



# PROPHETIC TIMES

WEEKLY WORLD NEWS UPDATE

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

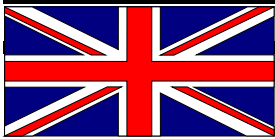
18 JANUARY 2003

## U.S. BEGINS PULLOUT OF NON-ESSENTIAL STAFF FROM MIDEAST

*Jan 15, 2003 The Middle East Newsline* reports: "The United States has launched an effort to withdraw non-essential government personnel from the Middle East. Officials said the effort is meant to avoid Arab or Islamic reprisals on U.S. personnel over the next few months amid tension in the Persian Gulf and Middle East region. They said U.S. intelligence agencies have warned that Al Qaida and Iraq could intensify attacks on U.S. nationals to foil any Washington-led war against Baghdad.

So far, officials said, the State Department is quietly pulling out non-essential embassy staffers and families in such countries as Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco and Saudi Arabia. They said similar measures will be taken in the United Arab Emirates and other countries.

'We have been seen a series of attacks over Ramadan that indicate that the intelligence warnings of increased threat to Americans in the region are accurate,' an official said. 'The biggest threat is that of kidnapping of Americans, particularly diplomats.'..."



## BLAIR READY TO ACT WITHOUT NEW UN RESOLUTION

*Jan 14, 2003 The Guardian.uk* reports: "The prime minister, Tony Blair, said today he believed 'passionately' that Saddam Hussein must be stripped of his weapons of mass destruction, with or without a new UN resolution. Mr. Blair stressed that his preference was to 'take the UN route', but did not rule out support for military action without further recourse to the security council. He said that, ahead of any US-led action against Iraq, 'our preference is to go back to the United Nations security council and have a second resolution' outlining the use of force.

Resolution 1441, passed last year, demanded that President Saddam allow unfettered access to inspectors searching for weapons of mass destruction. However, defining his government's position in more detail than he has done so far, the prime minister added a caveat about returning to the security council that did not completely rule out supporting military action outside a UN resolution.

Mr. Blair said he 'could not be constrained' by the possibility of a country imposing an 'unreasonable block' or proviso that would hinder a fresh UN resolution. He added: 'I want to make it quite clear, and I believe this to be the position of all the main security council members, that if there is a breach [of the first resolution] we would expect the United Nations to honor the undertakings that were given and make sure that the will of the UN is upheld.'

The White House has been careful not to commit itself to having to seek a second resolution before starting any military action, and Mr. Blair's comments today would still allow him room to support the U.S. doing so..."

## ISRAELI EXPERTS EXAMINE ANCIENT TABLET

*Jan 14, 2003 The Guardian.uk* reports: "Israeli geologists said Monday they have examined a stone tablet detailing repair plans for the Jewish Temple of King Solomon that, if authenticated, would be a rare piece of physical evidence confirming the biblical narrative.

The find - whose origin is murky - is about the size of a legal pad, with a 15-line inscription in ancient Hebrew that strongly resembles descriptions in the Bible's Book of Kings. It could also strengthen Jewish claims to a disputed holy site in Jerusalem's Old City that is now home to two major mosques. Muslim clerics insist, despite overwhelming archaeological evidence, that no Jewish shrine ever stood at the site. That claim was made by Palestinian officials in failed negotiations with Israel in 2000 over who would be sovereign there.

The origin of the stone tablet is unclear, making it difficult to establish authenticity. The Israeli daily *Ha'aretz* on Monday quoted an unidentified source as saying it was uncovered in recent years, during renovations carried out by the Muslim administrators of the mosque compound known to Muslims as the Haram as-Sharif, or Noble Sanctuary, and to Jews as the Temple Mount.

From there, it reached a major antiquities collector in Jerusalem, *Ha'aretz* said. The Holy Land has a thriving trade in antiquities, often operating on the edge of the law.

The sandstone tablet has a 15-line inscription in ancient Hebrew that resembles descriptions in Kings II, 12:1-6, 11-17, said Israel's Geological Survey, which examined the artifact. The words refer to King Joash, who ruled the area 2,800 years ago..."

---

## TURKEY AGREES WITH U.S. ON BASES

---

*Jan 12, 2003 The Middle East Newslire* reports: "Turkey has decided to approve the first stage of cooperation with the United States in any war against Iraq.

Officials said the government of Prime Minister Abdullah Gul has decided to approve a U.S. proposal for a 150-member team of military experts to inspect Turkish military bases and ports. The U.S. request had been delayed amid disagreement whether the U.S. delegation would be bound to Turkish law during their stay.



Turkey

After assurances from Washington, Ankara decided to sign a memorandum of understanding on for the U.S. base and port survey, officials said. The inspection will include at least six Turkish military bases as well as three sea ports. The United States has been using the Turkish air base at Incerlik for more than a decade..."

---

## TOXIC ATTACK ON CITY IS 'LIKELY SOON'

---

*Jan 11, 2003 The Financial Times* reports: "British ministers have been warned by their security advisers that a west European city is 'likely' to be the target of a terrorist attack using a chemical or other non-conventional weapon in the short-to-medium term. They have also warned that they cannot be sure they know the identity of more than 50 per cent of people in the UK who might carry out a terrorist attack on behalf of al-Qaeda.

In a separate incident on Friday morning German authorities arrested two Yemeni men believed to be high-ranking members of al-Qaeda, according to German security officials. The federal crime office confirmed that two men were arrested at a Frankfurt airport hotel, on the request of US authorities. One of the men is a senior al-Qaeda financier and both had been involved in building al-Qaeda's network in Yemen, security officials were cited as saying.

Fears that al-Qaeda terrorists are closer to carrying out a chemical attack have been heightened by the discovery this week of traces of ricin at a house in London occupied by suspected terrorists. Seven men arrested in connection with a suspected plot to use the deadly poison were still being questioned by anti-terrorist police in the UK on Friday and were expected to be charged this weekend.

Security sources in Britain say that it is 'certainly a possibility' that the ricin poison made in London might have been taken abroad..."

---

## THE EU NEEDS A SINGLE PRESIDENT

---

*Jan 10, 2003 The Financial Times* reports: "The convention on the future of Europe provides an unmissable opportunity for the reformation of the European Union as a genuine political community. Clarifying what we Europeans want to do together and simplifying the way in which the EU works - these are the challenges before us.

The critical issue dominating this constitutional debate is the organization of executive power in the EU - currently split between the European Commission and national governments, meeting in the Council of Ministers. The proliferation of proposals, from politicians and academics, bears witness to its importance.

What the EU requires is a visible European executive, with a face that is recognizable within Europe and on the international scene. The executive must have the authority to take the initiative and co-ordinate the actions of national governments. We propose a full-time president with a term of office of, say, five years, to provide continuity. The president would be appointed by national leaders following the five-yearly elections to the European parliament...

The president's primary role would be to represent the EU at home and, alongside the new minister for foreign affairs, on the world stage. He or she would also make proposals for legislative and executive action and would play a leading role in developing the EU's program, which would be devised by the Commission and adopted by the Council..."

*Compiled by L. Jim Tuck, Pastor*

*ljtuc@msn.com*

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