

Northern

BRINGING YOU THE LATEST NEWS
FROM OUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS
AROUND THE WORLD

news

NOVEMBER 2010



Editorial Ramblings



Appropriate to our front cover photograph, the question that needs considering is: *Are we in for some fireworks in 2011?* With the whole world in such a calamitous state in so many ways, the indications are that, according to one highly respected Christian and Biblical scholar that we know, *2011 will be a momentous year.* As you may remember from last month's magazine, we've been suggesting that our family and friends leave the Middle East. What surprised me about this was the response. I thought that many of those folks might say I was being overly pessimistic, but the response was quite the opposite - I had more e-mails than ever - and everyone who wrote was in agreement with me, and many had either left the area already or were making preparations to do so. I was also expecting a few people to tell me that it is easy for me to say *get out* when I'm here sitting pretty in the UK and no longer have ties in the Middle East. No one did say that. However, since last month, I've been offered a new job in Qatar. As you all know, Grace and I would dearly love to return there and the job is just what I'd love to get involved with. How I'd love to accept that job - but, of course, I'm not going to. It would have been easy for me to accept the position and hope for the best. Naturally, I was tempted to do so, as not only would I love to do the job, but it would also get me out of the UK and you cannot imagine just how much I'd like to get out of here! It was extremely hard to turn down that job. And as though the Middle East tensions aren't enough, as I write this there is enormous tension building up between North and South Korea - assisted by the USA (as usual). The USA is the World's biggest trouble maker - and all done in the name of peace, freedom and democracy! What lies!

No November edition of our magazine would be complete without remembering those fine British people who have paid the ultimate price for devotion to their duty and to their country during the conflicts that have taken place in the last century and beyond. They did so in order to keep this country free from oppressors and to maintain our democracy. How sad - and angry - they must feel when they look down at us and see how oppressed we are by the foreigners who rule our country from the European Parliament, at the expense of our national identity and democracy. Hitler must be cheering from Hell! He couldn't have done a better job of destroying this country than have his successors who have overwhelmed our incompetent and feeble leaders, and who have done far more to reduce my country to nothing than could ever have been imagined during those dark, but ultimately victorious, days of World War II when Great Britain took on the might of Germany, alone, until the USA was attacked by the Japanese at Pearl Harbour, so bringing them into the war too. In those days, this country was a Christian country and prayed to God for not only victory, but survival. How far we've deteriorated as a society since those God fearing days where almost the whole country trusted Him for our deliverance from evil. This year, unusually, we weren't able to attend the service ourselves as Little Lad had such a cough, we'd have never have got through the two minutes silence without causing disruption - and my cough wasn't much better than his. So we settled for watching it on the television where we were very touched by seeing the survivors of previous wars as well as family members of those who gave their lives for this country. 112 of our young people have been killed in action since last remembrance Sunday. What a tragedy for the country this is - and even more so for their families. This brings the total of British personnel killed in Afghanistan since the conflict started until this day (Remembrance Sunday - 14 November 2010) to 344 (as I was writing this an announcement was made informing us that yet another soldier had been killed in Afghanistan today). How many more are we going to lose before this conflict is over?

We're getting near to Christmas! Not many shopping days remain. Grace erected the Chritmas tree and put up the lights on 1 November. Much to JP's delight. We've also had a lot of fun packing a box of *goodies* to send to our family in the Philippines. As you can see from the photograph (*right*), the box was rather on the large size so it took a lot of filling. This was sent on its way late on 24 November, so it may be a little late for Christmas, but no doubt it will be enjoyed by all regardless of the date it arrives. We rather doubt that the Christmas cake will survive intact!

As usual, we've been beset by health problems. In particular, Grace has been very unwell and little seems to be able to be done to cure her. I've also had time off work, unwell, so we would value your prayers for a return to good health.

This is the 48th consecutive monthly edition of our magazine - 4 years. It's also the largest edition so far. We hope you enjoy reading it.

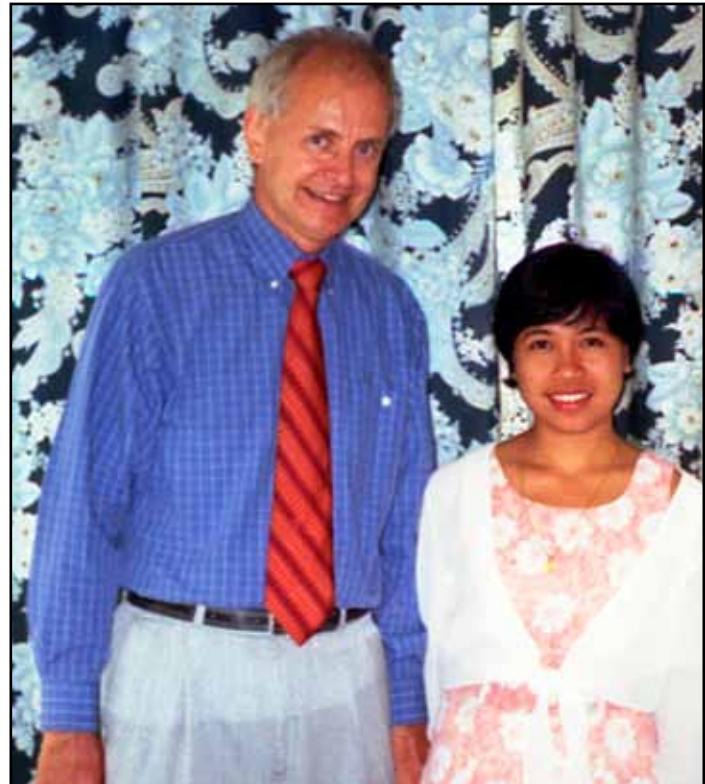
Cover Photograph: Fireworks over Wolverhampton.





Little Lad's school photograph - © Tempest Photography

10th Wedding Anniversary



A whole decade has passed since we got married on 13 November 2000 (*see photograph, above, right*). Doesn't time fly when you're enjoying yourself! During our first eight years together, we lived in fifteen homes, in four countries and shared many adventures - not least being the time when John (JP) was born in Doha, Qatar on 10 May 2005. Our current home has been the place where we have lived the longest - 2 years and 2 months, so far. The photograph (*above, left*) was taken by John (JP).

This year, we decided to have a little celebration and the day started off in fantastic style and a great surprise when we received, first, a beautiful card, then, a little later, we heard a knock on the door and, upon opening it, we were presented with a box containing the lovely flowers shown in the photograph. Both of these delights were from our family, Eric, Rita and Elizabeth, in Preston. Our celebration day continued with a trip to Birmingham where we had a splendid lunch, followed by a walk around the shops - and included eating the largest, most super ice creams we've ever eaten - at an Italian Ice Cream makers.





Little Lad with the three super ice creams - his was the big ice cream on the right of the photograph.

Grace on our wedding anniversary.
In the Birmingham Bull Ring
shopping mall.





NEED WASHING?

A little girl had been shopping with her Mum in Asda. She must have been 6 years old, this beautiful red haired, freckle faced image of innocence.

It was pouring outside. The kind of rain that gushes over the top of rain gutters, so much in a hurry to hit the earth it has no time to flow down the spout.. We all stood there, under the awning, just inside the door of the Asda store.

We waited, some patiently, others irritated because nature messed up their hurried day.

I am always mesmerized by rainfall. I got lost in the sound and sight of the heavens washing away the dirt and dust of the world. Memories of running, splashing so carefree as a child came pouring in as a welcome reprieve from the worries of my day.

Her little voice was so sweet as it broke the hypnotic trance we were all caught in, 'Mom let's run through the rain,' she said.
'What?' Mom asked.

'Let's run through the rain!' She repeated.

'No, honey. We'll wait until it slows down a bit,' Mom replied.

This young child waited a minute and repeated: 'Mom, let's run through the rain..'

'We'll get soaked if we do,' Mom said.

'No, we won't, Mom. That's not what you said this morning,' the young girl said as she tugged at her Mom's arm.

'This morning? When did I say we could run through the rain and not get wet?'

'Don't you remember? When you were talking to Daddy about his cancer, you said, 'If God can get us through this, He can get us through anything!'

The entire crowd stopped dead silent.. I swear you couldn't hear anything but the rain.. We all stood silently. No one left. Mom paused and thought for a moment about what she would say.

Now some would laugh it off and scold her for being silly. Some might even ignore what was said. But this was a moment of affirmation in a young child's life. A time when innocent trust can be nurtured so that it will bloom into faith.

'Honey, you are absolutely right. Let's run through the rain. If GOD lets us get wet, well maybe we just need washing,' Mom said.

Then off they ran. We all stood watching, smiling and laughing as they darted past the cars and yes, through the puddles. They got soaked.

They were followed by a few who screamed and laughed like children all the way to their cars. And yes, I did. I ran.
I got wet. I needed washing.

Circumstances or people can take away your material possessions, they can take away your money, and they can take away your health. But no one can ever take away your precious memories. So, don't forget to make time and take the opportunities to make memories every day.

To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven.
I HOPE YOU STILL TAKE THE TIME TO RUN THROUGH THE RAIN.

They say it takes a minute to find a special person, an hour to appreciate them, a day to love them, but then an entire life to forget them.

Send this to the people you'll never forget and remember to also send it to the person who sent it to you. It's a short message to let them know that you'll never forget them.

If you don't send it to anyone, it means you're in a hurry.

Take the time to live!!!

Keep in touch with your friends, you never know when you'll need each other -- and don't forget to run in the rain!

Thanks to Bonnie for sending this for us to read.

*Little Lad with his bicycle in Bantock Park,
Near our home, on 28 November 2010 - a
little late afternoon sun with a little snow.*



Little Lad making tracks across the snow.



Lest We Forget



The new memorial for the men of 40 Commando Royal Marines who have lost their lives in the line of duty

[Picture: LA(Phot) Si Ethell, Crown Copyright/MOD 2010]

A new memorial dedicated to members of 40 Commando Royal Marines who have given their lives for their country was unveiled this week at their base, Norton Manor Camp near Taunton.

The new memorial for the men of 40 Commando Royal

Marines who have lost their lives in the line of duty

[Picture: LA(Phot) Si Ethell, Crown Copyright/MOD 2010]

The memorial, made of granite by a Taunton stonemason, was paid for after a groundswell of public support for the unit which has recently returned from operations in Afghanistan.

The black, globe-shaped memorial was blessed by the unit's chaplain, Andrew Rawding, at a special ceremony attended by some of the families of the 14 Marines who have died in Afghanistan, civilian fundraisers including Royal Marines Association branches, and the Mayor of Taunton, Jefferson Horsley.

Lieutenant Colonel Paul James, 40 Commando's Commanding Officer, thanked the fundraisers and others who helped build the memorial garden site. He said:

"It is very moving to be here and to think this beautiful memorial and the garden was all made possible only through the generosity and kindness of people who undertook it all while we were out in Afghanistan, largely without our knowledge."

"Both local people and others throughout the country helped raise money. It is a source of added pride to know that we have so much support, especially when people are giving their lives in combat."

Molly Marsh remembers her Royal Marine father David who died when the vehicle he was travelling in was caught in an explosion in Afghanistan in March 2008

A slow-growing memorial tree and dedicated plaque is planned for each of the fatalities in Afghanistan.

Claire Marsh and her young daughter Molly, aged four, the widow and daughter of Royal Marine David Marsh, who died in a roadside bomb blast in 2008, placed flowers at his tree and plaque. Claire said:

"This garden is a lovely place to come and pay tribute to

David. He was killed by an IED when driving with his colleague and friend Lieutenant John Thornton on patrol with the Fire Support Group.

"They were both killed together. The garden is an ideal place to meet other families and I have spoken to John's family today. It is very comforting to share this support. It makes me extra proud of David to be here part of the ceremony with Molly."

Lt Col James added:

"It is a particularly proud moment to help launch the memorial and garden. It is a good place for families, friends and colleagues to come and reflect on the lives of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice."

"There is a sense of sorrow at this ceremony, but mixed with pride for what has been achieved by those with great valour, courage and selfless sacrifice."

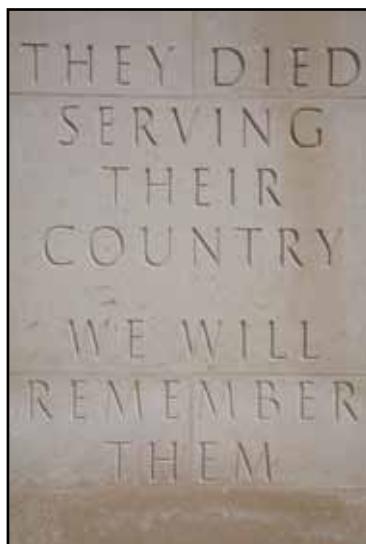
"However, families who have lost sons will find that they have gained many others through support of the family of the Royal Marines, both past and present."

Graham Rees, of the Bridgwater branch of the Royal Marines Association, helped build the memorial garden paths and set up the tree memorials. He said:

"My previous unit was 40 Commando, so I have a great affinity for them. Our branch donated £250 to the fund because we veterans feel every death. When one falls in battle we all feel that loss like a family."

"You can take the man out of the Marines but not the Marine out of the man, and this applies through your life."

Courtesy of URL: <http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/DefenceNews/HistoryAndHonour/RoyalMarinesUnveilMonumentToTheirFallen.htm>



Photos I took at the National Memorial Arboretum earlier this year (see May edition). We were very touched seeing this old couple, whom we assumed were veterans of World War II, walking along the wall of names of those who fell. It appeared they were looking for the names of those they once knew.



Prince William lays wreath on Remembrance Sunday at Camp Bastion in Afghanistan



Tribute: Prince William stood to attention and saluted the memorial to the British Soldiers killed in Afghanistan during a Remembrance Sunday ceremony at Camp Bastion in southern Afghanistan.



Memorial: Prince William lead Remembrance Sunday tributes alongside Defence Secretary Dr Liam Fox at a service at Camp Bastion in Helmand Province.

Prince William flew to Afghanistan today to lead tributes to Britain's war dead killed in the trouble-stricken country and in other conflicts.

William joined the congregation for a service of remembrance at Camp Bastion, Helmand Province, while his Grandmother, The Queen, laid a wreath at the Cenotaph in London.

The second in line to the throne was accompanied by Defence Secretary Liam Fox who placed his own floral tribute during the event this morning.

Later, his grandmother the Queen laid a poppy wreath in the traditional Remembrance Sunday event at the Cenotaph in London.

She was joined by other members of the Royal Family, Prime Minister David Cameron and opposition party leaders at the wreath-laying event at the Cenotaph in Whitehall.

Two minutes' silence was held in London and Afghanistan for mourners to commemorate the war dead.

William laid a wreath after the silence bearing the note: 'For Jo, Lex and all those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country.'

His visit added weight to an article by the prince in the Sunday Telegraph today, where he described how he is humbled by the respect shown for fallen heroes.

In it, he said: 'The country is as fervent today in its support for our armed forces and the sacrifices that they make as it has ever been.'

'The awareness of what young men and women are doing for us in the most extreme and hostile environments imaginable is striking and moving. I find this remarkable and, frankly, humbling.'

After the visit, William said the occasion was extremely important to him, not only to remember personal friends he had lost, but everyone who lost their lives in the line of duty. On his second visit to the region, William met British and international forces and joined Dr Fox to pay a visit to Camp Bastion's state-of-the-art medical centre.

Dr Fox, who accompanied William during the tribute alongside troops in Afghanistan, said: 'Remembrance Sunday is a time when the entire country stops to recognise the sacrifices made by the Armed Forces on our behalf.'

'I am extremely proud that Prince William and I could come to Camp Bastion to stand alongside the men and women serving in Afghanistan today.'

'I pay tribute to them, and everyone who has served before them in this conflict, and others on behalf of the freedoms that the British people enjoy.'

They were accompanied by senior British military officers in theatre, including Commander British Forces, Lieutenant General James Bucknall, Commander Task Force Helmand, Brigadier James Chiswell and the British Ambassador to Kabul, Sir William Patey.

Before the service in Afghanistan, Prince William met troops - most of whom had no idea he was due to visit. He even bumped into two old colleagues who he trained



Tributes: The Queen led hundreds of veterans when she laid a wreath of poppies in the The Remembrance Sunday Ceremony at the Cenotaph in London. ©Sky.

with. One, a Lynx pilot from Hampshire who did not want to be named, said: 'I know him from flying training when he came through with the Army Air Corps at Middle Wallop. 'He remembered both of us - it's a small world, the military helicopter world.'

Sgt Nick Rodgers, from South Yorkshire, serving with Brigade Reconnaissance Force, 16 Air Assault Brigade, said: 'It's a big occasion all round - we've got to stay focused for the job in hand but it's still recognised throughout.'

'We know that he wants to be here; to be honest, he would rather be out fighting with us so it's good to see him here.'

Prince William paid a secret visit to frontline troops at an airfield in Kandahar in 2008, flying home with the body of a soldier killed in action.

Once back in the UK, he privately met members of the family of Trooper Robert Pearson, who died on April 21 when his vehicle hit a mine.

But some hit out at the trip, branding it a public relations exercise to 'cover up' for controversy caused when the Prince was allowed to fly military helicopters to a stag do and to his girlfriend Kate Middleton's family home in Bucklebury, Berkshire.

The 2008 visit came after William's younger brother Harry served in Helmand Province for 10 weeks.

There are currently around 4,500 personnel at Bastion, 1,000 in Lashkar Gah and 950 in Kandahar.

Courtesy of URL: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1329360/Prince-William-leads-tributes-Remembrance-Sunday-laying-wreath-Afghanistan.html>

Poppies: Prince William walks to place a wreath on the memorial to the British Soliders killed in Afghanistan,
©PA



Poppy-burning Muslim protesters mar Armistice Day commemorations as millions fall silent to remember war dead

Islamic protesters sparked fury today after they burned a model of a poppy and deliberately broke the silence at Armistice Day commemorations in central London.

As millions of Britons fell silent to remember those who have died in war, members of a group called Muslims Against Crusades clashed with police during an 'emergency demonstration' in Kensington, west London.

As the clock struck 11am, the Islamic protesters burned a model of a poppy and chanted 'British soldiers burn in hell'.

They held banners which read 'Islam will dominate' and 'Our dead are in paradise, your dead are in hell'.

The Muslims Against Crusades website includes graphic images of children wounded in warfare and the torture of detainees at Abu Ghraib.



© Jeremy Selwyn

Some of the scum we have to live with in Britain today - Kick them OUT!



Courtesy of URL: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1328703/Remembrance-Day-Poppy-burning-Muslim-protesters-mar-Armistice-Day.html>



© Mark Richards

In contrast to the scum shown on the previous two pages, this is the real face of the true British people. The photograph shows 7 year old Jonny Osborne paying his respects to the fallen at the Remembrance Service at the Cenotaph in London on Sunday. Ironically, it was the freedom for which our military personnel fought and died that permitted the scum to stage their demonstration. Carry out a similar demonstration in the home countries of the scum shown in the previous photographs and you'd immediately be locked up and the key would be thrown away - or worse.

The following by Paul Harris - Daily Mail:

His (Jonny Osborne) great-uncle, Sapper Lawrence Burton, was killed in fierce fighting on the beaches of Greece in 1941 while serving with the Royal Engineers.

Jonny wore three of his medals yesterday as a guest of the Association of Veterans of Foreign wars, of which his U.S.-resident grandfather Terry Burton is president.

His other great-uncle, Len Burton, was shot by a German sniper in Italy in 1945.

So yesterday the great-nephew they never met added a few medals of his own to his blazer, among them a Spitfire emblem alongside Union Flag and Stars and Stripes badges.

Jonny, who attends a Church of England primary school near his home in North London, added: 'I said a prayer for them. I like praying to God. I think people should. There were lots and lots of people praying for these guys.'

The ceremony honoured the dead from all wars and remembered the loved ones they left behind. At the Cenotaph, Jonny shared the crowd's applause as he walked behind a cluster of Victoria Cross and George Cross holders. Among them were veterans of the Second World War, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Absent on parade, but still fondly remembered, were the likes of Harry Patch, the last Tommy from the trenches of the First World War. A stalwart of these occasions, he died last year aged 111. Which was why young Jonny and other youngsters had an important role to play yesterday, an occasion born of the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, when the guns finally fell silent in the 1914-1918 fighting.

As the number of survivors and their widows dwindles with time, new generations have become word-of-mouth messengers for those who gave their lives.

Courtesy of URL: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1328703/Two-faces-Armistice-Day-Boy-brimming-pride-fanatics-burning-hate.html>

British mawkishness and the end of the defence consensus

by Melanie Phillips
Daily Mail, 15 November 2010

They were words one hardly expected to hear from one of our most distinguished military figures — especially in the week of Remembrance Sunday.

However, that only makes the comments at the weekend of Lieutenant-General Sir Robert Fry, former commander of British forces in Iraq, all the more disturbing.

He said the British people had developed a dangerously ‘mawkish’ attitude towards the Armed Forces.

‘I think that the British people hold the Armed Forces in a state of excessive reverence at the present time. It is a greater infatuation than at any other stage of recent military history that I can recall,’ he said.

With these comments, he has put his finger on a subtle, but crucial and potentially catastrophic shift in our national psyche.

So what’s wrong with ‘reverence’ you may ask. Well, General Fry is making a brutal and, indeed, shocking observation - that the British hold dead soldiers in deep esteem while despising the causes for which they are currently laying down their lives.

This is because fundamental assumptions about this nation and the wars fought on its behalf have been shattered.

For most of the past two centuries, he observed, there had been an unspoken agreement that any war fought by Britain would be based on acknowledged rules; this country would most likely win that war; and the outcome would be largely beneficial.

That consensus, however, was broken with the war in Iraq — and may never be repaired.

The result has been that the public now mourn excessively the soldiers who have fallen in battle — who are seen increasingly as the victims, not of the enemies of this country but of its government that commits Britain to fight wars its people no longer support.

That is an utterly devastating observation. Devastating because it is true — and because of its implications.

For Britain is a fighting nation. It is a land of historic and classic warrior heroes. Military power is part of its DNA.

For centuries, it has successfully used that power to advance its national interests abroad and defend them at home. From the Armada to Trafalgar to the Battle of Britain, military

prowess has been synonymous with British greatness and is etched deep into the nation’s cultural memory.

Understanding the fact that wars to defend the nation inescapably entail sacrifice, the British once bore such losses stoically.

Until now — when public displays of emotion over fallen soldiers have reached such a pitch that Michael Clarke, director of the Royal United Services Institute, has described them as ‘recreational grief’ in memory of soldiers sent by useless governments to fight pointless wars.

Such erosion of the consensus about military power arguably started long before Iraq.

The widespread use of British soldiers in ‘peace-keeping forces’ stretched the patience of the public, who often found it hard to understand why it was necessary to police the world in this way, let alone see what good it did.

It is rooted further back still, in the last century’s two world wars which, although Britain won them, exacted a terrible toll of casualties and provoked as a result a near-terminal revulsion against war itself.

There is surely a more profound reason still. The acceptance that soldiers fight and die for the good of the nation is based on belief in something beyond the self.

But with the erosion of religious faith and the corresponding conviction that there is nothing beyond this world, the idea of dying for any cause becomes less and less persuasive.

Virtues such as heroism, altruism and self-sacrifice have thus been displaced by the culture of instant gratification, while true feeling for others has been replaced by false emotion or mawkish sentimentality.

Throughout this dismaying process of cultural decline, the Armed Forces have remained virtually the last redoubt of Britain’s vanishing virtues such as courage, orderliness, stoicism and an unshakeable belief in the greater good.

But all around, the rest of British society has been losing its belief in the nation — and its willingness to fight and die to defend it. And if the public no longer supports the aims for which the Armed Forces wage war, these suffer a catastrophic slump in morale.

As Chief of the Defence Staff, General Sir David Richards has ominously warned about the premature withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan: ‘If we lose this war, it will be in the homes of this country, as people tire of it.’

Rightly or wrongly, the war in Iraq shattered public trust in

the political and defence establishment ever to tell the truth about why a war is necessary in the national interest.

Now Britain is mired in Afghanistan, many think that, too, is a war we should not be fighting.

Personally, I happened to support both wars, and still do. But catastrophic mistakes have been made in explaining precisely why these were so necessary.

In particular, there has been an almost total failure to convince people that we are living in a very different world with a very different kind of warfare that doesn't fit the old assumptions.

We are up against an enemy we can't identify easily because it doesn't wear the uniform of a country's army, and it often chooses to operate under the false flags of one geographical conflict after another.

This is what General Richards was getting at this weekend when he said that Al Qaeda and Islamic extremism could never be defeated.

What he meant was that there could be no clear-cut victory, where British troops would march into the capital of a country it had vanquished or liberated.

As for Islamic extremism, an idea, however dangerous, cannot be defeated through military means. But as the general said, it can certainly be contained so that people are protected from it.

But that means an open-ended military commitment. And that depends crucially on popular support. Without that support, Britain and the West will lose — to an enemy that is fighting on many fronts to bring down the West.

General Richards says: 'Don't give up, folks.' But many are doing precisely that. Not just over Afghanistan or Iraq, but over the very idea that this country's political and military commanders can be trusted never to put its soldiers in harm's way unless it really is in the national interest to do so.

A country that no longer understands what it is fighting against — or even more crucially, what it is fighting for — will not, in the long term, survive.

This is all so desperately tragic. This is Britain we are talking about — that land of the lion-hearted that lit the lamp of liberty for the world and whose greatest nobility lay in ensuring that its light was never extinguished.

Yet now that mighty heart is all but broken. Almost the last place in which it still continues to beat on is in our Armed Forces.

Yes, we must, of course, mourn our fallen soldiers. But in order to respect their ultimate sacrifice, we must recognise and support the cause — our national cause — for which they continue to lay down their lives.

Courtesy of URL: <http://www.melaniephillips.com/articles-new/?p=778>



Not forgotten: Lucy Aldridge with her sons George, seven (left) and Archie, five, at Bredenbury War Memorial, Herefordshire, look at the name of her son, Rifleman William Aldridge, who was killed, aged 18, in Afghanistan in 2009.

Family in the Wars

Like most families in Britain, my family has done its duty to my country during the last century of wars and conflicts throughout the world. Thankfully, most of them survived. I'm sure they must be ashamed of Britain today - ruled by foreigners and permitting foreigners to take over not only the ruling of their country, but occupying it in such large, overwhelming, numbers. Here are the photographs of some of those to whom we owe a great deal.

World War I - 1914 to 1918



John Joseph Topping - my Grandfather - Cavalry.

Samuel Reuben
Cook (*right*).
my Grandfather.
Army



Arthur Muggeridge - one of my Grandmother's brothers - Royal Artillery.

Harry Simmonds - gave his life for my country. Killed in action on 2 June 1917 and buried in France. Husband of Lily Simmonds, (nee Muggerdige) one of my Grandmother's sisters.





Nathaniel Muggeridge - one of my Grandmother's brothers - Royal Navy



Charles Muggeridge - one of my Grandmother's brothers - Royal Artillery

Charles Muggeridge was a Gunnery Sergeant in the Royal Artillery - Royal Garrison Artillery Section.

The Royal Artillery Regiment was under the control of the Board of Ordnance until the Board was abolished in 1855. Thereafter the regiment came under the War Office along with the rest of the army. In 1861 the regiment absorbed the artillery of the British East India Company – 21 horse batteries and 48 field batteries – which brought its strength up to 29 horse batteries, 73 field batteries and 88 heavy batteries. On 1 July 1899, the Royal Artillery was divided into three groups: the Royal Horse Artillery and Royal Field Artillery comprised one group, while the coastal defence, mountain, siege and heavy batteries were split off into another group named the Royal Garrison Artillery. The third group continued to be titled simply Royal Artillery, and was responsible for ammunition storage and supply. Which section a gunner belonged to was indicated by collar badges (R.A., R.F.A., R.H.A., or R.G.A.). The RFA and RHA also dressed as mounted men, whereas the RGA dressed like foot soldiers. The three sections effectively functioned as separate corps. This arrangement lasted until 1924, when the three amalgamated once more.

(This paragraph courtesy of: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Artillery)

With grateful thanks to Colin Head who supplied some of the photographs and helped me with the captions.



Ernest and Arthur Muggeridge - two of my Grandmother's brothers - Army

World War II



John Joseph Topping (Jack) - my Uncle - Army

(left and below) Douglas John Cook - my father - Royal Air Force.



Paul A J Cook in Afghanistan as a Royal Marine Commando.



The killing risks of health'n'safety

by Melanie Phillips
Daily Mail, 1 November 2010

Health 'n' safety? It'll kill you. Or so runs the long-standing joke. What was once thought of as black humour, however, now turns out to be all too horribly true.

A document that surfaced yesterday illustrated the almost unbelievable extent to which health and safety regulations are preventing our emergency services from saving lives.

This was a three-page risk assessment questionnaire, which Metropolitan Police officers have to fill in before they can intervene in an emergency.

One might think that what matters in such cases is the risk to the public. But no — what is to be assessed is the risk to the police.

The form lists no fewer than 238 possible hazards to officers planning any kind of operational activity, such as security at a football match, or mounting an operation to deal with an emergency, such as a bombing or a riot.

The senior officer involved must tick the relevant boxes, fill in an inventory of 'risk activities', calculate levels of risk and submit their recommendation for the assessment to be confirmed and signed.

Such a form — which has its equivalent in other emergency services — is more than just a bureaucratic pain in the neck. It comes close to redefining the word 'risk' to encompass the whole of human life. For it is hard to think of any situation which it does not consider to pose a threat to an officer's health or safety.

Its exhaustive list of dangers range from 'gravity', 'friction', 'ejection' or 'slippery surfaces' to the laugh-out-loud 'uncomfortable seating', 'passive smoking' and 'sunburn'.

You really do have to wonder about the faceless bureaucrats who dream up this kind of nonsense. Can they really do so with a straight face? Is there perhaps a fifth column of anarchists in Whitehall seeking revenge upon society by passing such ludicrous, lethal and self-defeating laws?

Can one imagine anything more ridiculous than having to fill in this form just after a terrorist bomb has gone off? The very fact that such 'risks' have to be weighed up threatens to paralyse the emergency services and lead to the deaths of victims if officers don't have a comfy chair to sit on, for example, or if the sun is shining.

Yet, appallingly, such paralysis is precisely what did happen. At the inquest into the 7/7 London Tube and bus bombings, in which 52 people died, distressing evidence has surfaced

that station staff and fire officers refused to enter the Tube tunnels to help the wounded and dying because of health and safety regulations.

At Liverpool Street station, none of the staff was sent down to the track for 25 minutes after the explosion, as a British Transport Police officer forbade them from going to investigate.

At Aldgate station, lion-hearted Tube employees ignored such safety concerns voiced by their superiors and rushed to help the bomb victims.

Yet one of the survivors, Michael Henning, told the inquest how, after he had stumbled to safety from the wreckage of the train, he pleaded in vain with a group of emergency workers to go underground and help the injured and dying passengers.

Shockingly, the firefighters on the station platform explained in embarrassment that they had been ordered to stay out of the tunnel because of safety protocols and fears of a second explosion.

During the 40 minutes it took for the rescue services to go in, victims died of their injuries with no one coming even to ease their pain. Had help come sooner, some lives might even have been saved.

This shameful revelation prompted former Scotland Yard deputy assistant commissioner David Gilbertson to write an impassioned cri de coeur about the way health and safety laws force the emergency services to do nothing while people die.

Last June, he recalled, an ambulance crew in Cumbria was widely criticised for standing by for vital hours while the gunshot victims of taxi driver Derrick Bird bled to death.

The explanation given later was that the crew had been refused permission to advance by the police because of fears that Bird might open fire on them. He was already dead.

A generation of senior police, fire and ambulance officers, wrote Mr Gilbertson despairingly, has grown up in an environment where avoidance of risk and the fear of being sued are more important than public duty.

Recently, the former Conservative minister Lord Young produced a report aimed at addressing the 'compensation culture' by reforming health and safety laws. But this was mainly concerned with lessening these laws' stifling effects upon businesses and curbing the excesses of lawyers and insurance companies.

It referred only briefly to the emergency services, merely

recommending that police and firefighters should not face prosecution if they put themselves at risk when committing a heroic act.

But what about acts that are not necessarily heroic but merely part of their normal duty as police officers or firefighters? And what about ambulance crews?

Moreover, Lord Young blunted his own message by suggesting that public concern over health and safety measures had been largely whipped up by a sensational media.

Well, some individual stories may have been incorrect. But as the evidence at the 7/7 inquest or from Mr Gilbertson all too graphically demonstrates, the pernicious effects of health and safety protocols are emphatically not the product of fevered media imaginations.

Indeed, at another inquest in Kettering, Northamptonshire, only last Thursday, it was revealed that a passer-by who had jumped into an icy lake to help a drowning man had asked the fire crew on the scene to help tie a rope around him.

They refused because their manager decided they only had 'basic water awareness training'. As a result, the man drowned.

A more invidious and inappropriate application of health and safety rules than thwarting the life-saving work of the emergency services can hardly be imagined.

Public protection necessarily entails risk and risk demands courage. And there is no shortage of selfless courage among police officers and firefighters.

The terrible thing is the way health and safety laws are sapping the courage of officers whose natural instinct to put the lives of others first is being suppressed by orders from above. As Mr Gilbertson observed, the virtues of leadership, initiative, judgment and duty are thus being steadily destroyed.

Perhaps his most devastating observation of all was that when police bravery awards are annually announced, superior officers 'visibly blanch'.

Where others see heroes being decorated for acting without regard to their own safety, he wrote, these paper-shufflers see only potential lawsuits, insurance claims and breaches of force discipline.

How on earth has this nation of heroes and stoics arrived at such a point?

Part of the reason is the culture of entitlement, which makes people put themselves first and provides such rich pickings for lawyers and insurance companies which feed from this honeypot.

Because people demand their entitlement from the state, this in turn gives the state power to meddle in their lives — which it uses to tell us how we should behave. Accordingly, such rules are codified into laws to protect us — from ourselves.

Such interference has dealt a lethal blow to professionalism, the very basis of which lies in unwritten codes based on duty and responsibility to the public.

Health 'n' safety is not a joke. It has become, in effect, a killer. It will take more than one rather bland and incoherent report to restore this enfeebled nation to real safety and health.

Courtesy of URL: <http://www.melaniephillips.com/articles-new/?p=775>



Little Lad sees a Reindeer for the first time
in Birmingham!

A fatal, familiar chain reaction

by Geoffrey Lean

The Telegraph - 12 November 2010

The Deepwater Horizon oil spill and the Chernobyl nuclear disaster were both caused by a string of human errors.

There is one huge, unanswered – maybe unanswerable – question hanging over the painstaking inquiry into the causes of BP's Deepwater Horizon blowout, "the Gulf of Mexico's Chernobyl".

Investigators have just about pieced together the physical events that led to oil and gas racing up through three and a half miles of pipework to explode on the rig, killing 11 men and leading to the release of 4.9 million barrels of oil into the Gulf of Mexico. The inquiry in Washington is also coming to the conclusion, as co-chairman William Reilly put it, that the disaster resulted from a series of decisions made by "competent persons" which "look like they were just plain wrong". But nobody knows why they were made. One decision, the most crucial, is particularly puzzling. In the hours before the accident, men on the rig carried out the essential test that would tell them whether oil and gas were – potentially fatally – leaking into the well. Three times they tried it and each time the result signalled danger. But they decided to proceed as if all was well.

"The well was blown," Sean Grimsley, one of the inquiry's deputy chief counsels told us. "Hydrocarbons were leaking in. But for whatever reason the crew decided it was a good test. The question is why these experienced men out on that rig talked themselves into believing that it indicated well integrity. None of them wanted to die."

The same question arose at another inquiry I covered, nearly a quarter of a century ago, into Chernobyl itself. It is now fashionable to blame the accident on the Russian RBMK reactor design. But, though this was not great, the world's worst nuclear disaster was, in fact, caused by a similar chain of human errors.

Under pressure to complete a test, the operators made six crucial mistakes, including progressively switching off every one of the safety systems until, in the words of the chief investigator, Valery Legasov, the reactor "was free to do as it wished". In the last second of its life – at three seconds past 1.23am on April 26, 1986 – its power surged to several hundred times its normal level and an explosion blew its 1,000-ton lid clean off.

As Dr Pierre Tanguy, one of the chiefs of the world-beating French nuclear industry, acknowledged, the problem was "the kind of operator error that we all experience in our plants and is hard to eliminate. But without it, there would have been no accident."

A senior British nuclear engineer, Dr Brian Edmondson, put his finger on the root cause. The operators had "lost their fear of the reactor" and "lost all sense of danger", he said in an official summing-up. Why? Probably because their previous safety record had led to "dominant overconfidence".

There are many parallels with what happened in the Gulf of Mexico. Here, too, the operators seem to have been anxious to finish the job, and quickly, for reasons that are not yet clear. The accident stemmed from a series of errors – avoiding any one of which, as Legasov pointed out over Chernobyl, could have averted catastrophe. And, again, the operators were doing a job they had done many times, safely, before.

Certainly they were operating, as Reilly said this week, within a "culture of complacency". BP before Deepwater, like the nuclear industry before Chernobyl, had insisted that such a disaster could never happen (and that, even if it did, "no significant adverse impacts" could be expected because its response would be so good). "Dominant overconfidence" does not seem, in either case, to have been confined to the operators.

As bad as both accidents were, we escaped relatively lightly because of the weather. Chernobyl blew up on a still, clear night which allowed the radioactive plume to rise almost a mile into the air, as if inside an invisible chimney, where it met a gentle breeze which wafted it over relatively uninhabited marshes. Rain, which would have brought the danger down with it, did not fall for days. In the Gulf, the winds, after driving the oil towards the vital Louisiana marshes, changed just in time and held it offshore. In both cases the peril was able to disperse naturally.

As the nuclear renaissance gathers pace, and oil drilling ventures into ever more difficult waters, we cannot rely on the elements always bailing us out. The human errors that cause disaster, as Dr Tanguy said, are hard to eliminate. So if we decide that our need for the energy outweighs the risks, we must, at least, beware of overconfidence. When the industry says an accident is impossible, don your hardest hat.

Courtesy of URL: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/earthcomment/geoffrey-lean/8130146/A-fatal-familiar-chain-reaction.html>

Mr Cameron is in no position to lecture the Chinese on democracy



Messrs Cameron, Osborne, Cable and Gove (right to left) in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing
Photo: Stefan Rousseau/PA

by Christopher Booker
Daily Telegraph, 13 November 2010

The government of Europe is scarcely more accountable than that of China, says Christopher Booker

Quite a few eyebrows will have been raised last week at the sight of our Prime Minister in China extolling the virtues of democracy. If democracy means anything, it is a system which makes a government accountable to its people and gives them the chance to replace it with another one. That certainly doesn't apply to the one-party state in China. But how much does it apply in Britain, where almost everything our Government does is either dictated or constrained by decisions taken at a higher level by our new system of government centred in Brussels?

We are now largely ruled by a form of government which we can no more call to account than the Chinese can theirs. In effect we also live in a one-party state. And no one should know this better than David Cameron since, as a member of the European Council, he is obliged under Article 9 of the Lisbon Treaty (aka the European Constitution) to put his loyalty to the "Union" above the interests of his own country. In this sense, a more honest politician is Herman van

Rompu, the dim little Belgian who is now the permanent President of that European Council, and who last week reminded us that the purpose of the EU is to override the "egoism" which prompts countries to pursue their national interest. He was being entirely consistent with the principle laid down decades ago by Jean Monnet, the real founder of the "European project" – that the chief enemy of any attempt to create a supranational form of government is that form of "egoism" known as nationalism.

Monnet was not remotely interested in democracy. He wanted to build a United States of Europe, ruled by a political class of technocrats like himself, unaccountable to any electorate. His dream has now been all but realised and Mr Cameron is very happily part of it. So, in intoning to the Chinese about the virtues of democracy, is he trying to kid the rest of us, or is he just deceiving himself?

Courtesy of URL: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/columnists/christopherbooker/8131518/Mr-Cameron-is-in-no-position-to-lecture-the-Chinese-on-democracy.html>

A double blow for British democracy

by Melanie Phillips
Daily Mail, 3 November 2010

So prisoners in British jails are finally to be given the right to vote in general elections. The general, law-abiding public has a right in turn to be as dumbfounded as it is outraged.

The genesis of this decision lies in a ruling in 2004 by the European Court of Human Rights that Britain's blanket ban on prisoners' voting rights was discriminatory.

For six years, government lawyers have tried to get out of complying with this ruling. The Tories are no less vehemently opposed than was Labour. Dominic Grieve, the Attorney-General, has previously said it would be 'ludicrous' to give prisoners the right to vote.

It's not hard to see why. Criminals are jailed because they have transgressed the laws of society. As a result, they forfeit the entitlements of that society until they have paid their dues.

The very notion of prisoners' 'rights' is offensive. Of course, society has a duty to look after their basic needs — adequate food, shelter, safety and so on — while they reside at Her Majesty's pleasure.

But voting is not a basic human right, the kind which overrides any particular circumstances. It is rather a civic entitlement resulting from the unwritten compact between a citizen and a free society.

Criminals forfeit such entitlements because they have violated the fundamental understanding of that civic compact: that citizens must abide by the law of the land.

That's why laws prohibiting prisoners from voting are of ancient provenance, going back to the 14th century when the concept of 'civic death' was established.

After the 1867 Reform Act gave working men the right to vote, the Forfeiture Act established the practice that those who were guilty of felonies could not vote.

Yet the European Court of Human Rights has redefined voting as a universal right which prisoners must therefore enjoy. At a stroke, the court has ridden roughshod over the compact of citizenship and has stamped all over Britain's ancient concept of justice.

That's not surprising, since human rights law expressly refuses to recognise bonds of nationality and citizenship, insisting that the rights it bestows are universal — even though they are actually handed down by judges governed by their own particular views and prejudices.

So once again British ministers are not being allowed to govern in accordance with the wishes of the British public who elected them.

Is this not replete with the most bitter irony? For this ruling gives prisoners the right to vote. But what's the point of any of us having the right to vote, when the government we thus elect is overruled by a bunch of judges in a foreign court?

But the crucial point about this decision, the one that really sticks in the craw, is that we all know all this.

Ministers know all this. They know that human rights law rides a coach and horses through British democracy. We know they know this because David Cameron told us he would do something about it.

Indeed, he repeatedly gave a solemn promise when he was in opposition that he would respond to public outrage by repealing Britain's own Human Rights Act, which incorporated the European Convention on Human Rights into English law and created a veritable domestic industry of perverse legal rulings.

Yet no such initiative has been forthcoming. Instead, we are now told Mr Cameron was 'exasperated' and 'furious' at having to agree to votes for prisoners, but the threat of costly compensation claims from prisoners and potential legal action from the European Union had forced his hand.

Well, is he a man or a mouse? He is the Prime Minister of this country, for heaven's sake. Yet here he is fruitlessly wringing his hands as a bunch of foreign judges override his mandate.

Our problems with human rights law stem from the fact that, unlike virtually every other country that signed the European Convention but secured exemptions from bits they believed would cause them problems, Britain signed up to it lock, stock and barrel.

That foolish error was then given rocket fuel by our zealot judges, who saw in human rights law a way of transferring power to themselves from politicians they despised, and who used it to turn morality, justice and plain common sense upside down.

Repealing Britain's Human Rights Act, which incorporated the Convention into English law and thus made it so much easier to obtain perverse human rights rulings, would certainly improve matters.

But the Tories' proposal in opposition to replace it by a so-called British 'Bill of Rights' was clearly unworkable. The difference between this and the current law was unclear. And it would not have solved the problem that Britain

would still be bound by rulings from the European Court of Human Rights.

Even before the last election, it was obvious the Tories didn't really want to address this. They didn't want to try to renegotiate the terms of Britain's adherence to the Convention because they would have had to threaten to abandon it altogether if they didn't get what they wanted.

And they didn't want to walk away from the Convention for two reasons. First, they believed that since members of the Council of Europe are required to be signatories to the Convention, leaving the Convention would mean leaving the Council of Europe.

And that, they thought, would mean leaving the EU, too, since the EU makes it a condition of entry to belong to the Council.

This, however, is an assumption which has never been tested, and may well be wrong. But the second reason was that the Tories didn't want to be painted as being 'against human rights'.

So what it boiled down to, once again, was spin — the need to go with the flow of Left-wing shibboleths in order to get a soft ride with the BBC.

For all these reasons, reforming human rights law was just too much trouble. So it was no surprise that the Tories' promises were quietly shoved into the long grass.

And it was also no surprise that the vexed and related issue of prisoners' rights was handed to Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg, whose party supports votes for prisoners.

It's hard not to conclude, in short, that the Tories never had any serious intention of carrying out their promise to reform human rights law. They were merely saying what was necessary to buy off those troublesome Tory voters who were spitting tacks over the crazy culture of 'human rights'.

They did exactly the same thing over the EU, too. These two issues share the same neuralgic disorder: they remove the right of the British people to be governed in accordance with their own democratic wishes and cultural traditions.

What makes this even more painful is that it is not the case that European judges or bureaucrats are mounting some kind of hostile takeover of our country and preventing us from passing our own laws.

We ourselves signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights. We ourselves signed up to the European Union in all its various manifestations.

We have done this to ourselves. Or rather, our politicians have done it to us.

What politicians do, they can undo. But, instead, they fume and posture and make empty promises.

Voting rights for prisoners are indeed ludicrous. But not as absurd as voting for politicians who supinely give away their power to govern — thus doubly betraying all those who fought and died for the right to vote, which has now been so outrageously devalued.

Courtesy of URL: <http://www.melaniephillips.com/articles-new/?p=776>



Brussels has broken our power to rule

Both articles by Christopher Booker

The Telegraph, 11 September 2010 & 9 October 2010

The latest findings of Eurobarometer, the EU's own polling organisation, show that less than half its citizens now believe it is a "good thing". In many countries, its popularity is at record lows, and only 19 per cent see the EU as "democratic" (in Britain, Finland and Latvia this is as low as 10 per cent). What makes this particularly ironic is that in 2001 the EU's leaders issued their Laeken Declaration, admitting that the EU faced a crisis through its "democratic deficit". Their remedy was the process designed to give Europe a "constitution". After eight years of negotiation, obfuscation, lies and referendum-reverses, they got the constitution they wanted (although they had to disguise it as the Lisbon Treaty). The upshot of this tortuous attempt to "bring Europe closer to its peoples" is that those peoples see the EU as less democratic than ever.

Meanwhile, armed with its new powers, the inflated engine of our EU government rolls on, more power-crazed than ever. It is spending £800 million on setting up its new worldwide diplomatic service, with 100 of its officials earning more than our own shrunken and virtually irrelevant Foreign Secretary William Hague. Also now on the table are the EU's options for imposing its own taxes, the frontrunner being a tax on financial transactions to which Britain, as a world financial centre, would contribute 70 per cent, more than 300 billion euros a year. Britain and the City will also be hit hardest by the EU's seizure of control over the regulation of financial services.

Our Chancellor, George Osborne, has just conceded the EU's right to "supervise" the contents of national budgets, taking away much of a power Parliament has exercised for centuries. Britain also seems likely to lose what remains of the EU budget rebate won by Mrs Thatcher, putting up

our yearly contributions to the EU by another £3 billion - even though, for every £1 we get back from Brussels for our farmers, we already hand over £2 to farmers in other countries.

Theresa May, our Home Secretary, weakly claims that she wants reform of the European Arrest Warrant, when half of all those affected by it are being extradited from Britain. The EU's response, in effect, is that we agreed to this travesty of justice and we must learn to live with it.

But no current issue better illustrates the bizarre nature of the system to which we have surrendered the power to run our country than the chaos inflicted on our hospitals by the enforced application of the EU's working time directive. Led by John Black, head of the Royal College of Surgeons, medical professionals protest that this is threatening many patients' lives.

Even the European Commission freely admits, in a recent "communication" to the European Parliament and sundry others, that its rules are, in practice, highly "unsatisfactory" and in need of urgent reform. But it adds that attempts to amend the directives have been going on since 2004 and that any chance of getting the reforms needed will involve so many consultations and negotiations that little is likely to happen for years.

Of course, if we still had the power to run our own country, this crisis in the NHS and much else besides could be sorted out within months. But since our Government seems quite happy to continue handing over even more powers to this crazy system, there is nothing we can do about it – until eventually the whole lumbering, labyrinthine, unaccountable, undemocratic mess implodes under the weight of its own contradictions.

Courtesy of URL: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/columnists/christopherbooker/7996747/Brussels-has-broken-our-power-to-rule.html>

The Commonwealth is where Britain belongs

The wonderfully warm and colourful opening ceremony for the Delhi Commonwealth Games prompted some commentators to muse on the way our politicians have, for decades, downplayed the significance of the Commonwealth, this unique association of 53 democracies embracing nearly a third of the world's population. But few people realise how much, as we threw in our lot with "Europe" in the 1960s and 1970s, our new partners made it a condition that we should turn our back on the Commonwealth, with which we had so many ties and with which, at that time, we did nearly half our trade.

Apart from being forced by tariffs drastically to reduce our trade with our Commonwealth family, we have since been made to rebuff them in countless other ways. For example, to work in the NHS, New Zealand or Australian nurses must take an exam to prove, *inter alia*, that they can speak English, while the same does not

apply to Romanians, Slovaks or anyone from the EU. When Macmillan and Heath first led us into our infatuation with Europe, it seemed we were joining what was, economically, a dynamic club. Half a century on, Europe is in sad decline, while countries such as India, Malaysia, Singapore and Canada are among the fastest-growing economies in the world. Many people might sympathise with Lady Thatcher's comment in her book *Statecraft*: "That such an unnecessary and irrational project as building a European superstate was ever embarked on will seem in future years to be perhaps the greatest folly of the modern era. And that Britain, with her traditional strengths and global destiny, should ever have become part of it, will appear a political error of the first magnitude."

Courtesy of URL: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/columnists/christopherbooker/8053083/The-Commonwealth-is-where-Britain-belongs.html>

The climate change scare is dying, but do our MPs notice?

by Christopher Booker

Daily Telegraph, 16 November 2010

The collapse of the warmist position on climate change has not impinged on politicians in Britain or Brussels, says Christopher Booker. Nothing more poignantly reflects the collapse of the great global warming scare than the decision of the Chicago Carbon Exchange, the largest in the world, to stop trading in “carbon” – buying and selling the right of businesses to continue emitting CO₂.

A few years back, when the climate scare was still at its height, and it seemed the world might agree the Copenhagen Treaty and the US Congress might pass a “cap and trade” bill, it was claimed that the Chicago Exchange would be at the centre of a global market worth \$10 trillion a year, and that “carbon” would be among the most valuable commodities on earth, worth more per ton than most metals. Today, after the collapse of Copenhagen and the cap and trade bill, the carbon price, at five cents a ton, is as low as it can get without being worthless.

Here in Britain, as the first snows fall, heralding what may be our fourth cold winter in a row, it is time we addressed one of the most glaring political “disconnects” in our sadly misgoverned country.

Next Friday is the first anniversary of the leaking of the “Climategate” emails – the correspondence of a small group of scientists at the heart of the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). By exposing their manipulation of data and suppression of dissent, these called their reputation as disinterested scientists seriously into question. But that was only the first in a series of events that, in the past year, saw the climate scare going off the rails.

Next month sees the anniversary of the Copenhagen conference – the largest ever held, with upwards of 100,000 people present – which collapsed in an acrimonious shambles, without the treaty that would have landed the world with the biggest bill in history. This was followed by all those scandals surrounding the IPCC itself, hitherto regarded as the supreme authority on global warming. It emerged that the most recent IPCC report was riddled with errors, and that many of its more alarming predictions were based, not on proper science, but on claims dreamed up by environmental activists.

Since then, despite a series of unconvincing attempts to clear the Climategate scientists, it has become clear that the 20-year-old climate scare is dying on its feet. The money draining away from the Chicago exchange speaks louder than all those inquiries – and the same point will be made obvious in a fortnight’s time in Cancun, Mexico, as the UN attempts to salvage something from the wreckage at a conference that will draw scarcely a tenth of the numbers that met in Copenhagen.

But to all this deflation of the bubble our political class in Britain remains quite impervious. Our governments in London and Brussels charge on with completely unreal

and damaging policies which increasingly look as much of a shambles as the warming scare which inspired them. Scarcely a single politician dares question the Climate Change Act, by far the most expensive law in history, which commits Britain, uniquely in the world, to reducing its CO₂ emissions by 80 per cent in 40 years. By the Government’s own estimates, this will cost up to £18 billion a year. Any hope that we could begin to meet such a target without closing down most of our economy is as fanciful as the idea that we can meet our EU commitment to generate 30 per cent of our electricity by 2020 from “renewable” sources, such as wind and solar.

It was recently reported that farmers are rushing to cash in on the ludicrous subsidies which could earn them £50,000 a year for covering 35 acres of their fields with solar panels bought from China. These yield, on average, only 8 per cent of their capacity. Last year, all the solar panels in Britain generated an average 2.3 megawatts, barely 1/500th of the output of a single medium-sized coal-fired power station. Yet our Government wants us to pour billions of pounds into this scheme, just when Spain, Germany and Australia have drastically reduced their own solar subsidies, because the billions they lavished on them turned out to be a total waste of money for virtually no return.

Our Government also wants us to pay £100 billion through our electricity bills for thousands more wind turbines over the next 10 years, with another £40 billion to hook them up to the grid. Yet it’s predicted that by 2013, thanks to soaring costs and technical problems, orders for turbines will have fallen by 93 per cent.

The EU continues to set targets to power our transport with an increasing percentage of biofuels, when a new report from some of its own advisers finds that meeting its 2020 target will mean taking an area of farmland as large as Ireland out of food production, and that producing biofuels requires up to 167 per cent more energy from fossil fuels than they theoretically save.

None of this, of course, will do anything to save Britain from the looming crisis when the ageing nuclear and coal-fired power stations which supply 40 per cent of our current electricity needs are forced to close. The other night when it was very cold I checked to see how much of our electricity was, at that moment, coming from wind. The answer was 0.1 per cent, or a thousandth of all the power we were actually using to keep our homes lit and warm.

It appears that Chris Huhne, our Energy and Climate Change Secretary, is so obsessed with the half of his job relating to climate change that he can happily ignore the other half, to do with keeping the lights on. But Mr Huhne is far from alone. Not a single MP of any party has yet found the courage to mount a properly briefed challenge to all this lunacy. So what do we pay them for?

Courtesy of URL: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/columnists/christopherbooker/8131383/The-climate-change-scare-is-dying-but-do-our-MPs-notice.html>

Renewables will add £880 a year to bills



Blowing in the wind: there isn't the faintest chance that any of the Government's renewable energy targets will be met

by Christopher Booker
Daily Telegraph, 16 October 2010

Trying to meet our EU renewable energy target would cost more than we currently spend on our entire electricity production, says Christopher Booker. Is there any subject on which more nonsense is talked and written than the mindblowing proposals being bandied about by the Government for meeting our EU target of generating, within 10 years, 30 per cent of our electricity from renewable sources? (That is roughly six times the current total, meaning that we have by far the most challenging target of any country in Europe.)

For instance, the industry regulator, Ofgem, recently announced that by 2020 we will need to have spent £40 billion on connecting up our new renewable energy sources to the national grid – £4 billion a year. Alistair Buchanan, the head of Ofgem, blithely claimed, on the BBC Today programme and elsewhere, that this would only add £6 a year to the average electricity bill of Britain's 25 million households. Yet ten seconds with a calculator shows that the cost per household of that £4 billion a year works out to £160.

On top of this, the Government wants us to have, by 2020, offshore wind farms with a capacity of 33 gigawatts (1 gigawatt = 1,000 megawatts). At the current capital cost of £3 million per megawatt of capacity, this would cost another £100 billion (£10 billion a year, or £400 a year for each household), to be paid for through our electricity

bills. However, even if they could all be built, they would produce on average only around a quarter of that amount of electricity

Add in £8 billion a year (or £320 per household) which, the Government forecasts, we will be paying by then through its ludicrously generous feed-in tariff for solar power and, for these measures alone, our total annual bill for the dream of meeting our EU renewables target would be at least £22 billion. That's considerably more than the entire wholesale cost of Britain's electricity generated from all sources last year, at £18.6 billion.

In other words, these measures alone would much more than double our electricity bills, for producing on average – and very unreliably – barely as much energy as we get from a handful of conventional power stations.

In reality, there isn't the faintest chance that any of the Government's targets will be met. But the massive diversion of resources that it is doing its best to encourage will not help when it comes to filling the looming 40 per cent gap in our electricity supplies, as 17 of the older nuclear and coal-fired power stations are forced to close. There is virtually nothing, then, in these plans to ensure that we can keep Britain's lights on.

Courtesy of URL: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/columnists/christopherbooker/8068402/Renewables-will-add-880-a-year-to-bills.html>

Peak energy? What peak energy?

by James Delingpole

The Telegraph, 22 November 2010

One of the other lies told by Watermelons – when they’re not bleating about the fast-fading ‘crisis’ of “Man-Made Global Warming” – is that the earth is fast running out of scarce resources. “Even if Anthropogenic (man-made) global warming (AGW) isn’t quite as true as we pretended it was a few years ago, that’s still no excuse for not taking radical action to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels,” they claim. Isn’t it?

The Global Warming Policy Foundation (Happy anniversary, GWPF!) has collated several pieces which offer a helpful counter to this hackneyed, and too often unquestioned, eco-fascist narrative.

Here’s the New York Times: (And would Pravda lie to you about a story so very much counter to its preferred ecotard narrative?)

Just as it seemed that the world was running on fumes, giant oil fields were discovered off the coasts of Brazil and Africa, and Canadian oil sands projects expanded so fast, they now provide North America with more oil than Saudi Arabia. In addition, the United States has increased domestic oil production for the first time in a generation.

Meanwhile, another wave of natural gas drilling has taken off in shale rock fields across the United States, and more shale gas drilling is just beginning in Europe and Asia. Add to that an increase in liquefied natural gas export terminals around the world that connected gas, which once had to be flared off, to the world market, and gas prices have plummeted.

Energy experts now predict decades of residential and commercial power at reasonable prices. Simply put, the world of energy has once again been turned upside down. Here’s CBS on the vast reserves of natural gas now being extracted from shale:

“In the last few years, we’ve discovered the equivalent of two Saudi Arabias of oil in the form of natural gas in the United States. Not one, but two,” Aubrey McClendon, the CEO of Chesapeake Energy, told “60 Minutes” correspondent Lesley Stahl.

“Wait, we have twice as much natural gas in this country, is that what you’re saying, than they have oil in Saudi Arabia?” Stahl asked. “I’m trying to very clearly say exactly that,” he replied.

Does any of this sound to you like evidence that the world is facing the kind of energy crisis which can only be solved by concerted government intervention?



Nice propaganda, shame about the truth.

Me neither. One of my many beefs with the green movement is its wilful economic illiteracy. I say “wilful” because I can see no other explanation – except, possibly, arrant stupidity – for the way it so determinedly avoids all the lessons of history which show how infinitely adaptable man is and always has been in the face of “scarce resources.”

Man did not stop building wooden ships because of a shortage of trees. He stopped because he had developed the technology to build ships made of steel instead.

Man did not stop using horse drawn transport because of a concerted government campaign to reduce the piles of steaming horse manure in our cities by introducing a special Equine Transport Tax. He did so because private entrepreneurs invented the internal combustion engine.

Yet the energy policy of statist buffoons including Britain’s very own Huhne the Ecoloon is predicated on precisely this wrong idea: that it is a government’s job to force free citizens kicking and screaming in the direction of inefficient “renewable energy” through such distorting mechanisms as the “feed-in tariffs” (tacked on, by government diktat onto your gas and electricity bills) which have already proved such a disaster in Spain and Germany.

So lets, recap: the reason your energy bills are getting more and more expensive on the verge of what is widely predicted to be yet another obscenely cold winter is 1. to deal with a problem that doesn’t exist (AGW) and 2. to deal with another problem that doesn’t exist (wholly imaginary fast-depleting resources that must urgently be preserved through government intervention).

Courtesy of URL: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/columnists/christopherbooker/8131383/The-climate-change-scare-is-dying-but-do-our-MPs-notice.html>

Heartless Britain!

Refugees flee the tyranny of social workers

by Christopher Booker

Daily Telegraph, 6 November 2010

Cyprus has proved a haven for a family fleeing forced adoption, reports Christopher Booker. There was a time when Britain took pride in offering a safe haven to the victims of tyrannies in other countries. Today we see this in reverse, with scores of families each year fleeing this country as the only way to escape a vicious system bent on seizing their newborn children for no good reason. Last week I heard two more such horror stories and this week I will relate the first, in which I am legally compelled to disguise the names.

Roger and Carol lived happily in Doncaster with their five-year-old daughter. One day last November they had a marital disagreement, involving no more than raised voices. They were overheard by a neighbour who called the police. The couple were arrested and held for nine hours before being released without charge. But the police had summoned the social workers to remove the child, who had not been harmed in any way other than hearing her parents having a row – as countless children do every day.

The social workers obtained an interim care order, on the grounds that the child was “at risk of emotional harm”, and gave her to Roger’s parents, both of whom have worked for the police. Relations were amicable, but the grandparents insisted on working closely with the social workers. The parents were only allowed contact with their daughter in a filthy little “contact room” in the local social services office. As is usual, the parents were told that if they showed any emotion their contact would be stopped. In February, under this strain, Carol had a miscarriage.

Last June, puzzled at why the interim care order had not been renewed as the law requires, Carol called the court. She was told that the order had lapsed three months earlier. When her husband confirmed this by a second call to the court, Carol drove to her in-laws’ home to explain that there was no longer any legal reason why her daughter could not be returned to her. Her mother-in-law protested, but the child was so overjoyed to go home that she ran to get into her mother’s car. The mother-in-law stood in front of the car but Carol reversed and drove off.

When her daughter said she was hungry, they stopped at a motorway service station. The grandmother had alerted the police, the car number was picked up by a camera and before long Carol (who was pregnant again) was arrested, handcuffed and pushed into a police van. At the police station, she collapsed and was taken to hospital. Next day she was driven back to Doncaster and interviewed four times. The police confirmed there was no care order in place but, to her astonishment, Carol was told she would be charged with assaulting her mother-in-law, although

there had been no physical contact between them. She was released after midnight.

When the social workers applied for a new care order, the judge reproved their “slipshod work” but granted the order on the grounds that Carol had taken back her child “without thought”.

Before the next hearing, the parents’ solicitors advised them to undergo psychological assessments. The psychologist found nothing wrong with Carol, but Roger had “narcissistic personality traits”. They then underwent a second assessment, based on “true or false” responses to 170 statements (such as: “Last week I flew the Atlantic eight times”). This time, Roger was normal, but Carol showed “high probability of being a borderline alcoholic” – though she hardly ever drinks.

Eventually, the court ruled they could have no further contact with their child. In September, Carol was in court to face the assault charges. The magistrates found, by two to one, that though there was no direct evidence she had assaulted her mother-in-law, she had been “emotional” in court which indicated the “possibility” that she might have been similarly emotional during the confrontation. They therefore found her guilty, ordering her to return for sentencing in October.

Two days later, it transpired that the hospital she had visited for ante-natal tests had told the social workers she was pregnant. Her daughter’s guardian told her that, when the baby was born, the social workers would seize it. At this point, Carol decided she could take no more. “I had already lost one child,” she says. “I had suffered a miscarriage of justice. After all I had been through, there was no way I was going to lose another child.”

She did her homework on the internet, not least through the Forced Adoption website run by Ian Josephs, a businessman living in the south of France, where she read many stories similar to her own. She discovered that a possible escape route was Northern Cyprus, which has no extradition agreement with the UK.

Without telling her husband, she sold one of her cars to raise money for the journey, and travelled overnight in a coach down the motorway, passing the place where her daughter’s last sight of her mother had been of her being bundled into a police van. At Heathrow she waited hours for her plane, terrified she might be arrested. After 24 hours she arrived in Cyprus in the middle of the night, alone in an unknown land. But she had made it. The next day, being a resourceful woman, she began to find her feet, amazed at how friendly and helpful everyone was, including the authorities. Two days later, her husband flew out to join her.

Now, after a month, set up in a spacious villa, surrounded with friends, they cannot believe their good fortune. A scan in the efficient local hospital confirms that they can expect

the birth of a healthy son. As they begin to build a new life, Carol told me last week: "We feel we have escaped from hell into heaven. The only thing that matters to us is that we have managed to protect our baby and future children from an outrageous, heartless business, built around treating children as a commodity. Any other family in our situation really needs to take heed and get out. I don't feel proud to be a British citizen any more because of what happened to us." Meanwhile, back in Britain, The Sun and ITV's This Morning were celebrating National Adoption Week by

advertising a row of available children, complete with names and winsome pictures. What neither would be allowed to do, though, is to report how those children came to be parted from their parents. In some cases it may genuinely have been in the child's interests. But in too many others the reality of how cruelly children in Britain can be snatched from loving parents might make The Sun's readers very angry indeed. *Courtesy of URL: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/columnists/christopherbooker/8114956/Refugees-flee-the-tyranny-of-social-workers.html>*

Boy hides from social workers - in the jungle

by Christopher Booker

Daily Telegraph, 16 October 2010

Britain's zealous social workers have rarely gone to such lengths to seize a child from loving parents, says Christopher Booker. Of all the stories I have covered about zealous social workers seizing children from loving parents without cause, none is more bizarre than the one that looked as though it would be concluded in the High Court last Friday.

After London social workers had spent thousands of pounds vainly trying to track down, in the Ugandan jungle, a four-year-old boy who had evaded their clutches, the council indicated that it wished to close the case. But in a last minute twist, the judge gave the social workers three more months to find the child – so the story hasn't yet got a happy ending. The boy's mother is a Ugandan Catholic who has lived in Britain for more than 20 years, has degrees in IT and finance from two London universities, and has held down good jobs. Six years ago, however, she was temporarily homeless with a young daughter. She appealed for help to the social workers of the borough where she then lived. She was told she could put her little girl in foster care, but could be given no help herself. When she refused to hand over her child, a care order was made on the grounds of the mother's "neglect".

The mother was arrested at work, in front of her shocked colleagues, by six policemen, one armed with a pistol, and held in custody so her daughter could be seized. With court approval, the social workers then gave the girl to her father, despite the fact that he had a criminal record and was HIV positive.

Three years later, with a new partner, the mother had a son. Since she was on a register, the social workers where she now lived wanted to seize the child, but she left hospital a day before the papers arrived and they lost the trail. For three years the little boy lived happily with his parents, until last year the social workers of a third council caught up with her and began asking questions. Fearful that he would be seized, she took her son to Uganda to live with her family. Only six months later did the council serve papers with the court.

In March this year, she returned to England with her mother, who is infirm and suffers from dementia. When she arrived at immigration, with her mother in a wheelchair, she was arrested by four policemen. As she was taken off into custody, she asked the police to contact social workers to



Mother and child are often torn apart by our system of child protection Photo: Alamy

arrange help for her mother, who was in need of constant care and spoke no English. Having confiscated her passport, the police refused to assist and held her in the cells for 36 hours, leaving her mother helpless. A shocked Ugandan stranger intervened and took care of her until her daughter was released. But the police held onto their passports, meaning the mother could neither reclaim their luggage nor get work.

The council hired an agency staffed by ex-social workers to track down her son in Uganda. For six months – trying to enlist the help of the Ugandan authorities – the agency got nowhere, to the point where last week the council seemed ready to admit defeat and ask for the case to be discharged – at which point I would have been free to report it in full, naming all those involved.

Due to an unexpected intervention, however, the judge ruled on Friday that he would not discharge the case until social workers have had three more months to find the child (who lives happily in a remote village, only distressed at being apart from his parents). Meanwhile the mother cannot have her passport, and therefore cannot reclaim the luggage from Heathrow or get a job. (She earns a little money running a market stall but otherwise depends on her partner.) I doubt the child will be found, but I must postpone the happy ending until January.

Courtesy of URL: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/columnists/christopherbooker/8068395/Boy-hides-from-social-workers-in-the-jungle.html>

Cargo Plane Bomb Plot: *The unknown enemies who live among us*

The response to the Yemeni bomb plot betrays worrying flaws in national security, argues Anthony Glees.

Daily Telegraph 1 November 2010.

As the first reports emerged last Friday lunchtime that two suspect packages had been found in planes at East Midlands airport and in Dubai, Whitehall officials were strongly disinclined to take them seriously. This was despite their Yemeni provenance and the fact that al-Qaeda regards Yemen as a prime terrorism training ground.

Only later in the day, when President Obama confirmed that the packages contained the deadly and virtually undetectable explosive PETN, did disquiet begin to mount. Now, we learn that both devices at some point were on passenger jets, so this was not a threat confined to cargo planes.

Yet at no time over the weekend did the Government think to raise the official threat level from “Severe” to “Critical” in order to concentrate minds – even though the criterion (that an attack on the UK was imminent) had plainly been met by the presence of a bomb on a plane at a British airport. Why are we so slow to react? Just a few days ago, Sir John Sawers, the chief of MI6, gave a clear warning that international terrorists are determined to harm us. A few weeks earlier, Jonathan Evans, his counterpart at MI5, had drawn our attention to Yemen and the efforts of Anwar al-Awlaki, the radical preacher, to inspire his flock of mostly young people “to mount an attack on the UK”.

One explanation for the weekend’s mystifying lack of urgency is that there was no specific intelligence in the UK that indicated a plot might be unfolding. The key intelligence came from the Saudis who had passed it to the Americans, not us. But there is another: it is that the Government and our opinion-formers, for obvious political reasons, have moved far too quickly to dismantle past security measures. The Coalition’s Strategic Defence and Security Review, for example, boasts that it will “review our most sensitive and controversial counter-terrorism and security powers to provide a correction in favour of liberty”.

But strong, lawful security policies don’t undermine our liberty, they defend it. The new Government’s very first Bill abolished ID cards. Theresa May, the Home Secretary, explained: “They are wrong, they won’t work and there is a civil liberties argument against them.” She didn’t say, as she should have done: “We need to know who is here in the UK on national security grounds, but it costs too much.”

No one’s civil liberties are abused if we know who they really are. No one has “the civil liberty” to attack people

here, or elsewhere in the West, who simply want to go about their lawful business. It is far more convenient to forget that we are under persistent attack; so we prefer to remain in denial about who is attacking us and how they come to do so.

It was in Yemen that the so-called underwear bomber, Abdul Farouk Abdulmutallab, was taught how to use PETN – fortunately, not too well as his attempt to blow up a plane over Detroit on Christmas Day failed. Previously, he had been a student at University College London, where, as president of the Islamic Society, he had been radicalised by a variety of speakers imparting their hatred of the West to as many students as they could muster.

Alan Johnson, the former Home Secretary, told Parliament in January that “during 2005-08, when he had been a student at UCL, Abdulmutallab was known to the Security Service MI5”. This was because he had been found to be making contact with known men of violence such as Awlaki. MI5 is careful about whom it knows.

UCL carried out an inquiry into its former student (the third at the university suspected of terrorist connections) and concluded that “there is no evidence to suggest that Abdulmutallab was radicalised as a student at UCL”. Indeed, UCL congratulated itself for its own exemplary behaviour in respect of its international students while conceding that it should do more to know who they were. None of the 27 “witnesses” relied on by the inquiry came from the security and intelligence agencies. If UCL thinks that making contact with terrorists isn’t evidence of radicalisation, there is no point in trying to convince it of anything.

Earlier this year, Lord Mandelson wrote to all British universities explaining that 39 of them had been deemed vulnerable to violent extremism and gave them £390,000 to help deal with the problem. But academics still prefer to do their research and take the money, especially if it comes from Arab and Islamic sources.

The fact is that radicalisation leads to terrorism. It threatens our security. Yet parts of Government and our academic and legal community seem intent on ignoring this inconvenient fact, believing that if they can convince us that there is no serious threat, then one won’t exist. They want business as usual; but the terrorists have other ideas.

Professor Anthony Glees is director of the Centre for Security and Intelligence Studies at the University of Buckingham.

Courtesy of URL: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/8101583/Cargo-Plane-Bomb-Plot-The-unknown-enemies-who-live-among-us.html>

Britain's still-flowing river of denial

by Melanie Phillips - The Spectator - 1 November 2010

It's as inevitable as the fall of leaves from the autumn trees. As soon as another Islamic terrorist plot is discovered, a great caterwauling emanates from Britain's useful idiots whining that once again the country is under terrible threat – from counter-terrorist activity.

A new type of bomb which the authorities almost missed and which could have brought down airliners over British or US cities? Ah, but they didn't go off, see – so there's obviously no threat at all, only from daft Home Secretaries and sinister heads of intelligence services who just want to frighten us all so much we will allow Them to control all our lives...another terror plot, don't make me laugh, no evidence at all, just another hyped-up scare from those lying spooks still licking the boots of the Americans, just another excuse to destroy our ancient liberties which They so desperately want to do...no, not the Islamists, you stupid neocons, the British government...

Ah yes, all those security folk on both sides of the Atlantic banning all cargo from Yemen for no good reason simply because they are lying imbeciles; desperately trying to track down a further twenty-something possible bombs because they are US poodles; warning that the Yemeni terrorist mastermind Awlaki may have recruited some 30 murderous fanatics in Britain so that They can create mass hysteria to enable Them to snoop on all of us and lock us all up and turn Britain into a police state.

For heaven's sake fetch the strait-jacket, Deirdre.

In the Telegraph, the intelligence expert Professor Anthony Glees injects a much-needed note of sanity in warning that the British establishment -- far from whipping up a non-story in order to persecute the average British citizen – was slow to respond to the news from the US that there were bombs on planes because it is still in a state of denial over the Islamist threat:

One explanation for the weekend's mystifying lack of urgency is that there was no specific intelligence in the UK that indicated a plot might be unfolding. The key intelligence came from the Saudis who had passed it to the Americans, not us. But there is another: it is that the Government and our opinion-formers, for obvious political reasons, have moved far too quickly to dismantle past security measures. The Coalition's Strategic Defence and Security Review, for example, boasts that it will 'review our most sensitive

and controversial counter-terrorism and security powers to provide a correction in favour of liberty'.

But strong, lawful security policies don't undermine our liberty, they defend it. The new Government's very first Bill abolished ID cards. Theresa May, the Home Secretary, explained: 'They are wrong, they won't work and there is a civil liberties argument against them.' She didn't say, as she should have done: 'We need to know who is here in the UK on national security grounds, but it costs too much.'

No one's civil liberties are abused if we know who they really are. No one has 'the civil liberty' to attack people here, or elsewhere in the West, who simply want to go about their lawful business. It is far more convenient to forget that we are under persistent attack; so we prefer to remain in denial about who is attacking us and how they come to do so.

We read that a battle royal has been raging behind the scenes in the Coalition over whether or not to keep control orders. The argument against them is that they destroy our ancient liberties by locking people up without trial. But the only reason they were introduced in the first place was that the English judiciary had made it impossible to protect Britain against terrorism by declaring it unlawful either to deport foreign terrorist suspects – who could not be brought to trial without compromising intelligence sources – or to lock them up pending their ultimate removal to another country (to which they could always voluntarily depart, thus walking free from prison, if they so chose – truly draconian, huh?).

Control orders were a desperate – and indeed unsatisfactory – last resort to plug the dangerous security hole created so irresponsibly by the 'human rights'-fixated English judiciary. Without control orders, there would simply be no protection for British citizens against foreign terror suspects who cannot be brought to trial. Yet in the political battle now raging, it is reported that not only the reality-challenged LibDems but the Tory Justice Secretary Ken Clarke and the Tory Attorney-General Dominic Grieve want them to be abolished.

That is the measure of the state of denial in Britain about which Professor Glees so vainly warns.

Courtesy of URL: <http://www.spectator.co.uk/melaniephillips/6431984/britains-stillflowing-river-of-denial.shtml>

It will be many years before jihad is finally replaced by geography in Saudi text-books



by Richard Spencer
The Telegraph, 22 November 2010

It is a phenomenon visible in the most unlikely places. In European provincial towns, in former Soviet states in Central Asia, even in remote parts of China, sparkling new mosques and religious schools are shooting up funded by Saudi cash.

Some are innocent contributions to a worldwide religious revival. Some are more radical yet fall short of espousing violence; but many preach militant jihad along with outright rejection of the West.

Yet Saudi Arabia is also a key ally, and gains the overwhelming proportion of its income from oil sales to America, Europe and even more godless states such as officially atheist China. It remains baffling to most observers – even longstanding friends such as the American Republican Party – how to square the country's friendships with its ideologies.

Saudi officials have defended themselves by saying that militancy has been funded by wealthy individuals, often through charities based abroad, rather than by the state. They point out – rightly – that the Saudi royal family is the number one target of the most militant groups, such as al-Qaeda.

But this is only a partial explanation. Panorama's findings, that some of the most offensive text-books come from the Saudi school system itself, replicate frequent past criticisms of the Saudi education ministry.

At the heart of the conundrum lies a messy compromise struck 30 years ago. As the first jihadist groups struck inside Saudi Arabia, the royal family tried to balance its pro-Western sympathies with policies that gave more power at home to clerics.

Wahhabism, a puritan and often anti-semitic, anti-western form of Islam, was already the state religion, and the clerics' support for the House of Saud had always been conditional on its backing for the creed's strict implementation.

But as the 80s and 90s progressed, some clerics seemed to compete to produce more aggressive fatwas, in a bid to win stronger following from the young. The young, inspired by an education system that emphasised rote learning of the Koran over times tables, were driven by unemployment into demanding yet more radical leadership, in a vicious circle. Since 2005, King Abdullah has been trying to reverse the trend. He has opened a mixed-sex university specialising in science and technology, brought freelance clerics to heel, and even appointed a woman deputy minister of education. But there are conservatives as well as reformers in his own family, his use of the stick rather than the carrot has been limited. It will be many years before jihad is finally replaced by geography in Saudi text-books.

Courtesy of URL: <http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/richardspencer/100064742/it-will-be-many-years-before-jihad-is-finally-replaced-by-geography-in-saudi-text-books/>

It's the Saudis, stupid

by Melanie Phillips - The Spectator - 22 Nov. 2010

That fine journalist John Ware has performed yet another important public service with his exposé on BBC One's Panorama tonight of the hatred and sedition with which children are being indoctrinated in some British Muslim schools.

His revelations were sufficiently shocking to have been exercising this morning's papers in advance of this evening's transmission. In some of these schools, even very young children are being taught to regard the country of which they are citizens as an enemy to be fought and defeated; how to murder homosexuals and where to cut off hands or feet of others who have transgressed sharia law; and to hate all unbelievers but especially the Jews about whom these children are taught monstrous lies and libels.

Of course the school inspection authority, Ofsted, is totally useless in even detecting let alone doing anything about all this. The Education Secretary Michael Gove – who in another life wrote a book about the global threat of radical Islam – declared on camera that, regardless of respect for freedom of speech, these materials ‘should not be used in English schools’ and that ‘We cannot have antisemitic material of any kind in English schools’. (To which one could say, well that means banning half the Eng. Lit. canon; the point that Gove undoubtedly meant, however, was that such bigotry must not be taught uncritically as if it is true and thus teaching racial libels and inciting hatred, which is what these Muslim schools are doing).

Does anyone think for one second, however, that the promises to reform the inspection system and get a grip on all this amount to more than a row of beans? Of course not. The Policy Exchange think-tank has produced a report to coincide with tonight's Panorama which makes a number of suggestions about how to police all faith schools. Does anyone think for one millisecond that this list of worthy ideas will make a ha'porth of difference -- to a problem which in any event involves only Islamic schools? Of course not.

What John Ware's fine report has revealed is merely the tip of an enormous iceberg on which the UK Titanic has holed itself below the waterline. The most extreme material he discovered was in part-time weekend and evening Islamic schools, which are teaching from textbooks provided by Saudi Arabia and which teach the school curriculum of Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia is the wellspring of the Sunni Islam jihad against the free world. It is a foaming geyser of fanatical Islamic bigotry against unbelievers and especially Jews. It was Saudi Wahabbism that radicalised the Muslims of Pakistan who, when they immigrated in large number into Britain in the 1980s, accordingly imported with them jihadi educational institutions -- which then radicalised Muslim children born

and bred in the UK and turned them into fanatics, often to the utter dismay of their parents.

Saudi Arabia isn't just behind some part-time Muslim schools in Britain. It is funding Islamic studies at British universities, subverting the very basis of objective western scholarship by turning such courses into fanatical religious propaganda. Saudi Arabia is also funding extremist mosques in Britain. Saudi Arabia is also promoting sharia banking in Britain. Saudi Arabia is also helpfully establishing partnerships with more and more cash-strapped British and multinational companies.

In short, Saudi Arabia is buying up Britain and establishing within it an ever-expanding bridgehead for sedition in the furtherance of jihad and the ultimate goal of Islamisation. The most important measure to be taken to rid British schools of the scourge identified by John Ware is not to beef up Ofsted or improve ‘due diligence’ in enforcing English law against extremism. It is to ban all Saudi funding of such schools – indeed, to ban all Saudi funding of British educational and religious institutions.

What are the chances of Britain taking such action against this arch-enemy of the west? Nil. For the British regard Saudi Arabia as its friend and strategic ally. Why? Well, because it has oodles of boodle and all that oil for starters (the reason the US, too, is in Saudi's pocket). And also because, having spawned al Qaeda, it is now having to defend itself against the jihadi monster that regards Saudi too as its enemy – thus causing British diplomats to murmur admiringly about the clever and pioneering Saudi strategy of reprogramming jihadis into quiescent citizens. Well pardon me if I don't send up a cheer.

Do the British know that the Saudis speak out of every side of their mouths simultaneously? Yes of course they do. But because they are British, they think they can outwit them. That's because the British think they are wholly superior to backward Arab johnnies whom they've been dividing and ruling for centuries. They think this is the cleverest game in town.

But it's the Saudis (along with the Iranians) who are playing the longest and the shrewdest game in history. While the British stupidly and suicidally appease the Islamists, trying to play one bit of the Muslim Brotherhood against another and blaming everything but Islamic fanaticism for global terror -- thus refusing to acknowledge the religious war that is being waged against the west on many different fronts and thus ensuring that the British will be defeated by an enemy they cannot even bring themselves to name -- the Saudis are reeling in the United Kingdom like a fish on a line. That is the terrible truth behind tonight's Panorama.

Courtesy of URL: <http://www.spectator.co.uk/melaniephillips/6485065/its-the-saudis-stupid.shtml>

At Last - The BIG LIE Exposed

So now it's cards on the table, the big lie exposed, all pretence over. After decades during which the peoples of Europe were told that the EU posed no threat to the sovereignty of member states, the European Council President Herman von Rompuy has finally stated that the real purpose of the EU is nothing less than to destroy the nation state (Melanie Phillips)

By DANIEL MARTIN - 11 November 2010

The age of the nation state is over and the idea that countries can stand alone is an 'illusion' and a 'lie', the EU president believes.

In one of the most open proclamations of the goal of a European superstate since the heyday of Jacques Delors, Herman Van Rompuy went on to denounce Euroscepticism as the greatest threat to peace.

Tory backbenchers condemned the inflammatory comments in the speech made by Mr Van Rompuy to mark the 21st anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall.

They said it proved that David Cameron would have a battle on his hands if he is to prevent extra powers being handed to Brussels.

Last night 23 Conservative MPs, including former leadership contender David Davis, rebelled in the Commons by demanding a referendum if the Lisbon Treaty is amended – even if ministers argue the changes do not affect the UK. Their call was defeated.

Mr Van Rompuy's speech in the German capital told his audience that 'the time of the homogenous nation state is over'.

He added that the 'danger' of Euroscepticism was spreading beyond the confines of countries such as Britain and was becoming a stronger force across the whole continent.

'We have together to fight the danger of a new Euroscepticism,' he declared. 'This is no longer the monopoly of a few countries.'

'In every member state, there are people who believe their country can survive alone in the globalised world. It is more than an illusion – it is a lie.'

The Belgian equated Euroscepticism with fear, which eventually leads to war – echoing former French president



Nation state is dead: Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council, at the G20 Summit in Seoul, South Korea, today

Francois Mitterrand's famous phrase that 'nationalism is war'.

'The biggest enemy of Europe today is fear,' he said. 'Fear leads to egoism, egoism leads to nationalism, and nationalism leads to war.'

'Today's nationalism is often not a positive feeling of pride in one's own identity, but a negative feeling of apprehension of the others.'

In a strong defence of the euro, he said the recession would have been far worse if France still had its franc and Germany still had its mark.

Again employing the imagery of war, he said: 'Just imagine the big recession of 2008/09 with the old currencies. It would have resulted in currency turmoil and the end of the single market. A currency war always ends in protectionism.'

And in a section about the fall of the Berlin Wall, he praised the 'statesmen of 1989 – Helmut Kohl, Francois Mitterrand, Jacques Delors'.

There was no mention of Margaret Thatcher, who as British prime minister at the time argued against closer integration.

Last night UKIP leader Nigel Farage said: 'Rumpy Pumpy is unfit to govern. This man is an overpaid catastrophe who wants to abolish our nation. The only non-nation is Belgium, his own country.'

Backbench Tories warned such views were now on the rise in Brussels.

Conservative MP Douglas Carswell said: 'At last we see the real intentions of the Eurocrats. If that's what Mr Van Rompuy believes, he should at least get elected by someone before he says it.'

...as Eurocrats waste millions from your taxes!

Millions of pounds of EU funds have been squandered on projects including a hydrotherapy centre for dogs and sending a troupe round Britain to perform the Smelly Foot Dance.

Taxpayers' cash has also gone to a 'hip-hop laboratory' in Lyon, France, to address the 'lack of co-operation in European hip-hop'.

The details were revealed yesterday by the think-tank Open Europe, a day after auditors refused to give the EU's accounts a clean bill of health for the 16th year in a row. They emerged a fortnight after David Cameron faced a battle with the EU Parliament over the size of its budget for 2011.

The Parliament wanted an increase of 6 per cent on this year's £88billion – but Mr Cameron seems to have persuaded other countries to join him in restricting it to 2.9 per cent.

Open Europe produced a list of 50 examples of EU waste. Top of the list was £350,000 for a dog fitness and rehabilitation centre in Hungary. The EU's Rural Development Fund paid out the huge sum for a project to 'improve the lifestyle and living standards of dogs' – which included the development of a hydrotherapy system for dogs. More than a year on, building has yet to start.

Some £4.5million went on a fleet of limousines for European MPs in Strasbourg in 2009 alone. All chauffeurs at the company used must sign a confidentiality clause 'guaranteeing absolute discretion'.

In Britain, golf courses, motorsport centres and hunting clubs have all benefited from thousands of pounds meant for farming subsidies.

Open Europe director Mats Persson said: 'The EU's budget is irrational, overly complex and hopelessly out of date. Huge amounts of money are wasted on projects which do nothing to help the EU economy to get back on track. There should be no talk whatsoever of budget increases until the problems with waste and mismanagement are stamped out. 'MEPs and the Commission need to wake up to the economic reality around them.'

Courtesy of URL: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1328568/Nation-states-dead-EU-chief-says-belief-countries-stand-lie.html>



The European ‘dream’ has finally collided with reality

by Christopher Booker

Daily Telegraph, 20 November 2010

The drive towards a European superstate has had its flaws exposed at last, says Christopher Booker

Twelve years ago, I stood on the plinth of Nelson’s Column in the pouring rain, addressing a crowd of 10,000 people. We had marched through central London in the biggest ever demonstration against Britain joining the euro, a course then being daily urged on us by the BBC, with the aid of such Euro-zealots as Michael Heseltine, Chris Patten, Kenneth Clarke and Sir Leon Brittan.

At the time, Mayor Ken Livingstone was calling for the removal of the two statues of Victorian generals that stand on each side of Trafalgar Square. I therefore jokingly began by suggesting that, if they were to be replaced, this might be with a very small statue of John Major, for negotiating Britain’s opt-out from the euro at Maastricht, and a much larger statue of Sir James Goldsmith. It was the intervention of his Referendum Party in the 1997 election that prodded all the other parties into promising a referendum, thus stopping hopes of Britain’s entry dead.

It was only when, a few years later, I began work on a comprehensive history of the European “project” that I fully came to see how, for 50 years, it had only ever had one real agenda. As was laid down by its founding genius, Jean Monnet, the sole underlying purpose behind everything it has ever done has been to work stealthily – accreting its powers step by step – towards the creation of an integrated “United States of Europe”, ruled by one supra-national government.

Monnet realised in the mid-Fifties that the only way to realise his goal was to work towards it gradually, through a series of lesser goals, each of which would serve to focus the energies of his “Europe-builders” until it was time to move on to the next.

The first was to set up the embryonic institutions of his European government by disguising them as necessary for the creation of the Common Market. Once that was achieved, the focus moved on to creating a “Single Market”, as an excuse to take further powers to the centre. The next focus became “Economic and Monetary Union”, complete with that supreme symbol of integration, a single currency. Finally, the Europhiles could move on to the mighty goal – which took them eight years – of giving Europe a “constitution”, thus completing the dream conceived decades before,

When my co-author Richard North and I were compiling our history of how all this had unfolded, *The Great Deception*, we concluded that the “project” was eventually



bound to unravel, simply because it was built on too much deception and self-deception. The most obvious place for disintegration to begin was the single currency. As shrewd observers recognised right from the start, this could never last, because of the essential contradiction between the low interest rates demanded by its stronger economies and the temptation this would give their weaker brethren, such as Greece, Ireland and Spain, to go on a reckless spending spree.

It would be fun for a time – but no longer would they be able to defend themselves from the consequences by allowing their currencies to devalue. The inevitable result would eventually be an almighty bust, which is what we are seeing today: the slow-motion collapse of what was invented as the ultimate symbol of a united Europe. Like all such collapses, it will be extremely painful. But it marks the time when Monnet’s fantasy at last begins to collide with reality.

Courtesy of URL: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/columnists/christopherbooker/8149000/The-European-dream-has-finally-collided-with-reality.html>



The horrible truth starts to dawn on Europe's leaders

by Ambrose Evans-Pritchard

The Telegraph, 16 November 2010

The entire European Project is now at risk of disintegration, with strategic and economic consequences that are very hard to predict.

In a speech this morning, EU President Herman Van Rompuy (poet, and writer of Japanese and Latin verse) warned that if Europe's leaders mishandle the current crisis and allow the eurozone to break up, they will destroy the European Union itself.

"We're in a survival crisis. We all have to work together in order to survive with the euro zone, because if we don't survive with the euro zone we will not survive with the European Union," he said.

Well, well. This theme is all too familiar to readers of The Daily Telegraph, but it comes as something of a shock to hear such a confession after all these years from Europe's president.

He is admitting that the gamble of launching a premature and dysfunctional currency without a central treasury, or debt union, or economic government, to back it up – and before the economies, legal systems, wage bargaining practices, productivity growth, and interest rate sensitivity, of North and South Europe had come anywhere near sustainable convergence – may now backfire horribly.

Jacques Delors and fellow fathers of EMU were told by Commission economists in the early 1990s that this reckless adventure could not work as constructed, and would lead to a traumatic crisis. They shrugged off the warnings.

They were told too that currency unions do not eliminate risk: they merely switch it from currency risk to default risk. For that reason it was all the more important to have a workable mechanism for sovereign defaults and bondholder haircuts in place from the beginning, with clear rules to establish the proper pricing of that risk.

But no, the EU masters would hear none of it. There could be no defaults, and no preparations were made or even permitted for such an entirely predictable outcome. Political faith alone was enough. Investors who should have known better walked straight into the trap, buying Greek, Portuguese, and Irish debt at 25-35 basis points over Bunds. At the top of boom funds were buying Spanish bonds at a spread of 4 basis points. Now we are seeing what happens when you build such moral hazard into the system, and shut down the warning thermostat.

Mr Delors told colleagues that any crisis would be a "beneficial crisis", allowing the EU to break down resistance to fiscal federalism, and to accumulate fresh power. The purpose of EMU was political, not economic, so the objections of economists could happily be disregarded. Once the currency was in existence, EU states would have give up national sovereignty to make it work over time. It would lead ineluctably to the Monnet dream of a fully-fledged EU state. Bring the crisis on.

Behind this gamble, of course, was the assumption that any crisis could be contained at a tolerable cost once the imbalances of EMU's one-size-fits-none monetary system had already reached catastrophic levels, and once the credit

bubbles of Club Med and Ireland had collapsed. It assumed too that Germany, The Netherlands, and Finland would ultimately – under much protest – agree to foot the bill for a 'Transferunion'.

We may soon find out whether either assumption is correct. Far from binding Europe together, monetary union is leading to acrimony and mutual recriminations. We had the first eruption earlier this year when Greece's deputy premier accused the Germans of stealing Greek gold from the vaults of the central bank and killing 300,000 people during the Nazi occupation.

Greece is now under an EU protectorate, or the "Memorandum" as they call it. This has prompted pin-prick terrorist attacks against anybody associated with EU rule. Ireland and Portugal are further behind on this road to serfdom, but they are already facing policy dictates from Brussels, but will soon be under formal protectorates as well in any case. Spain has more or less been forced to cut public wages by 5pc to comply with EU demands made in May. All are having to knuckle down to Europe's agenda of austerity, without the offsetting relief of devaluation and looser monetary policy. As this continues into next year, with unemployment stuck at depression levels or even creeping higher, it starts to matter who has political "ownership" over these policies. Is there full democratic consent, or is this suffering being imposed by foreign over-lords with an ideological aim? It does not take much imagination to see what this is going to do to concord in Europe.

My own view is that the EU became illegitimate when it refused to accept the rejection of the European Constitution by French and Dutch voters in 2005. There can be no justification for reviving the text as the Lisbon Treaty and ramming it through by parliamentary procedure without referenda, in what amounted to an authoritarian Putsch. (Yes, the national parliaments were themselves elected – so don't write indignant comments pointing this out – but what was their motive for denying their own peoples a vote in this specific instance? Elected leaders can violate democracy as well. There was a corporal from Austria ... but let's not get into that).

Ireland was the one country forced to hold a vote by its constitutional court. When this lonely electorate also voted no, the EU again disregarded the result and intimidated Ireland into voting a second time to get it "right".

This is the behaviour of a proto-Fascist organization, so if Ireland now – by historic irony, and in condign retribution – sets off the chain-reaction that destroys the eurozone and the European Union, it will be hard to resist the temptation of opening a bottle of Connemara whisky and enjoying the moment. But resist one must. The cataclysm will not be pretty.

My one thought for all those old friends still working for the EU institutions is what will happen to their euro pensions if Mr Van Rompuy is right?

Courtesy of URL: <http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/finance/ambroseevans-pritchard/100008667/the-horrible-truth-starts-to-dawn-on-europe-s-leaders/>

2011 - A Momentous Year?

Things are shaping-up for 2011 to be a momentous year - as has already been suggested in *Editorial Ramblings*. Apart from the Biblical Prophesies, our own observations of what is happening in the World also indicate that things are about to get very much worse - and you thought it was bad already? What we've experienced is nothing compared to what lies ahead. Cast your mind back to April 2010 and see for yourself what is planned for 2011 in the following articles. I've also included an article saying that war between Israel and Iran is not inevitable. However, I think one should also consider that Iran is giving huge support to the Palestinians and Syrians (and others) and therefore, if Israel is invaded, it will be akin to being Iran in disguise. However, and I've saved the best to last, the most likely scenario is that Israel will utterly destroy Damascus in Syria - probably using a nuclear bomb. This may be in a last-ditch effort at self-defence, or because it feels sufficiently threatened to instigate the first move. It may also be provoked into making a hit on Iran - even in a MAD situation (Mutually Assured Destruction). It's only a matter of time - and time is running out.

10 Signs That War In The Middle East Is Imminent

April 10, 2010

When it comes to geopolitics, it is much more important to watch what the various players do rather than listen to what they say. This is especially true in the Middle East. While many leaders in the region are saying all the "right" things, the reality is that there are indications that all sides are preparing for war. In fact, there are signs that war in the Middle East may be imminent. The reality is that Israel is simply not going to let Iran continue with their nuclear program forever, and Iran is showing no indications that they plan to discontinue it. So a showdown is inevitable at this point. Tensions are rising and preparations are ramping up.

The following are ten recent signs that war in the Middle East is getting closer than ever....

1) On Tuesday, Israel began distributing millions of protection kits against biochemical warfare.

2) The Tel Aviv municipality has unveiled a massive new public bomb shelter built directly under the new Habima Theater.

3) According to a senior PA negotiator and sources in the Israeli government, the U.S. has actually been conducting negotiations with Israel on behalf of the Palestinian Authority. Since when did the U.S. government become the representative of the Palestinians? Things have gotten really weird since Barack Obama got in the White House.

4) In recent weeks the Obama administration has stepped up its monitoring of Jewish construction projects in eastern Jerusalem. In fact, if anyone picks up a hammer in east Jerusalem these days the Obama administration flies into a tizzy.

5) The Obama administration is now rejecting all visa requests from all Israeli nuclear scientists who work on Israel's nuclear reactor in Dimona and is now imposing severe restrictions on Israel with regard to the purchase of nuclear-related products. Wait a second – isn't Israel supposed to be our friend?

6) Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has cancelled a planned trip to Washington next week for Barack Obama's 47 country nuclear security conference. So why did he cancel his trip? Perhaps #5 was a big reason.

7) Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is claiming that Israel plans to start a war this upcoming Spring or Summer, and that this will be a chance for the surrounding nations to "finish" Israel.

8) A senior cleric within Iran's elite Revolutionary Guard has reiterated warnings that Tehran would strike Tel Aviv immediately if Israel and its Western allies attacked Iran.

9) Iran's Defense Minister Brigadier General Ahmad Vahidi says that "no trace of Israel will remain" if Iran is attacked.

10) Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Salam Fayyad is promising that the Palestinian people will celebrate the Holy Fire vigil next year in the "true Palestinian capital" of Jerusalem.

If you listen to the major Islamic leaders in the region, it sounds like they are very much looking forward to war. That may seem strange to those of us with a western mindset, but you have to realize that these Islamic leaders have had the "glory of jihad" pounded into their heads since they were knee-high to a grasshopper (as they say in the South).

The radical Muslims in the region are thirsting for a war with Israel, and Israel cannot allow Iran to continue developing a nuclear program indefinitely.

Trouble is on the horizon.

The Obama administration is totally inept and seems to be becoming increasingly anti-Israel.

Now is the time to be praying for Israel and for the peace of Jerusalem.

Courtesy of URL: <http://signsofthelastdays.com/>

Preparing to Sack the City of God

by Joel Hilliker

The Trumpet, 3 November 2010

Iran's rise portends Jerusalem's fall.

Many Muslims believe Jerusalem belongs to Islam.

Muhammad's first followers prayed toward Jerusalem. It was there, to the Temple Mount, that Muhammad was said to have been transported in a vision from his home in Mecca in his famous "night journey"; it was from there that he was supposedly met by the great biblical prophets and then ascended to heaven to speak with Allah.

Only later did Muhammad redirect his supporters to pray toward Mecca in Saudi Arabia. But in the minds of Muslims, the night journey and ascension forever marked Islam's spiritual connection to the City of God.

In recent years, the call has been going out to believers to reclaim Jerusalem once again. Leading that call is the Middle East's most powerful Muslim nation, Iran.

This nation's designs on the Holy City are important to keep in mind right now—because Iran is on a roll.

Even in the face of global opposition—and right under the nose of a frustrated United States and a conflicted Europe—Iran, under hard-line Islamic leaders, has stepped up to claim the mantle of the radical Muslim camp. It is defying the West's efforts to halt its nuclear progress. It is cementing its influence in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is building relations with Turkey and other nations. It is taking over presidency of opec. It is becoming a fixture within the United Nations.

"Iran wants to be the regional hegemon, and doesn't want to leave it to some outside power like the U.S.," the University of Denver's Nader Hashemi told the *Globe and Mail*. "It's doing everything in its power to make that happen."

As much as the U.S. wishes it could shut Iran up, it is reluctantly admitting defeat. It has acknowledged that in order to wind down its costly and unpopular war efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan, it needs Iran's cooperation. Last month it included Iran at an international conference on Afghanistan in Rome. Washington sees negotiation as the only solution, and it wants the Iranians at the table.

Amid all the impressive activity, Israel—and Jerusalem—has remained fixed in Tehran's sights.

Iran pours vast resources into supporting the terrorist groups bordering Israel. Hamas and Hezbollah strongholds to Israel's west and north are awash in Iranian money and weapons. Israeli sources recently revealed that Egyptian efforts to prevent aid from reaching Hamas in the Gaza Strip

have broken down, and that Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps has smuggled "record funds" to the radical Palestinian group. Meanwhile Iran, along with Syria, has provided Hezbollah tens of thousands of rockets and missiles. Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps has stepped up its training of Hezbollah's soldiers. It has built a set of underground tunnels and an underground telecommunications network for the terrorist group.

Apparently in response to a Saudi effort to draw Hezbollah away from Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad made a personal visit to southern Lebanon a couple weeks ago. He was welcomed like a rock star—"showered with rice and rose petals by tens of thousands of Hezbollah supporters who lined the streets and waved Iranian flags as his motorcade made its way from the airport to the presidential palace," the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported. Speaking to a raucously supportive crowd just two miles from Israel's border—the closest he has ever been to the Jewish state—he said, "The whole world knows that the Zionists are going to disappear. The occupying Zionists today have no choice but to accept reality and go back to their countries of origin." He called Lebanon the "focus point of resistance" against the Jews and stressed Iran's commitment to "full liberation of occupied territory in Lebanon, Syria and Palestine."

"Iran has virtually destroyed the peace process single-handedly." The Trumpet's editor in chief wrote those words over 12 years ago, in our August 1998 edition, and they remain true to this day. Whenever Arab-Jew peace talks begin to crank up, Iran goes on the offensive to derail them. Recent peace efforts have proved to be no exception.

In September, one day after Israeli and Palestinian leaders agreed to resume talks on a U.S.-backed peace deal, Ahmadinejad urged Palestinians not to abandon their armed struggle against the Jews.

The occasion was Quds Day, Iran's annual display of support for the Palestinian cause and the "liberation of Jerusalem." Started in 1979 by Ayatollah Khomeini, Jerusalem Day is an occasion for Iran and its supporters to denounce Israel and call for its destruction, praise terrorism and condemn the peace process.

This year, Ahmadinejad emphasized the global significance of the festival. The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center reported that "according to Ahmadinejad, the issue of Jerusalem is not limited to one geographic area; it is not just a Palestinian issue and it is, in fact, 'even greater than the issue of Islam.'"

As Iran rises, keep Jerusalem in mind. To Iran's leaders, Jerusalem's current occupation by Jews is just as wrong as its previous occupations by Romans and by Catholics, from whom Muslims forcibly took control on multiple occasions

throughout history. And they are preparing to seize the city once more.

Zechariah 14:2 prophesies that half of Jerusalem will be taken into captivity. As our booklet *Jerusalem in Prophecy* explains, this must occur soon, because other prophecies dated to the beginning of the biblical "great tribulation" (Matthew 24:21) describe the city being completely overtaken, in that case by a European power (Luke 21:20). Zechariah is speaking of an impending partial conquest of the Holy City by Islamic warriors—one that will precede the Tribulation.

Writing about this prophecy in our companion magazine *Royal Vision* back in January 2005, Mr. Flurry explained, "These verses prophesy that the Palestinians are going to

take over half of Jerusalem very soon. I don't believe that the Palestinians, by themselves, could do that—but they could if the king of the south [Iran, as labeled in the prophecy of Daniel 11:40] supported and helped them. We need to watch: Iran wants to take over that city. Such a conquest would galvanize the whole Islamic world to get behind the king of the south—a goal Iran has been working toward all along."

Ultimately, though, the Iranian-led Muslims aren't the only ones with designs on Jerusalem. Their aggression will prove to be the spark of a new crusade.

Courtesy of URL: <http://www.thetrumpet.com/index.php?q=7610.6186.0.0>

Fayyad envisages Jerusalem as Palestinian capital within 1 year

Palestinian prime minister says at end of Christian Holy Fire vigil, 'Next year we shall celebrate the creation of an independent Palestinian state along all 1967 borders'

Ali Waked

Published: 4 March 2010 - Israel News

Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad said Saturday that the Palestinian people will celebrate the Holy Fire vigil in Jerusalem next year.

Speaking at the end of Easter celebrations in Bethlehem, Fayyad said, "Next year, Inshallah (God willing), we shall celebrate in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in east Jerusalem, the capital of the Palestinian state."

"Our people, joined by all humanity, will celebrate the creation of the Palestinian independent state on all 1967 borders, a state whose capital shall be Jerusalem," Fayyad added.

He continued, "We want this state to be based on the principles of humanity and justice represented in this holiday; our people strive to free themselves from the burden of occupation through popular resistance and setting positive facts on the ground."

Fayyad noted that the Palestinian people are taking constant steps to implement their goals by achieving freedom, independence and the right of return, "in order to live in dignity in a state and a homeland of their own."

Foundations of a state

Fayyad added that the Palestinians are also working on setting the foundations for an independent state. "The dawn of liberty shall sprout from all of the Old City's alleys in Nablus, in Hebron and in all of the communities and refugee camps in the West Bank and the (Gaza) Strip."



Church of the Holy Sepulchre (Photo: AFP).

"We are determined to reach safe haven and freedom and are continuing to work on establishing state institutions and infrastructure."

Fayyad further noted, "The Palestinian state is being built these days brick by brick, step by step and we continue to broaden services for our people to fortify its standing, especially in the areas which have been damaged by the fence and the settlements."

Earlier on Saturday thousands of Christian pilgrims gathered at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre for the Holy Fire ceremony.

According to Christian tradition, Jesus was crucified and buried at the site and the fire burns above his grave on the Saturday before Easter.

Courtesy of URL: <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3871415,00.html>

Israel-Iran War: Not Inevitable

By Rex Wingerter, September 13, 2010

A chorus of pundits has lately been arguing that an Israeli attack against Iran's nuclear facilities is either inevitable or commendable. Recently, Jeffery Goldberg predicts in *The Atlantic* that Israel will strike by next July. Reuel Marc Gerecht, an editor for the *Weekly Standard*, urges that regional stability calls for Israel wasting no more time in launching a pre-emptive hit. These arguments predictably come from the neoconservative crowd who urged the United States to topple Saddam Hussein as an avenue toward reaching regime change in Iran.

But similar voices have been heard outside the usual cohort. Nearly a third of House Republicans have signed onto a resolution endorsing a pre-emptive Israeli attack on Iran. A so-called Bipartisan Policy Center report coauthored by two former U.S. senators has foretold of an Israeli attack. The *Joint Forces Quarterly*, a publication of the National Defense University, recently counseled that the United States must "prepare for the inevitable aftermath" of an Israeli strike on Iran.

Common to the views of both the predictors and the prescribers is an apocalyptic view of Iranian nuclear attack on Israel. Inexplicably absent from the argument is any consideration as to why Iran would initiate a first strike attack on Israel. President Ahmadinejad's vitriolic anti-Zionist, Holocaust-denying spew is unconscionable, but it does not translate into a clear-cut intent to launch a nuclear missile against Israel.

Iran's Rational Calculations

Ahmadinejad's confrontational exhortations are aimed at rallying the "Arab street" and showing that a Persian leader cares more about the Palestinians than Arab leaders. But even this pro-Palestinian rhetoric has proven largely empty. During Israel's three-week assault against Gaza, Iran offered no credible threats against Israel nor did it pressure neighboring Arab states to intervene to stop the carnage. Iran similarly left its Hezbollah allies to their fate during Israel's 2006 war in southern Lebanon. And rather than endanger larger economic and political interests, Iran remained relatively silent when Russia and China violently repressed militant Islamic activists in Chechnya and among the ethnic Uyghurs in the Xinjiang region.

This behavior is illustrative of a regime that rationally calculates its national state interests. Israel is a nuclear-weapons state with land, air, and sea-based delivery systems, and the Jewish state would retaliate massively if Iran attacked. Iran's leadership shows no predilection to commit suicide. The political crackdown in Iran following the June 2009 sham elections underscores Supreme Leader Khamenei and Ahmadinejad's intention to hold on to political power

at whatever cost. They would not throw away this status in a futile attack against Israel. The substantial personal investments of the ideologically passionate Revolutionary Guard's leadership in all sectors of the Iranian economy, highlighted in a 2009 Rand Corporation study, should temper its itch to launch an unnecessary war. Even zealots want to preserve their power and affluence.

Finally, a nuclear strike on Israel would likely destroy Jerusalem, a revered Muslim holy place. It would kill a substantial portion of the more than one-and-a-half million Israeli Muslim Arabs (23 percent of Israel's population) and perhaps a chunk of the four million Muslims that reside in the West Bank and Gaza. Such death and destruction certainly would not be viewed as a victory in Iran or the Muslim world.

Diverse Israeli Responses

Ahmadinejad's belligerency is reason for many in Israel to fear a nuclear Iran. But not all Israeli leaders believe that Iran is an undeterable mortal threat. "Iran well understands," reasoned Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak, "that an [attack] of this sort would set her back thousands of years." Former Mossad chief Ephraim Halevi similarly believes that Iran's prowess and Israel's vulnerability is exaggerated. As he explained in a 2009 interview, "[Iran] is not an existential threat. It is not within the power of Iran to destroy the state of Israel — at best it can cause Israel grievous damage. Israel is indestructible."

The claim that Iran is on the verge of acquiring a nuclear weapon is similarly misplaced. Army Lt. Gen. James Cartwright, the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has offered a more accurate assessment. Testifying in April 2010 before the Senate Armed Services Committee, he estimated that Iran was from three to five years from constructing a nuclear weapon. Moreover, that assessment may have overestimated Iran's technological prowess: Cartwright's judgment included Iran achieving simultaneous success in acquiring a sufficient amount of highly enriched uranium, assembling a workable bomb, and constructing an accurate missile. But even this presupposes that the Iranian regime has decided to build a bomb, a verdict lacking solid evidentiary support. Many observers believe that Iran ultimately will adopt the "Japan option" — possessing the capability to construct quickly a nuclear weapon if sufficiently threatened.

An Israeli strike would only set back but not destroy Iran's nuclear industry. An Oxford Research Group briefing paper predicted that following an attack, Iran would quit the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (why stay when a non-signatory state bombs with impunity a signatory state?) and make no excuse for initiating a nuclear weapons program. Israel would feel compelled to attack again, setting off a

series of escalating counterattacks. The entire Middle East quickly would devolve into twists of violence.

War Gaming

In a war game played in December 2009 at the Brookings Institution, an Israeli attack on Iran triggered a regional conflagration. According to the scenario, the fighting escalated to include Lebanon and Gaza, terrorist hits in Israel and Europe, missile strikes against Saudi oil fields, attacks on oil tankers, the mining of the Strait of Hormuz, and ultimately, massive U.S. military intervention in the Gulf region. An attack would greatly complicate current U.S. struggles to stabilize Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. A report by the International Crisis Group recently described in chilling detail how Israel, Hezbollah, Syria, and Iran currently are poised in a precarious balance of terror. The slightest provocation or miscalculation could trigger carnage heretofore unseen in the modern Middle East, a catastrophe a strike on Iran surely would trigger.

An Israeli attack would bolster al-Qaeda's propaganda that the United States is at war with Islam. Washington currently

is at war in five Muslim countries (Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia). The Arab world and other majority Muslim countries would view the United States as wholly complicit in any Israeli attack, a Christian state supporting a Jewish state to make war against a sixth Muslim state. President Obama's standing in the Arab world, which a new Pew Research opinion poll shows has precipitously dropped in the past year, would nose dive into an uncontrollable free fall, canceling out his vow to reach out to the Muslim world.

Among the many lessons drawn from the U.S. invasion of Iraq was that unintended consequences invariably flow from a war, even one of your own making. Current assurances that an Israeli attack on Iran would protect U.S. allies and bolster regional peace and stability should be treated with the same respect that we now treat the Bush administration's assurances that Saddam Hussein's Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction.

Courtesy of URL: http://www.fpi.org/articles/israel-iran_war_not_inevitable

The above article was published on the *Foreign Policy in Focus* web site

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While all our work adheres to our core values, the views expressed in FPIF publications do not necessarily reflect those of the staff and board of IPS or our advisor committee.

The scriptures that foretell Jerusalem's fate in the last days...

For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Zechariah 14:2 (KJV)

And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. Luke 21:24 (KJV)

But exclude the outer court; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles. They will trample on the holy city for 42 months. Revelation 11:2 (NIV)

Therefore who among us sinners can know what situation Jerusalem will be in by next year? Yet God knows. Pray for Jerusalem and its people! (Ed: and for the rest of humanity).

Canada's honest broker

Mon Nov 8, 11:05 PM

By Jennifer Ditchburn, The Canadian Press

OTTAWA - Stephen Harper says he'll take a forceful stand against anti-Israel rhetoric no matter the political cost to his government at international organizations such as the United Nations and the Francophonie.

The prime minister delivered the opening speech Monday at a two-day conference on anti-Semitism, taking place on Parliament Hill.

He noted Canada's unsuccessful bid for a UN security council seat this fall, saying he believes the country is morally obligated to stand up against those who would attack Israel.

"And I know, by the way, because I have the bruises to show for it, that whether it is at the United Nations or any other international forum, the easy thing to do is simply to just get along and go along with this anti-Israel rhetoric, to pretend it is just being even-handed, and to excuse oneself with the label of honest broker.

"There are, after all, a lot more votes — a lot more — in being anti-Israel than in taking a stand."

The reference to "honest broker" was a thinly veiled swipe at Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff.

Ignatieff attacked the Conservative government in a speech this month for sacrificing Canada's ability to command respect on the issue of peace in the Middle East. Ignatieff said Harper has used Israel as a wedge issue in Canadian politics, and called for a return to a time when Canada was seen as an honest broker in the world.

In a later speech to the same conference, Ignatieff mocked Harper for trying to portray his failure to win a seat on the Security Council as the price to be paid for his unstinting support for Israel.

"To claim a defeat as a moral victory seems to me to be a mistake," Ignatieff said.

He pointed out that it's the Security Council that will determine whether sanctions are imposed on Iran, whose Holocaust-denying president refuses to recognize Israel's right to exist.

"If Canada wishes to defend Israel against Iran, as it should, it would've been nice to be on the Security Council of the United Nations," Ignatieff said.

Ignatieff reiterated what Liberals have long touted as a balanced approach to achieving peace in the Middle East:



Prime Minister Stephen Harper delivers a speech on Parliament Hill in Ottawa on Monday Nov. 8, 2010.
THE CANADIAN PRESS/Sean Kilpatrick

recognition of two separate states —Israel and Palestine — with justice and security for both.

Nevertheless he added: "Let us also be very clear. A democratic state like Canada cannot be neutral as between a democratic state and a terrorist organization. There is no honest broker between those two."

One group that was not involved in the anti-Semitism conference, Independent Jewish Voices, criticized the Conservative government for stifling debate on Israel.

"As Jews, we know that the real threat is from the new McCarthyism, and not from so-called new anti-Semitism. We believe that it is legitimate and ethically necessary for Canadians of conscience to criticize Israeli human-rights abuses and to support non-violent remedies," spokesperson Diana Ralph said in a statement.

"We are calling on Canadian MPs to reject any attempts to silence or criminalize legitimate criticism of Israel, and to defend free speech in Canada."

Harper said Israel may be subjected to fair criticism, and noted that Israel subjects itself to such criticism as part of a healthy, democratic debate. But he spoke of a "solemn duty" to defend the vulnerable and challenge the aggressor at home and abroad.

"Not just because it is the right thing to do, but because history shows us, and the ideology of the anti-Israel mob tells us all too well, that those who threaten the existence of the Jewish people are in the longer term a threat to all of us."

Courtesy of URL: http://ca.news.yahoo.com/s/capress/101108/national/harper_anti_semitism



Comment by Melanie Phillips in The Spectator - 8 November 2010

And speaking of Canada, can anyone imagine Britain's Prime Minister or America's President saying what Canada's Prime Minister, Stephen Harper, has just said about the current global tsunami of Israel-hatred:

Stephen Harper says he'll take a forceful stand against anti-Israel rhetoric no matter the political cost to his government at international organizations such as the United Nations and the Francophonie.

The prime minister delivered the opening speech Monday at a two-day conference on anti-Semitism, taking place on Parliament Hill. He noted Canada's unsuccessful bid for a UN Security Council seat this fall, saying he believes the country is morally obligated to stand up against those who would attack Israel.

'And I know, by the way, because I have the bruises to show for it, that whether it is at the United Nations or any other international forum, the easy thing to do is simply to just get along and go along with this anti-Israel rhetoric, to pretend it is just being even-handed, and to excuse oneself with the label of honest broker. There are, after all, a lot more votes — a lot more — in being anti-Israel than in taking a stand.'

Indeed there are. Which makes his position all the more remarkable.

This article and title of main article courtesy of URL: <http://www.spectator.co.uk/melaniephillips/6452564/canadas-honest-broker.thtml>

The fun of the fair in Wolverhampton - maybe it won't be long before hysteria spreads throughout the World



'For the Truth, for Israel'

by Melanie Phillips - October 15, 2010

Il Foglio, 1 October 2010

'Per la verità, per Israele' campaign, Italy

The obsessive Israel-hatred now coursing through so much of the western world needs to be fought with the greatest possible urgency and strength.

This unprecedented campaign of demonisation and delegitimisation against a democratic country essential to the defence of the west is not merely an offence against decency. It does not merely threaten the security and existence of Israel. It is also undermining the civilised values by which the west defines itself.

Western society prides itself on being a culture of reason, committed to truth, justice and the rule of law. Yet the delegitimisation of Israel rests on a grotesque inversion of both truth and justice in which the roles of victim and victimiser in the region have been reversed.

This campaign has rewritten the history of the Middle East to air-brush the Jewish people out of the region and their own national story.

Building upon the lie that the Palestinian Arabs were the original inhabitants of the land, it suppresses the fact that the Jews were the only people for whom that land was their national kingdom and presents them instead as European interlopers in a place to which they had no historical connection.

This malicious falsehood has been used to whip up hatred not just against Israel but against the Jewish people in general. It is fuelling a campaign of rank injustice and outright bigotry.

Injustice because, in painting Israel as a coloniser, it seeks to deny to Jews alone the right of national self-determination in the historic homeland from which they were driven out and to which they have tenaciously retained a close attachment over the centuries.

Injustice because the campaign requires Jews to be ethnically cleansed from a future state of Palestine — even though under treaty obligations which have never been rescinded, Jews have the right to settle the land not just in Israel but in the West Bank and Gaza.

Injustice because this is the only conflict in history in which a lawfully constituted country under existential attack since its foundation is being pressurised to make concessions to its aggressors, even while its citizens continue to be attacked. Anywhere else this would be described as enforced surrender and a victory for belligerency.

Injustice because this is the only conflict where the world has told genocidal aggressors that they 'deserve' a state of their own. It is precisely the world's consistent rewarding of Arab violence and the pressurising of its Israeli victims that has perpetuated the Middle East impasse.

Bigotry because this obsessive campaign is fuelled by prejudice. While many who support it are motivated merely by ignorance and a tragically misplaced concern for the oppressed, the demonisation of Israel to which they subscribe is a new mutation of ancient Jew-hatred.

The egregious double standards, the scapegoating of a people for crimes such as genocide or ethnic cleansing of which they are not only innocent but are actually the victims, the use of diabolical imagery and conspiracy theory which characterise the campaign against Israel are all hallmarks of ancient anti-Jewish bigotry.

The campaign is being used to soften up the world for Israel's potential destruction. If Iran were to attempt a second genocide of the Jews, the world might therefore look the other way. This has a terrible historical resonance. Europe has been here before.

The demonisation of Israel is the signature motif of the west's current repudiation of truth, rationality and justice. In the light of the Islamic war of conquest being waged against civilisation, the western embrace of lies and bigotry against Israel can only be seen as the death-rattle of a culture that has lost the will to survive.

Courtesy of URL: <http://www.melaniephillips.com/articles-new/?p=772>

Comment by Eric Topping:

Israel of today is very much part of God's plan. At Jesus's ascension the words "*This same Jesus will come again in like manner.... to Jerusalem*" are recorded. In Romans 11 we read "*all Israel will be saved*".

In addition, Israel are an "*everlasting Covenant people*" based on God's promises to Abraham, mentioned many times in scripture. God keeps His promises.

I believe Israel is the most significant country in the whole world in God's future plans and the events taking place in the Middle East are to be watched with great expectation. The Gospel is for All. All who believe and in believing can receive the gift of sins forgiven, eternal life and become children of God.

Titus 2-11-14 focuses on "*The Blessed Hope - The Second Coming Of Jesus*". I am waiting in expectation as I believe you are.

Middle-East Meltdown

From the *Living Bible*: Isaiah Ch. 17.

This is God's message to Damascus, capital of Syria:

Look, Damascus is gone! It is no longer a city - it has become a heap of ruins! The cities of Aroer (*Ed. this area is in South-Central Jordan*) are deserted. Sheep pasture there, lying quiet and unafraid, with no one to chase them away. The strength of Israel and the power of Damascus will end, and the remnant of Syria shall be destroyed. For as Israel's glory departed, so theirs, too, will disappear, declares the Lord of Hosts. Yes, the glory of Israel will be very dim when poverty stalks the land.

Later in the same chapter it states:

Look, see the armies thundering towards God's land (*Ed. this is Israel*). But though they roar like breakers rolling upon a beach, God will silence them. They will flee, scattered like chaff by the wind, like whirling dust before a storm. In the evening Israel waits in terror, but by dawn her enemies are dead. This is the just reward of those who plunder and destroy the people of God.

Of course, it is important that we don't misinterpret the scriptures or assume a date. Also, the destruction of Damascus could be caused by a cataclysmic natural disaster, such as a massive earthquake. However, many Biblical scholars believe it will most likely be destroyed by a nuclear attack from Israel. When this will happen is anyone's guess, of course, however, the state of the world at present certainly gives rise for concern along these lines and suggests the time may be sooner rather than later. I might add, that Damascus has never been destroyed in the past and is considered to be the oldest, continuously inhabited city in the World.

Towards the end of the chapter stated above, the prophecy tells us that once Israel has been severely damaged, other countries will try to invade it and seize the territory. This is expected to be after the complete destruction of Damascus, so nothing substantial will be left of Syria, which will therefore be in no position to join in the attack. The invading nations are expected to be a combination of forces from the surrounding Islamic nations. These, as the prophecy tells us in no uncertain terms, will be destroyed by God.

From a political point of view, it makes sense for Iran to provide every support it can to Syria and other enemies of Israel, as if a conflict occurs between Syria (and other nations) and Israel, the leaders of Iran will be hoping that this will prevent Israel from attacking, and therefore destroying, Iran. However, it could be that Israel will send missiles and nuclear bomb carrying aircraft towards Iran as well as Syria and possibly other nations too - on the basis of *If we're going to get destroyed, we'll get as many of our enemies as we can before we finally succumb* (as Samson did when he pulled down the pillars of the building to which he was chained, killing not only himself, but large numbers of the enemy too).

The consequence of this will bring about world-wide economic chaos because of the destruction caused to the oil and gas industry in the Middle East and the global disruption to trade and industry. Fortunately, there are huge reserves of oil and gas outside the Middle East, but the *perception* that the world depends on the Middle East for its energy supplies will probably cause widespread havoc for a while. In addition, the radioactive fallout and the resulting contamination may bring about considerable, possibly world-wide, health problems and a significant reduction in the world's population, exacerbated by the poverty brought about by this chaos. The economic disruption will bring about starvation to many who either can't afford the sky-high prices that will be charged for what food there is available or there may be inadequate food stocks even for those who could afford to pay whatever it costs. In some countries, it is highly likely that many will also die from hypothermia as energy shortages (even temporary) will mean inadequate heating for many people. With that, some currencies could completely collapse - particularly the Euro and maybe even the \$US (thanks to the huge deficit of the US economy). For the survivors, it could cause human society, living in the 21st Century, to return to a way of life unknown to modern mankind. A grim scenario for those who remain on this planet.

Alan.

Study on a Possible Israeli Strike on Iran's Nuclear Development Facilities

By Anthony H. Cordesman, Abdullah Toukan
MARCH 16, 2009

During the last several months, the Burke Chair has carried out a detailed examination of Iran's programs involving missile and weapons of mass destruction. The key drafts involved are available on the CSIS web site at:
<http://www.csis.org/burke/reports/>

A final comprehensive report will be published this summer as CSIS book by the Praeger Press.

Abdullah Toucan, a senior Associate of the Burke Chair, has prepared an additional report which provides an independent assessment of Israel's options for striking at Iran's facilities, based in part on prior work on Iran's nuclear facilities. This report provides a detailed analysis of Israeli capabilities, possible flight paths, sorties requirements, battle damage capabilities relative to target hardening, and the other details of possible Israeli strikes.

It is entitled "Study on a Possible Israeli Strike on Iran's Nuclear Development Facilities", and is available on the CSIS web site at:
http://www.csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/090316_israelistrikeiran.pdf

The analysis examines the problems that Israel might encounter in penetrating the air defenses of given states in the region and the comparative air defense coverage of key states along possible flight paths. Detailed maps and charts analyze the coverage of given systems, sortie options, and the other military details that shape possible Israeli and Iranian options.

Finally the analysis provides a comparative analysis of Israel's possible nuclear weapons holdings relative to Iran's capabilities to produce nuclear weapons, and of possible missile as well as air attacks.

The key conclusions of the analysis are:

- A military strike by Israel against Iranian Nuclear Facilities is possible and the optimum route would be along the Syrian-Turkish border then over a small portion of Iraq then into Iran, and back the same route. However, the number

of aircraft required, refueling along the way and getting to the targets without being detected or intercepted would be complex and high risk and would lack any assurances that the overall mission will have a high success rate.

- With regard to the Arab States, most probably they will not condone any attack on Iran under the pretext that Iran poses an existential threat to Israel and a security threat to the whole region, whilst Israel has some 200 to 300 nuclear weapons, and the delivery means using the Jericho missiles, in addition to Israel still occupying the West Bank and the Syrian Golan Heights.
- The more there is an Israeli threat to the survival of the regime in Iran, the more Iran will be determined to acquire nuclear weapons. Iran would withdraw from the NPT based on the argument that it needs to acquire nuclear weapons to protect its sovereignty and any further aggression by Israel and the U.S.
- A strike by Israel on Iran will give rise to regional instability and conflict as well as terrorism.
- Iran should be engaged directly by the U.S. with an agenda open to all areas of military and non-military issues that both are in agreement or disagreement. Any realistic resolution to the Iranian nuclear program will require an approach that encompasses Military, Economic, Political interests and differences of the U.S vs Iran.
- The U.S. will have to try to make Comprehensive Verification of Iran's Nuclear Development Program one of the priorities in any diplomatic dialogue, while trying at the same time to persuade Iran to stop its enrichment program. However, in this area the U.S. will have to walk and negotiate along a very fine line between Israel's WMD and Ballistic Missile capabilities and the Iranian Nuclear development program. The U.S. must recognize that both are very closely inter-related and are fueling each other. So the U.S. should be prepared to address both issues simultaneously while trying not to be perceived as though it has double standards when it comes to Israel.

Courtesy of URL: <http://csis.org/publication/study-possible-israeli-strike-irans-nuclear-development-facilities>

Iran, Israel, and the Effects of Nuclear Conflict in the Middle East

By Anthony H. Cordesman, Abdullah Toukan

JUN 2, 2009

Much of the debate over proliferation focuses on the possession of nuclear weapons rather than their use in warfighting and their effects. History is a grim warning, however, that deterrence does not always work and rational bargaining often fails. Abdullah Toukan and Anthony H. Cordesman have developed a new briefing that focuses on the impact of actually using nuclear weapons of different yields on three illustrate sets of targets in the Middle East: Iran, Israel, and Jordan.

This analysis is entitled "Iran, Israel, and the Effects of Nuclear Conflict in the Middle East" and is available on the CSIS web site at:

http://www.csis.org/files/publication/090601_Iran_Israel_EffectsofNuclearWar_06_01_09.pdf

There is no way at this point in time to know the sophistication of the delivery system that might be used, the nature and yield of the weapon, choices about targeting, and decisions like height of burst. As the briefing shows, all have a massive impact on the real world effects of a nuclear strike.

Grim as these data are, they may underestimate the risks. The highest yield chosen is 500 kilotons, but a long-established nuclear power like Israel may well have thermonuclear weapons. It is also possible that an Iranian-driven nuclear arms race in the Middle East could lead to the US providing guarantees to friendly Arab Gulf states and Israel – the kind of "extended deterrence" or "nuclear umbrella" that the US provided to Europe during the Cold War. In this case, an Iranian nuclear strike on a target protected by the US might trigger US retaliation with weapons whose yield exceeded a megaton, particularly if Iran should hit a population center in its first strike.

The data on fall out also assume relatively prompt effects. It is clear from a wide variety of test data and simulations that the long term death rate from cancer and other causes can be far higher and extend well beyond a decade after the use of a weapon – depending on the target, weather conditions, height of burst, and the material affected. The reader should also be aware that a combination economic damage and the destruction of medical facilities could trigger serious additional casualties.

Courtesy of URL: <http://csis.org/publication/iran-israel-and-effects-nuclear-conflict-middle-east>



Anthony H. Cordesman holds the Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy at CSIS and also acts as a national security analyst for ABC News. He is a recipient of the Department of Defense Distinguished Service Medal. During his time at CSIS, he has completed a wide variety of studies on energy, U.S. strategy and defense plans, defense programming and budgeting, NATO modernization, Chinese military power, the lessons of modern warfare, proliferation, counterterrorism, armed nation building, the security of the Middle East, and the Afghan and Iraq conflicts. Many of these studies can be downloaded from the Burke Chair section of the CSIS Web site at <http://www.csis.org/program/burke-chair-strategy>. At CSIS, Cordesman has been director of the Gulf Net Assessment Project, the Gulf in Transition study, and principle investigator of the Homeland Defense Project. He directed the Middle East Net Assessment Project, acted as codirector of the Strategic Energy Initiative, and directed the project on Saudi Arabia in the 21st century. Professor Cordesman has served as director of intelligence assessment in the Office of the Secretary

of Defense and as civilian assistant to the deputy secretary of defense. He directed the analysis of the lessons of the October War for the secretary of defense in 1974, coordinating the U.S. military, intelligence, and civilian analysis of the conflict. He has also served in numerous other government positions, including in the State Department and on NATO International Staff. In addition, he served as director of policy and planning for resource applications in the Department of Energy and as national security assistant to Senator John McCain. He has had numerous foreign assignments, including posts in the United Kingdom, Lebanon, Egypt, and Iran, as well as with NATO in Brussels and Paris. He has worked extensively in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf. He is the author of a wide range of studies on energy policy, national security, and the Middle East, and his most recent publications include Saudi Arabia: National Security in a Troubled Region (Praeger, 2009), Iranian Weapons of Mass Destruction: The Birth of a Regional Nuclear Arms Race? (Praeger, 2009), Withdrawal from Iraq: Assessing the Readiness of Iraqi Security Forces (CSIS, 2009), Winning in Afghanistan: Creating Effective Afghan Security Forces (CSIS, 2009), and The North African Military Balance: Force Developments in the Maghreb (CSIS, 2009).

Courtesy of URL: <http://csis.org/expert/anthony-h-cordesman>

Saudi Arabia urges US attack on Iran to stop nuclear programme

- **Embassy cables show Arab allies want strike against Tehran**
- **Israel prepared to attack alone to avoid its own 9/11**
- **Iranian bomb risks ‘Middle East proliferation, war or both’**

By Ian Black and Simon Tisdall
guardian.co.uk, Sunday 28 November 2010

King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia has repeatedly urged the United States to attack Iran to destroy its nuclear programme, according to leaked US diplomatic cables that describe how other Arab allies have secretly agitated for military action against Tehran.

The revelations, in secret memos from US embassies across the Middle East, expose behind-the-scenes pressures in the scramble to contain the Islamic Republic, which the US, Arab states and Israel suspect is close to acquiring nuclear weapons. Bombing Iranian nuclear facilities has hitherto been viewed as a desperate last resort that could ignite a far wider war.

The Saudi king was recorded as having “frequently exhorted the US to attack Iran to put an end to its nuclear weapons programme”, one cable stated. “He told you [Americans] to cut off the head of the snake,” the Saudi ambassador to Washington, Adel al-Jubeir said, according to a report on Abdullah’s meeting with the US general David Petraeus in April 2008.

The cables also highlight Israel’s anxiety to preserve its regional nuclear monopoly, its readiness to go it alone against Iran – and its unstinting attempts to influence American policy. The defence minister, Ehud Barak, estimated in June 2009 that there was a window of “between six and 18 months from now in which stopping Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons might still be viable”. After that, Barak said, “any military solution would result in unacceptable collateral damage.”

The leaked US cables also reveal that:

- Officials in Jordan and Bahrain have openly called for Iran’s nuclear programme to be stopped by any means, including military.
- Leaders in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt referred to Iran as “evil”, an “existential threat” and a power that “is going to take us to war”.
- Robert Gates, the US defence secretary, warned in February that if diplomatic efforts failed, “we risk nuclear

proliferation in the Middle East, war prompted by an Israeli strike, or both”.

- Major General Amos Yadlin, Israeli’s military intelligence chief, warned last year: “Israel is not in a position to underestimate Iran and be surprised like the US was on 11 September 2001.”

Asked for a response to the statements, state department spokesman PJ Crowley said today it was US policy not to comment on materials, including classified documents, which may have been leaked.

Iran maintains that its atomic programme is designed to supply power stations, not nuclear warheads. After more than a year of deadlock and stalling, a fresh round of talks with the five permanent members of the UN security council plus Germany is due to begin on 5 December.

But in a meeting with Italy’s foreign minister earlier this year, Gates said time was running out. If Iran were allowed to develop a nuclear weapon, the US and its allies would face a different world in four to five years, with a nuclear arms race in the Middle East. King Abdullah had warned the Americans that if Iran developed nuclear weapons “everyone in the region would do the same, including Saudi Arabia”.

America is not short of allies in its quest to thwart Iran, though some are clearly more enthusiastic than the Obama administration for a definitive solution to Iran’s nuclear designs. In one cable, a US diplomat noted how Saudi foreign affairs bureaucrats were moderate in their views on Iran, “but diverge significantly from the more bellicose advice we have gotten from senior Saudi royals”.

In a conversation with a US diplomat, King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa of Bahrain “argued forcefully for taking action to terminate their [Iran’s] nuclear programme, by whatever means necessary. That programme must be stopped. The danger of letting it go on is greater than the danger of stopping it.” Zeid Rifai, then president of the Jordanian senate, told a senior US official: “Bomb Iran, or live with an Iranian bomb. Sanctions, carrots, incentives won’t matter.”

In talks with US officials, Abu Dhabi crown prince Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed favoured action against Iran, sooner



Embassy cables reveal the US, Israel and Arab states suspect Iran is close to acquiring nuclear weapons despite Tehran's insistence that its programme is designed to supply energy. Photograph: Morteza Nikoubazl/Reuters

rather than later. "I believe this guy is going to take us to war ... It's a matter of time. Personally, I cannot risk it with a guy like [President Mahmoud] Ahmadinejad. He is young and aggressive."

In another exchange , a senior Saudi official warned that Gulf states may develop nuclear weapons of their own, or permit them to be based in their countries to deter the perceived Iranian threat.

No US ally is keener on military action than Israel, and officials there have repeatedly warned that time is running out. "If the Iranians continue to protect and harden their nuclear sites, it will be more difficult to target and damage them," the US embassy reported Israeli defence officials as saying in November 2009.

There are differing views within Israel. But the US embassy reported: "The IDF [Israeli Defence Force], however, strikes us as more inclined than ever to look toward a military strike, whether launched by Israel or by us, as the only way to destroy or even delay Iran's plans." Preparations for a

strike would likely go undetected by Israel's allies or its enemies.

The Israeli prime minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, told US officials in May last yearthat he and the Egyptian president, Hosni Mubarak, agreed that a nuclear Iran would lead others in the region to develop nuclear weapons, resulting in "the biggest threat to non-proliferation efforts since the Cuban missile crisis".

The cables also expose frank, even rude, remarks about Iranian leaders, their trustworthiness and tactics at international meetings. Abdullah told another US diplomat: "The bottom line is that they cannot be trusted." Mubarak told a US congressman: "Iran is always stirring trouble." Others are learning from what they describe as Iranian deception. "They lie to us, and we lie to them," said Qatar's prime minister, Hamad bin Jassim Jaber al-Thani.

Courtesy of URL: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/nov/28/us-embassy-cables-saudis-iran>



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The best countries to retire to

If you fancy spending your retirement in sunnier climes, which nations should you be considering?

With the weather turning icy, thoughts begin to turn to sunnier climes, not just for the Christmas period but for life generally. The number of Brits trying life abroad has grown significantly over the past few decades — there are more than a million Brits living abroad, according to the Institute for Public Policy research.

And it's not just students taking a year out to 'discover' themselves making pots in a shack in Peru, but older Brits too. According to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, an extraordinary 38% of over-55s are planning to relocate in the next few years.

So if you fancy retiring somewhere abroad, which countries should top your wishlist?

HSBC Bank International has recently published parts of its Expat Explorer Survey, encompassing the views of more than 3,000 expats across more than 100 countries to find which nation performs best in various different areas.

And it found a clear correlation between those countries that offer a great quality of life to all expats, and that nation's popularity among silver expats — those looking for a new country for their twilight years.

But what does quality of life actually mean? The survey took into account a range of features, including the following:

- accommodation,
- food/diet,
- entertainment,
- healthcare,
- work life balance,
- social life,
- commute to work,
- opportunities for sports
- opportunities for travel,
- the ease of organising schools for their children,
- the ease of learning the language,
- how easy to make friends,
- healthcare and utilities,
- weather,
- how easy to fit into the new culture/lifestyle.

With that in mind, below are the top 15 ranking nations for overall quality of life according to the Expat Explorer Survey. Some of the top-performing nations boast extraordinarily large numbers of retirees among their expats — in Spain, just shy of 40% of all expats are retirees, while France (33%), South Africa (24%), Thailand (24%) and Canada (17%) also boast a large proportion of retired expats.

Perhaps a touch worryingly, the UK finished 23rd in the survey, behind nations like Qatar and Mexico, but just ahead of Russia and India. And you can't blame that entirely on the weather.

If you can't make your mind up on which nation you'd like to retire to, why not have a read of Ditch Britain for somewhere

Rank	Nation
1	Thailand
2	Bahrain
3	South Africa
4	Canada
5	Bermuda
6	Spain
7	France
8	Switzerland
9	Australia
10	Malaysia
11	Philippines
12	Germany
13	Belgium
14	Singapore
15	Hong Kong

better!

However, the study does suggest UK has the X Factor — no I'm not talking about Cheryl Cole getting annoyed at a Brazilian man that can't sing, but rather that in HSBC's survey the UK came out in first position when expats were surveyed about the options available for keeping themselves entertained.

So while our accommodation and commute to work are ranked bottom (take note London Underground), our music and film scenes are at least things to be proud of.

Before you hand over your cash for an upgrade on Britain's naff accommodation, make sure you read 6 terrific tips for buying an overseas property.

What to consider

Of course before you head off to the airport and buy a one-way ticket to Bangkok or Cape Town, you have a bit of homework to do first.

Here are some of the things you need to do to get your finances in shape before you get packing (with thanks to Standard Life). Get independent advice about transferring your pension overseas.

Check with the Department for Work and Pensions what reciprocal State Pension agreements are in place (if any) with the destination country.

Inform HM Revenue & Customs, the Department for Work and Pensions and your social security office when you move, and provide your new contact details.

Find out about your welfare rights abroad. Some UK benefits are not payable outside of the UK, others apply only in the EU or countries with specific agreements with the UK.

Make sure you inform any bank, building society or any other organisation with whom you have a policy or agreement.

Contact your local council and leave them a forwarding address.

Inform your GP and dentist that you are leaving. Be sure to research healthcare provision in your new country!

Courtesy of URL: <http://uk.finance.yahoo.com/news/The-best-countries-retire-yahoofinanceuk-4168493884.html>

Alan's Reflections

Alan's Reflections

One of the sad things about getting old is that, when looking back, one realises that so many of the great people one knew as a young man are now dead. It also makes one only too well aware of one's own mortality and how short our lives really are. When I look back to the days when I was an apprentice (1965 - 1970), I remember so many fine men with whom I worked - some of whom were real *characters*. I remember very well the advice I was given by Vic, a gentleman similar in age to what I am now, who worked as a pumping station attendant for the water supply company where I served my time. He repeatedly told me that I should emigrate to Canada once I was qualified. He used to show me letters and photographs he'd received from his son who had done just that and was doing really well in his new country. Like I was to become, he was an electrician and had got a job, if I remember correctly, for a Canadian mining company, and had completed his 'conversion' course where he learned about the Canadian electrical system and how it differed to our own. I sometimes wish I'd taken his advice. I wonder how my life would have worked out had I done so.

In those days I was considerably hardier to the rigours of cold winters than I am now. Before I left school and joined the real world of employment. I used to have a morning newspaper delivery round and an afternoon grocery delivery round. The worst winter in most peoples memory is that of 1963/64 where snow lay on the ground for four months continuously. Nothing like Canada, of course, but I was out on my bicycle delivering newspapers from 0645-0800hrs every day. My hands would be numb with the cold and sometimes stick to the metalwork of my bicycle as the skin froze to the steel. Thawing out was excruciatingly painful - especially if trying to speed up the process with warm water. But the papers still got delivered. One's duty was all important in those days. That's how I was brought up. My father always put his duty first. If that meant being called out to an emergency in the early hours of Christmas day, then so be it. No big deal. We coped with it, and lived with it without protest. Duty. Responsibility. That's how it was.

This month being November, we remember those whose duty cost them their lives in the various conflicts my country has been involved in over the years. It was everyone's duty to risk their life for their country - even civilians whose work in munitions was dangerous or those in the rescue services that fought fires amid falling bombs or rescued the injured from bombed buildings. Duty was what counted. Nowadays, duty counts for so little in so many peoples lives. In fact, as Melanie Phillips has indicated in her writing earlier in this edition, people are sometimes prevented from doing their duty because of the ridiculous level of bureaucracy that has spread like a virus through this once great country. No one can do their job because of a fear of being sued. How absurd it is that people are dying because of Health and Safety legislation.

An old expression that I used to quote to my children many years ago was: *With freedom comes responsibility*. How true this is. Over the years, Westerners in particular have lost more and more of their freedom because of the imposition of more and more legislation designed to do just that - reduce freedom and control people. This means that more and more people have lost any inclination to take responsibility for their actions - often hiding behind a wall of legislation (or exercising their *Human Rights* - whatever they are). This has spread into the workplace too, with the Health and Safety at Work Act. This was originally designed to protect people in the work place - and allow them to do their duty more safely. No complaints about that. Sadly, it is now used as a weapon to prevent people doing their job - their duty, as they live in fear of the repercussions that can arise for any action that deviates from this *Big Brother* Act - along with all the other *Big Brother* Acts we now have to follow - most of which originate in another country - Belgium - the home of the Great Oppressor - The European Parliament. Government by remote control. Government of **my** country by **foreigners**. I just wonder when it will become impossible to wage war because of having to complete a risk assessment form before a gun can be fired or use is made of whatever weapon is chosen as most appropriate. That would be a great benefit to mankind - but unlikely.

One of the few things I actually like about the Philippines is that the law doesn't work! This may sound a ridiculous thing to say having been brought up to be a law abiding citizen in what was the best country in the World when I was a child. Not that I'm a criminal when I go to the Philippines. Far from it. What is so refreshing is that there is FREEDOM. Hardly any cameras spying into my life. No one monitoring my every move. No Health and Safety at Work Act. No Social Services (appropriately abbreviated to SS - as in Hitler's SS!) that could take our child away from his loving family, and what systems there are are so inefficient (and/or corrupt) they are ineffective. And no one cares to change it. Of course, there is no protection either (or welfare benefits!) - but what price freedom? There are plenty of laws, of course. Probably just as many as there are anywhere else. But no one takes any notice of them - or, in most cases, even knows that they exist. Just don't upset the wrong person - or you may find a bullet through your head or a knife or machette in your back.

Nowadays, my duties and responsibilities are much more focussed on making sure my family are safe, well and happy. It is true to say that whilst our *standard* of living is very high, our *quality* of life has suffered immensely since returning to England. We have little social life, and very few friends - more acquaintances than friends. Isn't that sad? Life in the UK is quite hard as everyone has to strive so hard to make enough money on which to live, there isn't enough time to do anything else. This and the harsh climate that keeps everyone indoors means that everyone lives in their own little world and rarely ventures outside to do anything other than just survive. What price materialism! No wonder our society is falling apart.

A photograph of a large tree from a low angle, looking up towards the canopy. The tree is heavily laden with bright yellow leaves, which are backlit by the sun, creating a warm glow against the deep blue sky. The branches are dark and intricate, reaching out from the trunk on the left side.

Autumn colours on show. Taken
towards the end of October.

A photograph of a large tree with a dense canopy of golden-yellow leaves, likely a copper beech tree. The tree is set against a clear blue sky. In the foreground, a paved path curves to the right, and a grassy area is visible. The lighting suggests it is either sunrise or sunset, casting a warm glow on the foliage.

Winter colours on show. Taken
towards the end of November.