

MILESTONES



1994

MILESTONES TO THE KINGDOM

**A Review of the
World Events of
1994 in the light
of Bible Prophecy**

Don Pearce

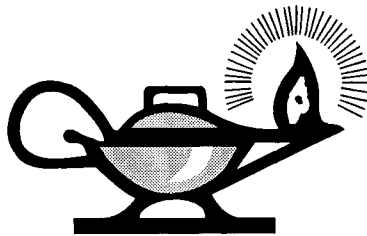
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January 1995

Preface

It has been another year of 'miracles'. 1994 has seen a vast amount of activity in all the key areas of interest to the student of Bible prophecy.

Middle East peace moves and their results

Our front cover presents the happy occasion of the signing of a Peace Treaty between Israel and Jordan, on the northern tip of the Red Sea. After nearly 50 years of enmity and wars, Israel was at peace with Jordan. This event helps to fulfill the prophecy about Israel in Ezekiel 38: "They shall dwell safely all of them"!

Even as this was happening President Assad was softening his rhetoric concerning Israel and its policies. This truly is significant. Who among us would have dreamt of such discussions, say, just three years ago?

In the past year more than 40 nations have established diplomatic relations with Israel! Her economy is booming and the sky of her cities is crowded with cranes and high-rise building. Egypt, Jordan, Israel and the US and UK have all kinds of joint projects. There is talk of a united states of the Middle East, combining the strengths of Israel's technological prowess in both primary and secondary industry, with the vast oil income of the Arab states. If this seems an impossible dream, just consider the amazing array of economic ties and advances that have been achieved in 1994 as described in chapter 2.

The purpose of the Gulf War becomes increasingly obvious. It has effectively re-aligned the Arab peoples. The militancy of Iraq and the radical fundamentalism of Iran have repulsed their neighbours and sent them looking for other stronger friends. In the Gulf War the US and to a lesser extent the UK provided critical support for Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. But substantial numbers of their troops and their equipment never went home and the Saudis and Gulf States have been happy to pay for their presence and to co-operate with their ready deployment of striking power as was so evident in October 1994 when Saddam again threatened Kuwait. So, "the king of the South" is implanted where he should be.

The British peoples and Europe

These great developments in Israel and her neighbours have not slowed down the angelic activity in other spheres. Prime Minister John Major of the Conservative Party is facing crucial months in his political life. It was the Conservative party which pushed for entry into what is now the EU, while the then leader of the Labour Party bemoaned Britain's desertion of all her daughter countries who stood with her through two world wars. Now the Labour Party is gaining popularity in Britain by playing down any further steps towards Europe. Meanwhile Germany and others in the EU are pushing harder and harder for one currency, for

financial integration and for common social policies. With public opinion obviously unfavourable to further integration with Europe and the British Prime Minister in desperate need to improve his standing in the polls it seems that 1994 has almost brought us to the time of Britain's retirement from Europe. In this edition of *Milestones* it is most interesting to read of increasing involvement of the UK with non-European nations. Queen Elizabeth II is even contemplating a visit to Israel. Clearly Britain is feeling the pressure of Europe's forward motion and is widening her diplomatic and trading activity throughout the world, just as in the days of old.

The year 2000 looms upon us

We know from the broadest assessment of earth's history that 6 millennia have passed and that the 7th should answer to the Sabbath Day when God rested and all was in peace. This grand concept has been well accepted in the community of Christ's people, as Gibbon informs us.

Our lives, brethren and sisters, are cast in the very latest years of human rule. We must be close to the Coming. We may expect quite a public fascination with the passing of a millennium. There will be planning for celebrations of many kinds as we enter the last 5 years of the 6th millennium. World leaders will use the event to announce all kinds of wonderful developments. The Roman Pontiff has already announced his ambitions for the year 2000. The most dramatic is a summit gathering of all monotheistic religions at Mount Sinai and a joint mass with the patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church to celebrate their reconciliation. Imagine what the means for the unity of Europe! Daniel was not wrong when he spoke of a strange union on the Continent before the invasion of the Divinely-prepared Stone. Imagine, too, the pressures this will put on Israel. How expendable are a few million infidel Jews when they frustrate the nice plans of political and religious unity for Europe and the world.

Brethren and sisters, there is no need for reassessment of our prophetic understanding. Minor details may be reworked from time to time but the general picture is in the place and provides us with an unequalled illumination when the whole world lies in darkness. We can be thankful to our God for the sound work done by our pioneer brethren. Beware lest any deceive us by gimmicky and inconsistent exposition of the prophets and divide the Brotherhood in its basic understanding of the prophetic scene. This warning is underlined by the Protestant movement. At one time they had conviction about their cause and it was based upon their understanding of Daniel and Revelation. Today their protest is all but extinct because their bookshelves are filled with Jesuit expositions of the prophets. Let us beware.

We have a final thought for our children and their schools. Humanists have long sought to evangelize the children of western democracies. Humanism glorifies man, his mind and his lusts. "Moral values derive

their source from human experience. Ethics are autonomous and situational, needing no theological or ideological sanction. Ethics stem from human need and interest". Humanism is essentially atheistic. The Humanist's grand goal is to capture the leadership of education and plant their seeds in the minds of the next generation. The following quotation will chill the hearts of all Christadelphian parents.

"I am convinced that the battle for human kind's future must be waged and won in the public classroom by teachers who correctly perceive their role as the proselytizers of a new faith: a religion of humanity that recognizes and respects the spark of divinity in every human being. These teachers must embody the same dedication as the most rabid fundamentalist preachers, for they will be ministers of another sort, utilizing the classroom instead of the pulpit to convey Humanist values... The classroom must and will become an arena of conflict between the old and the new—the rotting corpse of Christianity, and the new faith of Humanism."

J. Dumphy, *The Humanist*

One could only say that these Humanists have been astoundingly successful. Their flag flies on the mast of almost every public school in the Western democracies. When I visited several distant countries recently, I was deeply impressed with the sameness of new issues facing Christadelphians at work and school. The mass communication channels are having vast effects upon our societies. Whatever is left to do the UN picks up and despatches resolutions to our governments as from a world voice and opinion. In many countries these can be gazetted into legislation even though the Parliaments of respective countries have never seen or debated them. **All** this new legislation is humanistic. What is even more alarming is the knowledge that these educators are successfully seeking to bring this anti-God material to the minds of younger and younger children. Christadelphian teachers warn that this is happening and it is deliberate policy, to enter the developing minds before their parents can indoctrinate them from the Bible or their own experience. So children of the ages 9 and 10 are being taught about human relations and sexual perversions, of new family concepts that are **no** families, of feminism and equal opportunities for women and men as though God never made man and woman with separate and vital roles.

To all our families through many countries we send hearty encouragement to stand against this tide of evil. Because it comes from school is no reason why we need to accept it. That it is having its mark upon our children is clear to all mature brethren and sisters. There is a vast change going on from one generation to another. We can feel it in our meetings, we can see it in our Sunday Schools. We do not need to succumb to this gradual infiltration. Arm our children before school with a reading from the Word of the Living God and with prayer. If day school is going to infiltrate our children's principles then many have rightly decided that the price is too high. No job, no education is worth the sacrifice of the eternal life of our children and we need to see this clearly

as parents and guardians of the precious heritage of the LORD. There are alternatives, either costly or not so expensive. Ecclesias and groups of ecclesias need urgently to discuss these crucial issues. The ecclesia of Noah's day shrunk to just his family. The sons of God assimilated the world in which they lived. Let us not be afraid to make a difference for our Father's Name and stand by it, our little ones with us.

Miracles of fulfilling Bible prophecy will continue to mark the work and way of the angels in the Latter Days. Let us be fully aware of their faith building potential and act in accordance with God's will.

We thank our Father in heaven for His wonderful blessings and pray for the Day when all will ascribe to His glory.

B. N. Luke,
Secretary CSSS

January 16th, 1995

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Author's notes

I am grateful for items which readers have sent me. The sources below indicate the publications that I regularly see, so if an interesting item appears in some other magazine please let me see it, ensuring the date and source are indicated. Please let me know if you wish me to acknowledge its receipt.

Conventional terminology is used to describe parts of Israel—ie West Bank; people—ie the Palestinians; places—ie holy sites.

Sources are given where appropriate. Remember that the dates on weekly publications are when they are published—the event could have taken place 7 - 10 days earlier, hence many items are given vague timings eg “early in the month”

Abbreviations used

Publications

BIPAC Britain Israel Public Affairs Centre. Newsletter published fortnightly. £35 a year UK. Overseas rate on application.

Write to BIPAC, 21-22 Gt. Sutton St., London, EC1V 0DN Fax 0171 490 4785

CFI Conservative Friends of Israel. (ie political). Monthly newsletter. £10 a year. Write to 45B Westbourne Terrace, London W2 3UR. Fax 0171 224 8941

DT Daily Telegraph

ED European Defence

ET The European, published weekly

Geog The Geographical Magazine (British—not the National Geographic which I do take also)

GW Guardian Weekly

JP Jerusalem Post International edition, published weekly

ST Sunday Telegraph. Sister paper to Daily Telegraph.

Time The Time magazine, published weekly

TR The Reformer. Published bimonthly. “The Official organ of the Protestant Alliance”. A valuable source of information on matters of concern to Protestants. Minimum subscription £4., overseas £6. The Protestant Alliance, 77 Amptill Rd., Flitwick, Bedford MK45 1BD. Tel 01525 712348

From Correspondents

JC Jewish Chronicle, published weekly

Other abbreviations

DP Author’s notes

EU European Union. Was the EEC, then the EC, now the EU. The Common Market

GDP Gross Domestic Product

GNP Gross National Product

\$1billion = £660,000,000

\$1million = £660,000 approximately. \$ are always US\$.

Chapter 1:

THE CONTINUING DRIVE TOWARDS MIDDLE EAST PEACE

Introduction

*The faithful have long pondered the picture that Ezekiel describes in his 38th chapter. A picture of Israel dwelling **safely and at peace**. It surely is our privilege to be witnessing that situation develop. After years of struggle against her enemies, the State of Israel is vigorously pursuing a path of peace with her neighbours.*

It is a path that has involved hard decisions. Giving up territory for peace. Speaking to their enemies. Yet the political leaders have seen this as their only way to break the years of fighting which have affected everyday living. As the world generally seeks peace, Israel, too, joins in that search.

As watchmen on Zion's walls we see these things with mixed feelings. We rejoice that the situation is developing so that these words of Ezekiel can be fulfilled, yet we know that it is a hollow peace. It is a peace engineered by man. A peace that will suddenly crumble before Gog's treacherous advances.

*1994 saw the establishment of Palestinian self-rule in Gaza and Jericho, together with the signing of a Peace Treaty with Jordan. **Let's review the progress that Israel has made this year towards peace with her Arab neighbours.** To help unravel the three main strands we will look separately at the talks with:*

*the Palestinians
the Jordanians
the Syrians*

PROGRESS UP TO THE START OF THE YEAR

The Middle East peace talks began in November 1991, with two strands to them. The **Bilateral** talks involved Israel meeting with her Arab neighbours on a one to one basis, with several meetings occurring simultaneously. Eleven rounds of talks were held, some with little progress, others with more. The main discussions involved Israel talking with the Palestinians, Jordan, and Syria. These talks came to a dramatic climax with the Accord signed between Israel and the PLO on the White House lawn in September 1993.

This involved setting up an interim self-government for the Palestinians in Gaza and Jericho, under the leadership of Yasser Arafat. The

deadline for the Israeli withdrawal from Jericho and Gaza passed, with both sides making slow progress towards agreement on “the small print”.

Meanwhile, in November 1993, Israel and Jordan signed undertakings to pursue a path of economic co-operation, and to work towards a peace treaty.

Little progress was made in the talks with Syria, though a certain “softening” in Syria’s attitude to Israel was apparent.

The other strand to the peace talks were the **Multilateral** talks. These involved Israel and many other countries discussing matters of wider interest. Talks covered **refugees, water resources, regional economic development, Middle East security and the environment**. These made considerable progress and helped to break down the barriers between countries which formerly had been at war with Israel.

(A new strand was added in 1994—**Trilateral** talks, involving the U.S., Israel and Jordan).

THE PALESTINIAN TALKS

The situation at the end of 1993

The Accord signed in Egypt in September 1993 was deliberately ambiguous. It was a diplomatic document aimed at getting the two sides to sign. Many details needed sorting out. Each subsequent step was fiercely debated.

“Both sides are... playing a game of brinkmanship”. DT 28/12/93

At the same time as the talks continued there was an internal power struggle within the PLO. Israel’s failure to withdraw from Jericho and Gaza in November brought challenges to Arafat’s leadership. There were also financial problems for the PLO. Many countries had promised the Palestinians financial support, but were unwilling to hand over money without there being some structure to receive it. They did not want it to end up in Arafat’s pocket!

In December secret talks were held in Oslo and Paris and at the end of the year Israeli and Palestinian negotiators met at Cairo.

January

After 3 days of talks, little progress was made. Israel declared that she was in no hurry to withdraw from the Territories. The Palestinians would have to agree to her terms on security, especially Israel’s insistence that she controlled the border crossing points with Jordan.

Shortly afterwards, Mr Hurd, the British Foreign Secretary made a three country tour of the Middle East. Before leaving Britain he declared,

"I am keen that Britain should play a prominent part in the Near East in the coming year or so. This is going to be a crucial year" . DT 4/1/94

He offered economic aid and technical assistance to the Palestinians, involving training for senior Palestinian police officers, a consultancy to set up a banking and legal system and advice on holding elections. Britain is to build a girls' school in the West Bank and is supplying equipment for a Palestinian radio station. He urged the Palestinians to resume their talks. His diplomatic skills and offers of help gave the Palestinians the needed impetus to resume talks at the Red Sea resort of Taba. Considerable progress was made, although eventually ending in dead-lock.

Mr Arafat and Mr Peres met in Oslo at the funeral of one of the chief negotiators in the secret talks that brought about the Oslo agreement. Their talks were cordial and they agreed to a top level meeting at the annual World Economic Forum meeting in Switzerland at the end of the month. Here many issues were cleared and a draft agreement made.

February

The Israeli and Palestinian negotiators met in Cairo and eventually Mr Peres and Mr Arafat initialled a 12 page document, clearing many of the obstacles to Israeli withdrawal from Jericho and Gaza. Outstanding matters were scheduled to be dealt with in talks in Paris and Taba.

These talks made good progress. During the month came news that Israel had already begun to unofficially withdraw troops from Gaza, in anticipation of agreement being reached. This was despite continuing attacks on the troops.

Meanwhile bilateral talks were continuing in Washington.

Then came the devastating blow to these moves. An American born Jewish doctor entered the Cave of Machpelah at Hebron, which was full of Moslems at the time and shot dead nearly 30 people before he himself was killed.

March

The Israelis and Americans worked hard to prevent the peace process being derailed. The Israelis freed a large number of political prisoners. The Americans arranged for a further Middle East visit by Warren Christopher later in the month. Russia too stepped in, seeking to get talks resumed. Their deputy Foreign Minister was sent to Israel to suggest foreign observers be used to protect the Palestinians in the occupied territories. Both Mr Rabin and Mr Arafat were invited to separate talks in Moscow.

Mr Clinton also invited the Israeli and Palestinian negotiators to meet in Washington, in a less highly charged atmosphere. He also said that America would for the first time play an active role in the actual talks.

Mr Rabin went to Washington for talks with President Clinton, but Mr Arafat was unwilling to go. Mr Dennis Ross the American special envoy for Middle East affairs was sent to Tunis to meet with Mr Arafat. Mr Rabin also phoned Mr Arafat, assuring him that steps would be taken to prevent another such massacre, and he followed this up by sending a delegation to Tunis, headed by a Major-General.

At the end of the month, the talks resumed in Cairo.

April

The Israelis began the rundown of troops in Gaza and Jericho and agreed to allow foreign observers to monitor events in Hebron, the site of the massacre.

There was growing anger in Israel after 2 separate attacks were made on Israeli civilians, both involving bombs on buses. Hamas claimed responsibility, saying they were in revenge for what happened in Hebron. As Israel continued to release prisoners there was a growing unease that Israel was giving away so much and yet peace was still elusive.

The continuing economic talks in Paris were, however, making progress. In talks with Mr Arafat in Bucharest, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres "cleared the air about many misunderstandings". In the expectation that the Cairo talks were reaching a satisfactory conclusion, Arafat arranged to meet Warren Christopher in Cairo at the end of the month. Suddenly things seemed to be moving.

May

On May 12th. the Peace Agreement was ready for signing. Assembled in Cairo as guests of President Mubarak, on his 66th birthday, Israel's Prime Minister Mr Rabin, and Yasser Arafat signed in the presence of Warren Christopher and the Russian foreign Minister Mr Kozyrev. Not that it all went smoothly! There were many documents to sign. Mr Arafat refused to sign maps giving details of the Israeli withdrawal which included the area to be handed over in Jericho. Mr Rabin then refused to sign without the other's signature. The ceremony had to be postponed while hurried consultations took place. Eventually compromise was reached and the signing was completed with Mr Arafat adding "with reservation" alongside his signature.

Meanwhile in Paris, the Israelis and the PLO signed an economic agreement.

Israel was now in a position to remove her troops officially from the territories, and the Palestinians to take over the practical matters of running their own affairs in Gaza and Jericho. In spite of the long delay, when it came to it, the Palestinians were not ready. They asked Israel to delay troop withdrawals until they were more organized, but the Israelis

weren't keen to stay! Within two weeks of signing, Israel had virtually completed her withdrawal of troops from the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

By the middle of the month the first of some 9,000 police officers from several countries began to take up their duties. With the Palestinian flag flying in Jericho and Palestinian policemen on the streets, the inhabitants of Jericho speculated as to when Mr Arafat would set up his headquarters there.

June

The immediate problem facing the Palestinians was a question of cash. The Israeli government had paid the wages of health, education and other government departments up to June 1st. Now it was the Palestinian's responsibility. Wages had to be paid, but no money was coming in from taxes etc. The Israeli's had handed over the computerised tax system, but all the programmes were written entirely in Hebrew!

The promised money from donor countries had still not materialised as Mr Arafat, who had singlehandedly looked after the PLO finances for 30 years, had not set up any approved channels. Donors wanted to be certain that the money would not simply disappear!

Mr Arafat meanwhile was reluctant to commit himself to a date when he would move from his Tunis Headquarters to Jericho, much to the chagrin of the world's media who were spending vast sums to maintain their news teams in Jericho to cover this event.

By the middle of the month, aid matters began to be resolved. The international donors agreed to release straight away \$42 million. A total of £450 million (\$580 million) was pledged for 1994.

July

At the start of the month, Yasser Arafat returned to the Gaza Strip. This was his first visit since a clandestine visit shortly after the Israelis captured the area in 1967. After 4 days here, he travelled to Jericho by helicopter to avoid the road blocks set up by Israeli protestors. It was all a bit of an anticlimax. Instead of 200,000 turning out to greet him, fewer than 10,000 turned up.

He then flew to Paris to receive the UNESCO Peace prize which he shared with Mr Rabin and Mr Peres, then returned to Tunis to say farewell to what was his base for so long, before going to Cairo for further talks. He and his wife finally arrived at their new home in the Gaza Strip in the middle of the month.

August

Mr Rabin and Mr Arafat meet for their first Summit meeting in the Gaza Strip. The Israelis were asked to help in persuading the donor countries to pay up. Still only a trickle of aid was coming in.

Attacks on Israeli troops and civilians continued. Hamas, the Islamic fundamentalists, claimed responsibility for many of the attacks. Arafat moved to exert his authority and 40 Hamas members were arrested.

At talks in Alexandria in Egypt, Israel agreed to allow the Palestinians to take charge of education in the West Bank as well as in Gaza and Jericho, starting in the new school year. Both sides agreed to foreign observers being used in the Gaza Strip. Further prisoners were to be released by Israel. The United Nations Development Programme was suggested as a means of channelling donors' money which would be acceptable to the donors and the Palestinians.

At the end of the month, Palestinian and Israeli negotiators initialled an agreement to transfer part of Israel's civil administration to the Palestinians. In addition to running the schools in the West Bank, it set out areas such as health, social welfare, tourism and taxation to be handed over, though at an unspecified date, when funding was sorted out. The handing over of control for education now affected a large percentage of the Arab population, which until now had not really been touched by the peace changes. It marked another step in the move for Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Israel made it clear that further progress depended on the curbing of acts of violence.

September

Mr Arafat cracked down on the violence, arresting 49 leaders of the Islamic Jihad. There were growing misgivings in Israel on the success of Mr Arafat in containing the violence. The number of murders of soldiers and civilians in the past 12 months was 65, compared with 49 in the previous year and 26 in the year before (JP 24/9/94).

It was recognized that the quicker living standards were raised, the easier matters would be. The World Bank signed a \$30 million loan agreement for infrastructure projects in Gaza and Jericho. It was for matters like sewerage, schools, roads, water and energy.

October

A large oil refinery is to be built in Gaza, with much of the money coming from the U.S. under a "Builders for Peace" programme.

The first new Palestinian newspaper to be published in the Gaza Strip was launched.

The kidnapping of an Israeli soldier and his subsequent murder when the Israeli army tried to free him, heightened the fragile nature of what was going on. Israel reacted while still searching for the soldier by shutting out the Palestinian workers who work within Israel. Many thousands depend upon these jobs. Israel has often used this tactic to put pressure on the Palestinians. Mr Arafat moved to calm the Israeli outrage

by rounding up hundreds of Hamas suspects. This led to recriminations by Hamas, thousands marched on the Gaza Jail demanding their release.

Later in the month, a suicide bomber blew up a bus in a busy Tel Aviv street, killing himself and 21 others and wounding a further 47. The Israelis were now faced with terrorist attacks in their own streets. Feelings ran high, and doubts grew on the wisdom of pursuing further hand-over of territory.

November

Mr Arafat and Mr Rabin met in their continuing dialogue about implementing the Gaza-Jericho matters in the Oslo Agreement. Further concessions were offered by Israel to boost the flagging talks. 10,000 more Palestinian workers are to be allowed to return to work in Israel. Funding problems still remained which were hindering the transfer of powers to the Palestinians, which had been agreed several months earlier. These covered matters such as tourism, taxation, health and social welfare. Israel will, however, continue to work closely with the Palestinians, training them in these areas until they can take over these aspects completely. Talks are due to begin shortly on the next phase of the Agreement which deals with Palestinian self rule in the West Bank, and the holding of elections.

A further suicide bombing led to the deaths of 3 more Israeli soldiers. 150 more suspects were rounded up by the Palestinian police. Mr Rabin was reported as having serious doubts on the wisdom of implementing further deals with the Palestinians.

In the middle of the month, Gaza police opened fire on Islamic fundamentalists who were arranging a protest rally outside a mosque. In running battles, 16 were killed and more than 200 wounded. At a rally in Gaza two days later, there was widespread support for Yasser Arafat's efforts to prevent the peace process being derailed by terrorism.

Living standards in the Gaza Strip have fallen 25% since the Israelis left. Only a few thousand find employment in Israel compared with 100,000 before the intifada began. Many officials have not been paid, or receive much lower wages than under the Israelis. At a meeting in Spain where Arafat and Rabin were receiving the Prince of Asturias peace prize, they stressed again the need for funds to be speeded up. "Poverty and famine are also the strident enemies of our common dream", said Mr Rabin. Of the \$700 million pledged, only \$200 million has been received.

Israel realized that it was important that she helped to train the Palestinians, so that they could run things efficiently.

December

Donor countries meeting in Brussels, committed themselves to giving \$102 million to meet most of the 1994 budget deficit of \$123 million.

They also agreed to inject \$23 million into job creation schemes (JP 10/12/94).

After a three day cabinet meeting, the Israeli government voted to continue with the peace talks on the next phase of withdrawal, but hinted that Israel will make tough security demands. With so many settlements on the West Bank, Israel is unwilling to withdraw her troops as detailed in the Oslo agreement, until Arafat can control terrorism. Arafat is also unhappy at calling elections, as agreed in Oslo, as his popularity has slumped, and he might lose. Peres and Arafat continued with talks in Stockholm and Cairo.

Israel has now handed over control of welfare, tourism, health and taxation in addition to the earlier hand-over of education (JP 10/12/94). For the first time the Palestinians are getting income from taxation.

THE TALKS WITH JORDAN

In last year's *Milestones*, details were given of the "Common Agenda" signed between Israel and Jordan in November 93. It had as its main aim:

"To achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace between the Arab states, the Palestinians and Israel."

It covered many matters of economic benefit to the two nations. This year things moved forward, culminating in Jordan and Israel signing a Peace Agreement.

There have been extensive contacts between King Hussein and the Israeli leaders. Ever since the formation of the Jewish State in 1948, secret meetings have taken place, many in London. King Hussein has property there, and frequently visits for medical treatment. It was one of his London properties that the King sold to finance the recent re-gilding of the Dome of the Rock!

Hussein is the world's longest serving Head of State. He has been King for 41 years. He has survived at least nine assassination attempts. In his late 50's, he is a sick man. He has had a kidney transplant and is fighting prostate cancer. Time is running out. The economy too is shaky, due to his disastrous backing of Saddam Hussein in the Gulf War.

King Hussein had always made clear that he would not sign a peace treaty with Israel before Syria had signed one. However pressure grew to make him change his mind.

Co-operation between Israel and Jordan has been seen as a key to the success of the Peace Agreement with the Palestinians. The Palestinians have extensive links with Jordan, and the use of the Jordanian Dinar in the territories and establishment of Jordanian Banks, was something that Israel was keen to see. The West Bank had been under Jordanian control until the 1967 war.

January

Jordan and the PLO signed an economic agreement, allowing the Jordanian Banks and financial institutions to be established in the West Bank.

Crown Prince Hassan, King Hussein's brother, was a keynote speaker at a conference in London on the economics of Middle East Peace. A sound economic framework for the region, a "Middle East Free Trade Zone" modeled on the North American NAFTA, would strengthen peace.

Towards the end of the month, while King Hussein was in Washington, he told American Jewish leaders that he hoped to meet openly with Mr Rabin "before very long", and that peace with Israel would be "the crowning achievement" of his reign. He sketched a rosy picture of future economic co-operation in areas such as tourism, electricity distribution and road-building.

February

Mr Rabin quickly reacted, asking President Clinton to arrange a meeting. The subsequent massacre at Hebron put a stop on these talks for some time.

May

A secret meeting between the King and Mr Rabin in London, at the end of the month, broke the impasse. According to a senior official who was present, Mr Rabin spoke for almost two hours about the danger of Jordan being left behind in the peace process. Yasser Arafat would soon control Gaza and Jericho. Then the West Bank. The danger would be that he would take control of Jordan too.

They agreed to press on as rapidly as possible with economic co-operation.

King Hussein secretly visited Syria and revealed his plans for closer co-operation with Israel. President Assad was not against it, telling him to go ahead, as long as he didn't sign a peace treaty.

June

In Washington, the US-Israel-Jordan Trilateral Economic Committee met. Expectations were raised that a Peace treaty was not too far away. Israel and Jordan agreed to begin negotiations in July on border issues and joint economic projects. They agreed that they would hold their future talks in Israel and Jordan, rather than meeting on neutral territory.

King Hussein visited America and asked Mr Clinton to help her economy. Israel had long urged the Americans to give financial help to Jordan. The Americans offered Jordan the prospect of their \$1 billion debt being wiped off, and their army re-equipped in return for his willingness to make peace with Israel!

The way had now been cleared for King Hussein to move openly and independently of Syria. Jordan had been sidelined in the march to peace. Israel had seemed preoccupied with making advances with Mr Arafat, but things hadn't turned out quite so smoothly. Both Jordan and Israel realized that a stronger Jordan would limit the freedom of Mr Arafat. Amidst the growing insistence of Mr Arafat that Jerusalem was "his city", peace with Jordan gave Israel the more acceptable option of having King Hussein in charge of the Moslem sites, rather than Arafat.

An indication of the changed perceptions of Arab countries dealing with Israel was illustrated in London. For the first time, senior Jordanian, Palestinian and Saudi delegates attended a meeting organized by the BIPAC (Britain Israel Public Affairs Centre). They discussed the role of the media in the Middle East peacemaking.

July

In the burning mid-summer heat on the Israeli-Jordanian border near Eilat, mines and barbed wire were cleared and air conditioned tents pitched for the start of week long talks between Israel and Jordan. While these were taking place, Shimon Peres, the Israeli Foreign Minister, paid an official visit to Jordan. Apart from Egypt, this was the first time that a "front-line" Arab state had welcomed a senior Israeli.

With the talks having concluded satisfactorily, King Hussein and Mr Rabin met on the White House lawn in Washington—the first public meeting between the two leaders.

This time the handshakes were warm and the smiles relaxed as they signed a peace declaration, bring to an end a 46 year state of belligerency. This declaration was an important step towards a Peace Treaty. The 5 page Declaration covered co-operation over trade, border crossings, telephone and electricity links. It initiated talks on water sharing. Jordan pledged to work towards the ending of the Arab boycott. It also granted the King a "special role" in overseeing Muslim "holy sites" in Jerusalem.

The two men later addressed a joint session of the Senate and House of representatives—the first time an Arab and a Jew have done this.

"Secretary of State Warren Christopher later told me that he and others did not remember as moving and impressive an appearance by a foreign leader before Congress as that of Rabin." JP reporter 6/8/94

Behind this written declaration was an unwritten one.

"There was a clear understanding in Amman that Israel would defend the Hashemite throne from external threat, while there was a reciprocal understanding in Jerusalem that Jordan would provide Israel with strategic depth on its eastern flank and prevent terrorist attacks across their common border."
BIPAC 27/7/94

Shortly after the signing ceremony, the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires was blown up by a terrorist bomb, followed by an attack on the JIA headquarters in London. Iranian backed Islamic extremists were blamed.

At the end of July, trilateral talks were held in Jordan by the Dead Sea. Israel's Foreign Minister, Jordan's Prime Minister and Christopher Warren the US Secretary of State, announced specific projects which would make peace a reality. Links in the fields of banking, civil aviation, tourism, and finance were discussed. A new road to link the two countries was agreed. The Jordanians proposed establishing a free trade zone between the two countries. As *Time* magazine put it,

"Their talk was about peace and, just as important, about prosperity"

1/8/94

August

To inaugurate the new overflying agreement for civilian aircraft, King Hussein on his return flight from London, piloted his jet across Israel. Escorted by Israeli jets, he circled Jerusalem, so that he could inspect the newly gilded Dome of the Rock. Mr Rabin spoke to him, welcoming the occasion. Overflying each others' countries will save both countries much air time, although Israel will need overflying permission from Saudi Arabia to make dramatic time savings. The U.S. has already requested Saudi to consider this.

It was also seen as a message to Mr Arafat, that Israel was keen to have King Hussein linked to the "holy" sites, rather than the PLO.

This was followed a few days later by the opening of direct telephone lines between the two countries.

Then followed the new opening of the frontier near Eilat. The mines had been cleared, fences pulled down and a new road rapidly laid to link the towns of Eilat and Aqaba. These two towns lie close to each other at the head of the Gulf of Aqaba. Separated by a few miles and an international boundary, they became one of the first signs of peace in the region. Visitors will now be free to travel between them. Beyond Aqaba lie the ruins of Petra, a great draw for travellers. Initially the crossing was for non-Jewish passport holders, but since November it has been open to all.

Christopher Warren was there to witness the opening ceremony.

"It looks as if the walls of hostility are tumbling down before our eyes," Rabin declared. "This is the first step on a long journey." BIPAC 10/8/94

Crown Prince Hassan quoted in broken Hebrew from Hosea 2:15

"We will turn the valley of trouble into a gate of hope" JP 20/8/94

After the ceremony, they travelled to King Hussein's palace at Aqaba, the first time that he and Mr Rabin have met publicly on Jordanian soil.

In Oslo, Israel and Jordan secretly discussed water-sharing. Water will form a big part of any agreement. At the moment 95% of the Jordanians live on 10% of the country's land. Some 80% of Jordan is arid, receiving less than 200 mm, (8 inches) of rain a year. Population pressures make it important that the desert is made more productive (The Geographical Magazine 8/94).

The prophets tell us of the great changes that will come—it will indeed be a fertile area—but that lies ahead in the hands of Christ!

In continuing economic talks, alternating between Israel and Jordan, tentative agreement was reached for Israel to buy cheap Iraqi oil from Jordan! It would appear to be in violation of the UN economic sanctions. They agreed to link the electricity grids in the Aqaba-Eilat area to help cope with peak time loads. Israel also agreed to allow Jordan to export \$30 million worth of goods to the Palestinians. The Israeli Agriculture ministry is to help Jordan to set up water reservoirs, based on Israeli know-how.

September

Mr Rabin visited Amman. There was a growing expectation that a peace treaty was not far away. High level talks in Washington between Mr Peres and Crown Prince Hassan were arranged for early October.

On the economic front, a number of items were discussed, including the long talked about canal to link the Red Sea to the Dead Sea. Again we know from the prophets that there will be great physical changes in the land; not a man made canal, but a flowing river which has its source at the Temple. Whatever man builds, will all be swept away!

October—A peace Treaty

The three days of talks in Washington ended with the expectation that a peace treaty would soon be ready. Talks continued in Amman to sort out the final details, and by the middle of the month they initialled a peace treaty. The formal treaty was signed by Mr Peres and King Hussein on the 26th October in the presence of Mr Clinton and 5,000 guests. A tent village was erected on the border by the newly opened link near Eilat and Aqaba. Observers from several Arab states—Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia and some Gulf States, witnessed the signing. In spite of the high security in view of threats from Hamas, the occasion was a festive one. This was an agreement between friends. Conspicuous by his absence was Yassar Arafat, who hadn't been invited.

Central to the Treaty was the arrangement for Israel to give up a strip of land which they had taken in 1967, and leasing some of it back for 25 years, so that Jewish settlements would not be disturbed.

A portion was read from the Koran, and then a rabbi read Psalm 121. (A wonderful psalm, but sadly the sentiments though true—that God

keeps Israel—do not apply to this situation. God has other plans of peace which revolve around a humbled Israel accepting the Messiah).

November

Another crossing point was opened, this time in the north, close to Beit She'an, south of the Sea of Galilee. This bridge will enable Jordan's second biggest city, Irbid, to be linked by road to Haifa Port on the Mediterranean. Following the opening, King Hussein made his first public visit to Israel. He and his brother, Crown Prince Hassan, flew by helicopter to a cultural centre near Tiberias, on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Here they exchanged peace treaty documents with Prime Minister Rabin. They discussed raising money to build a dam on the Yarmuk and Jordan Rivers.

Just before this visit, the King spoke by phone to Yasser Arafat for the first time in several months.

December

Having formally established diplomatic ties at the end of November, embassies were opened in Tel Aviv and Amman. The appointment of the two ambassadors is expected in January.

THE TALKS WITH SYRIA

The progress of these talks has been at a much slower pace. There has, however, been a significant shift in the Syrian attitude to Israel. Warren Christopher has paid many visits to Damascus.

One event during the year which commentators felt would have the effect of moving things forward, was the death of the Syrian leader's son and heir in a car crash in January. Without an heir, it was felt Assad would be more anxious to secure peace. Now aged 66, he has been ill for some time.

The Syrian press, which is under Assad's control, has been less outspoken against Israel. All the Jews living in Syria were allowed to leave the country—provided they travelled to a country other than Israel. Several thousand Jews took the opportunity to leave, only about 300 remain. Over a third of the Jews who have left Syria since 1992 have chosen to move on to Israel (JP 29/10/94).

Assad has dismissed many of the leaders of his security and intelligence forces in moves which are seen to be in preparation for a more open style of government (BIPAC 30/11/94).

In December it was reported that direct talks were to be resumed in Washington after a 10 month break. US officials are to be present. There was also an interesting article by a Professor Maoz who is a specialist on Syria:

"It can be assumed that (Syria's) intention is not for a peace in the tradition of Western Europe or North America, but for a pragmatic peace with a powerful enemy, aimed at achieving strategic gains for Syria and promoting its interests.

Syria is capable of bringing a rapid end to Hizbollah's war of attrition, which Syria promotes even today against Israel from southern Lebanon; of accelerating the peace process between the Palestinians and Israel, and of assisting with the settlement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees." BIPAC Dec 94

On the other hand Syria has been courting her former partner, Russia. With arms purchases said to be worth £500 million, she is modernising her forces with Russian equipment. Russia has agreed to write off debts of \$10 billion so that she can purchase these new arms! This is between 80 and 90% of Syria's debts to Russia and the former Soviet Union. (BIPAC 18/5/94). Syria is reported to have on order nearly 100 new aircraft and an unspecified number of SA-10 surface-to-air missiles (BIPAC 14/12/94).

Jane's Defence Weekly commenting on these purchases said that these Russian gestures "reflect Moscow's intention to re-assert some of its former influence in the Arab world" (BIPAC 29/7/94).

Syria is thought to be seeking to acquire nuclear weapons.

By October, Syria was said to have close to 5,000 tanks [Israel has 3,895. DP] and about 1,000 ground-to-ground missiles with a range of 70-500 km (40-300 miles), many capable of carrying chemical warheads (JP 15/10/94).

Aided by North Korea, Syria was reported to be on the verge of setting up a production line to build surface-to-surface Scud-C missiles, with a range of 500 km (300 miles), more than adequate to cover every part of Israel (BIPAC 30/11/94).

In spite of protests from Israel, the EU decided in December to lift its arms embargo on Syria, though adding they were not aware of imminent arms sales.

This accumulation of weapons bodes ill for the future. Syria has no enemies—other than Israel.

Withdrawal from the Golan?

The great issue is Israel's withdrawal from the Golan. Although such a move has been resisted strongly by Israel in the past, their mood has changed. Peace is such a desirable option that there is serious talk about giving up direct control to either the UN or America. A report in May spoke of Israel seeking aid in compensation for a withdrawal.

"Israel is seeking \$5 billion from Washington in emergency military aid to compensate for withdrawing from the Golan in the context of a peace deal with Syria, according to the Hebrew-language daily *Ha'aretz*.

"The aid request, which will be in addition to the annual \$3 billion package provided by the United States, will involve the pre-positioning of U.S. arms and ammunition."
BIPAC 18/5/94

Under this scheme Israel would have access to this weaponry in emergency. She would also seek "sophisticated weaponry and intelligence, including some of the most advanced types previously unavailable to Israel."

What a contrast to the peace of the Kingdom age—where, peace will involve the destruction of weapons, not the chance to build them up!

Under a plan drawn up by the US Joint Chiefs of Staff directorate of plans and policy, there would be a US combat brigade deployed on the Golan, numbering between 2,500 to 5,000 soldiers (JP 19/11/94). This has perturbed the Israeli government who see that such a force would weaken their ability to act in self defence. We await developments on such a withdrawal. President Assad has made clear that as far as he is concerned a peace deal involves handing the Golan back to Syria. A deal involving the US acting as a mediator may be the way forward. It would enhance America's involvement in the area, something which Ezekiel's prophecy has led us to expect.

We considered in the last issue whether there was any scriptural guidance on this matter. Obviously the Golan was an important part of Israel in the past when in Old Testament times she was a rural community.

The key phrase in Ezekiel 38:12 is *dwelling in the midst of the land*. If Israel gave up direct control of the Golan, as she has already of Gaza and Jericho, then we might have a fulfilment of this phrase. It would leave her in control of the central part of the land. The word for *midst* is not the normal one. It only occurs here and in Judges 9:36. It has the sense of highest part, centre, summit. Although the Golan is high, a look at a relief map would indicate that the central strip, to the west of Jordan, could be described as the *highest part, centre, summit*.

Chapter 2:

ISRAEL'S GROWING PROSPERITY

Introduction

*In the last two Milestones we have sketched the dramatic rise in the economic strength of Israel. She has one of the fastest growing economies in the world and is now among the largest of the world's trading nations! The picture of **peace and prosperity** as portrayed in Ezekiel 38 is certainly one which we can see being fulfilled before our eyes.*

We can only repeat our mixed feelings as we see these things coming to pass. We are thrilled at seeing the fulfilment of the prophetic word, yet we sorrow as we know that it is all to end in tears. It is a peace and prosperity which has not come about through Israel's repentance and God's blessing. It has come about because this is a necessary part of Israel's development. When all that her hands have built up is swept away before the Gogian invader, when flesh is unable to save her, then God will arise to shake terribly the earth. They will see and fear and turn to their Messiah who comes to deliver his people.

The prophet Ezekiel speaks of this present time as being a time of trespass.

"Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name;

After that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they dwelt safely in their land, and none made [them] afraid". Ezek. 39:25-26

Ezekiel had earlier spoken of the trespass of the land, the people and their king (15:8; 17:20; 20:17). They had put their trust in their own strength rather than God, and so they were taken captive.

The invasion of the land by Gog involves much loss of life and many prisoners of war. Then shall come the Messiah with his saints to save them. The destruction of Gog will also involve the destruction of all the things that Israel has built up.

"For in my jealousy [and] in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be **a great shaking in the land of Israel;**

So that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and **all the men** that [are] upon the face of the earth, shall **shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground"** Ezek. 38:19-20.

ECONOMIC PROGRESS IN ISRAEL

General progress

Israel has experienced three years of explosive growth and in 1994 it was even greater! Her economy as measured by GDP, grew by 6.8%, double last year's rate of 3.4%. This was a better performance than all 24 members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)! (BIPAC 11/1/95).

This has been due to a number of factors, the major one being peace. Another factor is Israel's heavy investment in education and training. The absorption of so many skilled scientists from the former Soviet Union in the 1950's and onwards has given her a leading edge in technical research. Her pool of talent has been boosted by the recent arrival of some half a million highly educated and well motivated immigrants from Russia (TE 14–20/10/94). These immigrants have changed the face of the nation. They have more that tripled the number of engineers, and more than doubled the number of doctors (JP 24/12/94). Israel spends more on higher education than Western European nations.

"The proportion of Israelis who hold advanced academic degrees is exceptionally high, whilst labour costs are among the lowest in the West." BIPAC 12/1/94

"Israel publishes more scientific papers per head of population than any other country and spends a phenomenal amount on research and development. At 2.9% of GDP, it is roughly the same % as the amount spent in the U.S. and far more as a proportion than either Germany or Japan. ...A dramatic shift in government policy away from the statist intervention of the past towards an American-style gung-ho capitalism, has unleashed a wave of energy that is turning Israel's tremendous scientific base into highly marketable products." BIPAC Feb 94

In a survey carried out by a major Swiss bank, Israel was placed third among economies that hold the most promise of future competitiveness. The U. S. A. ranked 10th, and Britain 12th! (BIPAC 6/4/94).

The government is pushing through a rapid privatisation programme which was expected to raise more than \$1.5 billion in the year (BIPAC 9/2/94).

The growing demise of the Arab boycott

One of the factors which has helped Israel's economic growth has been the weakening of the Arab boycott. Set up in 1948, it imposed a total trade boycott on Israel. The boycott worked at three levels. At its **primary level** it forbade any Arab League country to trade with Israel. At its **secondary level**, it forbade Arab League countries to deal with companies who traded with Israel. At its **tertiary level** it sought to force companies in non Arab countries to boycott other companies who traded with Israel, or had Jewish connections.

During 1994, the boycott has been increasingly ignored. Japan instructed firms to ignore it. The Arab League itself indicated that member states could ignore secondary and tertiary boycotting if they wished. Kuwait and Qatar have dropped it and Saudi Arabia has to some extent. The G7 and the EU issued statements against the boycott. The newly signed GATT agreement forbids members to operate secondary and tertiary boycotts. Politically motivated primary boycotts are only tolerated as long as GATT is informed.

To a large extent, it is now the Arab countries which are suffering, rather than Israel. Israel's standard of living is 13 times higher than most Arab States. She has built up her economy through free trade and competition. The Arab nations have been left behind because of their restrictive, almost feudal systems (Sources BIPAC and CFI).

In November, the six members of the Gulf Co-operation Council—Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates, bowed to American pressure, and agreed to dismantle any secondary and tertiary boycotting of Israel. With Egypt and Jordan having signed peace treaties, it leaves Syria and Lebanon as the only two sizable Arab countries to still officially observe the boycott (JP 8/10/94).

Although the primary boycott officially is still there, it is in the main being ignored. It is estimated that the trade between Israel and the Arabs already exceeds \$1 billion per year. Firms outside Israel now have little to fear from doing business with Israel.

THE PEACE DIVIDEND

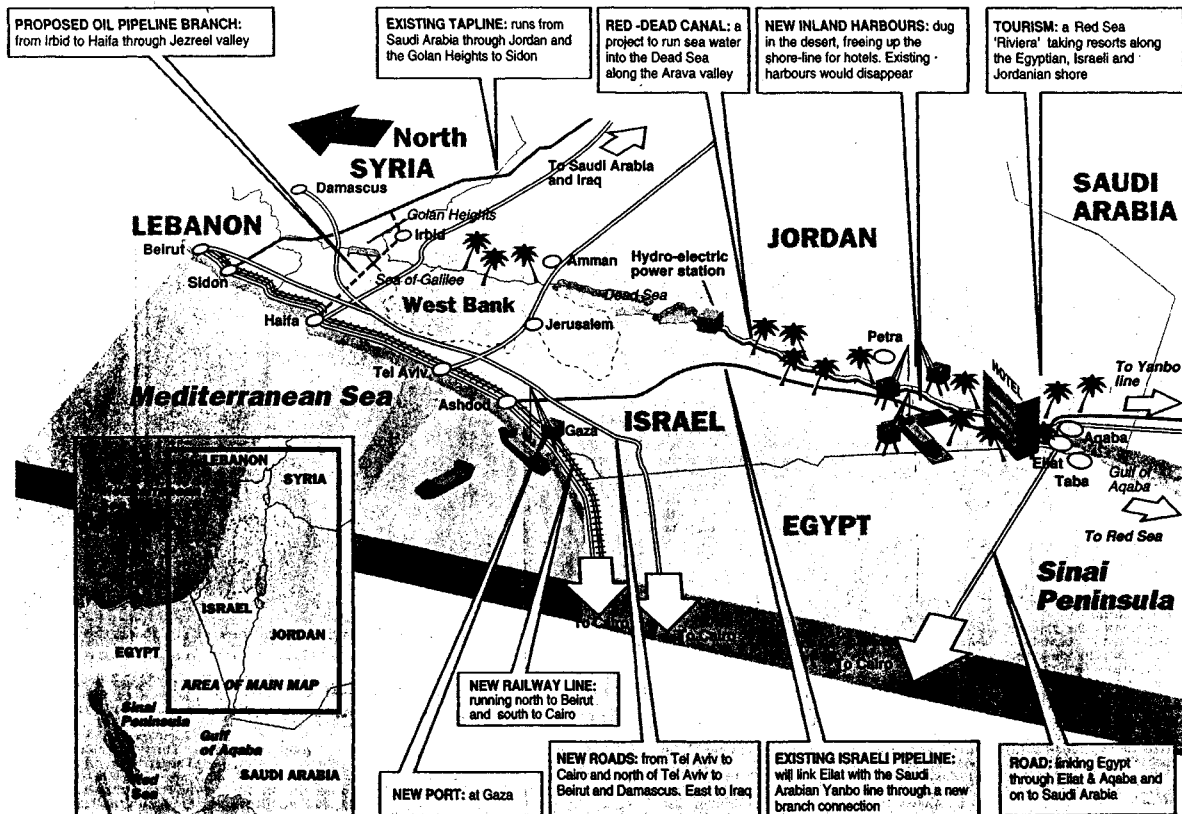
Tourism

One of the benefits already apparent is the increase in tourists to Israel this year. Business is booming for hoteliers and travel operators. Income from tourism is expected to increase from \$1.3 billion a year to \$3.3 billion (BIPAC 9/2/94).

Israel, Jordan and Egypt are cooperating to establish a "multi-national, multi-destination" resort on the Red Sea which offers "summer" holidays during the northern winter.

Linked to this scheme to create a Red Sea Riviera is a plan to build a Red Sea—Dead Sea canal, taking sea water into the Dead Sea, generating power as it falls. This plan envisages an inland port, carved out of the desert, so that the ports of Eilat and Aqaba can move inland, freeing the coast for tourists! (BIPAC 8/94; ST 21/8/94).

Overleaf: Peace puts Israel back on the trade map



Air travel

Israel is planning to make Tel Aviv an international aviation hub for the Middle East, instead of the dead end that is at the present. Ben Gurion Airport is already the busiest airport in the Middle East, and Bovis, a British construction firm has started to build a second terminal. During the past three years the airport has developed direct flights to many places in Europe, the former Soviet Union and the Far East. There are flights to more destinations in the former Soviet Union than from any other country. Flights to Seoul, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Singapore and Sydney are being finalized. Israel is ideally placed at the strategic cross roads of Europe, Asia and Africa (TE 19-15/8/94; JP 3/9/94).

A spokesman for *El Al* remarked

"We had been the meeting point of the silk and spice routes. Now we could well become that central hub again." TE 19-25/8/94

Links with Arab countries

Israel is poised to increase her business links with her neighbours. At the end of October, a 3 day regional economic conference was held in Casablanca, hosted by King Hassan II of Morocco. Government officials and no fewer than 2,000 company executives from more than 60 countries attended, including half of Israel's cabinet! It was the more remarkable because Israel played a leading part in its organization, and had the largest delegation attending. The delegates then moved on to Jerusalem and Amman! A second conference is planned in Jordan in six months time (DT 2/11/94 & BIPAC 8/94). The Americans pledged to finance half the cost of a feasibility study to develop the Jordan Rift Valley, as well as giving \$74 million in short-term loans for Jordanian small businesses.

Egypt

Although the peace treaty was signed with Egypt in 1979, it has been a cold peace until now. This year things seem to be changing. Egypt is no longer isolated in her relations with Israel.

"A \$500 million jointly owned gas pipeline from Egypt to the Israeli border is planned, as well as joint projects in the fields of food processing, textiles, clothing and minerals. Israel is planning to increase exports to Egypt of textiles and car tyres. Twenty five Egyptians are being trained as diamond polishers and cutters in Israel.

About 1,000 Egyptians are also expected to attend Israeli agricultural colleges this year and Israel has agreed to help pay for a \$1 million model farm at Alexandria". BIPAC 1/6/94

The Israelis are hoping to switch their electricity production from coal to gas supplied by Egypt.

Both countries are negotiating a new trade agreement which will cancel all custom duties on trade between the two countries (BIPAC 23/2/94).

Following a feasibility study financed by the EU and the Austrian government, the electricity grids of Egypt and Israel were linked between Eilat and Taba, and the link is being extended to Aqaba (BIPAC 8/94).

Plans are being made to build a \$1.4 billion network of six highways, radiating from Israel to Cairo to Jordan.

In April, a direct fibre-optic telecommunications cable link was inaugurated. Until now, calls between the two countries were routed via Italy! It is hoped that other Arab countries will link in via Egypt to take advantage of Israel's skills in telecommunications (JP 23/4/94).

In August, plans were revealed to build a multi-million dollar oil refinery in Alexandria, in a joint investment by the two countries (JP 20/8/94). Construction is expected to start in November (BIPAC 14/10/94).

In September an industrial co-operation deal was signed by industry leaders from both countries, in order to boost trade. The Egyptians are interested in purchasing agricultural technology, car parts and chemicals (JP 5/11/94).

A new bus link was started in November. The 10 hour trip runs twice a week between Jerusalem and Cairo (JP 19/11/94).

President Weizman made his 17th visit to Egypt at the end of December, but was disappointed when President Mubarak refused to give a date for a return visit to Israel—he has never been in the 13 years he has been in power.

Jordan

Jordan, Israel and Germany are looking at a \$3 billion, 10 year project to pipe water from the Mediterranean 100 miles to a desalination plant near Beit She'an. It would then flow down a 300 metres decline to generate the power to run the desalination plant. The water would then be piped to a dam to be shared by Israel and Jordan.

Jordanian importers are in discussion with Israel over the use of port and warehousing facilities at Ashdod to bring goods into Jordan. It would save ships having to travel all the way to Aqaba, saving thousands of pounds on each cargo (BIPAC 20/6/94). Similarly they are looking at using Haifa.

Direct phone links were set up in August.

Israel is wishing to build a huge produce market near Beit She'an, close to the new border crossing, to supply Jordan's needs in fruit and

vegetables. Israel is also proposing to set up a model farm in Jordan to give training in modern farming methods (JP 3/9/94).

This crossing point was opened in November. The new Bailey bridge is due to be replaced within a year by a permanent concrete bridge. It replaces an old bridge which was blown up in 1947.

Qatar

Israel is hoping to receive natural gas from Qatar in exchange for pipelines and storage facilities at the port of Eilat (BIPAC 1/6/94).

Low-level diplomatic links are expected soon (DT 2/11/94).

Oman

One of the rounds of multilateral talks concerning water, was held in Oman. The deputy Foreign Minister led the Israeli delegation's ground-breaking visit. In addition to the multi-lateral talks, closed door meetings were held to discuss possible future co-operation in the fields of water desalination, disease prevention, health care and technical training (BIPAC 20/4/94).

In November, it was reported that they were close to establishing diplomatic relations with Israel (BIPAC 16/11/94).

Morocco

Having signed an economic accord earlier this year, Israel is seeking trade links involving direct air, telephone and mail links, as well as banking, financial co-operation and joint agro-industrial projects (BIPAC 1/6/94).

Diplomatic ties were established in September, which are planned to lead to full diplomatic relations soon.

A direct flight agreement was expected to be signed at the end of November, cutting the cost of travel by half. At the moment one has to travel via Paris (JP 12/11/94).

King Hussan II claims descent from Mohammed, and wants to play his part in determining the future of the Moslem "holy places" in Jerusalem!

Tunisia

Low level ties are being established, based on an exchange of economic representatives, a first step to full diplomatic relations (BIPAC 5/10/94).

In July direct-dial telephone links were established.

Turkey

Turkey is a predominantly Moslem country, but has a secular constitution. Around 26,000 Jews live there, mainly in Istanbul (Constantinople). The two countries exchanged ambassadors two years ago. There have been cultural exchanges and a growing tourist trade.

The Israeli President paid a 3 day visit in January to encourage trade—the first such visit by the President. One item was the discussion of the possible transfer of water to Israel from Turkey, the only country in the region to have a water surplus (JC 21/1/94).

The Turkish government has invited Israeli investors to participate in a \$33 billion project to construct 22 dams and 19 power stations on two of Turkey's largest rivers (BIPAC 23/2/94).

In September, talks began, which they hope will lead to a trade accord next year. Turkey is very interested in Israel's agricultural technologies. Turkey is modernizing her farming in a vast area of the country (BIPAC 14/9/94).

The Turkish Prime Minister Mrs Cillar, visited Israel in November. Talks disclosed that the two countries were about to conclude a free trade agreement.

Links with other countries

Britain

The links with Britain are extensive and growing. Because of our special interest in the role that Britain has to play, we will examine the detail in the next chapter—*Britain's growing involvement in Israel*.

The European Union

Israel is negotiating the payment terms to become an associate member of the prestigious, multi-million-dollar EU Research and Technical Development Programme (RTDP). Israel would then be able to receive finance from the EU to carry out research and development. She would be attractive to many EU firms as her skills are legendary and her costs are much lower than in the EU (TE 14-20/10/94).

Israel is renegotiating the terms of her associate membership of the EU, which will increase the markets in which she is allowed to compete. They are supposed to be completed by the end of the year, but Israel has had to fight for the concessions she wants, and it does not appear that the talks will be completed on time. Although Shimon Peres, the Foreign Minister had reached agreement in principle, it was opposed by the Israeli Industry and Trade Minister and the Agriculture Minister (JP 31/12/94). Israel at the moment imports more from the EU than she exports to it, and so is demanding a greater share of the business in Europe to even out the \$7 billion a year imbalance. She has threatened to look to Asia as a substitute trading partner (BIPAC 16/11/94).

Russia, the former Soviet and eastern Europe

In April, Russia signed a tentative agreement to supply Israel with 14 million barrels of crude oil and 5-10 billion cubic metres of natural gas a year. (With annual payment in advance!) (JP 7/5/94).

In July, a hospital in Israel signed an agreement with the government of Azerbaijan, to treat their citizens. It is planned to build a hospital in Azerbaijan, which will be run by Israeli staff. This plan is expected to be adopted in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and other former Soviet republics (BIPAC 27/7/94).

Russia was granted Most Favoured Nation trade status by Israel in an agreement signed in October. This reduces tariffs and duties, and is expected to increase trade. Last year exports to Russia totalled \$115 million (JP 29/10/94).

Talks have started on a free trade agreement with Poland (JP 17/12/94). They are well on the way with the Czech Republic where an agreement is expected to be signed in mid-January (BIPAC 14/12/94).

The Far East

Israel has made great strides in enhancing her links with the East. The countries of the Pacific Rim are expected to be the area of the world to show the fastest growth. The Jerusalem Post has carried numerous reports of Israel's links with countries such as Japan, China, India, Indonesia, Singapore, S. Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and the Philippines. In 1993, Israel's exports to Asia increased by nearly 21% over the previous year, trade with India increased by 60%! In the first nine months of this year, Asian trade had increased by a third (BIPAC 6/4/94; 14/9/94; 14/12/94).

Mr Rabin paid a visit to Japan in December and signed two agreements, one on cultural exchanges and the other on co-operation in science and technology (JP 24/12/94).

Following a five day visit by the highest ranking Indian delegation ever in Israel, the Jerusalem Post reported:

"Indian, Israeli officials bask in good vibrations

"Israel's ties with India are 'the warmest with any Asian country ... The climate between the two peoples is very conducive for economic co-operation ... India and Israel are on the same wavelength.

There are already bilateral agreements in the fields of tourism, science and technology, medicine, agriculture and civil aviation.'" JP 26/11/94

"Industry and Trade Minister will travel to India this week to sign a most-favoured-nation trade agreement and a pact to encourage industrial and economic co-operation between the two countries. The new trade status will result in the elimination of all trade barriers between the two countries." JP 24/12/94

This link with India is interesting as we have always related her to the eastern Tarshish, having enjoyed trade with Israel right back to the days of King Solomon.

Chapter 3:

BRITAIN'S GROWING INVOLVEMENT IN ISRAEL

Introduction

Britain played a major part, under the Hand of God, in setting up a homeland for the Jews in the aftermath of the first World War. At first the Arabs in the land welcomed the returning Jews. As time went on, and the numbers returning grew and grew, there developed bitter hostility between them. Britain, from our point of view, behaved badly towards the Jews, especially during and just after the war, when they were fleeing for their lives from Europe and seeking a safe haven in the Promised Land. Britain felt driven to wash her hands of the situation, and so under the United Nations, the State of Israel was established in 1948.

Since then, Britain has pursued an uneven approach—fearing to upset the Arabs upon whom she was dependent for oil, and not favouring the Jews. It may well be that part of Britain's past troubles have been a lack of blessing by God for this country's attitude to His people. America was the country that was doing much to help Israel.

Things certainly seem to have changed as we shall examine in this chapter. Britain again is playing an important role in Israel and the Territories. There are probably a number of reasons for this change. The discovery of North Sea oil meant that Britain was not dependent upon Arab oil. The Gulf War found her heavily involved in the Middle East. She has experienced anti-Israeli terrorist attacks in London this year. Being a trading nation she has her eye on the vast amount of business that is there in Israel, whereas many of the Arab States are very backward in their expectations and living standards.

Above all, Britain is a "diplomatic" nation. She works behind the scenes, often playing off one side against the other, in order to achieve her aims. As the "mother lion" she achieves her ends with the help of the "young lions".

The reader is referred to Chapter 3 of last year's Milestones for an exposition of Britain's role as Tarshish, with the young lions at her side. This will set the scene for why we rejoice to see more clearly this year the role that Britain is playing not only in Israel, but the Middle East in general.

BRITAIN AND ISRAEL

Regular readers of *Milestones* will have noticed the introduction of two new sources of information.

- CFI —*Conservative Friends of Israel*. Some members of the British Conservative party has always maintained links with Israel. This group within the party encourages links and trade with Israel. They publish a newsletter giving details of events involving Israel which have a British interest.
- BIPAC —*Britain Israel Public Affairs Centre*. At the end of 1993 they started to publish a fortnightly newsletter, which has been immensely valuable in assembling information for Milestones, especially as it has coincided with an increase in Britain's interest in Israel. Details of where to obtain these items is given in the *Contents* page.

In November there was a fascinating two page survey entitled *Partnership in peace*, written by the BIPAC Director, Helen Davies. With kind permission we reproduce it in full.

"Partnership in peace

"When Foreign Office Minister Douglas Hogg was asked in the House of Commons this month whether he thought the time had come for the Queen to make a State Visit to Israel, the response was brief but enthusiastic. "A splendid idea." Such an answer, and such a visit, would have been unthinkable until recent months.

"Like so much else concerning Israel, however, the unthinkable is now being translated into the possible, into the probable and then, rapidly, into reality.

"A State Visit to Israel by the Queen, which would be the first since the establishment of the Jewish State, will not in itself represent a substantive change in political or economic relations between Britain and Israel. It will, however, be symptomatic of the significant changes that have already occurred in these and other areas.

"For both in style and in substance, the response was yet another indication that old obstacles, traditional taboos and ingrained inhibitions are being shaken off as the region emerges from half a century of conflict into an era of peace.

"Today, there is a virtual identity of perceptions and purpose between London and Jerusalem on a wide range of issues, most notably—and, perhaps, most importantly—on the subject of the Middle East peace process.

"The relationship took a quantum step forward during the tenure of Margaret Thatcher, the first British Prime Minister to visit Israel. This process has been continued, and accelerated by the government of Prime Minister John Major.

"A measure of the progress this year alone is reflected in a succession of ground-breaking events, visits and agreements that have raised Anglo-Israel relations to a new level:

- In May, Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd told the House of Commons that Britain was ending its 12-year-old arms embargo of Israel.
- In June, Britain and Israel signed an agreement to establish a £300,000 bilateral fund to promote joint scientific research between Israeli and British institutions, and to encourage an exchange of scientists.
- In August, Britain announced its support for Israel's application to join the European Union's exclusive Research and Development Fund, which will give Israeli scientists a central role in European research projects and allow entrepreneurs to bid for non-nuclear tenders within the EU.
- In September, Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres held talks when they attended the United Nations General Assembly in New York.
- In October, Lieutenant-General Ehud Barak became the first Israeli Chief of Staff to make an official visit to Britain at the invitation of his British counterpart.
- Also in October, David Hunt, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, visited Israel as a guest of the Minister of Science, Shulamit Aloni, for talks on scientific and technological co-operation.
- In November, Malcolm Rifkind made the first official visit to Israel by a British Minister of Defence and declared Britain's solidarity with Israel in its struggle against acts of terror by Islamic extremists: "There has to be a sharing of information, a close co-operation and a determination both by countries and the international community to rout it."
- In November, too, Foreign Office Minister Hogg attended the signing of the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty on their common border in the Arava Desert.

"Beyond the political, economic, military, scientific and cultural nature of the expanding relationship, the Duke of Edinburgh this month made a private visit to his mother's grave in Jerusalem. At a moving ceremony, he received the posthumous citation of a Righteous Gentile, which was awarded by Yad Vashem to his mother for having personally saved Jews in Greece.

"Although the visit was officially "private," Prince Philip was the guest of honour at a dinner hosted by President Ezer Weizman and met Israel's leaders in an atmosphere that was marked by mutual warmth and cordiality.

"The proposed visit to Israel by Prime Minister John Major next March will set yet another political milestone in relations between the two countries, enhancing trade and signalling a further development in the burgeoning friendship.

"Visits by Israeli Cabinet Ministers to Britain are now so common and so frequent that Prime Minister Major was once moved to joke that the Israeli Ministers might as well hold their weekly Cabinet meetings in London.

"Israel is marching to the drumbeat of conviction and courage towards an era of political, economic, strategic, scientific, high-tech and cultural co-operation, and Britain is marching in step.

"While Israel demonstrates that it is taking risks for peace, Britain is instilling confidence, inspiring hope, buttressing the process through practical, tangible acts.

"As the natural nexus of Israel and the Arab world, London has traditionally provided a discreet venue for secret contacts between Israeli and Arab officials.

"In addition to supporting bilateral negotiations between Israel and its neighbours, London is also playing a constructive role in the multilateral talks.

"Last April, the Foreign Office co-sponsored a conference at Chatham House which attracted an international audience to discuss, and to learn about, the financial markets of the Middle East, an event that drew together, perhaps for the first time, top economic, industrial and commercial leaders from the region.

"In the Middle East itself, Britain is taking a lead in assisting the Palestinian Authority to establish its credibility in the autonomous areas by pledging a sum of £75 million over three years to help pay the salaries of its police force, train its media technicians, aid the development of its administrative institutions and assist the process in other ways.

"Alone among Permanent Members of the UN Security Council, Britain is continuing to stand firm with the United States in its policy of dual-containment, striving to check the mad ambitions of Iraq's Saddam Hussein and the bizarre behaviour of the Islamic extremist regime in Teheran, both of which pose a threat to the stability not only of the region but also, ultimately, of the West itself.

"Throughout the long years of regional hostility, British leaders have been consistent opponents, in word if not in deed, of the Arab Trade Boycott.

"While successive governments have refused to outlaw compliance with the Boycott in Britain, the administration of Prime Minister Major has been active in issuing *démarches* to Arab states and expressing its opposition directly to the leaders of the region, through the EU, through G7 summits and in other forums.

"It may not have been entirely coincidental that the Gulf Co-operation Council announced in October, just one week after a visit to Saudi Arabia by Prime Minister Major, that it was abandoning the secondary and tertiary aspects of the Boycott.

"Both in its bilateral relations with Israel and as a central player in the European Union, Britain is showing a sensitivity for the sacrifices Israel is making in the cause of peace and an appreciation of the opportunities that are opening up as a result of the positive, new environment in the region.

"In Brussels, Britain is demonstrating its support for Israel's position at the negotiations which are aimed at upgrading the Israeli-EU economic accord.

"The new warmth is reflected in the area of two-way trade, which amounted to £1,193 million during the first nine months of this year, an increase of 12 per cent over the same period last year and which, significantly, involves 70 British companies that had not previously traded with Israel. It is also reflected in the fact that more than 15 per cent of the record 1.9 million tourists to Israel last year were British.

"Such figures are not only an indication of confidence in Israel and of strengthening Anglo-Israeli ties, they also speak of an atmosphere that makes it conducive for British businessmen to trade with Israel and holiday-makers to visit.

"Significant steps were taken during the Thatcher years to dispel the cobwebs that have traditionally snared Anglo-Israel relations. During the recent Major years, those relations have acquired layers of substance.

"Foreign Secretary Hurd, one of the most astute observers of Middle East affairs and an architect of the recent improvements in relations, told a Jewish audience in London this month that past disagreements with Israel had, on occasions, been 'fierce.'

"'Sometimes history will say we were right and sometimes history will say we were wrong,' he said. 'That is the truth of the matter.'

"'It is equally true', he added, 'that hostility is now a thing of the past; that the character and the quality of Anglo-Israeli contacts are improving all the time.

"'A new page has been turned and old psychological barriers have been pushed aside. Residual acrimony, which was the legacy of the Mandate and the historical inheritance of the two states, is now largely being jettisoned.

"This is giving way to a ramified network of agreements on economics, security, science, technology, the arts and culture.

"Such accords are the stuff of relations between allies; collectively they represent the glue that is binding Britain and Israel into a relationship that will endure, transcending political or diplomatic complications that may arise in the future.

"There might still be disputes and disagreements, but these will be debates between friends, held against the backdrop of mutual interests, within the context of a common understanding." BIPAC Nov 94

In November, John Major addressed a joint Israel Appeal/Jewish Continuity dinner in London. These are some of the points he made:

"...I would also like to say a word on the relationship between the United Kingdom and Israel which, in my view.. has never been warmer and never had so much content.

"Jewish Continuity stress the central importance of the values which have inspired and united Jewish people over two thousand years. It stresses education and it underlines duty, honesty, service, neighbourliness and the virtues of working together in local communities. It sees the risks of selfishness and isolation in our rapidly changing world and it points up the way in which the family has always been at the heart of Jewish life, the institution on which others depend.

"The values we share form a bond between Britain and Israel. So, too, does the extraordinary network of personal connections which this dinner reflects.

"There were times in the past when the relationship between Britain and Israel could be a little prickly. ... But events, and the determined efforts of many individuals on both sides, have brought us much closer together over the past few years - closer, as I have said, than we have ever been before.

"Since President Herzog's visit to London under two years ago, a whole series of events have strengthened and extended the friendship between Britain and Israel.

".... The experiences of my colleagues have only whetted my appetite for the visit to Israel which I have long wanted to make. The prospects for British/Israeli co-operation are very great and I intend to explore them fully. I want to see us working ever more closely together for stability in the Middle East.

"... Not least, I want to promote trade. Trade between Britain and Israel is soaring. British exports went up by 50% last year and a further 22% so far this year. Israel is Britain's third-largest market in the Middle East.

".. But we can do much more together. So when I go to Israel in March, I shall be taking with me a party of senior businessmen. Some are already important players in the Israeli market, some will be new to it. I want them to see, with me, the opportunities for trade and investment which it undoubtedly offers."

BIPAC 30/11/94

Britain's economic links

The prospect of the British Prime Minister visiting Israel in March indicates the new thinking behind Britain's desire to do trade outside the member countries of the EU. We will consider in chapter 6 how Britain is turning her back on Europe and reaching out in her traditional role of a Tarshish power, trading in many markets. There is also the prospect of the Queen going too. Whether she makes it or not now, we look forward to the time in the not too distant future when the

“... the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour”. Psa. 45:12

One of Britain's skills lies in her financial institutions, which invest world wide. Israel is seen as a lucrative market

“British officials have long accepted that they have only a limited ability to influence the political aspects of the peace negotiations. But, said the Foreign Secretary: ‘Financial services is an area in which we have particular expertise. It is sensible for us to focus on this sector.’”

JC 21/1/94

Britain has been using her influence within the EU, to improve the new trade agreement which is still being hammered out between Israel and the EU.

Early in the year, the British government arranged to host in April, a two-day conference on Middle East financial markets.

“John Milne, advisor to the Bank of England for the Middle East and Asia, said Britain had been given particular responsibility for fostering the development of the financial markets in the region.

“He said Britain will finance a consultancy study on the region's stock markets which would examine the current structure, as well as the regulations and the potential for linking regional markets.

“Britain was also considering financing technical assistance for the financial sector in the West Bank and Gaza, he said.” BIPAC 16/1/94

UK based investment funds have been set up to invest in shares in Israeli companies listed on the Tel Aviv stock market. A £100 million fund was announced in January and a £50 million in February. Another fund was so popular that it was doubled in size to £130 million. In March another one was set up with £50 million to invest.

In February, a group of British industrialists and businessmen visited Israel and expressed their interest in bidding for several of the large infrastructure projects, one of which was for the enlargement of the airport, which led to Bovis winning the contact.

Also in February an exhibition was arranged in Jerusalem entitled “Best of British Enterprise”, involving some of the most famous names in British industry as well as leading academic and R&D institutes in Britain (BIPAC 9/2/94).

In May a trade mission was organized to Israel, firms covered a diverse range of activities, from engineering to electricity, textiles, public relations and food processing.

An article in the National Westminster Bank Newsletter for November 1994 makes interesting reading.

"Israel is now among the largest of the world's trading nations expected to export over £10 billion of visible goods in 1994 with an expected inflow of international investment in excess of £12 billion. Agriculture, although still very important in the export trade and to the economy is becoming less important as industry develops exports of high added value machinery, electronics, fine chemicals, processed food and clothing.

... For the British exporter, Israel is one of our most important customers with UK exports in 1993 up 50% and with a projected value of more than £1 billion expected in 1994. British export success has been largely in the industrial field covering machinery, process equipment and capital goods generally, components, electronics, raw materials and large quantities of commodities and food manufacturing inputs. There is a growing trade in vehicles and vehicle parts.

British consultants are already busily at work in the area helping to further visionary plans for the infrastructure that will bring about new roads, railways, harbours, electric power, gas, water and health care facilities.

... Britain can be proud of the part that she has played in the Israeli economic success story and can look forward to participating in an exciting future as Israel's neighbours realize the economic benefits of closer co-operation".

BRITAIN IN THE MIDDLE EAST

When Saddam Hussein threatened Kuwait once again, in early October, Britain and America responded rapidly. Fighter aircraft were sent from Germany to reinforce British planes already in the Middle East. A battalion of 1,250 Royal marine commandos was despatched with support troops. 1,300 tons of military freight was flown out involving 123 RAF flights. A destroyer was also sent to support a frigate which was already off Kuwait. Although a much smaller force than the Americans could muster, it served to show that Britain and America could operate together in defence of this region, and their resolve to defend the area was warmly welcomed by the Arab states.

Britain decided that the troops would stop on in Kuwait, to act as a deterrent to Saddam Hussein. It is also a "rare military and political opportunity" to have joint training with the Americans under these conditions. It is seen as a chance for Britain to re-establish relationships with the Pentagon and the Clinton administration. Britain has just won an order to supply £50 million worth of Starburst anti-aircraft missiles to Kuwait.

GKN won a £100 million order to supply armoured vehicles to Oman. Following John Major's visit to Saudi Arabia in September, Westland expect to supply anti-submarine helicopters next year.

Chapter 4:

AMERICA'S CONTINUING ROLE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

America poured about 30,000 troops into the area during October to counter Saddam's threatened invasion of Kuwait. She has 12 cargo ships on standby in the Indian Ocean at her base at Diego Garcia. They were moved up to Kuwait to supplement the tanks and artillery kept permanently in Kuwait. The whole operation ran smoothly; the lessons had been learnt from 'Desert Storm'. Faced with the might of America and Britain, Saddam wisely withdrew his forces.

The Gulf States have met the vast cost of this exercise. America has decided to increase the amount of weaponry held in the region. She is to double from 70 to 130 her fighter aircraft in the Gulf. She plans to have enough equipment in place to supply three armoured brigades.

"William Perry, the US Defence Secretary, has said the prepositioned equipment is a key deterrent to aggression in the region as it allows troops to arrive by air and be deployed almost immediately to fight instead of having to wait for the arrival by sea of heavy munitions.

In the past, however, the Gulf states and others in the Middle East have been wary about the long-term deployment of American troops or equipment on their soil. Recent agreements, which include a Kuwaiti plan to build a new equipment storage site to the south of Kuwait City, represent a significant change in attitude towards Washington since the end of the Cold War.

Since 1992, Allied forces have been enforcing Operation Southern Watch, which prohibits any Iraqi flights south of the 32nd parallel. This week the total number of sorties flown passed the 50,000 mark."

The Times 29/10/94

"America beat off competition from a joint British-French consortium, to replace Saudi Arabia's civilian air fleet in a \$6 billion contract."

BIPAC 23/2/94

America continues to pour aid into Israel and Egypt. In July the Senate approved a bill to allocate \$3 billion to Israel, \$2.1 billion to Egypt and for the first time, \$80 million to the Palestinians. There were fears that after the November election reverses in the US, the future flow of aid might be affected. Voices continue to be raised at the high level of investment in these countries, especially when there are economic problems at home. However, the Republicans assured Israel that the aid would continue as before (BIPAC 30/11/94).

In October, the Senate passed a bill to prevent double taxation for American firms who invest in Israel. This bill has been under debate for

25 years! It should lead to a considerable expansion in American investment (JP 1/10/94).

Earlier the two countries had reached an agreement over joint ventures in Russia, the Central Asian Republics and other areas of the CIS. It is hoped that new immigrants from the former Soviet Union will be able to use their contacts to generate business (BIPAC 15/6/94).

Earlier still in January, the two countries signed an agreement establishing the US-Israel Science and Technology Commission, which aims to promote joint private-sector, high-technology projects. Israel wants to use America's experience in adapting defense technologies to civilian use (JP 29/1/94).

The US also backed plans by Israel's Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, to hold talks with the Middle East countries under a 'super structure' that would look at Middle East security and development. It would cover such items as arms control, non-aggression, economic co-operation and human rights. It would be called the Conference on Security and Co-operation in the Middle East (CSCM) (JP 4/6/94). I have not heard whether this has proceeded; it would be an interesting example of the working of the chief of the "young lions" in this area.

The headline, *Pentagon ties 'best in decade'* expressed the warm relations between America and Israel. (JP 30/4/94). In January, a new US Ambassador to Israel was appointed—Edward Djerejian. He was a very popular choice in Israel, as he is highly thought of. He was ambassador to Syria for 3 years, so knows Assad well. His declared aims are to:

"enhance the high level dialogue between Washington and Jerusalem; to urge greater international recognition of Israel; and to help reform the Israeli economy".

JP 22/1/94

On the occasion of the signing of the peace treaty between Israel and Jordan, President Clinton visited Jerusalem and addressed the Knesset.

"Israeli MP's gave him a standing ovation when he declared: "Your journey is our journey and America will stand with you now and always.""

ST 30/10/94

He also recalled words of advice his pastor had given him.

"If you abandon Israel, God will never forgive you. It is God's will that Israel, the biblical home of the people of Israel, will continue forever and ever."

JP 5/11/94

Chapter 5:

JERUSALEM A BURDENSOME STONE

Introduction

The prophets foretold that Jerusalem would be a burdensome stone.

"And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it" (Zech. 12:3).

The sovereignty of Jerusalem is a contentious issue now and will increasingly be so in the future. Jew, Moslem and Christian claim to have rights over this city. The Jewish–Moslem claim is the most contentious one now, but prophecy declares that the future issue will primarily be the Jewish–Christian one, though of course some of the fanatically anti-Semitic Islamic nations—Persia, Ethiopia and Libya—will be there as Ezekiel 38 tells us. The coming invasion of Israel involves the "standing up" of Daniel's image when the nations represented by the image come together against God's people. The Book of Revelation, in speaking of the same things, speaks of the "gathering of the nations to the battle of Armageddon", under the influence of the unclean spirits out of the mouth of "the Dragon, the Beast and the False Prophet". Our following chapters expound this threefold cord. The link between the confederacy in Ezekiel 38 is a hatred of the fact that the Jews are in control of 'their holy city' and a desire to conquer Israel's wealth.

Isaiah, when speaking of this same time, puts it this way –

"For it is the day of the LORD'S **vengeance**, and the year of recompences for the **controversy** of Zion" (Isa. 34:8).

We will look briefly at

the Jewish,

Moslem

Christian

claims to the city.

THE JEWISH CLAIM TO JERUSALEM

Milestones readers will know that at the heart of the Gospel, is the Hope of Israel. The day when the promises to the fathers will be fulfilled, when Christ will be King over all, with Jerusalem as his throne. Jerusalem is God's chosen city. He gave it to His people Israel, subject to their obedience. Through disobedience they were removed from the land and the era of the **times of the Gentiles** began. That time period ends when Jerusalem is no longer "trodden down of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24).

Although we rejoiced when Jerusalem came under Israeli control in 1967, we still appreciate that the times of the Gentiles has not yet come to an end. As we have frequently made clear, Jerusalem is to come under the power of the Gentiles for one last time. The Gogian invasion of Ezekiel chs 38,39 and the invasion of Zechariah chs 12,14 are the same event. The Jews' hold of Jerusalem is to be lost. Half the inhabitants of the city are to be taken away as prisoners of war. (Zech. 14:2). Then Messiah comes to save his people, his land and his city. The Jerusalem that exists now will be swept away in the great earthquake that levels the cities of the world, and dramatically changes the topography of the land in preparation for Zion's role in the Kingdom age—the centre of the world.

"The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem" (Isa. 2:1-3).

The present day Jewish claim to the city is not a divine right. God has, however, permitted His people, in unbelief, to take the city and use it as their capital. By so doing they are a sign to this generation. The word of God declared so long ago that they must return and possess the city, in order that the final situation might arise—that the city might be the contentious issue that brings the nations down. The present lack of faith on His people's part, in no way justifies the action of those who will seek in that day to destroy God's people.

A strand of the picture of which we must not lose sight, is the latter day work of Elijah the prophet. The closing verses of the Old Testament are very dramatic.

"Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments.

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:

And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."
Mal. 4:4-6

The work of Elijah is here linked with the Law of Moses. Who better than Elijah to stir Israel back to the things of the Law and the fathers, in preparation for leading them to Christ in due time. He will cause many in Israel to turn to the Lord. The scene will then be set for Christ and the saints to come forth with a mighty hand to redeem his people.

Also to be borne in mind is that in 1996, the Jews plan to celebrate the 3,000th anniversary of the conquest of Jerusalem by David. Great plans are under way. The eyes of the world will be focused on that city—if other events haven't overtaken them! Due to the archaeological research of one of our brethren, the eyes of Jewry (and of the Gentiles!) will be focused on the temple mount and the Dome of the Rock. Zechariah's words—a *burdensome stone*—might yet be found to have an added significance!

It is against this background that we look at the present situation.

MOSLEM CLAIMS TO JERUSALEM

There are four Moslem contenders for Jerusalem: Yasser Arafat, King Hussein, King Hassan II of Morocco and King Fahd of Saudi Arabia—who looks after Mecca and Medina. We saw in chapter 1, that Israel considers that King Hussein would make a better guardian of Islamic holy sites in Jerusalem than Arafat. Hussein would respect Israel's claim to the **city** as their capital. Arafat desires both the "holy places" and city!

Israel has long made it clear, that there can be no compromise on the status of the city. The Oslo agreement laid down a framework that included discussions on Jerusalem by the third year from the withdrawal of Israeli troops. The clock, as it were, started ticking in May this year. Many in Israel see that the promising of discussions was a terrible mistake. Yet we see the hand of God. Jerusalem **is to be** the bone of contention. The politicians state that they are willing to discuss the religious sites, but not sovereignty. Mr Peres, the Foreign Minister stated

"I have said Jerusalem is closed politically and open religiously. This means it will remain unified, and only as Israel's capital, not two capitals. It will remain under Israeli sovereignty. However, when it comes to the needs and rights of various believers, we are open to proposals."
JP 23/7/94

Arafat has already laid claim to Jerusalem as "the capital of Palestine". He was upset by Israel's agreement that King Hussein could play a role in the future discussions on the "holy sites", and that he can continue to fund them. (The King is currently reported to be spending \$9 million annually "for the shrines and the salaries".) However the situation has been slightly defused by King Hussein handing over to the PLO the control (and payment of wages!) of Moslem sites in the West Bank. He still controls and pays for sites in Jerusalem.

In September, under pressure from the US, the EU, and Japan, Arafat backed off from insistence that part of the funds being donated, be used to fund Palestinian institutions in Jerusalem. The donors would only agree to further sums being paid if his Jerusalem funding wish were dropped (JP 24/9/94).

In July, the Saudis pledged \$1 billion for Arab development in Jerusalem, to counter the threat they perceive from Israel's ambitious building programme around Jerusalem. This money is to be spent "on developing Moslem and Christian religious sites in eastern Jerusalem, as well as beefing up Palestinian institutions and economic projects". The money is to be funneled through the Palestinian Authority, giving the PLO a large amount of control over how it is spent (JP 2/7/94).

We repeat from last years *Milestones* (pages 17-18):

A letter in the Jerusalem Post (11/12/93) and articles on 29/5/93 and 27/11/93 sets the record straight as far as Moslem interests in the city is concerned. Jerusalem is mentioned almost 700 times in the Hebrew Bible. It is not mentioned **once** in the Koran. There is a reference in the Koran to *Al Aksa*—"the furthest mosque", but in spite of Moslem claims, this does not refer to what is now the Aksa Mosque—the Dome of the Rock. In Mohammed's day Jerusalem was a Christian, Byzantine city including what subsequently became the Aksa Mosque. There is no mention in the Koran of Mohammed ascending to heaven from here. Far from being a holy city, when Jerusalem was captured in 638 (after the death of Mohammed), it was given its old pagan Roman name, Aelia. Jerusalem never has been an Arab capital, the Arab conquerors built a new city, Ramle, to serve as their capital. Much later the term *Al Quds*—"the Holy" was used, but this was in reference to the fact that the site had been the site of Solomon's Temple, not to anything Moslem. The Moslems claim that it is the "third most important site to Islam" after Mecca and Medina. It shares this "third" position with many other sites! Iraq, Iran, Turkey and Syria also claim to have the third holiest shrine on their soil. It is only in recent years that the Moslems have shown any concern for the city. When the Temple Mount was under Jordanian control, only the Jordanian royal family visited it. No other Arab ruler ever bothered. It suits their cause to now make out that it is a special site to their religion in order to press their claim to Jerusalem.

THE "CHRISTIAN" CLAIMS TO JERUSALEM

An interesting, brief paragraph in the Jerusalem Post:

"Russia demands say in status of Jerusalem"

"'Russia deserves and demands a say in the political status of Jerusalem's holy sites', said Victor Posuvaliuk, head of the Middle East department in the Russian Foreign Ministry. 'I'd like to stress that Russia possesses the largest Christian Orthodox community in the world,' Posuvaliuk said."

JP 3/9/94

The Greek Orthodox, Armenian and Latin patriarchs have joined together to "formulate a joint definitive proposal concerning the future of the holy places in the city." (JP 17/9/94). Thus we see the sides jockeying for the coming battle.

The Vatican and Jerusalem

The most interesting development, however, is on the part of the Vatican. At the time of the crusades, the Popes claimed the title “King of Jerusalem”. Because of this claim the Vatican did not recognize the new state of Israel in 1948.

However, after some 17 months of consultations, the Vatican and Israel signed an accord on the 30th December 1993. This 15 point document established diplomatic relations between the two countries. They exchanged special envoys and in June this year upgraded these to Ambassador level.

“The Vatican commits itself to joining Israel in the fight against anti-semitism. Israel for its part, vows to uphold the right of freedom of religion and the customary rights of rival Christian denominations in holy places.

The Church also obtains recognition of its right to run monasteries, schools and other religious institutions. Sensitive questions of the church’s legal and fiscal status will be discussed by separate sub-committees.”

DT 31/12/93

The Vatican chose to locate its embassy in Jaffa—the first country to do so. Jaffa has a large Arab population. The Vatican also started discussions with the Palestinians.

In March the Vatican established diplomatic relations with Jordan. (JP 12/3/94). Prime Minister Rabin visited the Pope, who accepted an invitation to visit Israel.

When in June the two sides upgraded their special envoys to ambassadors, the Israeli government issued the medal below.



“The medal marks a new era of mutual understanding and co-operation between Christians and Jews, who share common roots and moral values.”
Israeli Government spokesman

The medal is reproduced on page 48. It shows the official emblem of the State of Israel—the menorah and two olive branches to “represent the Jewish people’s yearning for peace” (Facts about Israel).

The emblem of the Vatican shows the “keys of St. Peter” with a crown and cross. The inscription on the reverse *PAX VOBIS* is Latin for *Peace be with you*. Pax, the Roman goddess of peace is identified with Irene the Greek goddess of Peace, who was pictured with the boy Plutus in her arms, one of the forerunners of the Mother and child, around which the worship of the catholic church revolves. (My thanks to a correspondent for information on the medal. See p18 of *The Two Babylons* by Hislop for more information on Pax/Irene).

We have been warned that at a time when they say *Peace and safety*, there is to be sudden destruction (1 Thess. 5:3). The word of God reveals the true intentions of the Vatican.

At the end of the year, the Jerusalem Post reported on a statement by the heads of the Christian communities saying that:

“Jerusalem is too precious to be dependent solely on municipal or national political authorities, whoever they may be...The statute on Jerusalem should also be guaranteed by the international community.”

The report then went on to say:

“Ironically, it is Israel’s agreement with the Vatican—culminating in the exchange of ambassadors between Israel and the Holy See earlier this year—which led to the formulation of the statement. In the light of the formal agreement between Israel and the Catholic Church, the other historic churches began to feel uneasy about their own position vis-à-vis the Jewish state.”
JP 31/12/94

Chapter 6:

BRITAIN LOOKS BEYOND EUROPE

Introduction

We have examined the changing attitude of Britain to the Jews. Equally thrilling has been the steady drive away from the EU.¹ When Britain joined the Common Market, Bible students were puzzled. Our understanding of prophecy was that Britain would be associated with the things of Israel at the time when Europe was opposed to Israel. Was our understanding wrong? No, it has been a test of faith, and a patient waiting for events to change so that Britain would leave the Common Market as it then was. Until recently that seemed a remote possibility. Now there are many who seriously doubt the wisdom of Britain remaining shackled to Europe. At the same time, Britain's trade with the rest of the world is increasing, and her need of Europe declines. We chart the progress in these directions, in these next two chapters.

BRITAIN'S UNEASE WITH THE EU

There has been growing disillusionment with the EU this year. The increasing grip on everyday life of Brussels' bureaucracy is irksome to this island race. Having individual freedom to do one's own thing rather than being regimented is what Britain is used to. Britain joined the Common Market to exploit the wider market that it offered. It was not to give up the freedom of Parliament to control her destiny and to be controlled from Brussels.

The continent has quite a different attitude to so many things. Centuries of submission to the power of the Church has left its mark. They are used to being told what to believe and do. Continental Law is based upon Roman Law—guilty until proved innocent.

Britain has been mainly Protestant. Freedom of thought and action has been guided by a Protestant work ethic. Laws based upon the individual's rights—innocent until proved guilty. Although Britain has had its fair share of scandals recently, she regards the continent as riddled with fraud and corruption in high places. Britain too has maintained her world wide links, especially with the Commonwealth, unlike most of the rest of Europe, where those old links are much diminished. Much of Europe has

¹ What used to be termed the EEC or Common Market, became the European Community, and then in January 1994, with the signing of the Maastricht Treaty, it became the European Union, the EU. However many papers still use the term EC.

suffered repeated invasion, but it was 1066 when the last invader set foot on Britain's shores!

Britain is prepared to compromise so far and no further. The monarchy and Parliament's powers are under threat from the wish of France and Germany to make it more than a "common" **market**. They are seeking a "common" **union**, with one currency and one parliament.

1994 has been a turning point. The Daily Telegraph, Britain's largest circulation quality daily paper, together with her sister paper the Sunday Telegraph, have run many articles this year critical of continued membership. Many are asking whether it is worth remaining a member of such an inward-looking community when there is a whole world of trading opportunities outside Europe. Leaving would be a big step. There seem three choices facing Britain:

- 1) Remaining at "the heart of Europe" and giving up her freedom
- 2) Becoming part of a two-tier Europe, and being on the outside
- 3) Leaving altogether.

Prophecy indicates that she will not choose 1). A two or three-track Europe has been talked about for some time, and increasingly so this year. It involves those countries who seek to integrate to do so, and have a common currency. Those who, like Britain, don't want this, retain trading links, but don't take part in making the decisions. It could well be that Britain takes the second option, and, with time, that might lead to the third.

Britain, Europe and Rome

Before looking at this year's events, this extract from *Milestones 1991*, page 60 sets out some of the reasons for our viewpoint.

Britain and Europe

Why do we traditionally see separate roles for Europe and the English-speaking peoples? There are several passages that indicate a separate power from those nations brought together in the final European confederacy. Ezekiel 38:13 is one of these where we have "the merchants of Tarshish and all the young lions thereof", in league with Arabian powers and questioning the Northern Invader, Gog. Clearly this is a power of the latter days but outside of the Northern Confederacy. It is a power famous for worldwide maritime trade and in a supporting role with the southern Arabian peoples. It is a power that has developed many other nations, here styled "the young lions". All these details are clearly relevant to Britain and it is her family of nations that have retained an identity separate from Europe.

Centuries of history have brought that distinction. Though Britain once occupied half of France, no European power has put a foot on England since William the Conqueror in 1066. England's attitude to the Jews has not been good but a great improvement on that of Europe! England and the English-speaking peoples have been essentially Protestant and that fact has led to the availability of God's Word and a general freedom of conscience in religious matters. At the time when the Americas and Australia, New Zealand, India, South Africa and many other parts were being colonized by Britain there were also Catholic Spanish, French and Portuguese vessels plying the "new" oceans of the world. On an early French map of Australia, circa 1800, the new land was named "Terra Napoleone"! So much could have gone the other way but under the Hand of God many of these nations retained the allegiance to the throne of England and despite the anachronism in this age, still present as a Commonwealth of Nations, a truly remarkable fact in this world.

Britain was first invaded by the Romans in 55 BC, and was under Rome's control until AD 407. At the time when the Visigoths, under Attila their king, were threatening to capture Rome, all Roman troops were recalled from the Rhine to come to her defence. The Roman commander in Britain, took it upon himself to take his troops across the channel to fight the barbarian invasion of Gaul, as all other Roman troops were tied up defending Rome. They never came back. (Rome fell to the Visigoths shortly afterwards in AD 410). Britain having been left defenceless, organized her own defence when in AD 409 they were attacked by German barbarians. The historian Zosimus records:

"They took up arms, and, braving the danger for themselves, they liberated the cities from the attacking barbarians . . . they expelled the Roman officials and set up their own state, on their own authority."

The People of Britain, A. Birley

And so it was that at the time when the 10 horns were establishing themselves on the head of the beast of the sea (Rev 13:1), Britain was no longer part of that empire. She was free and independent. The beast system which we are seeing revived today in the developments in the EU has its ten horns. (Rev 18:12, 16). Based upon the situation in the past, we can be confident that as the horns develop again, Britain becomes independent.

Britain's troubled year with the EU

The newspaper headlines, with a little explanation, tell the story.

"Britain's EC rebate under fire as Bonn seeks cuts" DT 26/1/94

Mrs Thatcher in 1985 negotiated a sizable rebate, to reduce the burden of Britain's contributions to the running of the Common Market. This has been a source of resentment from the other members.

“Major is ready for a long fight with the EC”

DT 23/3/94

This was over Britain not wanting to see her voting power diluted when the Community was enlarged to 15. With more votes being cast, Britain would not have sufficient percentage to block moves she did not like. This was a long and bitter row. It led to a further headline:

“Union fears permanent problem with Britain”

TE 1–7/4/94

Then there was Britain’s opposition to the candidate put forward by France and Germany to replace M. Delors as President of the European Commission:

“Major risks clash to stop ‘Delors Mk 2’”

DT 22/6/94

“Britain and Germany on collision course in EC”

DT 27/6/94

Britain used her veto and forced the community to put forward another candidate. Many in Britain didn’t think the second candidate was any improvement on the first. But Britain had made her protest and the new candidate—Jacques Santer of Luxembourg was accepted.

Shortly afterwards Germany banned British beef in a move that was seen as a retaliation for Britain’s veto on the presidency matter.

“British fury at beef ban by Germany”

DT 29/7/94

Then there were matters to do with the “Social Chapter”, part of the Maastricht Treaty. Britain had opted out of many of its provisions, to the great annoyance of the other members who saw that it would give Britain an economic advantage, in industry not having to bear the financial burdens of its implementation.

“Portillo twice plays the EU opt-out card”

DT 23/9/94

When the new President, Jacques Santer, took office at the start of December, his first task was to appoint the portfolios to the European Commissioners. Two were British, Sir Leon Brittan and Neil Kinnock, the former Labour party leader. Sir Leon has held the most prized position, he was described as “bestriding Brussels like a colossus”. He has been negotiating with Eastern Europe over their entry to the EU. Mr Santer’s problem was that with the forthcoming enlargement of the EU there were now more Commissioners than there were jobs. Envious eyes were being cast on Sir Leon Brittan’s job.

“Brittan on the menu in the great EC carve-up”

ST 9/10/94

When the new Commissioners were announced, his job had indeed been carved up, in what was seen as a further snub to Britain.

There were two other matters which caused grave misgivings in Britain. One was the scale of fraud that was being uncovered in the EU, and the other—linked to it, was the increase in contributions that Britain was being asked to make. The more galling when it was seen that so

much money was fraudulently disappearing into the pockets of farmers and growers, mainly, in the other EU countries.

"Fraud costs Euro taxpayers £5bn"

DT 29/7/94

"Play the EU game: you can waste millions"

"How to lose millions: pour money into poorly-supervised agricultural projects, fail to link farm subsidies with market prices, and make sure there aren't enough investigators"

DT 16/11/94

Britain's contributions have been held at £2.5 billion. They are set to increase to £3.5 billion by the end of the decade.

"Britain's bill set to soar by £1bn"

DT 16/11/94

The Daily Telegraph has estimated that being a member has cost Britain a total of £235 billion since Britain joined in 1973. This takes into account the hidden costs beside the direct costs of our contributions. They estimate that the average family food bill is £20 a week higher than it would be if Britain was not in the EU, and able to buy at world prices instead of the artificially high EU prices.

A two tier Europe?

The suggestion has been mooted for some time that a way to resolve differences between the aspirations of the different countries making up the EU, is to have a two—or three tier Europe. At its heart would be those countries pressing for closer integration, notably France and Germany, with the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg. They would merge their currencies and allow Brussels to dictate policy. They would set up their own defence corp and have a common defence policy. The outer ring or rings would consist of those countries who were seeking to join the central core, but whose currencies were not yet in a position to merge, such as Italy and Spain, or those countries, like Britain, who did not want to have close integration. In the three tier version, the outer tier would consist of new members such as the eastern European countries.

"Big Two plan fast track to federal Union"

"Franco-German pact as voting row grows"

TE 25-31/3/95

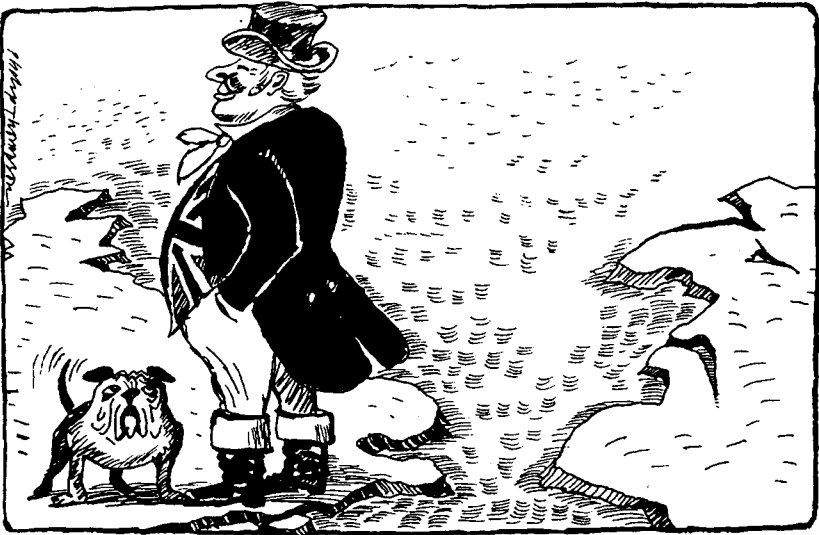
This report stated that France and Germany held regular daily meetings to work out a joint strategy. Potentially these two countries were in a strong position. The European Community presidency (not to be confused with the European Commission presidency) is rotated every 6 months. Helmut Kohl of Germany took over from Greece in July, and President Mitterrand of France takes over at the beginning of 1995. They announced that they would work together and made great plans for what they could achieve between them. The reality, however, was different. Kohl was facing elections in Germany in October, with a falling lead in the opinion polls and so couldn't do anything which might upset the voters. Mitterrand is a very sick man and will not be seeking re-election

in Spring 1995. Their ability to push through controversial changes was therefore limited.

John Major seems to be in favour of the two track scheme. He called for a “multi-speed, multi-track, multi-layered Europe” (DT 1/6/94). Though at times he shys away from the plan, because it does not put Britain at the “Heart of Europe”. We shall have to see!

Calls to leave the EU

There are many inside the government as well as out, who call for Britain to leave the Community, and seek a future as an independent world power. The following cartoon illustrates this feeling.



The cartoon following had as the headline under it:

Instead of sinking with the EC, why not swim alone? DT 8/4/94

The article, by Niall Ferguson, who is Fellow and Tutor in Modern History at Oxford, was written when Britain was arguing over the dilution of her voting rights with the changes being made for enlarging the community.

“According to the distribution of votes in the Council of Ministers, the average Irish voter has something like four times as much influence in Brussels as the average Brit.

“..the case for Europe is far less persuasive than is generally realised.membership carries a substantial price tag, currently something like £2.3 billion. .. if other states succeed in reducing Britain’s rebate, the burden will increase faster still. Our gross contribution stands at nearly £7 billion a year.

"We import more from the other EC countries than they import from us: to the tune of £2.5 billion last year. If we leave, they are unlikely to impose punitive tariffs on us, lest we do the same to them.

"Of course, there remains the diplomats' old refrain: no EC membership, no international influence. Yet how much influence can this country expect to exert? .. The point about the EC's federal structure is not that it gives Britain international influence, but that it *negates* Britain's international influence.

"Some would warn that we could become a third-rank power on the periphery of Europe. .. lets take that risk, but let us at least determine our own destiny. Once, four centuries ago, we *were* a third-rank power on the periphery of Europe. We had the option of being absorbed into the European Union of Hapsburgs. We rejected that option and went on, over the next 300 years, to rule the most extensive Empire the world has ever seen."

DT 8/4/94

This article was followed by a letter to the editor from a Prof. Stephen Bush of New York. It was headed "No middle way on Europe". It strengthened the arguments already put forward and concluded:

"Accompanying this would be a re-evaluation of the Commonwealth as an asset, not as a burden; as a vehicle for practical idealism; and perhaps, by virtue of its containing about a quarter of humanity, as informal guarantor of our UN Security Council seat."

DT 12/4/94

At the annual Conservative conference in October, Mr Michael Portillo, the Employment Secretary, won a four minute standing ovation for his fiercely anti-Brussels speech. A similar ovation was accorded Mr Peter Lilley, the Social Security Secretary, for his speech, strongly defending British sovereignty and opposing the "united states of Europe". The former Chancellor, Mr Norman Lamont, in addressing a fringe meeting at the Conference, said that the advantages that had accrued from Britain's 20 year membership, were "remarkably elusive". He could not pinpoint a single concrete economic advantage. He pointed out that the disadvantages outweighed the advantages.

The Conference seems to have marked a turning point. Never before has there been such vocal support for what, until recently, was unthinkable—Britain going it alone. John Major is not yet convinced, but his need to draw the party together has led him to suggest that there might be grounds for holding a referendum to decide the matter. It probably will come to a head when Brussels seeks to impose yet higher burdens and the feeling will be "enough is enough." Britain's trade with the EU is already declining, as she pushes out into other areas of the world. Europe is slower coming out of the recession than Britain. British industry has rapidly shaken off its lethargic image of strike-riven workers. Taking lessons from the Japanese companies who have invested here, she has emerged able to compete with most of the world.

Chapter 7:

BRITAIN AS TYRE

Introduction

*Our community has long held the view that Britain is the latter-day Tyre and the “Merchants of Tarshish”. It is evident from scripture that there must be a latter-day power occupying a similar position to that of Tyre and her merchants in OT times. Readers are referred to Ch 8 of “Russia, the Vatican and the Invasion of Israel”, by Bro. Graham Pearce, for the scriptural evidence. What we see today is Britain emerging once more as a dominant, world **trading** power. Her businessmen are to be found in every corner of the world. Her centuries long tradition of overseas investments is beginning to provide a rich return.*

We examine Britain as a growing trading power under the following headings:

Britain's growing power

Banking

Stock market

Shipping

Investment

Britain's economy

U.K. oil

Isaiah's prophecy of Tyre

BRITAIN'S GROWING POWER

Let's sketch her world position.

Banking

This is a vital aspect of a trading nation. International transactions require a strong financial centre. London is host to over 500 overseas banks. Paris fewer than 250, and Frankfurt which won the prize of being home to the European Monetary Institute, has only 150 foreign banks. It has the biggest concentration of banks in the world, and growing fast. In the past year, 35 new foreign banks have set up offices here, many from the fast growing Asia-Pacific region. In a 1992 survey it was estimated that Britain's average daily worldwide trading volume in currencies was \$300 billion, the lion's share of an \$800 billion world wide volume. Germany's trade was \$57 billion and Paris \$36 billion.

Traditionally there were reckoned to be three main financial centres, London, New York and Tokyo. Recent crises in Japanese banking has seen Japan declining from her world position, leaving London and New York as the world powers in financial and banking terms (TE 8-14/4/94).

Stock market

In the equities market, London has now overtaken New York, and is second only to Tokyo. As with banking, Japan is declining and Britain is picking up the business rather than New York (TE 16–22/12/94). Business generally is booming. London now accounts for almost 60% of all overseas equity trading, and nearly 90% of all cross border trading in Europe. London also handles 65% of the world's market in new securities floated on the international bond markets.

Shipping

Although Britain's merchant fleet has shrunk from 30% to 3% of the world's fleet over the past 70 years, London still retains its place as the world's biggest provider of marine services. It handled £3 billion of shipping insurance premiums in 1991, £400 million of shipbroking commissions, and a shipping loan portfolio worth about £7.5 billion. Many of the Greek shipping magnates live in London, because of the facilities available here (DT 14/10/94).

Investment

Britain is one of the world's biggest global investors. Earnings from which contribute £8 billion a year to the balance of payments. Britain's eyes are not on Europe.

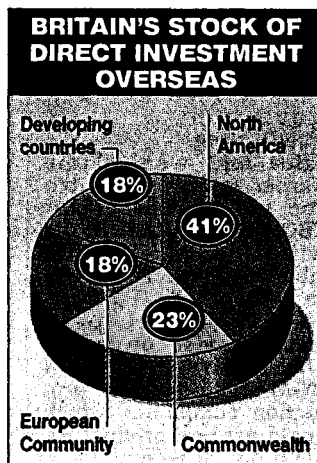
"BRITAIN'S BIG SWING EAST"

"South-east Asia and the Pacific Rim, not Europe, are the targets for investment." ST 30/10/94

This was the headline to an article by Bill Jamieson on the investment plans of Britain's top companies. Only 15% of the companies named Continental Europe as their largest growth in overseas investment, compared with 21% for North America and 47% for South-east Asia and the Pacific Rim.

More than half Britain's top 100 quoted companies derive more than 30% of profits from overseas, but only 14 of these companies have more than 30% of earnings coming from Europe.

Britain's investments over the past centuries have traditionally lain mainly outside Europe. This chart shows the relative distribution of Britain's overseas investments.



We saw in chapter 2, that Israel is developing strong links with India, traditionally viewed as the eastern Tarshish. Britain too, is targeting

India. When John Major visited India two years ago, he set up the Indo-British Partnership Initiative (IBPI). Under this initiative trade has boomed—now worth about £1 billion in British exports and imports and expanding at 20% a year.

In March, the Indian Prime Minister visited Britain and signed a bilateral agreement on mutual protection of investments. In November, the British Trade Minister led a business delegation of 85 members to India on a trade mission.

Bill Jamieson has written a fascinating book *"Britain beyond Europe"*, published this year. He points out that Britain has long had a world outlook rather than a narrow European one.

"Britain's economic self-interest was seen to lie in its development as an independent maritime power, trading with the continents of North and South America, Africa and the Middle and Far East. The history of Britain's continental involvement has never been one of imperial mission but rather one of thwarting the illiberal military imperialism of others and specifically of guarding against the continental Channel ports falling under the sole control of a potential aggressor."



Business in Europe? There is a world elsewhere

Britain's economy

Britain's industry has changed immensely over the past decade. In a poll of senior managers from 100 top companies, including foreign-owned companies based here, the UK was rated 'top in Europe' for manufacturing. This was due to her economic strength, her skilled workers, low labour costs and good distribution links (DT 4/2/94).

With the economy growing at around 3.8%, Britain's economy is at its strongest level for six years. Inflation has been kept under control and is

the lowest in Europe apart from France. Interest rates are much lower than they have been for many years. Exports are expected to rise strongly over the next few years, pushing the economy into the black. At the moment Britain imports more than she exports. It reached its worst position in 1990 when it was £6 billion in the red. It has recovered remarkably. The debt was expected to be down to £1 billion at the end of 1994 and possibly in the black again at the end of next year (ST 20/11/94). When the third

quarter figures were announced at the end of December, Britain had already surged into the black. The headline **"Outlook for Britain 'at 30-year high'"** (DT 7/11/94) sums up a remarkable year. The Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke said the figures crowned an excellent year for the economy—

"Output has grown by 4%, employment has risen by over a third of a million, inflation has remained below 3% for the longest period since 1961 and the current account is now back in surplus for the first time in almost eight years. British businesses are winning in the markets of the world. we are selling more goods and services abroad than at any time in our history."

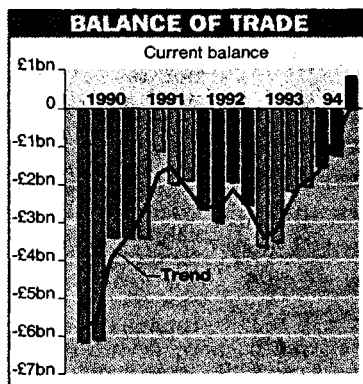
DT 23/12/94

Britain is expected to outperform its main continental rivals for the third year in a row.

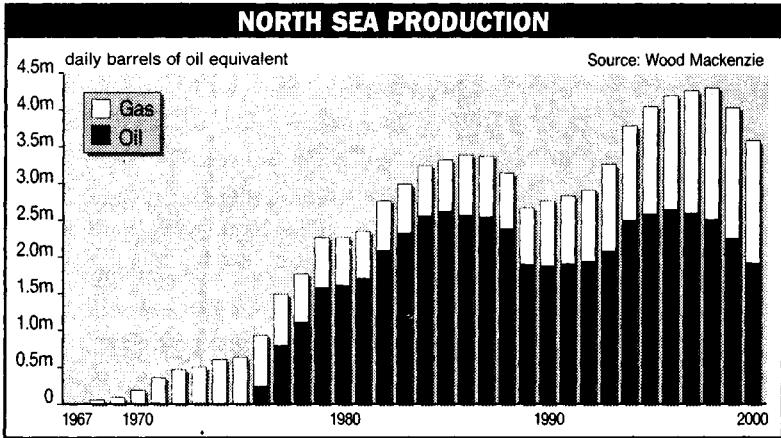
Unshackled by the high social costs of the continent, and with rising productivity, Britain's labour costs are very competitive. Worked out in relation to US costs at 100, the UK is 76; Italy 95; France 97; Belgium 127 and Germany 152. In other words the UK costs are half those of Germany.

UK oil

Britain has benefitted for the past twenty years from the vast reserves of gas and oil which have been found both off-shore and inland. It was thought that the oil reserves were drying up and by the end of the century, Britain would be losing the substantial benefit of oil revenues. This hasn't proved to be the case. New technology has enabled more oil to be extracted from existing wells. New types of platforms which don't need fixing to the sea bed have reduced operating costs by 30% and enable wells to be worked on in deep waters. Throughout the year new finds were reported. New wells are to be sunk in the inhospitable region off the Shetlands. It is estimated that anything between 20m and 320m tonnes of



oil lie here. In the traditional North Sea area, new wells coming on stream helped to boost production to a six year high and on course for a 10 year high (DT 28/10/94; 5/11/94).



At the year end a £1.5 billion North Sea gas development was announced. The Britannia field is expected to yield 2.5 trillion cubic feet of gas—the equivalent of more than a year's worth of the total UK demand for gas, as well as yielding oil. At least 90 further developments are awaiting government permission for go ahead—"an offshore boom in oil and gas developments" (DT 21/12/94).

Much of the revenue that was generated by North Sea oil was invested overseas. When oil began to flow in the late 70's, Britain's net overseas assets (the balance between what we invest overseas and what we borrow from overseas) were around £6.4 billion. It shot up to £44 billion in 1982 and almost £100 billion in 1986. Then the oil prices collapsed from a peak of \$39 a barrel to a low of \$14, and is around \$17 today, drastically reducing profitability and investment. Today, net overseas assets run at around £20 billion. Interestingly countries such as the US and Germany run net overseas **liabilities**—they borrow more from overseas than they invest. The fruits of this overseas investment are beginning to come home for Britain (ST 13/11/94).

ISAIAH'S PROPHECY OF TYRE

One of the many prophecies concerning Tyre is that of Isaiah chapter 23. A period of downfall was prophesied which would last 70 years.

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king; after the end of seventy years shall Tyre sing as an harlot.” Isa. 23:15

There would have been a fulfilment of this in Old testament times. Isaiah continues,

“And it shall come to pass after the end of seventy years, that the LORD will visit Tyre, and she shall turn to her hire, and shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth.

And her merchandise...shall be holiness to the LORD: it shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the LORD, to eat sufficiently...” Isa. 23:17, 18

This indicates that there must be a latter-day fulfilment. A time which will see the return of the Lord, and the latter-day Tyre using her resources to the benefit of God’s people. Are we seeing in Britain’s re-emergence as a world trading power, and her changed attitude towards the Jews, the beginning of the fulfilment of these words? 70 years ago would take us to the first major steps in the establishment of the Jewish homeland, when Britain went back on her word in deference to the pressure exerted by the Arab lobby in Parliament. In 1921 Winston Churchill who was Colonial Secretary at the time and in control of Palestinian affairs, gave way to the demands of the Emir Abdullah, who had invaded what we call Jordan. Four-fifths of the territory which had been promised to the Jews was given to the Arabs to become Trans-Jordan. The long years of “The Depression” were just beginning, to be followed by WW II and the difficult days that followed.

Here we are 70 plus years on and what a different picture we see.

Chapter 8:

THE QUEEN AND THE COMMONWEALTH

The Queen has had another difficult year, with her family much in the news over their failed marriages. But she continues to act as the binding force behind the Commonwealth. She was able to welcome back to the fold South Africa after an absence of 33 years, the 51st member of the Commonwealth.

A book published this year entitled *The Queen*, by Kenneth Harris, and reviewed in the Daily Telegraph 11/4/94, showed what an important role she plays. She is far from a figurehead—

“She is doing something of importance, and doing it remarkably well.

“The British monarch’s principle task is to keep the show on the road, to ensure there is a government capable of running the country and commanding a majority in the House of Commons. Once that is done the Queen, up to a point can relax. But, to achieve this, she has had to make decisions that were difficult, potentially embarrassing and which only she could make.

“Successive prime ministers have testified to the importance they attach to their audiences with the Queen, to the value of her experience, her good sense of judgement, her common sense.

“It is when the Queen speaks as Head of the Commonwealth as well as Queen of Great Britain that she enjoys the greatest authority. “The existence of the Commonwealth gave the monarchy a standing and a meaning which transcended what the throne of the United Kingdom alone could give,” writes Harris. ‘And to guide, maintain and enhance the Commonwealth, the new Commonwealth, was a sacred trust and duty”.

In February, the Queen made a West Indies tour, visiting eight Commonwealth countries. In October she visited Russia—no reigning British monarch has set foot on Russian soil before.

The scriptural picture is of **all the young lions** being with the **merchants of Tarshish** (Ezek. 38:13). In the strong Commonwealth ties, we see this picture of Britain as the mother lion, the Tarshish trading power, who has young lion powers backing her up. These are not cubs, but independent, grown up lions, who never-the-less still retain their links with the mother. Although America is not a member of the Commonwealth, yet originally she was colonized from Britain. Fully independent, and fighting her own battles, yet having the common bond of language and culture, America continues to cooperate together with Britain.

Chapter 9:

THE BEAST—WESTERN EUROPE

Introduction

Last year, in chapter 13 of Milestones, we sketched the growing development of the three-fold cord: the Dragon, the Beast and the False Prophet (Rev. 16). The development of the 6th Vial brings the nations to the Battle of Armageddon. It is of great interest to see the latter-day development of Europe, east and west, fitting into this prophetic picture. We devote this and the next two chapters to consider developments. First we look at Europe.

The enlargement of Europe

The beast

of the sea

of the earth

the image of the beast

in the latter-days

Germany at the heart of the beast

Franco-German relations

THE ENLARGEMENT OF EUROPE

On January 1st 1995, the EC expands from 12 to 15 members. Austria, Finland and Sweden are joining. Norway voted to remain outside. With all three countries there was a sizable opposition to joining. In Sweden there is a strong anti-catholic feeling. Two women Ministers campaigned against joining, as they believed “the Pope has an undue influence over the EC and that he imposes conservative views that affect women’s rights” (ST 13/11/94).

Many of the eastern European states are anxious to join. Negotiations are proceeding slowly. John Major is keen to see a larger **trading** community. Helmut Kohl of Germany is keen to see the Community enlarged eastward to include Poland, Hungary, the Czech and Slovak Republics, Bulgaria and Romania, and by 1999, to rekindle the Europe of the past. Already it has been agreed that the heads of these governments can attend one of the two EU summits held every year, and representatives can attend other meetings (DT 5/10/94).

For each of the new members, including Norway in case she had joined, the entire European Community law had to be translated into the local language. All 37,000 pages of it! From next year the present 11 languages which are used in meetings will increase to 15. The present cost of translations is £50 million a year—this will escalate rapidly. 1.5 million pages of translated texts are turned out in a year at present (ST 27/11/94).

Talks have also started to bring in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovenia. It is hoped that a full association agreement can be signed by June 1995, which would bring them trading benefits and allow their representation at meetings as has been offered to Poland, and others (DT 16/12/94).

It is difficult to see how such a babel of voices could be coped with. Even now a vast army of interpreters and bureaucrats are being recruited to deal with these negotiations and to prepare the economies of these countries, as rapidly as possible, for their integration. Germany is taking the lead in this training. The German language is mainly being used, supplanting French as the language most used in EU discussions. (TE. 22–28/12/94).

Our particular interest lies in Austria joining. Vienna was for many years the seat of the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, the beast of the earth of Revelation 13.

THE BEAST

Let's briefly look at the development of the **beast** in Revelation. In Ch. 13 we have the **beast of the sea, the beast of the earth, and the image of the beast**. In Ch 12 we have a dragon with seven heads and 10 horns and 7 crowns on the heads. With the subsequent division of the Roman Empire into east and west, the dragon which initially represented the power of pagan Rome, became the symbol of eastern Rome. The beast is introduced to describe the western Roman empire in its various phases.

The beast of the sea

The description in Ch. 13:2 leaves us in no doubt as to the connection between this beast power and the four beasts described in Daniel Ch 7. This beast incorporates facets of each of Daniel's 4 beasts, and is a description of a phase in the history of Daniel's 4th beast. At this time it has 7 heads and 10 horns each crowned, v. 1. (In Ch 12 the heads are crowned, not the horns). With the wounding of the 6th head—the Imperial head, in AD 476, at the hands of the barbarians, there arose a 7th head—the Gothic head. This head was not to continue for long. John saw the 6th head revive. The Gothic rule was finally overthrown in AD 553, and the West came once more under the control of the Emperor in Constantinople.

The ending of the Gothic rule enabled the power of the papacy to grow. The dragon power of Constantinople *gave power to the beast* (v. 4) when the Emperor Justinian in AD 533 and the Emperor Phocas in AD 606/610 declared the papal supremacy in spiritual matters. Thus it was given *a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given it to continue 42 months*. This time period of 1260 days of years ended with the French Revolution of 1794 and the ending of the Papal

States in 1870. Not that the beast was to be destroyed at this time. The word *continue* is no—where else translated continue. It means *to make, build or construct* with derived meanings of *to effect, do or perform*. We are informed what it was to do during this period in verses 6 and 7—to *blaspheme, and to make war with the saints*. Its ability to persecute the saints ended in the last century, but the beast continued.

Bro Thomas lists the 10 horns as the Huns, Vandals, Visigoths, Burgundians, Gepidæ, Lombards, Franks, Suevi, Alans, Bavarians. They were crowned horns, independent kingdoms to be found upon the Western Roman empire. They didn't continue as independent powers, but the territory they occupied was the basis upon which the horn powers continued upon the head of the beast.

The beast of the earth

A further development is given in v. 11 onwards, **the beast of the earth**. It had two horns like a lamb, but spoke as a dragon (v. 11). This corresponds to the part of Daniel's vision where a little horn comes up which overthrows 3 of the horns. In this little horn were eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth speaking great things (7:8). In Daniel, the horn represents the emperor and the mouth represents the papacy—speaking like a dragon. In Revelation, the lamb horns correspond to the papacy and the new emperor who arose in the west at this time—Charlemagne and his successors. Pope and Emperor working together—the Holy Roman Empire.

The image of the beast

There was a further development—the **image of the beast**. Charlemagne gave territory to the Pope, who as well as being spiritual head over all western Europe, had his own Kingdom and power in Italy.

The beasts continued side by side. When the **beast of the earth** had developed, the **beast of the sea** was restricted to France and Spain, the **beast of the earth** was to be found in the Holy Roman Empire in Germany and Austria and the **image of the beast** in the Papal possessions of Italy. The spiritual leader over all was the papacy, the military rulers were the Kings of France and Spain and the Emperor in Germany. In the east the **dragon** continued in Constantinople until overthrown in 1453. The seat of dragon then moved to Moscow.

The latter-day beast

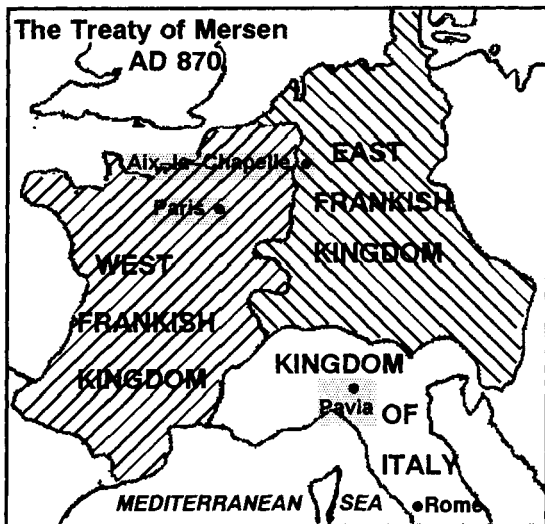
When we come to Revelation Ch 16, we are re-introduced to the **beast** and the **dragon** and a new symbol—the **false prophet**. The new symbol is necessary because **the image of the beast** has disappeared with the loss of the Papal States in 1870. This coincided with the declaration of Papal infallibility—claiming to speak on God's behalf. This is what prophets did, but this was a false prophet. We look therefore for a latter-

day beast and dragon system, together with a false prophet system. Further details on the beast are given in chapter 17. The restored 6th head in the West—the beast of the earth—is described as the 8th head (v. 11), so we have a beast system modeled on the beasts of the sea and earth. It has 10 horns which are as yet uncrowned, but are given their power by the beast (v. 12). A further detail is given of the horns, which although coming later in the prophecy, are best regarded as if in parenthesis. Verse 16 speaks of the horns making the whore who rides the beast desolate. This was fulfilled in the period from the French Revolution onwards, when Europe broke the power of the papacy, as described under the first 5 vials. In the final picture, we find the horn powers of Europe receiving power as *kings one hour with the beast. They have one mind, and shall give their power and strength to the beast.* (v. 12, 13). They make war with the Lamb, but are overcome by him (v. 14). The harlot that rides the beast, i.e. controls its direction, is the papacy, the false prophet of Ch. 16.

Bro. Thomas gives the **one hour** a time value of 30 years, which commences after Gog is defeated and the gospel preached and ends when the beast and its rider are totally destroyed. With Gog defeated, the power in the East is broken, and Europe will then briefly reign supreme. Doubtless at the time of its fulfilment there will be 10 countries working together, but it may not be possible to identify them until then. Our interest is in seeing the shaping of Western Europe, encompassing the territories of the horns in the past. We are seeing the latter-day shaping of the beast upon the back of which the whore, the false prophet can ride.

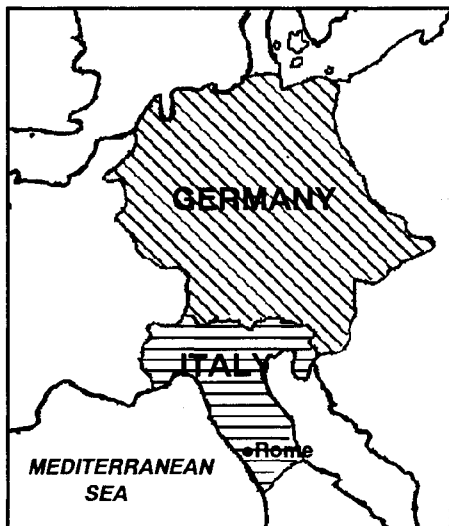
GERMANY AT THE HEART OF THE BEAST

The Holy Roman Empire had its roots in the Kingdom of the Franks. They came from the Rhine region, moved westward and established themselves in northern Gaul, spreading with time to cover all of Gaul — modern France, by the 6th century. It was in the 8th century that Pippin (or Pepin) king of the Franks came to the aid of the Pope who was being attacked by the



Division of Charlemagne's Empire

Lombards. In return he was anointed by the pope as *patricius Romanorum* (patrician of the Romans). His son Charlemagne was a successful warrior. He extended eastward, uniting the many conquered tribes by converting them to Catholicism. The Kingdom was divided between his 3 grandsons. With the death of one of them it was divided into two: the West Frankish Kingdom—corresponding to France and Belgium of today; and East Frankish Kingdom, Germany (W and part of E),



Germany & Italy under Otto the Gt. AD 962

Denmark, Czech Republic, Austria, and the Netherlands. When the Eastern line died out, instead of uniting with the West Frankish Kingdom, they elected a Duke Conrad to be king. He designated Duke Henry of Saxony as his successor. He was succeeded by his son, Otto I, who became the most powerful king in Europe, appointing bishops and clerics. He pushed the boundaries of his kingdom eastward, converting the Slavs, extending his eastern border to the Oder—the present eastern border of the former East Germany. In 961 he came to the rescue of Pope John XII and in 962 Otto was crowned Emperor of the Romans. This was the start of the HRE. Otto wanted to control the appointments of clerics in Italy as he did in Germany. This led to dispute between them, and Otto deposed John, and supervised the election of the next two popes. Thus began the balance of power between Church and State which lasted until the time of Napoleon.

During the fourteenth century, the German princes would choose as emperor a count who had only small possessions, fearing to promote someone of power to this position. The title at this time gave no real power, but gave social prestige and attractiveness in marriage. In the 1300's, the Hapsburgs, who were petty German princes, served as Emperors and acquired through marriage the duchy of Austria. The title then ran through a series of Counts of Luxembourg. When this line died in 1438 it passed to the nearest heir, the Hapsburg Duke of Austria. So began the vast Hapsburg empire, which for five centuries was the great power of Europe, the provider of Emperors. So in the latter half of the HRE, it is customary to associate the power of the empire with Austria. Napoleon fulfilled the 4th vial in his conquest of Austria in 1806,

bringing to an end the rule of the Hapsburgs. Hence our interest in Austria joining the EU.¹

Today we see the growing power of Germany to dictate policy in the EU. Chancellor Kohl was re-elected in October, for the fourth time, though with a much reduced majority. He heads a united Germany, whose combined population of some 80 million, makes it the largest country in the EU—one in four Europeans lives in Germany. She has the strongest economy, and holds the largest block of seats in the European Parliament—99 seats, 12 more than anyone else. The successful reunification of Germany has created a strong power-block which is beginning to dominate Europe. Her GDP is the world's 4th largest, her international trade second only to America. The German mark is the strongest currency in the world. The old jibe of Germany being an economic giant but a political dwarf, no longer applies. She has been flexing her political muscles. In July the German Constitutional Court ruled that German troops could be deployed outside the Nato area. She has built up a strong army, navy and air force, but has had no role for them until now. Compared with France, she has more submarines and destroyers, a larger army [a third larger than Britain's. DP] but her air force is a little smaller. (TE 29/4—5/5/94) For the first time since the war, German troops marched down the Champs-Élysées on Bastille Day.

In July, President Clinton visited Germany and declared that Germany was now "the dominant US ally in Europe". The Sunday Times carried a cartoon showing Clinton crowning Kohl, who was holding a standard with the wording "Fourth Reich".

"Clinton tactlessly reminded Europe of this uncomfortable fact. [The power of Germany, DP]. He resurrected the Holy Roman Empire and crowned Kohl the new king of Europe.

Kohl's Germany is more powerful economically than was the Kaiser's Second Reich or Hitler's Third Reich". Sunday Times 17/7/94

Kohl has worked to secure Germany's political clout. The most senior position at Brussels is the Secretary-general of the Council of Ministers. A relatively unknown job, but as one German official put it, "the importance of the job is inversely related to its visibility". The Secretary-general advises the Council of Ministers, where all EU decisions are taken. Germany efficiently twisted the necessary arms to secure the job for her top diplomat, Dr Jurgen Trumpf. His five year stint should place him in a key position to press forward Kohl's enlargement plans. Another key German, already serving, is Klaus Hansch, the president of the

¹ Source for much of this material; *The Mainstream of Civilisation—to 1500*, Chodorow et al.

European Parliament. When he finishes in 1996, it is expected that a German Democrat will take over. Jacques Santer, the newly appointed president of the European Commission owes his position to Mr Kohl and is expected to be little more than a German puppet.

"In his quiet, unassuming way, Mr Kohl seems to have lined up all the plums. In four or five years time, as the countries of *Mittel Europa* prepare to join the community, he will collect his jackpot". DT 30/8/94

Kohl's aim is to create a united Europe. Now that his success in the unification of Germany can be seen, he can vigorously pursue this larger union, involving a two speed Europe, if necessary. The German paper on "Reflections of European Policy", issued in September, which embraced this two track theme was written by Mr Karl Lamers, the foreign policy spokesman for the ruling Christian Democratic party in Germany. It spoke what Chancellor Kohl found impolitic to admit, just before the elections, of a vision involving a single federal state with a single federal government (DT 22/11/94). (See Ch 6 for details of the two-track ideas). He is a man in a hurry. This is his last four year term of office, he is pushing on as fast as he dare to complete his vision in time.

FRANCO-GERMAN RELATIONS

The history of the Common Market revolved around the French/German axis. Germany felt politically restrained because of its past history. France was weaker economically, but carried political weight. The partnership brought results. This picture now seems to be changing. Germany can now stand on her own feet, and France is being left behind. The French are not so keen on the vision of a united Europe, and see this vision straining their relationship. With France following Germany in the six-monthly spell of Presidency for the European Community, it had been expected that they would be working together—a 12 month co-presidency. This did not work out due to rifts and electoral pressures. It has allowed Germany to move ahead. Chancellor Kohl has secured his next term of office. French elections are due in May, and President Mitterrand will not be standing again. He is a sick man, and may not even survive until then. It was expected that Jacques Delors would stand for president, but domestic pressure caused him to drop out. There seems no strong French leader in sight. We will probably see Germany increasingly being at the heart of Europe, making the running.

Chapter 10:

THE FALSE PROPHET—THE PAPACY

Introduction

The papal control over the affairs of western Europe is immense. Her policy of infiltrating her members into prominent positions in all walks of life has paid handsome dividends. Whether it be in the press, radio TV, politics, her voice is now heard. Events can be used to further the Catholic viewpoint. Faced with a weak Church of England leadership, many have defected to Rome. The Pope is seen as a world leader and figurehead. The Time magazine voted him "Man of the Year" for 1994. Their last issue of the year carried his picture on the front cover and devoted 18 pages to him. What a change in the last 100 years. As Revelation 18 says "I sit a queen and am no widow".

Her widowhood phase, when "the horns hated and devoured her," has passed. All nations are now drinking her "wine." We examine her progress under these headings.

The present Pope

The Papacy in Europe

The Papacy and the rest of the world

Moves towards reconciliation with the Orthodox churches

The exodus to Rome

The false prophet —Pope or Mohammed?

THE PRESENT POPE

The 73 year old Pope has held this office for 16 years. He is suffering from the after effects of the assassination attempt in 1981. In 1992 a benign tumour was removed, though there was speculation that it was cancerous. This year he broke his femur. He hopes to remain in office until the year 2000, but there is increasing speculation as to whether his health will last that long. This has led to mounting speculation over who his successor would be. The current favourite is Cardinal Martini, the Archbishop of Milan. Another is Cardinal Ratzinger, a German, who has headed the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the former Holy Office—the office of the Inquisition, since 1981. He works closely with the Pope (DT 30/4/94; The Times 1/10/94). The Time magazine put it:

"The Pope and Ratzinger are two pieces of a puzzle. Without the one, the other would not be complete. Asked whether the Cardinal in practice was the undisputed No. 2 under the Pontiff, one insider in the Holy See responds, 'Intellectually and theologically, he's No. 1.'"

The present Pope's charisma is well known.

“People who see him—and countless millions have—do not forget him. His appearances generate an electricity unmatched by anyone else on earth.

John Paul’s impact on the world has already been enormous, ranging from the global to the personal. He has covered more than 800,000 km [500,000 miles] in his travels. Many believe his support of the trade union Solidarity in his native Poland was a precipitating event in the collapse of the Soviet bloc.”

Time 26/12– 2/1/95

Obviously written by an admirer, yet this is the picture the world sees—a good man in a world of moral decadence.

His book, published this year, *Crossing the threshold of hope*, became an instant best seller, with over a million copies sold within the first few days, it is expected to sell 10 million copies world wide. It was published in 20 languages and 36 countries.

Also published in English this year, was the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the first complete survey of catholic teaching since the 16th century. The sales of this 600 page book exceeded all expectations.

He maintains an “iron” grip on Catholic policies. In spite of their unpopularity, his stand on abortion, contraception, women priests is unyielding. In Daniel’s image the clay is found to be mixed with iron. This iron of Rome is to be found in the growing influence of Rome upon Europe in these last days.

The Pope has given encouragement to a new religious order, *The Legionaries of Christ*. They are seen as a replacement of the Jesuit order whom he perceives as having become too liberal. Members are in training for up to 14 years (longer than Jesuit training). It already has 300 priests and a further 3,000 in training. He also encourages the lay movement *Opus Dei*. (Time 26/12/94)

THE PAPACY IN EUROPE

The leaders of virtually all the EU countries are Catholics. So are many of the officials in the European organizations. The Pope has little difficulty in ensuring his views are known. The power he wields is immense. Those who do not live in a catholic country have little concept of the influence that the church has in all walks of life. Through the confessional, the priest has access to the minds of all his congregation. The Pope’s position on Europe was made clear in the speech he made to the Parliament in Strasbourg in 1988. He exhorted the members of parliament to “render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s”. They held the temporal power, he the spiritual. He spoke of his wish for the day when “Europe may once again cover its true geographical and more important, historical dimensions”. He has his eyes set on the recreation of the Holy Roman Empire.

A review of a recently published book on the Pope, *John Paul II: a Biography*, made the point that Britain did not feature.

"It is as if for him the existence of this land were less real than that of the most petty American state. Nor is the fact devoid of instruction. It is almost as if the Pope inhabits a different globe. It is very much the papal style to call Europe back to its Christian roots, and to argue that the Eastern bloc countries have every reason to be regarded as part of a common European culture." DT 22/10/94

In his native Poland, the church has suffered a setback, with the defeat at the polls of the right-wing parties who were allied to the Church. Poland has made a Concordat with the Vatican, signed in secret on July 18, 1993, just when the Diet [parliament] had been dissolved. It gives the Church considerable powers in the fields of religious education, tax exemptions for the clergy and religious marriages. The new party which swept to power in the elections which followed the signing, was angry to find the deal a fait accompli. As it has the status of an international treaty, it cannot theoretically be modified (GW 13/4/94).

In chapter 3 of *Milestones* 1992 we dealt with the workings of the papacy and America to overthrow communism in Poland. We can add a further snippet.

"In the past, John Paul has not hesitated to involve himself in Polish politics. His friend Tadeusz Mazowiecki, a Solidarity intellectual who was Poland's first post communist Prime Minister, this month told Time something that church officials in the past frequently denied. After the communist regime imposed martial law in 1981, the Pope wrote letters of counsel to solidarity activists interned by the communists; priests and bishops served as couriers because they were not subject to body searches. Said Mazowiecki: 'Their robes carried more mail than many workers in our postal service.'" Time 26/12/94

"Vatican's voice takes her seat at Kohl's table" TE 25/11-1/12/94

This was the extraordinary headline to an article about the appointment of an East German politician as the youngest member of his cabinet. She has been nominated minister for women. A staunch Catholic, she will ensure that the Vatican's viewpoint is central to Germany's policies on matters affecting women.

THE PAPACY AND THE REST OF THE WORLD

The Pope demonstrated the power he wields when he overthrew a US resolution on abortion at the U.N.'s International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in September.

"The Pope's emissaries defeated a US-backed proposition on abortion. ... For nine days the Vatican delegates... lobbied; they kept their Latin American bloc in line and struck up alliances with Islamic nations opposed to abortion. In the end the Pope won." Time 26/12/94

He forged an alliance with Islamic fundamentalists in Iran to help block the motion. The Papal Nuncio in Teheran met with the Prime Minister's brother and the deputy Foreign Minister. The understanding between them is seen as laying the foundation for cooperation in "a future war between the religious and the materialists" (GW 14/8/94).

The Pope converses with President Clinton over the phone. As well as trying to move his position on abortion at the Cairo conference, he also discussed Bosnia. Clinton is described by the U.S. ambassador to the "Holy See", as having an **"extraordinarily positive relationship with the Pope."** (The Reformer Jul/Aug 94).

The Times carried an article about the volume of anti-Church of England material in the papers, and the amount of space devoted to those who convert to Rome. It said that there is no doubt that there is a powerful corps of right-wing Roman Catholic journalists such as Paul Johnson, William Odie, Clifford Longley, and Auberon Waugh committed regularly to write corrosive articles. The Daily Telegraph is one of many titles owned by Conrad Black a "commercially aggressive lay Roman Catholic". Rupert Murdoch is also a convert to Roman Catholicism. Both control newspapers in Australia too. Lord Rees-Mogg is a powerful media figure and a keen Roman Catholic, who actively calls for Rome to take over the cathedrals of Britain. "A powerful media campaign is under way" it warns (The Times 29/1/94). Multiply this around the world and one gets an inkling of the power the Roman Church wields.

The Vatican has completed diplomatic links with Israel, and the Pope has accepted an invitation to visit. Ties have also been made with Jordan.

Vatican intelligence chief, Jean-Louis Tauran, met Colonel Gaddafi of Libya, in an effort to co-ordinate opposition to the rising tide of Islamic fundamentalism. He also visited Tunisia, and met with Yasser Arafat.

"Tauran is a shadowy, but efficient diplomat, considered the chief architect of the Vatican's Middle East policy. He has supported the PLO ...he was recently involved in the former Yugoslavia, and was instrumental in the recognition of Slovenia and Croatia." TE 1/4/94

MOVES TOWARDS RECONCILIATION WITH ORTHODOX CHURCHES

The present Pope is friendly towards the Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartolomus I, leader of the Greek Orthodox church.

In June 95, he hopes to meet the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, the leader of the Eastern Orthodox Church. He has long spoken of mending the breach between the Roman and Eastern churches which became final in 1054 (Time 26/12/94).

Relations with the Serbian Orthodox Church are strained, as are relations with the Russian Orthodox Church, the more so with four million Ukrainians declaring themselves Roman Catholic with the return of religious tolerance (DT 24/10/94). **His dream is to welcome in the year 2000 on Mount Sinai in a joint mass with the Moscow Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, and Muslim leaders!**

THE EXODUS TO ROME

As well as the examples given in Ch. 6, there has been a long list of defections from the Church of England to Rome. This was hastened by the acceptance by the C. of E. of women priests in February. The Church is very weak. Although it has a nominal membership of 24 million in Britain, yet the Roman Catholic Church with one fifth the members, attracts more worshippers on a typical Sunday morning. It is thought up to 1,000 priests will defect within a decade (Time 21/2/94). The Daily Telegraph reported that five bishops and 570 clergy have signed a declaration accepting the full authority of the Pope. They are expected to convert over the next few years (DT 24/2/94).

John Gummer, the Environment Secretary at the time, converted in February, the first cabinet minister to do so while in office (DT 1/3/94).

In July was a report that five London parishes—the clergy and their congregations—were planning to join Rome. This would be the most significant group exodus since the Reformation (DT 18/7/94). In October a further 10 London parish priests were planning to change. This is posing serious problems of manpower and morale (DT 26/10/94). Three former bishops have converted this year (DT 15/10/94).

THE FALSE PROPHET—POPE OR MOHAMMED?

We quote a few words from *Elpis Israel* on this matter which concerns many in the brotherhood.

Protestant and Papal scribes are in the habit of applying the epithet “false prophet” to Mohammed, and therefore do not perceive its applicability to the Roman bishop. But neither Mohammed, nor his successors, are termed “false prophet” in the Apocalypse. The Arabian was false enough, doubtless: but he was a far more respectable character than any Pope that ever reigned; were I to choose between the two superstitions, I would rather be a Moslem than a Papist. It was the glory of Mohammed to destroy idolatry: it is the infamy of the Popes to be the high priests of the “queen of heaven”. Elpis Israel p. 376

Chapter 11:

THE DRAGON—RUSSIA'S ROLE

Introduction

*It has been a time of great change in Russia. With the break-up of the Soviet Union, Russia has been in disarray, striving to find a new role. This year has seen a turn around in her economic fortunes. She is resisting moves towards the West, and is seeking to exert her independence as a world power. The scriptural picture is that there is a latter-day **Dragon** power able to act independently, but also able to cooperate with the **Beast** and the **False Prophet** to come against the mountains of Israel.*

We review events in Russia under these headings.

A summary of the changing fortunes in Russia.

political

economic

The growth of the influence of religion.

Zhirinovsky

Her armed forces

Links with Nato

Ties with former Soviet countries

Where is Russia heading?

A SUMMARY OF THE CHANGING FORTUNES IN RUSSIA

Political

It has been another tumultuous year for Yeltsin. As the year ends, there is growing pressure for him to stand down. The quelling of the rebellion in Chechnya looks set to weaken him.

There have been many changes during the year in Yeltsin's government. He had to reshape his cabinet in response to the poor showing of the reformers in the December 93 elections, and the rise of Zhirinovsky. An early victim was Yegor Gaidar, the architect of Russia's transformation to the free market. He stepped down in protest at the softening of the reform programme. Another was Boris Fyodorov, a young, skilled radical reformer. By the end of January, there were virtually no reformers left.

In January, Clinton and Yeltsin met in Moscow for a summit meeting. They signed two major weapons treaties. One, to re-target long range missiles away from cities and into the ocean, the other, to eliminate the 1,800 warheads held in the Ukraine. America has agreed to purchase \$8

billion worth of Russian uranium over the next 29 years—which would require 20,000 warheads to be dismantled to provide the material. Clinton pledged to unlock some of the billions of pounds of aid which has been promised but not delivered (DT 15/1/94).

Yeltsin gave his annual “state of the nation” speech, promising that the pathway of reform would continue, but at a slower pace and taking into account the social cost. He sounded a more nationalistic tone. He rejected Nato plans to expand into the former Warsaw pact countries, without including Russia (DT 25/2/94). Yeltsin was incensed when Parliament voted to free the hardliners who had opposed him the previous October.

In spite of the many changes, the government seems to be running much more smoothly. As one Western commentator living in Moscow put it:

“In three and a half years he had witnessed 15 major reversals of government policy. But since the December rout of the reformers, ‘politics has flipped over and settled in the middle. The course is much more stable.”
ST 3/7/94

In September, Yeltsin visited Britain before flying on to address the UN and to have talks with President Clinton. Yeltsin was Britain’s ally at the time with regards to the conflict over Bosnia, because Britain and Russia opposed the American plans. At the UN he stressed his country’s role as a great power and outlined its right to intervene in the countries of the near-abroad. [The republics which broke away in 1991.]

October was the anniversary of the attack on the Parliamentary building. Yeltsin’s speech was remarkable in that he announced he would not be opposed to having communists serving in his government! He appears to have gone full circle, and it is an indication of the change in government this year. “Consensus, Russian-style, is rapidly becoming Kremlin policy.” Yeltsin declared:

“Over the past year Russia has changed a lot. We have cut the Gordian knot. We have created a new constitution, which has allowed social peace”.
TE 7-13/10/94

At the end of the month the Prime Minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, proposed a tough budget, promising further economic reforms. It is aimed at cutting inflation from the present 15% **a month** to 1% by the end of 1995, and was drafted with an eye to getting a further \$12 billion of support from the IMF. He survived a vote of no-confidence, called at the disastrous fall in the value of the rouble.

November brought another cabinet reshuffle, after the government’s most senior economic reformer resigned. Yeltsin’s changes are seen as a humiliation of the Prime Minister, and a desire by Yeltsin to get his own presidential staff into key positions.

In December, Yeltsin decided to act against the breakaway state of Chechnya. They are a small Islamic people, blood relatives of the Iranians, who were brutally subdued by the Tsars and then by Stalin. An important oil pipe line runs through the country. The Chechens desire independence, possibly to be linked with their neighbours Azerbaijan. There are many Russians living here, and the Russian soldiers are loath to launch attacks which will kill their own countrymen. Many in Russia opposed Yeltsin's action to attack and bomb them, fearing a re-run of Afghanistan. The Deputy Commander of the Russian land forces has resigned over the attack, and the Deputy Defence Minister has voiced his opposition to the operation. The Chechen troops are skilled and tough, and although small in numbers they would wage a vigorous guerilla war. The West predicts a rerun of the fall of Gorbachev 12 months after his attack on Lithuania left him weakened politically. Russia can ill afford the cost of a war. Balancing the budget will be hard enough without the additional burden of this battle, which at the end of the year was reported to have cost £200 million (DT 30/12/94). If he does succeed in crushing them, what reaction will it spark from their relatives in Iran?

Economic

Many of the reformers lost their seats in the December elections, and in January the Economics Minister, Yegor Gaidar, and the Finance Minister, Boris Fyodorov, resigned. Yeltsin retreated from the tough path of reforms, putting in more conservative Ministers, who favoured a return to State intervention, wages control and limits on privatisation (DT 31/1/94)

The Russian Prime Minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, who was appointed in 1992, has proved to be a strong man, guiding these reforms and who has the backing of the IMF. By May, monthly inflation figures were down to single figures, more and more enterprises were being privatised, so the International Monetary Fund agreed to a further loan of \$1.5 billion, with the promise of much more to come if things continued to improve.

Russia's privatisation programme is going ahead at a fast pace. Massive chunks of industry have been sold off. In a few years Russia will have changed from having the largest state ownership in the world, to one of the smallest. A staggering 70% of Russia's workforce is now employed by companies wholly or partially in private hands. 80 million citizens have become shareholders. "Thanks to privatisation, the Russian economy has now been fundamentally transformed." (TE 4-10/6/94; 5-11/8/94). 40% of the workforce now works in the service sector.

The traditional long queues in the shops have all but disappeared. Shops are full, one can buy freely. No longer are Western goods only available to foreign currency holders in special shops. The free market culture has been widely embraced by the ordinary Russians, who seize

the opportunities to better themselves. As always, the rich get richer and the poor poorer (ST 25/9/94).

The West had assumed that Russia would yield rich pickings, and that by applying Western ideas, Russia's economy could be turned round and built up. The Russians have resented being "taken over"; they wish to retain their independence and former power. Many Western businessmen have now retired from the scene (DT 14/2/94). The G7's decision to admit Russia to their summit in July, was seen by Mr Yeltsin as vindication of this position. Russia only asked to be treated as an equal, not as a weak nation begging for help. He said that Russia had felt "hurt" that promises of \$43 million in aid from the G7 last year had not yet materialized (DT 11/7/94).

In June, at the end of 18 months discussion, Russia and the EU signed a "Partnership and Co-operation Agreement".

"The agreement is the most ambitious economic agreement Russia has ever signed, and will reduce trade barriers between Russia and Europe as well as laying the foundation for much closer economic and political co-operation.

"The EC is by far Russia's largest trading partner, with a total two-way trade of about £20 billion a year.

"Under the agreement, Russia's president is to have meetings twice a year with the EC presidency and the Commission president." DT 23/6/94

In October there was a run on the rouble. Its value plummeted, causing panic and a mass buying of dollars. The bank rate was raised to 130% to stem the flow. It did recover to some degree, but had lost a lot of value. The run was blamed on incompetence, and the Central Bank chairman was sacked, together with the top foreign-currency regulator, the Finance Minister and the Economics Minister. President Yeltsin hopes his new team will serve the economy better. Negotiations are under way with the IMF to stabilize the rouble by pegging its value (ST 16/10/94; DT 28/10/94).

At the end of the year inflation was rising again, the rouble had fallen 50% in value against the dollar during the year. Official output figures showed a decline, though they do not take into account the rapidly growing 'black economy'. One in seven are 'moonlighting'. Tax evasion is rampant. Unemployment is rising as action is taken to improve efficiency. Reforms have a long way to go, but life is much better than it was.

THE GROWTH OF THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGION

"A resurgence of the Russian Orthodox church continues to grow, officials say. Since restrictions on new churches ended five years ago, thousands of Orthodox parishes have been started, and their number

now stands at 14,000. A prominent Siberian businessman stated, 'Russia needs a spiritual revival more than it needs an economic revival. Without a spiritual revival, we won't be able to come to grips with our crime problem, official corruption, and other moral blights.'

TR Jan/Feb 95

Orthodox priests are present on state occasions. Yeltsin has given his backing to the rebuilding of the 30-storey Orthodox cathedral in the heart of Moscow. The original building was bulldozed by Stalin in 1931. The cost of rebuilding is estimated at \$500 million. Work started in October and has already run into problems, and the finishing date of 1997 to coincide with the 850th anniversary of Moscow, appears wishful thinking.

In January, Orthodox Christmas services were celebrated throughout Russia. In Moscow the midnight Mass from the cathedral of the Epiphany was broadcast on their Channel One television. At Orthodox Easter celebrations on May 1st this year, Boris Yeltsin together with the Prime Minister and the Mayor of Moscow attended Easter midnight mass, candle in hand (DT 8/1/94; 2/5/94).

Following the attack on the Parliamentary building in October 93, an army of builders and craftsmen have been working round the clock to make it habitable again. When it was ready it was "blessed" by a Russian Orthodox bishop, who presented an icon of the Virgin Mary to the Prime Minister (DT 5/1/94).

ZHIRINOVSKY

Since gaining 23% of the votes in the December 93 elections, Zhirinovsky and his Liberal Democratic Party have kept reappearing in the news. There was much controversy as to where the money came from for his election campaign. Many fingers point to the KGB.

In February, he drew on a map of Europe how he would like to see Europe divided—into Greater Germany and a Greater Russia. Poland would be divided between them. Austria, the Czech Republic and Slovenia to be part of Germany. Russia to take over the Ukraine, Moldova, Slovakia and most of the Baltic republics. Bulgaria to take over Macedonia and parts of Greece, Turkey and Romania (TE 3-9/2/94). Time will tell!

He champions the concept of a Slavonic revival. The Slavs occupied the vast region of eastern Europe stretching east to the Urals, north to the Baltic, south to the Adriatic and Aegean seas, and west to Germany. It was to this region that the Greek Orthodox religion came from the 6th century onwards, bringing Orthodox Christianity eventually to Moscow, together with a Byzantine way of life. Hence his support for the Serbs in the battle in the former Yugoslavia. The Serbs are Slavs, and Orthodox.

“Mother Russia was ready to come to the Serbs defence”, he said (DT 1/2/94).

At his party's Annual Conference, he re-iterated his dream of the “great leap south”, to the Indian Ocean and into Turkey. These were necessary steps to curb the growth of Islam. He foresaw the destruction of the Turkish people, as they had destroyed the Armenians in 1915. “The Turkish-speaking world must be torn apart. The Muslim threat must be removed.” He is friends with Saddam Hussein. (The Independent 1/5/94).

His popularity at home is falling, many see him as a sideshow. We let *The Times* have the last word.

“Nevertheless, many Russian and Western experts warn that it is far too early to write Mr Zhirinovsky's political obituary and insist that given the right conditions he could still make a serious challenge for the presidency in 1996.”
The Times 18/6/94

HER ARMED FORCES

Russia, like other countries has been slimming down her armed forces. A figure given in March put the number of troops at 2.5 million. However a report at the start of the new parliament stated:

“Boris Yeltsin's government is quietly adopting a tougher position in favour of a strong and self assertive Russia. . . The defence minister announced that he would be urging Russia's new parliament to agree to a target of 2.1 million men in the armed forces, compared to the old parliament's target of 1.5 million.”
GW 9/1/94

The cuts in defence spending were threatening the survival of 3,000 factories and millions of jobs. Arms sales of £2 billion in 1993 were only a fraction of what they had been in the Soviet days. The arms industry has organized itself to push for overseas sales to keep the factories going. A new company has been set up by Yeltsin, which amalgamates the three biggest rival firms, and has been given exclusive rights to sell Russian arms abroad. By streamlining their sales effort, they hope to dramatically increase sales. At the first sales launch party in March, there were guests from Iraq, China (believed to be Russia's biggest arms buyer), Middle East states, Thailand and Malaysia. We have already reported on the arms sales to Syria (DT 11/3/94; 21/3/94).

The control of Russia's Black Sea fleet still causes problems. Crimea, where their port of Sebastopol lies, now belongs to the newly independent state of Ukraine. She keeps her 300 strong fleet in some sort of readiness. But the Ukraine and Russia maintain a war of words over who owns the fleet. Last year's agreement for the Ukraine to lease the fleet to Russia was never implemented. A further deal was struck in April, giving 15–20% of the fleet to the Ukraine. Separate bases will be provided (DT 16/4/94).

This summer saw the pull-out of the last of the Russian troops and air force stationed in East Germany. They stripped the bases bare, taking home everything they possibly could. Many of the returning troops had to live under canvas as the new accommodation for them had not been completed. Russian troops were also withdrawn from the newly independent Baltic States. The only troops Russia now has in the West are about 30,000 troops in the tiny Russian enclave of Kaliningrad, between Poland and Lithuania, which she has to maintain by sea from St. Petersburg. This is her sole surviving ice-free port.

A letter to the Daily Telegraph by an American investigator working for the US Congress, indicated that Russia's spying against the West was continuing at only a slightly reduced level.

LINKS WITH NATO

In June, Russia signed to join Nato's Partnership for Peace programme. This is not a full membership, but is the first step in that direction. This follows 22 east European and ex-Soviet republics who joined this programme in January. Russia held out joining, seeking a higher status, which she was eventually granted.

TIES WITH FORMER SOVIET COUNTRIES

"Since the giddy days of 1991, when the republics scattered like schoolchildren at recess, independent life in what Russians call the 'near abroad' has proved tougher than anticipated....The West, to which many of these states looked for salvation, has been both parsimonious and sanctimonious." Time 25/7/94

"No one, with the exception of the Communist opposition, talks of a new USSR. Yet there is little doubt that what is being created in its place is a new regional order in which the countries' economic, political and foreign policies are increasingly being subordinated to Russia."

TE 1-7/7/94.

The **Dragon** is regaining some control over many of these Republics, and we should expect to see this trend continue. They will probably retain their independence, but be linked economically with Russia. She will then be in a position of being a *guard unto* these many nations (Ezek. 38:7).

Ukraine

This has been a troublesome state for Russia, since it became independent in 1991, because of the Russian Black Sea fleet which is located in the south in Crimea. Crimea has a 70% Russian population who want to retain links with Russia. The rest of the Ukraine wanted to make links with the West. Many of Russia's nuclear missiles are stationed here. The country was on the verge of civil war, with Crimea declaring

independence from the Ukraine, but elections in August brought in a pro-Russian leader, much to the relief of the West and Russia. (DT 13/7/94)

Belarus

Ukraine's northern neighbour has, like Ukraine, turned back to Russia in elections this year. They intend to abandon their separate currency and go back to the rouble, which will have the effect of making it an economic province of Russia (TE 15-21/7/94).

Georgia

This year Russian troops were welcomed back into Georgia to help deal with separatist rebels, who were threatening to break up the country.

Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan, sitting on the world's largest oil reserve is thought to be willing to share this wealth with Russia in return for help against her hostile neighbour—Armenia. Russian troops also guard her border with Iran.

Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan

In these five Central Asian Republics, Russia is increasingly exerting her influence. Landlocked, with all communication links going to Moscow, they find themselves increasingly dependent on Moscow. The area is rich in oil and mineral deposits. Russia's oil companies have ensured that they are involved in the joint ventures with the West, and that the pipelines to the West cross Russian territory. This way she can retain a hold over these countries. In Tajikistan, Russian troops were called in two years ago in the fight against Muslim rebels, and have virtually been running the government ever since.

WHERE IS RUSSIA HEADING?

At the moment Russia has lost an empire, and is seeking a new role. There has been less blood shed than when Britain and France lost their empires. Just as with time, the newly independent states of the British empire chose to renew links with Britain in the form of the commonwealth, so many of the states are turning back, desiring economic links with Russia. Some, however, want to sever all links, such as Chechnya. With some 25 million ethnic Russians now finding themselves living outside their diminished homeland, Russia feels responsible for them, and does not want to see them living in countries which are hostile to her. Hence her insistence that her troops are allowed to remain in many of these newly independent countries.

Russia still sees herself as a world power and feels that the West does not treat her with sufficient respect. There is a growing feeling of

nationalism. The picture is emerging of a Russia, slowly re-finding her feet. As the **Dragon** power, she will be an independent force, not absorbed into Europe. She will co-operate with the **Beast** and the **False Prophet**, in dealing with the situation as it unfolds in Israel. Ezekiel describes her desire to come into the land as an *evil thought*. Her position is that of a *guard unto* the other nations. This indicates a leading role with the other members of Daniel's image, with her military might at the forefront in the invasion.

She is to come forth with many ships. At the moment many of these are rusting and languishing in port for lack of money. Just as oil has helped Britain's economy, so too it might help Russia's. The world's largest oil reserves have been located by the Caspian sea in what is now Azerbaijan. A western consortium is hoping to develop it (DT 10/1/94). There are large reserves in Siberia and the Central Asian Republics. Russia also has rich reserves of gold, which she is mining at a high rate (ST 16/10/94).

Chapter 12:

THE BALKANS

Introduction

The area of the former Yugoslavia continues to hit the headlines, as the killings and atrocities continue. This area is no stranger to conflict. It is the dividing zone between the East and the West. It is also the area where Catholic, Orthodox and Muslim religions meet. In peace they live uneasily side by side, in war they make ferocious neighbours. It still is not easy to discern what the outcome will be, though a trend does seem to be emerging.

We would refer readers to chapter 9 of *Milestones 1992*, for the general background picture. What we are expecting to see is the increasing division between the Catholic Croats in the West and the Orthodox Serbs in the East, in order to create part of the two legs of Daniel's image. In the past, when the iron of the Roman Empire was divided into two legs, East and West, it was the Catholic and Orthodox religions that formed the basis of that division. Daniel's image is to stand upon its two feet, so we expect to find a similar division.

There have been three interesting developments this year. The entry of Russia into the fray, the co-operation of the Croats and Muslims, and the US backing of the Muslims.

We have seen the might of Nato poured upon the Serbs. Russia has now actively come to the support of her co-religionists, and succeeded in diluting the power of the West in dealing with the situation. Although the West has used air power this year, Russia has prevented them from making many more attacks. She has used her UN troops successfully, playing the part of a world power, brokering peace deals, which have at times wrong-footing Nato. She now has 500 troops deployed in Sarajevo. President Yeltsin has declared that he would not allow Russia to be excluded from the Bosnian peace process (DT 18/2/94).

This year has seen the co-operation of the Catholic Croat forces and the Bosnian Muslims, against the Serbs. It is the Muslims who have been squeezed out as the Serbs have gained territory. This co-operation has prevented them from being pushed right out, but they remain the weaker party. In March, the two sides ceased hostilities and created a loose federation, to unite the two ethnic groups (DT 28/5/94). It wasn't however until early November that it was reported that they were actively co-ordinating their forces against the Serbs, and together they regained some of the territory recently lost to the Serbs (DT 3/11/94).

According to reports in *The European*, the American CIA has been helping the Bosnian Muslims, providing them with satellite intelligence and tactical training. Helping the Muslims also helps the Catholic Croats, while they are working together. Indeed it claims that it was the Americans who forged the federation between the two sides last March. (TE 18–24/11/94; 25/11–1/12/94). These moves by America, are angering Nato. Although America is part of Nato, increasingly Nato feels isolated as America and Russia do their own thing.

One wonders what deals have been done by the Papacy to ensure the Croats are helped. We have seen elsewhere how the Papacy is prepared to do deals with the Muslims, and also how the Pope discusses Bosnia with President Clinton.

At the end of the year when it looked as if the UN would be forced to withdraw all her peace-keeping forces and wash her hands of the situation, President Clinton sent Jimmy Carter to try to arrange a cease-fire. He made considerable progress to every-one's surprise, and obtained a tentative agreement to a four month truce. Lt-Gen. Sir Michael Rose—the UN commander in the Balkans, was able to bring this to a signed agreement in the closing hours of 1994. It was exactly 1,000 days since the siege of Sarajevo had begun. It remains to be seen whether the cease-fire holds.

"MEN'S HEARTS FAILING THEM FOR FEAR"

In Luke 21:26 the Lord Jesus spoke the following well-known words concerning the last days:

"Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken."

Whilst, at a general level, we have seen this state of affairs developing in the world since the Second World War with the advent of such things as nuclear weapons and AIDS, in recent times this prophecy has begun to be fulfilled with greater urgency. One group of people who are at the cutting edge of dealing with the "things which are coming on the earth" are the world's diplomats. In a candid book on the work of the British Foreign Office published this year, Ruth Edwards (1994) provides revealing evidence that the conditions pertaining in the world today match the terms of this prophecy.

She describes the time we are living in as "the time of upheaval and fear" (p.161) and on the same page quotes a source as saying that "the international task of the decade is managing disorder". The chief cause of this increase in disorder and associated problems is seen as the end of communist governments in eastern Europe: "The simple truth is that since the collapse of Communism the complexities of the ensuing crises are far beyond the ability of the world's institutions to solve" (p.158). In speaking of work concerned with the UN she goes on to say: "... and the work increases at a terrifying and completely unpredictable rate". A desk officer in the UN department said the following:

"The UN is being pressed, stretched more and more, because we are talking not just about existing problems here [northern Iraq], [or in] former Yugoslavia, [or in] Somalia where there are enormous strains on the UN system.

"But we've got potential problems coming up like Mozambique, Angola, Afghanistan, possibly the former Soviet Republics all beginning to fall apart. The demands are increasing and almost endless: *the prospects are dreadful*" (p.158) (our italics).

The significance of Edward's book is not simply that the, all too obvious, problems of the world are catalogued. It is the way that she shows these problems are impacting on those who are trying to deal with them, an emphasis reflected in Luke 21. As she writes: "surviving the 1990s will require enormous psychological adjustment" (p.163).

The phrase "hearts failing" translates one word in the Greek which essentially means, according to Strong, "to breathe out". Each time a diplomat lets out a sigh at his ever increasing in-tray this prophecy is fulfilled. It is clear from Edward's book that this is happening with increasing frequency.

Reference: Ruth Dudley Edwards (1994) "True Brits - Inside the Foreign Office", BBC Books, London.

Written by Bro Nigel Bernard

Acknowledgements

- Cover photo © *Australian Associated Press* CN 2857. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Jordan's King Hussein with US President Bill Clinton before signing the peace treaty at the Israeli/Jordanian border, October 26th, 1994!

We gratefully acknowledge kind permission to use the following material:

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A special note

We are saddened to report that bro. Graham Pearce who was born in 1912 at Derby, died on 24/8/94 after a life of very dedicated service to his God and his Master. He now awaits the call of an angel. Cuttings from various publications relevant to Bible prophecy were found neatly filed ready for the next *Milestones*. Brother Graham was a very serious and God-fearing man, yet certainly not without compassion and sympathy for human weakness. There are not many of his stature in our Brotherhood at any one time; but we are most thankful to his son bro. Don for taking up this monumental annual task. May we express our thanks, also, to bro. Alan Clarke for his timely assistance.

Milestones 1994

1994 has been another dramatic year with major developments in the light of Bible prophecy.

- Peace Treaty signed between Israel and Jordan which ends 46 years of belligerency. Syria starts to get involved in the process.

While the whole peace process seems a little shaky, particularly with the Palestinians, it is inexorably increasing in the number of countries involved, with only two front line Arab states holding out.

- Dramatic increase in prosperity for Israel.

Israel is now among the largest of the trading nations! Like so much else concerning Israel, the unthinkable is now being translated into the possible, into the probable and then, rapidly, into reality.

- The Old Mother Lion gets into step with her destiny.

This is how one commentator saw the change in Britain's attitude:

"Israel is marching to the drumbeat of conviction and courage towards an era of political, economic, strategic, scientific, high-tech and cultural co-operation, and Britain is now marching in step."

Gone is the old acrimony. Britain now has her eye on the vast amount of business opportunities in Israel. Relationships between the UK and Israel have never been warmer.

When Saddam again threatened Kuwait, Britain reinforced her presence in the Middle East.

The prophetic significance of these milestones and many others are detailed herein, and the reader is invited to invigorate his faith by consideration of these significant matters.

The return of Jesus Christ may be the next *milestone*, but if we are not ready with oil in our lamps it will be too late to do something about it then.

