

Greetings from Tyler,

Signs are mounting that war preparations are under way, and Israel is in the crosshairs. A report in the Jerusalem Post references satellite photos published by The Times of London showing Hizbollah terrorists populating a missile base in Syria, bristling with notorious scud missiles. The story is backed up by other Middle East sources in addition to a statement by Dianne Feinstein of the U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee.

According to a Debkafile report, “A colossal Iran-funded and directed armament program has permitted Syria to field 1000 ballistic missiles and Hizbollah 1,000 rockets – all pointed at specific Israeli military and civilian locations, including the densely populated... Tel Aviv. Lebanon is said to have greatly increased troop strength near the Israeli border, and is practicing the firing of anti-aircraft missiles.

Iran just held war games, which included the simultaneous test firing of 30 surface to surface missiles, according to Debkafile, missiles identical to those recently supplied to Hizbollah in southern Lebanon. Israel has just wrapped up five days of war games, amid accusations of military provocation.

There are also reports of a U.S. nuclear submarine having just passed through the Strait of Hormuz, the vital shipping channel, and U.S. aircraft carriers moving to take up positions in the Persian Gulf. Since several recent incidents where Israel absorbed dismissive treatment from the current U.S. administration, there has reportedly been a change of course complete with assurances that Washington would stand with Israel. You could just about get whiplash trying to follow the twists and turns.

According to another report by WorldNetDaily, Saudi Arabia and the other gulf nations are growing increasingly nervous that Iran might use its imminent nuclear status to attack and subjugate the entire Arabian Peninsula. The following quote carried in the report attributed to an Iranian “cleric” appears to vindicate that fear. “The Islamic United States (led by Iran) will be an introduction to the formation of the global village of the oppressed, and that will be a prelude to the single global rule of the Shiite Mahdi.”

Our just completed monthly letter references the belief of Iran’s Shiite leaders that they must play a role in creating havoc, something akin to “Armageddon,” to bring about the return of their legendary “12th Imam” to establish worldwide Islamic rule. They view it as religious destiny, and Ahmadinejad went so far as to spell out the whole scenario before a session of the United Nations in 2007.

At this point we might be tempted to ask whether Iran may be assuming the identity of the King of the South of Bible prophecy. Garner Ted Armstrong believed that the prophesied King of the South would emerge representing an Arab nation, and there may yet be developments that will bear that out. But at this point there appears to be a growing apprehension that Iran is intimidating the Sunni-led nations with its nuclear ambitions.

You must also be aware of the saber rattling between North and South Korea having

been ramped up since the sinking of the South's military vessel by torpedo. Since that time, there has been a complete severance of all relations punctuated by ominous military maneuvers.

Here in the U.S., attention is largely focused on the oil spill in the Gulf in the wake of the platform explosion of a rig operated by British Petroleum. The spill is projected to be one of the greatest ecological disasters in American history, and near as we can tell, still underway over a month after the initial incident. It looks like another crisis that will not go to waste, as the president has declared a temporary moratorium on all offshore drilling plans. In addition to damage in the Gulf, the curtailing of drilling may also have a negative impact on the oil business not to mention the prospect of higher fuel prices, which was telegraphed even before the current administration took office. Will this crisis somehow attribute to plans to impose "cap and trade" too?

We've always kept our distance from conspiracy theories, but given so many nonsensical statements and developments of late, even a sane person might begin to wonder just what is going on? Europe is reeling from the prospect of a Greek default and the strong possibility that another four euro zone nations may be in similar trouble. The solution has been to pledge the equivalent of one trillion dollars to bail out, or at least make good on payments due, at the cost of allowing the IMF to dictate the terms of "austerity" measures. Greeks are furious over the planned cuts to their government incomes and subsidies, and strikes are reportedly planned elsewhere in Europe to protest cuts in their benefits.

A troubling aspect of this story is American involvement in the European bailout. Numerous reports have the Treasury Secretary traveling throughout Europe giving guarantees of U.S. backing, apparently in addition to the \$170 billion that has been pledged as America's share of the IMF's trillion dollar bailout. And many analysts believe the move will only provide temporary relief from panic, as the underlying behavior of socialist spending is expected to continue with relatively minor revisions.

Will Europe collapse its own economy? Many in the alternative media have pointed out that numerous members of the current administration have been schooled in philosophies and belong to fraternities that believe in and work toward "collapsing the system" of capitalism in order to usher in a new order of socialism where liberty is curtailed and the government dispenses "social justice." Much of what we're seeing in terms of stimulus spending, bailout mania, the takeover of financial and industrial concerns does lend credence to those concerns.

As we pause to recognize the sacrifices of so many on Memorial Day, it's difficult to come to grips with the reality that so many gave their all to prevent the very ideology currently being imposed on America from ever reaching our shores.

As detailed in the upcoming letter, some believe that only a completely new "structure" can ultimately save Europe from a looming economic meltdown. Given what we know about end time prophecy, that sounds more than a little suspicious.

The GTA telecast this week brought 391 requests with one hundred eighty five first time contacts. We offered the audio study of Galatians and the booklet Saved by Grace.

We had a great Pentecost weekend at Land Between the Lakes, organized and hosted by Dr. James Ricks. There was a good turnout, with plenty of speakers and participants for the services and workshop sessions. No more often than we get to see a lot of those folks, it's a shame it couldn't have lasted longer. I've also had glowing reports from Atlanta, where Mr. Jim Josephsen appeared as guest speaker. We hope all of you had a good Sabbath and Pentecost too. And another is upon us already!

Our thanks go out to all of you.

Mark Armstrong