



PROPHETIC TIMES

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OPPOSITION TO PRODI'S TWO TIER COMMISSION PLANS

July 5, 2002 The *EU Observer* reports: "Commission President Romano Prodi's plan to shake up the European Commission has run into strong opposition from his own team, many of whom believe radical reforms should wait until after they step down, reports the *Financial Times*."

Mr. Prodi wants to create an inner cabinet of eight or nine senior colleagues – in effect creating a two-tier Commission – and he wants to make the changes before new member states join the European Union in 2004. However, that idea has been widely criticized within the 20-strong Commission.

'What's the point of making the changes before enlargement?' asked one senior commissioner. 'It makes far more sense to wait until a new Commission comes in,' reports the *Financial Times*.

In addition, the *Financial Times* reports that Mr. Prodi's plan for an early shake-up had received virtually no support. 'We told Romano that his ideas provided a useful starting point for further discussions,' the *Financial Times* was told.

The criticism is a setback for the Commission president, for whom the reforms are an important part of a strategy to strengthen his authority and to counter accusations of weak leadership.

Mr. Prodi believes the move to an inner cabinet should take place before the enlargement of the EU, which is expected to bring in 10 new countries and 10 new commissioners, swelling the number of commissioners to up to 30..."



IS THE WAILING WALL WAILING?

July 4, 2002 The *Jerusalem Post* reports: "In a highly unnatural phenomenon, water has begun dripping from the midst of a stone in Jerusalem's Western Wall. The water leak, which was first noticed Saturday by worshippers at the Wall, continued yesterday for the fourth straight day, Shmuel Rabinovitch, the rabbi of the Western Wall, said yesterday."

On Sunday, Antiquities Authority director-general Shuka Dorfman and Jon Seligman, its Jerusalem regional archeologist, were rushed to the scene to examine the dripping, which has so far dampened a 10 by 40 centimeter section of the Wall.

The drops of water are coming from a mid-level stone on the right edge of the men's side, near the division with the women's side. The drip has also proved to be of immense interest to Jewish mystics, who see it as a sign of upcoming redemption.

Antiquities Authority spokeswoman Osnat Gouez said yesterday that the authority officials who visited the site on Sunday decided to wait a couple days to see if the problem would continue before contacting officials from the Wakf, which is in charge of maintenance at the Temple Mount, just above the Wall.

However, informed sources say that as the drip has persisted for at least 96 hours, Wakf officials have since been alerted to the drip, which may be coming from a hose or pipe they have installed...

Rabinovitch said that his priority is to stop the dripping, which he termed 'highly unusual.' Referring to a symbolic name given to the Wall the Wailing Wall by European observers because Jews for centuries came there to bewail the loss of the temples, Rabinovitch said: 'Maybe the Wall is indeed crying because of the current situation in the country.'"

EGYPT GIVES LITTLE TO U.S. WAR AGAINST TERROR

July 4, 2002 The Middle East Newsline reports: "Egypt, regarded as a leading Arab ally of Washington, is said to have contributed far less than others in the Middle East to the U.S.-led war against terrorism.

A Defense Department report asserts that Egypt has contributed far less than such regional allies such as Djibouti, Jordan, Kuwait and Turkey. It was the first Pentagon report that detailed the contribution by 20 countries to the war against Al Qaida and its allies.

In a report released on Friday, the Pentagon listed what it termed was a partial list of those countries that are helping the United States. The support cited by Egypt -- which receives about \$2 billion in U.S. economic and military aid -- was one of the smallest entries in the report..."

SAUDIS REJECT CALL TO REPLACE ARAFAT

July 3, 2002 The Jerusalem Post reports: " Saudi Arabia's ambassador to Washington, Prince Bandar bin Sultan, met yesterday with US National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, to deliver a message from Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah about President George W. Bush's Middle East speech last week, sources here said.

The thrust of the message could not be immediately determined. But Abdullah, who met with Bush in Texas earlier this year as Bush was fashioning a new Middle East initiative, was quoted this week criticizing Bush's call for new Palestinian leadership.

Abdullah 'rejects any intervention by any party in Arab internal affairs, especially the affairs of the Palestinian people, who alone have the right to choose their leadership,' an unnamed official was quoted as saying.

Saudi intelligence chief Prince Nawaf bin Abdul-Aziz was quoted in an interview last week expressing a similar view. 'The kingdom is against any intervention in the internal affairs of the Palestinians. We must leave it to them to decide who their president is, and not to have any power such as the United States impose one on them,' he said..."

ONE IN THREE EUROPEANS 'IS ANTI SEMETIC'

July 1, 2002 The *Independent UK* reports: "A new form of anti-Semitism has taken hold in Europe, fuelled by anti-Israeli sentiment, according to a survey which shows almost one in three Europeans now harbors some anti-Jewish feelings.

Attitudes towards Jews vary across the five countries surveyed with Belgians, Germans and the French 'most likely to hold a prejudiced view of Jews'. Denmark and the UK are said to be the least prejudiced. But attitudes in the UK show a worryingly high level of anti-Semitic sentiment.



The findings of 2,500 people polled – 500 in each country – show 30 per cent harbored traditional anti-Jewish views. The survey was commissioned by the Anti-Defamation League, a US-based organization set up just before the First World War to combat anti-Semitism in the US.

Those polled were each read out four statements containing stereotypical anti-Semitic sentiments. The numbers who thought the statements 'probably true' varied from country to country but were still very high..."

Compiled by L. Jim Tuck, Pastor

UCGIA, Oakland, San Jose, & Santa Rosa, California

ljtuck@msn.com