



PROPHETIC TIMES

WEEKLY WORLD NEWS UPDATE

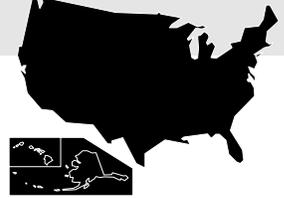
OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

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TONY BLAIR STRIVES TO BRIDGE THE GROWING GULF BETWEEN EU-US

May 22, 2002 *The EU Observer* reports: "The British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, warned European and American leaders to stop splitting the two continents, amid growing transatlantic rifts ranging from trade to defense and the stance on international conflicts. On the eve of a crucial visit by the American president



George Bush to Europe, the British Prime Minister pledged to play the peacemaker to stop anti-American feelings in Europe and anti-European voices in the United States. In an interview with *The Times*, he admitted that he regarded it as his job to stop people 'pulling apart' Europe and America. Tony Blair suggested a forum in which politicians from Europe and the United States could meet to discuss current problems would be welcome.

Mr. Blair also warned against telling Britain to 'choose between Europe and America.' The British premier hinted to an earlier statement by the European Commission's president Romano Prodi, who urged the UK to get closer to Europe and voiced dismay at London's ties with Washington. Mr. Blair admits there are problems between Brussels and Washington and he places trade disputes at the top of the list. However, he played down the significance of the transatlantic rift: 'My sense of this is that despite the difficulties the sensible majority understand that what we have in common is far more important than what divides us. We can resolve these issues, but let us not exaggerate the differences or start turning a disagreement into a conflict. It is not sensible.'..."

EASTERN NAVAL WARSHIPS DEPLOYED ON ARABIAN SEA

May 22, 2002 *The Times of India* reports: "In a significant move, five frontline warships of the Eastern Naval Fleet have joined the western naval warships to bolster Naval presence in the Arabian Sea. 'The warships have been moved in view of the prevailing situation and to take on challenges on the seas in keeping with India's maritime interests,' a defense ministry spokesman said.

The warships which have moved to join the Western Naval Fleet include the lethal Kashin class missile destroyer, a missile-armed multi-purpose frigate and three missile corvettes, sources said.

They said cross-coast deployment had been completed and the warships placed under administrative and operational control of the Flag Officer Commanding in Chief of the Western Naval Command. 'The warships would augment the force levels and operational preparedness of the western sea force', they said.

The Navy had carried out similar shifting of warships during the 1999 Kargil conflict and in 1971 Indo-Pak war..."

MAJOR CHINESE MILITARY WAR GAMES BEGIN NEAR TAIWAN

May 19, 2002 *The Washington Times* reports: "Chinese military forces opposite Taiwan have been placed on the highest state of alert as Beijing begins large-scale annual war games, according to U.S. intelligence officials. The maneuvers in Fujian province include thousands of ground troops and amphibious forces that have begun grouping in the southern China coastal region. U.S. intelligence agencies photographed lines of tanks and armored vehicles on roads between the Fujian capital of Fuzhou and the coastal city of Xiamen, directly across the 100-mile strait from Taiwan.

'So far we have not seen any ships,' said one U.S. official who is monitoring the war games. A second U.S. official said the war games are under way. 'We're watching it closely,' he said. The heightened alert was picked up by U.S. intelligence agencies based on military communications in the region, U.S. officials said.

War games near Taiwan triggered the Taiwan Strait crisis in 1996, when China fired short-range missiles to ocean areas north and south of Taiwan. The United States responded by sending two aircraft-carrier battle groups to waters near the island. The maneuvers in 1996 were judged by U.S. Navy intelligence officials as a possible prelude to military action against Taiwan.

China's communist government has stated repeatedly that it would use force to reunite the island with the mainland if Taiwan's government declares independence.

Chinese newspaper *Wen Wei Po* reported yesterday that the war games will involve as many as 100,000 troops. The maneuvers are expected to continue for six months...



PRIME MINISTER WANTS TO BE REMEMBERED FOR TAKING BRITAIN INTO THE EURO

euro

May 19, 2002 *FT.com* reports: "Tony Blair said on Wednesday that he would happily go down in history as the prime minister who took Britain into the euro and the decision was 'getting close'.

In a strong endorsement of euro membership, Blair said it would be a 'betrayal' of the national interest if he let politics get in the way of joining the single currency if the economic conditions were right.

His comments were interpreted by pro-euro campaigners as a ratcheting up of rhetoric at a crucial time, weeks before millions of Britons head to the Continent on holiday and prepare to use the single currency.

Although he said he would not like to be remembered as the man who scrapped the pound, Mr. Blair continued: 'I would have no problem with history recording me as the person who said to the British people: 'It is in our interests for us to be a key and major player in Europe and here is something that is, as in the single currency, in our economic interests to do so.'

'It is an economic union. We shouldn't for political reasons stand aside. I don't believe that would be a fulfillment of our national interest. I believe it would be a betrayal of our national interest.'

Britain in Europe, the pro-euro campaign, said Mr. Blair's remarks represented the 'strongest signal yet' that the government was gearing up for a referendum.

Blair said although there were divisions in public opinion over the issue, voters could be persuaded if it was made in economic terms..."

DENMARK VOICES REJECTION OF SUPER PRESIDENCY

May 18, 2002 *The EU Observer* reports: "The three biggest parties in Denmark are opposed to the British-French proposal of electing a strong president of the Council of Ministers for a five year period in order to replace the present rotating presidency, writes Danish paper *Politiken*.

'It certainly does not sound like progress, because it would mean a further monopolizing of the presidencies,' says Bertel Haarder, Liberal Europe minister, continuing: 'We agree that the present presidency circus is outdated. Consequently we are in complete agreement with Mr. Solana's ideas on group presidencies, but cannot accept this British-French proposal.'

The Danish government representative in the Convention, former Liberal minister of foreign affairs, Henning Christophersen, will oppose the proposition in the Convention on the future of Europe. Quoted in the *Politiken* he said, 'I believe that most member countries will say no thanks.'

The Social Democratic opposition party and Dansk Folkeparti also strongly reject the proposal. According to Henrik Dam Kristensen, Social Democratic Danish Convention member, the introduction of a super presidency will be harmful to small and middle size EU countries..."