

PROPHETIC TIMES

WEEKLY WORLD NEWS UPDATE

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BRUSSELS DECISION TO TAKE LEGAL ACTION SPLITS EU

January 13, 2004 The EUObserver reported: 'The European Commission today decided to launch unprecedented legal action against member states over their effective suspension of the euro rules last November. Announcing the decision to journalists during the European Parliament's session in Strasbourg, the spokesman for Economic and Monetary Affairs Commissioner Pedro Solbes said that the controversial move was made after a "long and comprehensive debate". There was no vote on the issue, as some had expected, although the spokesman confirmed "this does not mean that there was unanimity".

The Commission will now ask the European Court of Justice to rule on a procedure taken by finance ministers last November to avoid disciplinary action being taken against France and Germany for their persistent breaking of the rules underpinning the euro. Brussels believes the procedure was "not appropriate" and has received legal advice confirming this. The spokesman also confirmed that the Court would be asked to "fast-track" the case, which would mean the issue is resolved in 3 to 6 months rather than one or two years, but it is up to the court to decide to grant this.

This highly controversial issue has provoked strong - and diverging - reaction across the EU. The Commission itself was thought to be highly divided during the debate, with commissioners from the bigger countries in favour of letting the case drop and officials from smaller states wanting to push ahead.

Brussels finds itself in an unfortunate no-win situation. If it had decided not to launch legal action, its authority would have suffered, but its decision to go ahead in the courts is likely further to damage relations between the Commission and member states.

This catch-22 dilemma was highlighted by the leader of the Liberals in the European Parliament Graham Watson, who described the move as a "high risk, high reward strategy". He nevertheless welcomed the announcement saying, "Not taking legal action would mean tacitly accepting the decision of ministers to forget their responsibilities and throw out the rule book".

The Parliament's largest political group, the European People's Party, also welcomed the action as it showed that "the Commission cannot be blackmailed"...



PIG-HUMAN CHIMERAS CONTAIN CELL SURPRISE

January 13, 2004 NewScientist.com reported: 'Pigs grown from fetuses into which human stem cells were injected have surprised scientists by having cells in which the DNA from the two species is mixed at the most intimate level. It is the first time such fused cells have been seen in living creatures. The discovery could have serious implications for xenotransplantation - the use of animal tissue and organs in humans - and even the origin of diseases such as HIV.

The adult pigs that had received human stem cells as fetuses were found to have pig cells, human cells and the hybrid cells in their blood and organs. "What we found was completely unexpected. We found that the human and pig cells had totally fused in the animals' bodies," said Jeffrey Platt, director of the Mayo Clinic Transplantation Biology Program

The hybrid cells had both human and pig surface markers. But, most surprisingly, the hybrid cell nuclei were found to have chromosomal DNA that contained both human and pig genes. The researchers found that about 60 per cent of the animals' non-pig cells were hybrids, with the remainder being fully human.

Importantly, the team also found that porcine endogenous retrovirus (PERV), which is present in almost all pigs, was also present in the hybrid cells. Previous laboratory work has shown that while PERVs in pig cells cannot infect human cells, those in hybrid cells can. The discovery therefore suggests a serious potential problem for xenotransplantation.

The work also suggests a possible route of infection for other viruses that have crossed from animals to humans. Perhaps HIV managed to jump from primates to humans through infected blood from a bite, which allowed the stem cells from the two species to fuse," Platt said. "When the genes recombined, perhaps the virus was reawakened..."

BIRD FLU >MAY BE WORSE THAN SARS'

January 14, 2004 The BBCNews.com reported: 'The bird flu could be "worse than Sars", if it mutates so it can spread between humans, experts have warned. Three deaths in Vietnam have been linked to the disease, which is affecting poultry across Asia. Experts say that all cases seen so far in humans have occurred after people had been in close contact with sick birds. But the WHO has warned that avian flu has a higher mortality rate than Sars.

Peter Cordingley, spokesman for the World Health Organization regional office in Manilla told the AFP news agency: "If the

H5N1 virus attaches itself to the common human flu virus and if it is then effectively transmitted, it has the potential to cause widespread damage. "The common human flu virus is far more infectious than the Sars virus and can spread by aerosol and not just through droplets as in the case of Sars virus. Mr Cordingley added: "The mortality rate is far higher than that of the Sars virus."

Up to 12 people are thought to have been infected with avian flu in the Vietnam outbreak, including the three who have died. In a Hong Kong outbreak in 1997, the disease killed six out of 18 people who were infected.

Sars has killed around 800 people worldwide and infected at least 8,400 since it first emerged in November 2002...'

NATIONAL PARK ABOUT TO BLOW

December, 2003 The Idaho Observer reported: 'Yellowstone National Park happens to be on top of one of the largest 'super volcanoes' in the world. Geologists claim the Yellowstone Park area has been on a regular eruption cycle of 600,000 years. The last eruption was 640,000 years ago making the next one long overdue. This next eruption could be 2,500 times the size of the 1980 Mount St. Helens eruption. Volcanologists have been tracking the movement of magma under the park and have calculated that, in parts of Yellowstone, the ground has risen over seventy centimeters this century.

In July, 2003, Yellowstone Park rangers closed the entire Norris Geyser Basin because of deformation of the land and excessive high ground temperatures. There is an area that is 28 miles long by 7 miles wide that has bulged upward over five inches since 1996, and this year the ground temperature on that bulge has reached over 200 degrees (measured one inch below ground level).

There was no choice but to close off the entire area. Everything in this area is dying: The trees, flowers, grass and shrubs. A dead zone is developing and spreading outward. The animals are literally migrating out of the park.

Then during the last part of July one of the Park geologists discovered a huge bulge at the bottom of Yellowstone Lake. The bulge has already risen over 100 feet from the bottom of the lake and the water temperature at the surface of the bulge has reached 88 degrees and is still rising.

Keep in mind that Yellowstone Lake is a high mountain lake with very cold water temperatures. The Lake is now closed to the public. It is filled with dead fish floating everywhere. The same is true of the Yellowstone river and most of the other streams in the Park. Dead and dying fish are filling the water everywhere.

The irony of all this is the silence by the news media and our government. Very little information is available from Yellowstone personnel or publications. What mainstream newstories do appear underscore the likelihood of a massive volcanic eruption. Though geologists publicly admit Yellowstone is 'overdue' they have been quoted as stating another massive magma release may not occur for 100,000 or 2 million years. Others close to the story are convinced that a massive eruption is imminent. A source that has demonstrated first-hand knowledge of the park's history and recent geothermal events stated the following: 'The American people are not being told that the explosion of this 'super volcano' could happen at any moment. When Yellowstone does blow, some geologists predict that every living thing within six hundred miles is likely to die. The movement of magma has been detected just three-tenths of a mile below the bulging surface of the ground in Yellowstone raising concerns that this super volcano may erupt soon.'

WEAKENING DOLLAR MAY FALL FURTHER

January 8, 2004 The Wall Street Journal reported: 'After watching the dollar plummet like a drunken Santa Claus tumbling down a chimney -- even the lowly Argentine peso advanced against the greenback during December -- investors, economists, traders and probably even some central bankers are beginning to wonder if the U.S. currency could really crash.

The answer is probably not. But don't relax: That doesn't mean it won't fall further. On Tuesday, the dollar dropped to another all-time low of \$1.2810 against the euro at one point, an 11-year nadir against the pound sterling, its lowest point in a decade against the Canadian dollar and multiyear lows against the currencies of Japan, Switzerland and Australia. Wednesday, the dollar recovered some, climbing to \$1.2638 against the euro in late New York trading.



Against Europe's common currency, the greenback is down 5.5% since Dec. 1, 2003; down 17% since the start of last year; down 30% from the beginning of 2002; and 35% below its record high in late October 2000.

But people see it going weaker still. The gurus at Bear Stearns in London predict the euro will be trading at \$1.35 in six months and \$1.40 in 12 months. And that's even taking into account the fact that the European common currency itself isn't in any great shape. "The only thing the euro has going for it is the fact that it is the only serious challenger to the dollar as a major international currency," says Steve Barrow, the firm's chief currency strategist in London. "But that's all the euro needs right now." Meanwhile, he sees the dollar falling to -95 in six months from -106.26 late Wednesday in New York...'

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