



PROPHETIC TIMES

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BRUSSELS BOOSTS AID TO BEEKEEPERS AMID MYSTERY BEE DIE-OFF

September 15, 2010 The EU Observer reported: "Imagine a world without strawberries or courgettes or leeks. The global decline in bee numbers - vital pollinators for many of our favourite fruits and vegetables - could threaten such a scenario.

As part of its response to the growing and mysterious drop-off in the world's bee population, the EU on Tuesday (14 September) announced it will bump up its planned aid to Europe's beekeeping sector, upping annual support from €26 million over the period 2008-2010 to €32 million from 2011-2013.

Domesticated honey bees are among Europe's most important pollinators, but the black and yellow insects have been hit by a plague of problems over the last decade, including habitat loss, climate change and the parasitic varroa mite. However, while identifying a number of issues, scientists still do not know what is causing the mass die-off, which has earned the moniker 'colony collapse disorder', or CCD, which first hit North American in 2006 and has since spread to Europe.



Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain, have been hit particularly hard, with similar reports of problems in Switzerland and Germany, although not to the same degree. CCD is worrying both financially and in terms of food security, as many agricultural crops around the world are pollinated by bees.

Announcing the increased aid which will be channeled through national programmes in the EU's 27 member states, EU environment commissioner Janez Potocnik warned that more will need to be done.

"About 30 percent of our food comes from plants pollinated by bees so it is clear that we will all be in big trouble if bees continue to disappear," he said."..."

EU BID FOR MORE RIGHTS AT UN SUFFERS SURPRISE DEFEAT

September 15, 2010 The EU Observer reported: "The European Union suffered a defeat at the United Nations on Tuesday (14 September) in its attempt to win most of the rights enjoyed by fully-fledged UN members after other regional blocs said it was unfair that Europe would get a boost in its standing at the global body but not them.

A UN General Assembly resolution that sought to allow European Council President Herman Van Rompuy to address the UN chamber - no differently from US President Barack Obama or Iranian leader Mahmoud Ahmedinejad - was narrowly defeated after a majority of nations voted to delay debate on the matter.

The resolution would also have awarded the EU, which currently only carries observer status at the UN, the right to make proposals and submit amendments, the right of reply, the right to raise points of order and the right to circulate documents."..."

The EU currently has only observer status at the UN. Its delegates do not sit among the UN member states, but off to the side, along with entities such as the Vatican, the Red Cross and the Arab League.

However, a majority of countries, mainly from the developing world with regional blocs of their own, asked why the EU should win additional rights but not the Caribbean Community, the African Union, or the South American Union."..."

As a result, it will remain the case that only the nation that holds the rotating presidency of the EU, currently Belgium, will be able to speak for Europe in the UN chamber."..."

CRISIS FORCES EUROPE TO UNITE ON FINANCIAL REFORM

September 13, 2010 SpiegelOnline reported: "A euro-themed statue outside the European Parliament in Brussels: European Union leaders have finally put aside national interests to push through Europe-wide financial reforms.

The euro crisis scared European Union members enough that they have finally put aside national interests to push through Europe-wide financial reforms. In doing so, they are handing more power over to Brussels.

Austrian Finance Minister Josef Pröll felt tired but jubilant when he returned to his hotel on Place Jourdan in Brussels late last Monday evening. For hours on end, he and his European counterparts had been given a detailed presentation by European Council President Herman Van Rompuy and his task force on how the shaky monetary union could be stabilized and crisis-ridden Europe could be put back into shape.

The finance ministers listened attentively before going on to discuss the issue. But instead of rushing headlong into the usual squabbling session, a cozy feeling of harmony spread through the conference room.

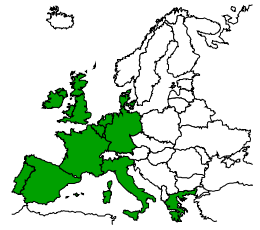
German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schäuble found words of praise for his new "highly constructive" British counterpart, Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne. Osborne, who has a reputation as a euroskeptic, in turn described Brussels' plans, which London had until then rigorously opposed, as "not bad."

Afterwards, over a glass of red wine at the hotel bar, Austria's Pröll, who has always been somewhat critical of Brussels, enthusiastically said that the EU is more or less implementing "what we have been discussing for years." He said that the European Union was about to take a

"quantum leap" that will "fundamentally change Europe."

The politicians appear to be determined to make up for what they have neglected in the past. A monetary union cannot succeed in the long term if every member state simply pursues the economic policies that suit its own interests. This is something that economists have always known, but it has never been politically feasible: Euro-zone member states were not prepared to relinquish more power to Brussels.

That has changed since the euro crisis shook the monetary union and the realization sank in that things cannot continue as they are. Suddenly there is talk of an "economic union" and even the necessity of an "economic government," yet there is no sign of the usual outcry."..."



DOOMSDAY WARNINGS OF US APOCALYPSE GAIN GROUND

September 13, 2010 Breitbart.com reports: "Economists peddling dire warnings that the world's number one economy is on the brink of collapse, amid high rates of unemployment and a spiraling public deficit, are flourishing here.

The guru of this doomsday line of thinking may be economist Nouriel Roubini, thrust into the forefront after predicting the chaos wrought by the subprime mortgage crisis and the collapse of the housing bubble.

'The US has run out of bullets,' Roubini told an economic forum in Italy earlier this month. 'Any shock at this point can tip you back into recession.'

But other economists, who have so far stayed out of the media limelight, are also proselytizing nightmarish visions of the future. Boston University professor Laurence Kotlikoff, who warned as far back as the 1980s of the dangers of a public deficit, lent credence to such dark predictions in an International Monetary Fund publication last week.

He unveiled a doomsday scenario -- which many dismiss as pure fantasy -- of an economic clash between superpowers the United States and China, which holds more than 843 billion dollars of US Treasury bonds."..."

NEW DRUG-RESISTANT SUPERBUGS FOUND IN 3 STATES

September 14, 2010 The Associated Press reported: "An infectious-disease nightmare is unfolding: Bacteria that have been made resistant to nearly all antibiotics by an alarming new gene have sickened people in three states and are popping up all over the world, health officials reported Monday.

The U.S. cases and two others in Canada all involve people who had recently received medical care in India, where the problem is widespread. A British medical journal revealed the risk last month in an article describing dozens of cases in Britain in people who had gone to India for medical procedures.

How many deaths the gene may have caused is unknown; there is no central tracking of such cases. So far, the gene has mostly been found in bacteria that cause gut or urinary infections. Scientists have long feared this -- a very adaptable gene that hitches onto many types of common germs and confers broad drug resistance, creating dangerous "superbugs."

"It's a great concern," because drug resistance has been rising and few new antibiotics are in development, said Dr. M. Lindsay Grayson, director of infectious diseases at the University of Melbourne in Australia. "It's just a matter of time" until the gene spreads more widely person-to-person, he said."..."

COMPUTERS SET FOR QUANTUM LEAP

September 16, 2010 Financial Times reported: "A new photonic chip that works on light rather than electricity has been built by an international research team, paving the way for the production of ultra-fast quantum computers with capabilities far beyond today's devices.

Future quantum computers will, for example, be able to pull important information out of the biggest databases almost instantaneously. As the amount of electronic data stored worldwide grows exponentially, the technology will make it easier for people to search with precision for what they want.

An early application will be to investigate and design complex molecules, such as new drugs and other materials, that cannot be simulated with ordinary computers. More general consumer applications should follow.

Jeremy O'Brien, director of the UK's Centre for Quantum Photonics, who led the project, said many people in the field had believed a functional quantum computer would not be a reality for at least 25 years.

"However, we can say with real confidence that, using our new technique, a quantum computer could, within five years, be performing calculations that are outside the capabilities of conventional computers," he told the British Science Festival, as he presented the research."..."

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