



PROPHETIC TIMES

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RUSSIA EXPANDS NAVAL PRESENCE IN SYRIA

June 7, 2006 Middle East Newline reported: "Russia has sought to expand its naval presence in Syria in an arrangement that would grant superpower protection to the regime of President Bashar Assad. Russian sources said Moscow and Damascus have discussed the expansion of the Russian naval presence in two major Syrian ports. They said Moscow was prepared to pay Syria for the naval rights with both advanced weapons and a strategic defense pact.

"It's clear that Syria doesn't have the money to pay for major weapons systems," a source said. "So, over the last year, we've been discussing alternatives."

On June 2, the Moscow-based daily Kommersant reported that Russia wants to regain full access to the Syrian ports of Latakia and Tartous. Quoting a Russian diplomat in Damascus, the newspaper, regarded as authoritative, said Moscow has already launched a project to dredge the Latakia port to accommodate large Russian warships..."

AL QAIDA-ALIGNED MILITIA CAPTURES MOGADISHU

June 7, 2006 Middle East Newline reported: "An Islamic militia loyal to Al Qaida has driven pro-U.S. forces out of the capital of Somalia. The Islamic Courts Union has reported the capture of Mogadishu from a secular alliance supported by the United States. The union said the last fighters from the secular alliance fled Mogadishu on Monday.

"We want to restore peace and stability to Mogadishu," Sharif Sheik Ahmed, chairman of the Islamic militia, said in a radio broadcast. "We are ready to meet and talk to anybody and any group for the interest of the people."

The secular alliance has not confirmed the claim by the Islamic militia. But diplomatic sources in Mogadishu confirmed that Al Qaida-aligned forces appeared to have taken control of the Somali capital. They said many of the secular fighters have fled to neighboring Kenya..."

CANADA FACES 'JIHAD GENERATION'

June 6, 2006 The Christian Science Monitor reported: "Canadians are struggling to understand the threat of "home-grown" terrorism after the arrest of 17 Toronto-area young men in connection with what investigators said were plans to commit massive terrorist attacks in Canada.

The suspects all lived in Canada at the time of arrest; many are longtime residents and citizens. Like the perpetrators of last summer's London bombings, these young Muslims apparently became radicalized not in Al Qaeda training camps abroad but in suburban neighborhoods where they led relatively unremarkable lives

Such home-grown terrorism is a growing concern, says security analyst John Thompson. "The cops have a nickname for it - the jihad generation," says Mr. Thompson, president of the Mackenzie Institute, a Toronto think tank.

"These are kids at a transition, between Islamic society and Western society," he adds. "A lot of people will get militarized if they're unsure of their own identity." Plus, Thompson says, "They're just young and stupid. If you're 17, bored, restless, you want to meet girls - hey, be a radical."

Five juveniles were among the 17 males arrested Friday night and early Sunday morning on terrorism charges related to planned attacks with explosives on Canadian targets. The group allegedly bought three tons of ammonium nitrate - 1-1/2 times the estimated amount used to blow up the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City in 1995 - according to Assistant Royal Canadian Mounted Police Commissioner Mike McDonell. Investigators says that the group was inspired by Al Qaeda, but that there is no evidence of a direct link to the organization.

"These individuals were allegedly intent on committing acts of terrorism against their own country and their own people," Prime Minister Stephen Harper said. "As we have said on many occasions, Canada is not immune to the threat of terrorism."

But here in Toronto, a city of 2.5 million people that prides itself on its multiculturalism and tolerance, the arrests came as a shock to many."..."



BACKING FOR BABY CLONING TO BEAT DISEASE

June 5, 2006 The London Daily Telegraph reported: "A proposal to create babies that are both cloned and genetically altered to prevent serious hereditary disease is outlined today by the leader of the team that created Dolly the sheep.

Ever since news that Dolly had been cloned from an adult cell made headlines around the world, Prof Ian Wilmut has repeatedly said he

is "implacably opposed" to cloning a human being.

But in his forthcoming book *After Dolly*, serialised today in *The Daily Telegraph*, he argues that, when the techniques are shown to be safe, society should consider cloning with genetic modification to prevent the birth of babies with serious diseases.

The Edinburgh University professor argues in the book, written with the *Telegraph's* science editor, Roger Highfield, that cloning an IVF embryo consisting of 100 or so cells is not the same as cloning a person.

The process of cloning - nuclear transfer - that Prof Wilmut's large team honed when he was at the Roslin Institute, culminated in the birth of Dolly in 1996. Cloning also makes it possible to carry out precise genetic corrections, as demonstrated in 1997 when his team unveiled Polly, a sheep altered to secrete a human blood clotting protein in her milk.

The same method potentially offers a much more efficient way to achieve healthy births than current methods of screening embryos for harmful genes.

Prof Wilmut writes: "Doctors should be able to offer at-risk couples the opportunity to conceive with IVF methods, break down the resulting embryos into cells, correct any serious genetic defects in these cells then clone demonstrably healthy cells to create a new embryo that can be implanted to start a pregnancy."

CHINA REPORTS NEW BIRD FLU OUTBREAK IN POULTRY



June 8, 2006 VOA News reported: "China has confirmed an outbreak of bird flu in poultry in the western Xinjiang region. State media say the virus was identified after domestic poultry died at a farm in Hetian County. Officials confirmed the cause of death was the deadly H5N1 viral strain.

Wednesday, Asian and Pacific nations held a 24-hour disaster exercise, to practice coordinating information about managing a bird flu outbreak.

Indonesia and Vietnam have suffered significant human losses from bird flu cases believed to have been transmitted from bird to human. The World Health Organization is investigating whether the deaths of seven members of one family in Indonesia could be linked to human-to-human transmission of the virus. More than 120 people, most of them in Asia, have died of bird flu since late 2003."

AHMADINEJAD: IRAN TO TALK U.S. GAVE IN

June 8, 2006 Associated Press reported: "Iran's president said Thursday his regime is ready for talks over its nuclear capabilities, but he sent mixed signals on how much is open for negotiation and suggested Tehran has the upper hand in its showdown with the West.

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad repeated Iran's position that uranium enrichment is an untouchable national right, a clear jab at the West two days after Iran received a package of economic and technological incentives to suspend the program.

A report to the U.N. nuclear agency's board, meanwhile, said Iran slowed enrichment over the past month but picked up the pace Tuesday, the day the proposal for talks was delivered. There was no indication in the report, obtained by *The Associated Press*, that the two events were linked.

While the slowdown in enrichment could reflect a decision by Iran to send a positive signal before talks, a senior U.N. official said it also could be the result of technical difficulties. The official agreed to discuss the confidential report only if not quoted by name.

Ahmadinejad portrayed Iran as having forced Washington and its allies to accept the Islamic regime's "greatness and dignity" and increasingly bend to its will. The shifting messages are seen as part of Iranian posturing before possible talks, which could include the United States after a nearly 27-year diplomatic freeze. Western nations, led by the U.S., worry Iran's uranium enrichment technology could become the backbone for a nuclear arms program. Iran insists it only seeks electricity-producing reactors.

"The nation will never hold negotiations about its definite rights with anybody, but we are for talks about mutual concerns to resolve misunderstandings in the international arena," Ahmadinejad told thousands of people in Qazvin, about 60 miles northwest of Tehran.

In a major policy shift, the United States agreed last week to join France, Britain and Germany in talks with Iran, provided Tehran suspends all suspect nuclear activities. Tehran has welcomed direct talks with Washington, but rejected any preconditions.

Ahmadinejad did not say whether Iran would accept the Western package of incentives, which were presented Tuesday by the European Union's foreign policy chief, Javier Solana.

Its contents have not been made public, but diplomats have said the package includes economic rewards and a provision for some U.S. nuclear technology if Iran halts enriching uranium - a major concession by Washington. World powers also have suggested the length of the proposed enrichment suspension could be subject to negotiation, diplomats said."

The offer, however, also contains the implicit threat of U.N. sanctions if Iran remains defiant."..."