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CHINA 'TO OVERTAKE US ON SCIENCE' IN TWO YEARS

March 29, 2011 BBC News reports: "China is on course to overtake the US in scientific output possibly as soon as 2013 - far earlier than expected. That is the conclusion of a major new study by the Royal Society, the UK's national science academy. The country that invented the compass, gunpowder, paper and printing is set for a globally important comeback.

An analysis of published research - one of the key measures of scientific effort - reveals an 'especially striking' rise by Chinese science. The study, Knowledge, Networks and Nations, charts the challenge to the traditional dominance of the United States, Europe and Japan.

The figures are based on the papers published in recognized international journals listed by the Scopus service of the publishers Elsevier..."

KLAUS WARNS EURO PACT WILL LEAD TO FULL POLITICAL UNION

March 29, 2011 The EU Observer reported: "Vaclav Klaus, the Czech Republic's famously eurosceptic president renowned across Europe for holding up passage of the Lisbon Treaty for months, has launched an attack against a fresh EU target: the 'Euro-plus-pact'.

"The Brussels summit on 25 March was not about anything else but the further integration of Europe towards fiscal ... union," he wrote in an opinion piece in Czech daily newspaper Pravo on Monday, referring to the meeting of EU premiers and presidents where 23 out of the bloc's 27 member states signed up to a pact that aims to boost European competitiveness.

"It was a radical reduction of the sovereignty of other EU countries."...

The pact, along with other far-reaching measures endorsed by the summit last Friday, intends to deliver ever closer 'economic governance' where the economic policies of each member state are co-ordinated centrally and supervised by Brussels.

The hair-shirt approach to fiscal policies contained in the pact are the quid pro quo demanded by Germany in particular in return for boosting the size of eurozone rescue funds. Klaus believes this is the beginning of large-scale financial transfers between states.

The Czech president, the last EU leader to sign on to the Lisbon Treaty on 3 November, 2009, after months of stonewalling, accused EU leaders of using the economic crisis as an excuse to push for deeper integration.

"A few years ago when these people managed to pass the Lisbon Treaty - a European constitution - they knew that at the time this probably moved forward too fast and that there should now be a pause," he said.

"They even told me personally when trying to convince me to sign up to the Lisbon Treaty that there would now be a pause [from further integration moves] for an interval of at least ten years."

"By using the economic and financial crisis of 2008-2009 and the subsequent crisis of the euro in 2010 - still continuing - it gave them a wonderful excuse to get back to pushing forward with the further deepening of European integration."

He worries that the fiscal integration that is occurring today will inevitably be followed by full political integration. He wrote that the European Economic Community later became just the European Community, then along came European Monetary Union and the European Union.

"Sooner or later, this will be followed by other developments," he wrote, saying that a European fiscal union, or 'EFU' as he terms it, will be followed by an 'EPU'.

"Where an EFU has been agreed in Brussels agreed ... an EPU is the final stage - the European Political Union."



ISRAEL NOT EAGER TO SEE SYRIA'S ASSAD GO

March 29, 2011 The Associated Press reported: "Syria has fought three wars with Israel and maintains close ties to its fiercest enemies in the region, including Iran and the Hamas and Hezbollah militant groups. So it may come as a surprise that many in Israel view the current unrest convulsing Syria with a wary eye, fearful that a collapse of Bashar Assad's regime might imperil decades of quiet along the shared border.

Israeli leaders, who voiced fears _ unfounded so far _ that the earlier uprising in Egypt might spell the end of the two countries' peace agreement, are keeping quiet about the tumult that has spread to Syria.

Several officials said that while Israel is closely following the situation in Syria _ where mass protests are posing the greatest threat to the Assad family's four decades in power _ there is no consensus on how to react or even what the best-case scenario is for Israel.

In Geneva on Monday, President Shimon Peres said only that the unrest "changes the status quo in Israel," while hoping Palestinians and Syrians "will be peaceful and free."

Privately, officials note that Syria has been careful for decades to avoid direct violence, while fighting proxy wars by backing anti-Israel groups like Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon.

"That has been the working assumption in Israel for years: Better the devil you know than the devil you don't," said Eyal Zisser, director of the Middle East Studies department at Tel Aviv University. "(Syria) scrupulously maintained the quiet. And who knows what will happen now _ Islamic terror, al-Qaida, chaos?"

Last month, Israel's government watched with trepidation as Egyptians toppled longtime leader Hosni Mubarak, afraid that the ouster of its staunchest Arab ally might put a three-decade-old peace treaty in jeopardy and help to boost Islamists.”...

THREATS CLAIM NUCLEAR BOMBS HIDDEN ALL OVER U.S.

March 29, 2011 CBS Chicago reported: “The threats came in the mail and to date, there have been 25 letters that warn of nuclear bombs destroying America. People who got them called the FBI and CBS. The Bureau’s Chicago office is leading the investigation.”...

FBI Special Agent Andre Zavala said, “Yes, they alarmed a lot of people.”

Attorney Tracy Rizzo was alarmed. A number of days ago, an envelope, with a Chicago postmark and a hand-written address to her private investigations firm, came in the mail. The letter inside said, “The Al-Qaeda organization has planted 160 nuclear bombs throughout the U.S. in schools, stadiums, churches, stores, financial institutions and government buildings.” It also said, “This is a suicide mission for us.”

The writer, who claims to be Osama Bin Laden, tells the reader the nukes are remotely controlled. “It was clear the writer wanted to scare me,” said Rizzo, “Yes, it frightened me.” Rizzo was one of eight people in the Chicago area to contact the FBI. Agencies in Oregon, California, Texas and Florida also got the letter with the Chicago postmark.

“There are items in the letter that lead us to believe it is a hoax,” said Zavala.”...He said much of what’s in the message doesn’t add up, but in a post 9-11 world, the FBI can’t let it go – even if it does appear to be a hoax.”..”

HOW BIG IS THE FEDERAL BUDGET DISASTER?

March 29, 2011 AmericanThinker.com/blog reported: “The devastating images from Japan are seared into our collective memory. With 10,901 dead and another 17,038 still missing, the human toll is almost beyond comprehension. The 9.0 magnitude earthquake and resulting tsunami that ravaged Japan has become the most expensive natural disaster in recorded history.

From Fox News: Japan's Cabinet Office on Wednesday estimated the catastrophe...could cause losses between 16 trillion yen (\$198 billion) and 25 trillion yen (\$309 billion). That figure compares with estimates from the World Bank and Goldman Sachs for losses of \$235 billion and \$200 billion, respectively.

The \$309 billion price tag would make Japan's earthquake the costliest on record, surpassing the \$125 billion that the Insurance Information Institute estimates Hurricane Katrina cost the Gulf coast in 2005. It would also top the \$100 billion in damage caused by the 1995 Kobe quake in Japan.

Uh... hold on a minute. Something seems wrong with these numbers. Do I understand this correctly; all those coastal cities and towns that were leveled, the tens of thousands of cars and homes that were pulverized, all the stores, shops, factories, warehouses, schools, freeways, roads, ships, aircraft, trains, port facilities and infrastructure reduced to rubble and it will only cost as much as US Federal deficit for a couple of months?

First a quick look at the Congressional Budget Office report for February, 2011. Two sentences stand out.

[The] CBO estimates that the deficit in Feb. 2011 was \$223 billion, which is very similar to the deficit recorded in Feb. 2010.

[The] CBO estimates that the federal government incurred a budget deficit of \$642 billion for the first five months of fiscal year 2011, \$10 billion less than the shortfall recorded in the same period last year.

Shocking and inconceivable, how else to describe the monumental scale of the Federal deficit as measured by the devastation from Japan? Hundred of billions of dollars each month, the accumulated treasure of great empire is being hemorrhaged into oblivion, without purpose, thought or rationality...

Meanwhile our Socialist Administration, content to bleed this nation into second-class status, gleefully ticks off each day that brings our nation \$4.1 billion dollars closer to insolvency, instability and the end of our Constitutional Republic.”



UN TO ISRAEL: SURRENDER!

March 30, 2011 IsraelToday.co.il reported: “UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Tuesday reiterated that the world body expects Israel to immediately surrender to internationally-backed Arab demands that it relinquish all claims to the Jews’ biblical heartland of Judea and Samaria and half of their ancient capital of Jerusalem. The Jewish presence in the so-called “West Bank,” which includes the eastern half of Jerusalem, is “morally and politically unsustainable, and must end,” Ban insisted during a press conference in Uruguay.

Meanwhile, the Palestinians are moving forward plans to unilaterally declare an independent state with the support of the UN, outside the framework of a land-for-peace deal with Israel.

Palestinian leaders indicated that they will make such a move later this year. The motion is almost certain to be shot down in the UN Security Council, where the US exercises veto power, but will be widely adopted by the UN General Assembly, which most will see as more than adequate for “Palestine” to be declared a state.

Israeli officials are busy lobbying various nations against supporting this move. But diplomats fear their efforts are bearing little fruit, since Israel is not presenting any kind of alternative plan or process.”...

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