



PROPHETIC TIMES

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EUROPE WARNS IRAN AGAINST ATOMIC ARMS

September 22, 2004 Reuters reported: "Europe warned on Tuesday that it would not tolerate an Iran with nuclear weapons after the Islamic republic defied the United Nations by announcing it had begun converting a large amount of raw uranium to prepare it for enrichment, a process that can be used to develop atomic bombs.

European Union foreign policy chief Javier Solana said, however, the EU remained committed to offering energy and other cooperation if Tehran abandoned its nuclear ambitions. Solana spoke to Reuters after a meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi on the fringes of the U.N. General Assembly that was "frank ... tough and friendly."

Solana sidestepped a question about whether he felt the Iranian nuclear controversy was still open to negotiation. "I think we have to keep on doing the utmost in talking and dialogue ... If we fail in that direction, we may have to resort to other mechanisms (such as taking the issue to the U.N. Security Council but) we prefer not to have to," he said.

Iran's announcement on Tuesday came just three days after the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the U.N.'s nuclear watchdog, adopted a resolution calling on Iran to suspend all activities related to uranium enrichment.

Iran had promised Britain, France and Germany last October it would freeze all activities related to uranium enrichment. But Tehran angered the EU's "big three" by renegeing on that commitment.

The United States and some other nations believe Tehran intends to use fissile material for weapons. Iran denies that and says its nuclear program is solely for peaceful purposes...."

AL QAEDA SEEN PLANNING FOR 'SPECTACULAR' ATTACK

September 22, 2004 The Washington Times reported: "U.S. intelligence agencies concluded recently that al Qaeda X fearing its credibility is on the line X is moving ahead with plans for a major, "spectacular" attack, despite disruptions of some operations by recent arrests in Britain and Pakistan. Officials said recent intelligence assessments of the group, which is blamed for the September 11 attacks, state that an attack is coming and that the danger will remain high until the Nov. 2 elections and last until Inauguration Day on Jan. 20.

"They [al Qaeda] think their credibility is on the line because there hasn't been a major attack since 9/11," said one official familiar with intelligence reports on the group. A second official said: "There isn't reason to believe that the recent arrests have disrupted their plans."

Authorities in Pakistan and Britain recently arrested key al Qaeda leaders, but the group uses tight "compartmentation" of its operations. The process, used by intelligence services, keeps information about operations within small "cells" of terrorists to protect secrecy. Thus, details of the possible attack remain murky, but analysts say it is planned to be bigger and deadlier than the September 11 attacks, which killed 3,000 people.

Potential targets include the White House, Pentagon, U.S. Capitol and congressional buildings, as well as landmarks and business centers in New York, the officials said. The officials said that there is no specific information about targets. Intelligence officials say a key figure in al Qaeda's North American operations is Adnan Shukrijumah, who is being sought by the FBI for the past several years. One official said Shukrijumah recently was seen in Mexico and earlier had been in Canada near a university with a nuclear reactor, leading to concerns that he was seeking radioactive material for a radiological bomb. The Mexican newspaper Proceso, quoting Mexican officials, reported earlier this month that Shukrijumah was being sought in northeastern Mexico after being tracked to Sonora in August.

Acting CIA Director John McLaughlin told a Senate hearing last month that al Qaeda's ability to keep its operations secret is a "strategic weapon."

THOUSANDS SENT VCJD EPIDEMIC WARNING

September 21, 2004 London Daily Telegraph reported: "Thousands of patients have been sent warnings by the Government telling them that they may have been exposed to vCJD through blood plasma products.

The Department of Health has announced that more than 6,000 people will now receive letters to help minimize the possibility of passing on the human form of mad cow disease.

The department estimates that the number who may be affected directly could be around 4,000. John Reid, the Health Secretary, and Sir Liam Donaldson, the Chief Medical Officer, said the letter was a highly precautionary measure and the risk of any of the patients developing vCJD was very small.

It follows the first possible case of a person dying after contracting vCJD through a blood transfusion, announced by Mr Reid last December.”

This led to a ban on people who have received a blood transfusion since January 1980 donating blood in the future...”

CHIRAC IN CALL FOR GLOBAL TAX

September 22, 2004 The EUobserver reported: “French President Jacques Chirac has called for an international tax to help fight poverty. Speaking at the United Nations in New York, Mr Chirac praised a report prepared by a French working group, which suggested an international tax be levied on arms sales and some financial transactions in a bid to eradicate poverty.

The report contains “technically realistic and economically rational solutions”, said Mr Chirac, according to Reuters, who has joined forces with Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva to push the anti-poverty agenda. They will attempt to push forward to aim of halving the number of people in poverty by 2015, as UN leaders pledged in 2000.

More than a billion people around the world live in extreme poverty, surviving on less than one US dollar per day. And a declaration signed by 110 countries urged governments to consider the report.

But Mr Chirac’s ideas were strongly attacked by the US delegation. US Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman said, “global taxes are inherently undemocratic. Implementation is impossible”...”

EUROPEAN GENDARMERIE FORCE SET UP TO POLICE TROUBLED SPOTS

September 20, 2004 The EUobserver reported: “Defense ministers from France, Italy, Spain, Portugal and the Netherlands signed an agreement on Friday (17 September) in the Dutch town of Noordwijk to form a joint paramilitary force. The 3,000-strong European Gendarmerie Force (EGF) will be based in Vicenza in north-east Italy and is designed to help restore public order to regions emerging from conflict such as the Balkans and beyond.

Michelle Alliot-Marie, the French defense minister, said the force was designed for “post-conflict” duties in regions emerging from civil war such as Bosnia, Kosovo and the Ivory Coast. Italian Defence Minister Antonio Martino explained the new force could be used for three different types of intervention. “The force could be used to prevent a conflict, so before a military intervention, it could be used in support of military intervention, or it could be used after military intervention to make sure the post-conflict runs smoothly”, he said.

The EGF will have a core of 800-900 members ready to deploy within 30 days and a pool of 2,300 reinforcements on standby. The first commander will be French. Other EU members will be invited to participate in the force, but some countries with no national paramilitary forces ruled out any involvement.

“Germany will not take part”, said German Defense Minister Peter Struck to Reuters, adding Germany wanted to maintain its strict separation between the police and army. Britain welcomed the scheme but without its own tradition of a militarized police it has no plans to take part, the Daily Telegraph reported.

The agreement was signed in the frames of a meeting of the 25 defense ministers of the European Union. The informal meeting was chaired by the Dutch defense minister Henk Kamp. The gendarmerie is only the latest in a series of new European cross-border military, paramilitary, and police bodies, including a Finnish-Swedish force to patrol the Arctic wastes and a Franco-Spanish anti-terrorist police corps.

The Finnish-Swedish joint force is likely to be comprised of about 1,000 Swedish soldiers and 200 Finns. The EU defense ministers are to announce, during their so-called resource meeting on 22 November, how much each EU country will contribute to the combat units, and what countries will set up units together.

NATO will hand over command of a 7,000-strong peacekeeping force in Bosnia to the EU in December.”

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