new year, the world views a largely divided, argumentative, seemingly confused mess of nations which, though they carry the name European Union, appear the very antithesis of unity. *Do not be fooled!* This very state of seeming disunity will actually create the *crisis* that certain European minds thrive on fixing—*their way!* Europe has never unified voluntarily. When it has been unified in the past, that unity has been *imposed* upon it—by force!

It will take more than the doubtful quality of leadership provided by French President Jacques Chirac or German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder to pull this rag-tag bunch of nations together. What is presently lacking is the demagogic leader and the powerful religious force which have traditionally been able to create the magic of unity within this complex of nation-states.

Bible prophecy indicates that those powerfully influential leaders must be on the scene, somewhere, in Europe right now. Who are they? When will circumstances arise that will propel them

to the fore? Will the further crisis created by absorbing 10 new nations into the EU this May prove to be the event which exposes that strong leader whom this magazine has always predicted will arise to lead Europe in a final resurrection of the old Holy Roman Empire? Will the present pope's death usher in that influential religious leader who will empower the Vatican to provide the spiritual glue to bind the fractious nations of Europe together for a brief moment in time? Follow these trends as the year unfolds.

MIDDLE EAST

CONTINUING EFFORTS TO IMPLEMENT

A plan that allows for the creation of a separate Palestinian state will tend to dominate events in the Middle East. Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has given till the middle of this year for the U.S.-led "road map" peace plan to produce results. If it fails, Sharon has warned that he will complete the West Bank security wall that imposes itself on large areas of land sought by the Palestinians as part of their state.

Europe, Germany in particular, will eventually take over and conclude the Middle East peace process. Watch for developments along this theme during 2004. Notwithstanding the German government's strident resistance to the U.S.-led war in Iraq, Germany will also insist on significant involvement in Iraq's reconstruction—likely with the UN's backing.

Positive Vision

Although 2004 may bring negative trends, a true vision of hope emerges for those with the perspective to see their ultimate outcome. The events foreshadowed in this article are coalescing toward the ultimate demise of man's civilization as we know it.

The good news is, as events climax toward the close of this doomed civilization, the scene is being set for a far better civilization, destined to open mankind's potential to fulfill the most noble aspirations possible. You need that vision in order to contend with and understand the reasons for the negativity of world trends. Request your free copy of our mind-opening book *The Incredible Human Potential* to gain a perspective far beyond the year ahead, on into human-kind's breathtaking future! ◆



Is California Cursed?

“I am reading about stress in your November issue and sometimes I wonder if people will try to set fires like we see in California due to stress and just want to hurt others because of their lack of inner peace.”

Chino, Calif.

I AM SO APPRECIATIVE OF YOUR STEADFAST coverage of an entire range of subjects. I may not agree with your theology, but I remain impressed by the commitment of your Church to publish a point of view that is so unpalatable to the secular world. People don't want to hear that our world is teetering on the brink of an economic catastrophe so appalling that there is no historical precedent. Only when the conflagration occurs do people finally open up their ears to listen.

Richmond, Calif.

I ENJOY READING YOUR ARTICLES BECAUSE they are a different point of view from the news I see on TV. One problem I did have with your December 2003 issue was the article "Space Wars." It had a picture of a German Eurofighter that stated, "the most advanced of its kind," which shocked me. If anything, the Eurofighter got up to par with the American F-15 Eagle or Russian Su-35.

North Hollywood, Calif.

All our research, including the press releases distributed by the manufacturers and defense experts, indicates that the Eurofighter Typhoon is, to quote one source, "the world's most advanced swing-role combat aircraft Eurofighter Typhoon features unrivalled technology ..." (PR Newswire, March 14, 2003).

Why We Cannot Win

THE NOVEMBER 2003 COVER STORY, "Why We Cannot Win the War Against Terrorism," is one of the best analyses I have ever read on the topic. I am deeply concerned—actually downright appalled—by what our "liberal" leaders have done to this country. As a Christian, I do believe that we must fight evil. I know that most Middle East countries see us as a superpower, but they do not fear us as

such. They know that half their battle is already taking place within our own political structure. They know that our democratic society, although the best form of government in the history of mankind, when led by politicians with their own self-interest agendas, only weakens us as a country. Admittedly, President Bush may not be the best man in power or have all the right answers, but at least he and Tony Blair took a stand. Unfortunately, there is no spine to the other liberal politicians. They live in a cocoon with rose-colored glasses. They have probably never seen firsthand what fanatic terrorists really think of the U.S. and how they plan on ultimately defeating us unless we take the fight to them.

Reston, Va.

I WOULD LIKE TO COMMENT ON YOUR ARTICLE "Will Pills Solve our Ills?" specifically in relation to ADHD. I have ADHD, and I am 19 years old. I have to agree that pills are not the only method of dealing with ADHD. What is very good and effective is stability in both the home and professional life. It's funny to note that males are prone to ADHD (there are nine ADHD boys to one ADHD girl). I wonder why this is? Could it be that boys no longer know who they are? Is it because dad lives in a different state or city because mum and dad are divorced, and he has no male role model? Males now

Letters to the Editor must include the writer's name and address and should be sent to The Trumpet, P.O. Box 1099, Edmond, OK 73083, or e-mailed to letters@theTrumpet.com. Letters may be edited for space and clarity.

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JOEL HILLIKER

War on Two Fronts

America is not just battling terrorists—it's battling itself.

HITLER'S STRATEGY FOR WORLD CONQUEST HINGED ON HIS wager that America wouldn't have the nerve to enter the war. He was right—that is, until Pearl Harbor. Japan's attack on American soil provoked a firestorm: The president united the nation and rallied the full force of its manpower, industry and political will to wage an all-out two-front war lasting four years and costing over 400,000 American lives.

Times have changed. September 11—which killed several hundred more Americans than did the Pearl Harbor attack—also roused the U.S. into a two-front war. This time, however, one of those fronts is at home.

The Democratic presidential contenders are unanimous in criticizing the war plan (a couple are competing to be “the antiwar candidate”), by turns calling the president incompetent, deceitful and corrupt. (During a National Public Radio interview, the frontrunner, Howard Dean, described as “interesting” the outrageous theory that the president was told in advance about 9/11 by Saudi Arabia.) They are even resurrecting the notion that President Bush doesn't have a legitimate claim to his office. Other prominent Democrats agree, including Al Gore, who endorsed Dean just a week after his NPR remarks, Edward Kennedy, who calls the war a fraud, Hillary Clinton, who accused Mr. Bush of trying to “turn back the progress of the entire 20th century,” and billionaire George Soros, who gravely warns that it is a “life and death” issue for our country to oust the president.

The manic mass media have a field day front-paging such statements, doing their best to wrench public opinion against the White House. Reporters pounce on intelligence inconsistencies. They play down reconstruction successes and hyperventilate over terrorist successes. They pretend Saddam Hussein was harmless to America; despite his openly paying for Palestinian terrorists, they can't see how he would have ever *dared* cross the line by doing business with al-Qaeda. Even as America and Iraq rejoiced when the autocrat was captured last month, leftist politicians and pundits contorted themselves trying to minimize the achievement. It's as though they want America to fail in order to vindicate their hatred for the president.

This is not just politics as usual. This is civil war.

Unfortunately, as the folks with megaphones in politics and the press shout each other down, the rest of the country is following suit. November 5, 2003, the Pew Research Center published a poll about the political landscape tellingly titled “Evenly Divided and Increasingly Polarized,” showing that the

rift exposed by the 2000 election ruckus still exists—except now, everyone's views are more intense.

Trouble is, today the nation is at war. And this is not a fight for the prestige of a president or for a lower price at the pump. *America is in a war for its survival.* Victory could bring near-term stability to much of the world. Defeat would mean nothing less than catastrophe. As high as the costs are, it is a war the U.S. cannot afford to lose.

Yet, as foreign radicals labor to break America's will on Mideast soil, American radicals are effectively laboring to break it at home. Their divisive comments would be uncouth in peacetime—but in the midst of war, they are flirting with treason. Forget political parties. Do they comprehend the stakes in this war against terrorism? Do they realize Armageddon is at the door?

The biggest casualty in this war is America's national morale—a crucial element of any nation's power. Hans Morgenthau defined national morale as “the degree of determination with which a nation supports the foreign policies of its government in peace or war.” He wrote, “In the form of public opinion, it provides an intangible factor *without whose support no government, democratic or autocratic, is able to pursue its policies with full effectiveness, if it is able to pursue them at all.* Its presence or absence and its qualities reveal themselves particularly in times of *national crisis*” (*Politics Among Nations*, emphasis mine).

Put another way, “Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand.” So said Jesus. The truth is, America *cannot stand* while it is so divided!

Think about it. This president has only half the country behind him while the other half is doing all it can to unseat him. Even if they fail and he is re-elected, the clamorous public will make it increasingly impossible for him to finish what has been started.

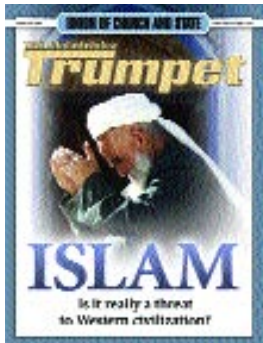
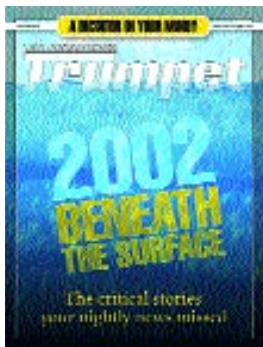
It seems ironic that, as America's leader speaks grandly of spreading democracy to areas of the world stained by tyranny and terrorism, it is that very system which could hand him a pink slip right in the midst of his effort. An angry nation split down the middle, where it seems the only point of agreement is that the other side is evil, hardly seems to be a model other countries would aim to emulate.

Of course, mass communication puts this schism in plain view of every single one of America's enemies. As they strategize for world conquest, surely they are thankful that, against the mighty U.S., they have unwitting allies, fighting splendidly on the war's second front.



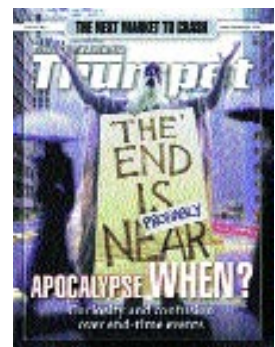
CIVIL WAR Antiwar protesters in Washington, D.C., burn a U.S.

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