

PROPHETIC TIMES

WEEKLY WORLD NEWS UPDATE

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ANIMAL-HUMAN HYBRIDS SPARK CONTROVERSY

January 27, 2005 National Geographic News reported: "Scientists have begun blurring the line between human and animal by producing chimeras—a hybrid creature that's part human, part animal. Chinese scientists at the Shanghai Second Medical University in 2003 successfully fused human cells with rabbit eggs. The embryos were reportedly the first human-animal chimeras successfully created. They were allowed to develop for several days in a laboratory dish before the scientists destroyed the embryos to harvest their stem cells.

In Minnesota last year researchers at the Mayo Clinic created pigs with human blood flowing through their bodies. And at Stanford University in California an experiment might be done later this year to create mice with human brains. Scientists feel that, the more humanlike the animal, the better research model it makes for testing drugs or possibly growing "spare parts," such as livers, to transplant into humans.

Watching how human cells mature and interact in a living creature may also lead to the discoveries of new medical treatments. But creating human-animal chimeras—named after a monster in Greek mythology that had a lion's head, goat's body, and serpent's tail—has raised troubling questions: What new subhuman combination should be produced and for what purpose? At what point would it be considered human? And what rights, if any, should it have?

There are currently no U.S. federal laws that address these issues."



JAPAN INCREASES TOUGH RHETORIC ON NORTH KOREAN SANCTIONS

January 27, 2005 The Voice of America reported: "Japan is giving its clearest signal yet that it might impose economic sanctions against North Korea. The threat comes amid increasingly contentious rhetoric over the failure to resolve the issue of North Korean abductions of Japanese citizens during the Cold War.

Japanese government officials on Thursday indicated they are considering taking measures against North Korea for the lack of progress on accounting for Japanese citizens kidnapped by agents of the North several decades ago. This comes in response to North Korea accusing Japan of "thoroughly fabricating" the results of DNA tests on remains handed over two months ago. The communist state claims the remains are from one of the Japanese abductees who died on North Korea. But Japan says its tests do not concur.

Vice Foreign Minister Ichiro Aizawa says Japan might have to impose economic sanctions. Mr. Aizawa says North Korea's responses have been insincere, thus Japan has no choice but to consider more specific and tougher measures against Pyongyang.

Japanese media report that several top officials in the Koizumi government remain reluctant to impose sanctions, which North Korea has previously stated would be tantamount to a declaration of war. There also appears to be concern among some government officials here that imposing sanctions would give North Korea another excuse to further delay or pull out of stalled multi-nation talks on Pyongyang's nuclear weapons programs..."

IRANIAN SOURCE REPORTS PLOT TO ATTACK U.S. NUKE

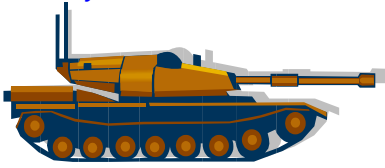
January 27, 2005 Middle East Newslines reported: "Congress has been pressing the U.S. intelligence community to investigate claims by an Iranian defector that Teheran planned to crash an airliner into a nuclear reactor in the United States. Several members of Congress were said to have been alarmed by the information and one has met with CIA senior officials to press for an investigation. So far, the CIA has refused to question the Iranian defector, a former senior official in the 1970s.

Rep. Curt Weldon, vice chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, has met the unidentified defector several times in Paris over the last 22 months. Weldon said the defector has been accurate in predicting several important developments in the Iranian regime since February 2003. The developments were said to have included those in Iran's nuclear weapons programs and support for Al Qaida.

The informant, dubbed Ali, was said to have been in contact with two dissidents in the inner circle of the Islamic republic. They were said to have reported a secret government directive by Iranian supreme leader Ali Khamenei who presided over the nation's strategic weapons programs and financed and controlled groups deemed terrorists..."

RUSSIA, SYRIA PREPARE FOR MAJOR ARMS DEAL

January 27, 2005 Middle East Newline reported: "Russia and Syria have signed an agreement that could pave the way for a major weapons deal. The two countries signed a military cooperation agreement that would facilitate the sale of Russian weapons to Damascus. Moscow and Damascus also agreed to resolve the dispute over Syria's \$13 billion debt to the former Soviet Union.



The agreement was signed in Moscow on Tuesday during the visit by Syrian President Bashar Assad. Officials said Assad and Russian President Vladimir Putin signed an accord that would enable Russia to resume major arms sales and upgrades for Syria's military.

"The two countries agree to pursue traditional cooperation in the military-technical sphere in keeping with their mutual interests and international obligations," the Russian Itar-Tass news agency reported..."

ISRAEL SEEKS DEFENSE AGAINST IRANIAN ROCKETS

January 26, 2005 The Middle East Newline reported: "Israel has determined a requirement for a defense system against Iranian-origin long-range rockets supplied to Hizbullah. Officials said the Defense Ministry has contracted a feasibility study on a system to defend against the 15,000 rockets deployed by Hizbullah along the Lebanese border with Israel. They said the ministry as well as the military have assessed that Israel has come under immediate threat from these rockets, many of which have a range that can strike cities in the center of the country.

For the last 15 years, Israel has developed, tested and deployed the Arrow-2 missile defense system, meant to protect the country against Scud-class and Shihab-3 intermediate-range missiles. The ministry study would examine the feasibility of using elements of the Arrow to defend against missiles and rockets with a range of 100 to 250 kilometers.

The biggest rocket threat in Hizbullah's arsenal, officials said, was the Iranian-origin Fajr rocket. Officials said the new version of the Fajr has the accuracy of a short-range missile combined with the rapid launch and salvo-capability of a rocket. They said Hizbullah could have thousands of Fajrs in southern Lebanon..."

TERROR SUSPECT ARRESTED SEEKING NUCLEAR MATERIAL

January 25, 2005 WorldNetDaily reported: "German police have arrested two suspected al-Qaida terrorists – one who was allegedly trying to buy enriched uranium for a nuclear bomb and another planning a suicide attack in Iraq.

According to a German prosecutor, the arrests, which occurred early Sunday, came after months of investigation, Knight-Ridder reported. The suspects were nabbed after early morning police raids in Mainz and Bonn. President Bush is scheduled to visit Mainz next month, which heightens the security concerns in the city.

Authorities described one suspect, Ibrahim Mohamed K., as a 29-year-old German citizen with an Iraqi background. Mohamed K. is said to be a high-ranking al-Qaida operative in charge of recruiting suicide bombers and planning attacks from Europe.

It was not clear if the enriched uranium the suspect attempted to secure even exists. Mohamed K. allegedly tried to buy 48 grams of the material in Luxembourg.

Knight-Ridder reported that, according to the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency, there were 540 confirmed attempts at illicit trafficking in nuclear and radioactive materials between January 1993 and December 2003. Of those, 17 involved highly enriched uranium or plutonium, the fuels needed to power nuclear weapons.

Mohamed K., whose last name has not been released, was known to have been actively involved with al-Qaida before 9-11. A German resident and passport holder, he is believed to have taken part in several al-Qaida training camps in Afghanistan. After fighting against U.S. forces in Afghanistan, the suspect returned to Europe, where he has traveled freely due to his German citizenship..."