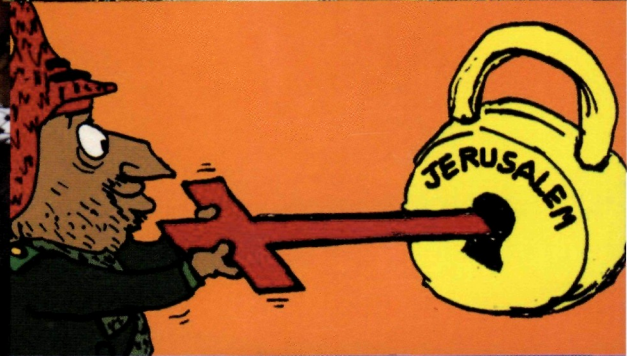


MILESTONES



2000

Don Pearce

MILESTONES TO THE KINGDOM

***A Review of the
World Events of
2000 in the Light
of Bible Prophecy***

Don Pearce

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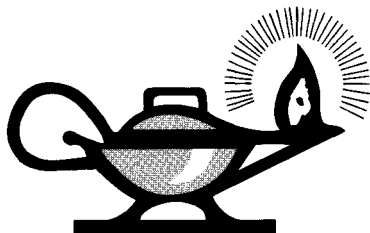
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JANUARY 2001

Preface

Milestones 2000! Certainly we never thought we should be still here in daily mortal life in the year 2000. And now it is behind us—and still we await our Master.

The great lesson that comes to us from this consideration is that no matter what small corrections have been made to the chronology of history, we must be drawing very near to the coming of the Lord. It was Gibbon who recorded that among the early believers there was a general understanding that as there had been seven days in creation so there would be seven thousand years in the fulfilment of God's purpose with man and that the kingdom of Christ would occupy the final of those 1,000 years.

"The ancient and popular doctrine of the Millennium was intimately connected with the second coming of Christ. As the works of the creation had been finished in six days, their duration in their present state, according to a tradition which was attributed to the prophet Elijah, was fixed to six thousand years. By the same analogy it was inferred, that this long period of labour and contention, which was now almost elapsed, would be succeeded by a joyful Sabbath of a thousand years; and that Christ, with the triumphant band of the saints and the elect who had escaped death, or who had been miraculously revived, would reign upon the earth till the time appointed for the last and general resurrection.."

True to expectations, the year 2000 has been a remarkable one with many highly significant events pointing us forward in our waiting for Christ. For Israel it has been both a prosperous and a frustrating year. The people thought their new Labour Prime Minister would be the one to lead them to peace with the Palestinians. In July, in the beautiful hill country west of Washington, at Camp David, Ehud Barak all but received that illusive peace. Agreement was obtained on the borders, on the Palestinian refugees and on the Jewish settlements, but these talks foundered on the issue of Jerusalem! It wasn't Mr Barak that wouldn't give ground. He had gone to the conference with a plan in his back pocket for the division of Jerusalem. It was Mr Arafat that would not yield! His demand was that the Palestinians must have all of East Jerusalem, the Old City.

The logic of the situation is, therefore, that Barak has had his time. It is inconceivable that Israel will ever give up the Old City of Jerusalem and we would never expect that she would. So the Barak-Arafat chapter had to close and in fact as we write these words, the daily press indicates that the opposition leader, Ariel Sharon, is most likely to win in the present Israeli election due on 6th February 2001. This was almost unthinkable even six months ago but suddenly now appears inevitable. Mr Sharon is a strong, well-reasoned army general known for a very firm position and it does

seem rational that his type of approach will better serve Israel's present needs. How amazing it is to watch our Father's hand in these things.

Russia also has had a year of remarkable and varied happenings but she is now right back on the main stage of the international affairs. Mr Putin was embarrassed with virtual national insolvency, with a sunken submarine, with a collapsed radio tower, and innumerable evidences of decadence and disarray. Yet in the second half of 2000, Russia's presence was noted from China to Egypt, from Germany to Libya. Arms sales have been increasing to many countries and in particular to Middle-East clients! Europe led by Germany, seems to be clearly contemplating trade and military links with the mysterious old bear of the East.

This eastern leaning of the European Union has another significant ramification, If West and East Europe combine as a "United States of Europe" what is the further need of Nato. Increasingly Europe seems more to resent the U.S. and many of the integration moves have competition with the U.S. as the motive. In the middle of these gigantic political shifts is Britain, desperately trying to retain its EU membership yet opposed to the Euro, to any further integration and to many other items which Germany and France consider essential if the momentum of unity is to be realised. The pressure is really on in Europe!

So these are exciting days for Christadelphians. The standing of Daniel's Image is occurring before our eyes, Gog and Magog are working together, the Papal system is active in the whole scene, Britain and her family of nations are increasingly incompatible with Europe and Israel is more and more isolated among the nations—and Jerusalem is the eye of the impending storm.

We are a blessed people to know the significance of all these things. Let us be diligent for our Master before his presence is among us.

Brian Luke,
Secretary
January 2001

CONTENTS

PREFACE	3
Abbreviations	7
Acknowledgements.....	8
1 A BRIEF REVIEW	9
Brief overview of 2000	
2 THE PROPHETICAL SIGNS OF OUR TIMES	13
Some of the latter-day prophecies	
The frog-like spirits of Rev 16	
Chart of the Beasts of Revelation	
Ezekiel 38 – two aspects	
Magog	
I will turn thee back	
The iron/clay feet of Daniel 2	
3 THE DRAGON SPEAKS WITH A FROG-LIKE VOICE	22
Putin's frog-like words	
The Russian Church speaks with 'frog-like' words	
4 THE DRAGON STIRS	25
Making Russia great again	
The revival of the Orthodox Church	
Communist overtones	
Harking back to the Tsars	
Restoring the Tsar's throne	
"Tsar Putin spends £25m on a palace"	
Canonisation of Nicholas II	
Double headed eagle	
5 GOG OF THE LAND OF MAGOG.....	31
The Tsars and Germany	
Russian links with Germany	
Russia, oil and the EU	
"Russia & Europe should appreciate shared interests"	
6 THE BEAST – "LAYING THE FINAL BRICK IN THE EUROPEAN HOUSE"	40
Putting into place the last brick in European building	
The many facets of the new Europe	
Not so nice at Nice	
7 THE DEVELOPING EUROPEAN SUPERSTATE	45
Europe's view on political union	
The Nice Summit	

	- The emerging superstate - The Rapid Reaction Force, alias Euro Army - The Charter of fundamental rights - Europol, Eurojust - The nations who want political integration	
8	BRITAIN—THE LONG GOODBYE?	52
	- Points of conflict - The falling euro - Foreign investments flooding into Britain - North Sea Oil “Time to pull out” - Britain and Europe	
9	THE FALSE PROPHET—DECEIVING THE PEOPLE	57
	- Out of the mouth of the False Prophet - The False Prophet and the EU - The Charter of Fundamental Rights - The Holy See and the UN - A “patron saint” for politicians - Papal supremacy “Memory & Reconciliation, the Church and Faults of the Past” - The “ecumenical gathering of the year”—at Rome - A Marian Millennium - Mary—Co-redemptrix? - The third secret of Fatima - Links between the Roman & Orthodox Churches	
10	ISRAEL’S TROUBLING YEAR	68
	- Israel, Syria and Lebanon - The struggle over Jerusalem - Arab disunity - The Peace Talks	
11	RUSSIA AND THE M. E.—BUSINESS AS USUAL	72
	- Russia and the Middle East peace talks - The growing Russian involvement in 2000 - Russia – “moving back to her old policy” - Iran, Iraq, Libya, Qatar - Russia in the Far East - India, China	
12	THE FALSE PROPHET & THE MIDDLE EAST	79
	- The background to the present situation - The Vatican and Israel - The Vatican and the Arabs - The basic Agreement between the Vatican & PLO	

The Pope's visit to Israel
 The Pope and Jerusalem
 Saddam calls for a Jihad

13 SOUNDING THE TRUMPET 87

Abbreviations used

- CH** Catholic Herald. Weekly.
DT Daily Telegraph
EC The Economist magazine, weekly.
EJ The European Journal, the journal of the European Foundation. Very valuable euro-sceptical journal. Minimum 10 issues a year. £25 UK. (£15 students & OAP's) Phone 020 7930 7319; Fax 9706
EJID The above's fortnightly **Intelligence Digest** is available free by e-mail from euro.foundation@e-f.org.
EU European Union. Was the EEC, then the EC, now the EU
J.I.D. Jane's Intelligence Digest, Intelligence International Ltd. Excellent background 01444 475660; fax 4455999 46 issues. £134
Israel Line. A free e-mail service, giving you 2 pages of news about Israel, 5 times a week. To subscribe to Israel Line, use the on-line subscription form at <http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/listservform.asp>
JP Jerusalem Post International edition, published weekly.
LOR L'Osservatore Romano. The official Vatican paper. English, w'kly
ST Sunday Telegraph. **Time** The Time magazine, weekly
TR The Reformer. Bimonthly. Valuable source on Protestant matters. Min. subscription £4. overseas £6. Tel/fax. 01525 712348
TS The Sunday Times. London. Weekly
TT The Times. London. Daily. [] Author's notes.

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www.washtimes.com www.stratfor.com/home/giu/DAILY.asp to subscribe, free, to Stratfor Global Intelligence Update (form at bottom of web page)

Israel: www3.haaretz.co.il/eng www.jpost.com

Vatican: www.cathcom.net www.vatican.va/news www.TheTablet.co.uk

World's papers: www.thepaperboy.com www.moreover.com [//wire.ap.org](http://wire.ap.org)
 [Ass. Press] www.onlinenewspapers.com

\$1 million = £660,000, \$1 billion = £660,000,000 approx. \$ always US\$.

Many books referred to are available from *Milestones* - request booklist.

Author's notes

I would like to thank my family for their help, also Bro. Alan Clarke for his helpful advice and comments.

I am grateful for items which readers have sent me. The sources above 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 acknowledgement.

Conventional religious terminology is used, occasionally I put them within “ ”, but generally not. Readers will appreciate my understanding on the falseness of many of these terms. Conventional names are also used to describe parts of Israel—i.e. West Bank, etc.

Sources are given where appropriate. Dates on weekly publications are when published—so could be 7-10 days after event. Only the oldest date is used where range of dates is shown.

Acknowledgements and permissions arranged

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- Papal badge, page 64, © *The Bible Magazine*, vol. 13:2
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- Arafat, key as a cross, and Jerusalem lock, cover B R and page 84, © *Jerusalem Post* 25-2-2000
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Chapter 1:

A BRIEF REVIEW

Brief overview of 2000

In spite of the world celebrating the close of the 20th century some 12 months ago, it really closed at the end of this year 2000. The fast moving events of the year have again given us quiet confidence in the pioneers' expositions of the many prophecies of the last days. The continuous historical unfolding of the events of the Book of Revelation dovetailed with the many other prophecies of the Old and New Testaments gave our community an expectation of the sequence of events at the Lord's return. Far more has happened than was realised—the time scale was much longer than thought. So much so that many have thought that new interpretations were required, but for the faithful, patient, watcher on Zion's towers, all things have their time of fulfilment. Radical new ideas are not needed! The pendulum of world history swings to and fro, seemingly changed by chance and random events, but in truth directed by the angelic host.

And so the world puzzled as it learnt a new word—"chads". Chads can be hanging, pregnant, detached. But they sum up a mystifying period in American history. "Who is the president" literally hung on the outcome of the validity or otherwise of the punched holes on voting papers in Florida. Such a close finish had never happened before. Why now? Like a stone in the pond the ripples of this hung contest swept out. Both France and Russia seized the initiative to push their own agenda while the world's remaining superpower was in this stalemate position. It was widely recognised too, that because this was an election year for America, President Clinton would not have the political force he once wielded. And so in the words of a British proverb "While the cat's away, the mice will play!"

Like the skilled chess player that Russia is, she exploited her opponents' weaknesses, to make subtle gains on the world chessboard. She pushed her way back into the Middle East, resuming her old trade as in the Soviet days of arms salesman to the world. In spite of the embargo on trade with Iraq, Russia has re-established her friendship and trade with Saddam Hussein. France too has been pushing her trade in this direction.

France has been irked for many years at the role of America, envious of the unchallenged power the US wields. She too has seized the opportunity to push ahead with her version of the European army, a non-Nato force that can work at Europe's bidding. In spite of the protestations of Britain, and her endeavours to get her partners to agree at the Nice Summit in December that it will be linked to Nato, no assurances were laid down and few believe that this really will happen.

There is a very real prospect that America will turn her back on Europe. Apart from Britain, the rest of Europe thinks they can manage without her. Events in Kosovo in the previous year showed their need of the U.S. But wait. There is a military force waiting in the wings as it were, desperate for a role in the world. If America withdraws troops from Bosnia as President-elect Bush openly said he would do while he was on the campaign trail, then who will step in? Russia. The matter has already been raised!

There have been two other interesting ripples. Oil prices have shot up three-fold or more during the year 2000, although they sank back towards the year-end. OPEC reduced supplies and, with the doubts and uncertainties in the Middle East, prices obligingly climbed. Not that it has had such critical effects as the price rises after the Six-day War. Yet when they compound with ripples from another event—the weakening euro—they have a more marked effect. As well as seeing the oil prices triple, members of the EU have seen the euro slump in value against the \$US. Remember that oil is sold in dollars. So for the euro zone, the impact has been much greater. Then why not contemplate an alternative source of fuel, which need not be purchased in dollars and is not dependent upon the volatile Arab situation? Is it co-incidence that just “next door” is the country that sits on one of the world’s largest reserves of oil and natural gas and would be happy to receive payment in any currency? So not surprisingly there have been extensive talks and agreements made for the EU to fund the piping of oil and gas from Russia to the EU. What a remarkable chain of events brought about this situation!

The end of 1999 brought the dramatic resignation of Yeltsin and the hand-over to the relatively unknown Putin. What a remarkable year it has been for Russia under his hand. Who would have thought at the start of the year that this former KGB operator who spied on—yes—Germany, would invite the German leader to spend Christmas 2000 with him! A remarkable friendship has sprung up between the two men. It has given Germany the confidence to act as the EU leader, rather than as an equal partner with France, whose relations with Russia were frosty for most of the year. Germany’s aim? A Europe that reaches to the Urals. It is not too far-fetched a thought now in the light of events that have moved on swiftly in 2000. The growing involvement of Russia with Germany has indeed been a remarkable sign of our times. There is a possibility of Germany becoming deeply involved in Russian businesses, as a means of reducing Russia’s debt to Germany. In the light of Ezekiel’s prophecy that Gog would be of the land of Magog, it is thrilling to see such developments. It is a real boost to our faith in the prophetic word of God.

Two years ago the euro was regarded as the pinnacle of the European house. However Germany and France—and their allies—knew that there remained a final brick that needed to be laid. A brick that Britain strongly opposed and refused to acknowledge. The final brick of political union. This year has seen the matter brought to prominence. With or without

Britain they are determined to press ahead with political integration, which will give a new identity to Europe. Britain's isolation was seen at Nice in December. The reality is that the EU is intent on steaming away without Britain. Nice was intended to lay the stepping stones for new members. Instead it increased the regulations and obstacles in their way!

The pace is gathering, as we shall see later in *Milestones*, for an unexpected twist to our expectations concerning Britain. *Milestones* has consistently spoken of the need for Britain to leave the EU, but who would have thought that the situation may well be resolved by Europe leaving Britain, rather than the other-way round!

Britain, in spite of the gloomy predictions that were made about her position outside the euro, has done much better outside than ever she would have done if she had signed up to the euro. Was this the hand of God marking out a future role for Britain that we have traditionally been expecting? Could it be that with an inward-looking America, Britain will play a larger role in the Middle East—a role that was long expected of the power that enabled the Jews to return to their land?

It is too early to comment on the possible effects of the change of government in America. Mr Bush has only just assembled his team. It does seem reasonable to see America's world role being checked, at least for a while. This will give Russia her opportunity to work with Europe as the replacement superpower, something both Russia and Europe desire to see. It will enhance Britain's isolation from the rest of the continent in preparation for her future role.

It is interesting to learn that Australia is expanding her defence forces, preparing them for a more international role. As one of the "young lions", can we not see her preparation for her future part in the Divine plan?

For Israel, however, it has been a disastrous year. She pulled out of Lebanon, expecting to wrong-foot her enemies, and to bring a measure of peace. Ever since the Papal visit things have spiralled downwards as far as the peace process is concerned. Scenes of carnage have been frequent visitors to the news screens. Jerusalem has indeed shown itself to be a "burdensome stone". We have seen the bias against Israel by virtually all the world's media. It is not difficult to see the world rising up against her, just as the prophets have said.

Arafat has seen that the Pope holds the key to Jerusalem. He has also re-involved the Russians in his efforts to win acceptance for the Palestinian State and control over a part at least of Jerusalem.

With the understanding that comes from a true interpretation of the Book of Revelation, comes the certainty of the truth about the Church of Rome. What Jesus reveals to his servants is a very different picture to that we see through the eye of the media. The influence of the Roman Church, not only on the affairs of Europe, but on events in Israel, is increasing step by step.

2000 saw several significant events. Among them were the Pope's visit to Israel, the Agreement with the Palestinians, the moves to make saints of the founding fathers of the EU, and the establishment of a new "patron saint for politicians", Thomas More.

We must bear in mind that the coming contest will essentially be a religious one. It will be the culmination of centuries of despising the true witnesses of God, both Jew and believer. The harlot system that is the mother of all churches stands opposed to true worship. The gathering of the nations to the battle of Armageddon is at its heart a religious contest. Isaiah describes it as *the controversy of Zion*.

2000 has indeed been an exciting year. Even though our scriptural studies have led us to an expectation of certain events, we have to marvel at the way the angels work behind the scenes to achieve His purpose. Bible prophecy enables us to see that the Hand of God has worked in the past and is working today. It gives us the quiet assurance that He is in control and that the Lord Jesus **really is** at the door. Events are moving swiftly forward. The call to his saints can truly come at any time.

The rest of Milestones!

Our brief review has not given any prophetic justification for the importance that we place in these events. This will be the work of our next chapter. Obviously we can only be brief, and a list of booklets to aid such study is given. In the subsequent chapters we can then flesh out the details given in this brief review. It is our desire that a study of these things will:

- awaken an interest in our brothers and sisters to open their Bibles and to study these things for themselves, and also availing themselves of the sound expositions that have been written by our earlier brethren.
- cause the expectation of the Master's return.
- develop an understanding of what the Kingdom is all about, what the reality is behind the phrase "*The hope of Israel*".

We are in danger of being submerged by the movement to dwell on the New Testament, to the neglect of the foundation stones laid in the Old. It is time to awake and study to show ourselves as workmen that need not be ashamed, understanding the full gospel that Christ preached. So we pray *Thy Kingdom come*.

A selection of books to help our study is found on page 88.

Chapter 2:

THE PROPHETICAL SIGNS OF OUR TIMES

Some of the latter-day prophecies

In *Milestones 1999* we gave a broad outline of many of the prophecies that cover this exciting period of the Lord Jesus' return. We ended the chapter with a tabular summary of a possible sequence of events. This year we want to look in greater detail at elements from two of these prophecies. They are the "frog-like spirits" which we find in Revelation ch. 16 and the "turning back" of Gog and also the link between Gog and Magog, which we find in Ezekiel ch. 38. There will be other prophecies, which we consider as we come to the appropriate chapter.

The "frog-like spirits" of Revelation 16

The reason for our particular interest this year in this aspect is that really for the first time Russia has been speaking with a frog-like voice. It has been coming both out of the government mouth as well as from the Orthodox Church's mouth. They have been truly remarkable signs for our times.

Rev. 16:12 And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

:13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

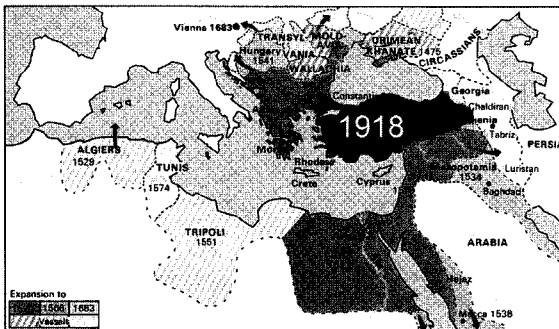
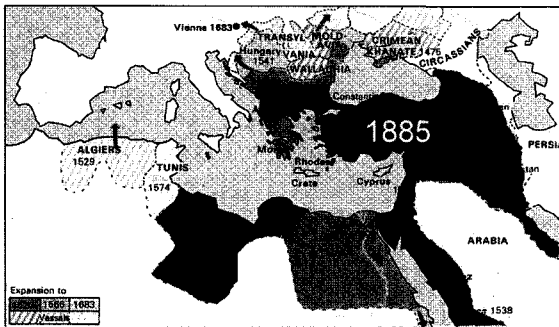
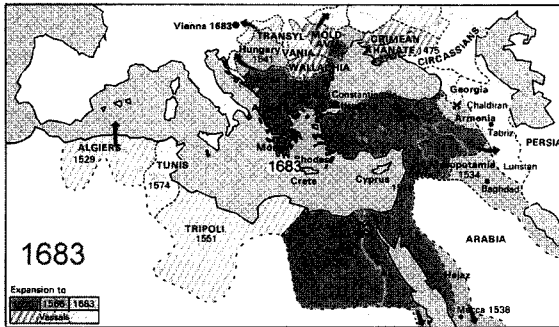
:14 For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

:15 Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

:16 And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

The previous verses of this chapter had outlined the work of the preceding five angels who had poured their vials—or bowls—of God's wrath upon various sections of Europe. They deal with the judgements of God that fell on a Catholic Europe following the French Revolution. Napoleon Bonaparte and others executed God's wrath upon an area of Europe that had been foremost in the persecution of Protestants, and especially the true believers. The Jewish people also had experienced the heavy hand of Rome for a long period of time. These judgements led to the Pope being taken prisoner and Rome degraded to a second rate city. Eventually in 1867-70 the Church lost all its lands. However, in the language of v. 11, *they did not repent of their deeds*. As we shall see, the hidden hand of the Roman

Church can be found in much that we shall be looking at. The revival of the Roman Church in the 20th century is a truly remarkable phenomenon, paralleled by the equally remarkable revival of the Jewish nation.



The sixth angel's bowl of wrath was poured upon the "River Euphrates" drying up its flow of water. In the symbology of this book, it is easy to see in this the drying back to the nation in whose land this river rises—Turkey. The maps demonstrate how dramatically, over a long period of time, the power of Turkey has declined. Her territory today is a shadow of that which she once possessed. Although

it seems a long time since the last push back in size that took place in WW 1, there have been many events that have arisen since. We must also bear in mind that the drying up is not yet complete, the final

stage will be when she loses what she now possesses, when the Gogian host sweeps down into the Middle East.

The drying up was so that *the Way of the kings of the east might be prepared*. The word for *east* means "sun's risings", an understandable link with the east as this is the direction of the rising sun. Kings associated with the sun's rising point to Christ and the saints. So these happenings to Turkey over 80 years ago were in preparation for the Lord's return. He is

returning as King of the Jews to inherit the throne of his great ancestor David. It was therefore necessary that there should be a partial return of the Jews to their former homeland. Many prophets make it clear that the latter-day invasion is of a land possessed by God's people (e. g. Ez 38:8; Zech 12:2). And that it is of a religious nature, we shall see in chapter 12. So it is not co-incidental that we have the rebirth of Israel in the same era that has seen the rebirth of the power of the Vatican.

The next things that John saw were three unclean spirits like frogs – v13. Further detail is given to identify what these symbolised. For they are the spirits of devils (Greek demons), working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty – v14. He was clearly told where these frog-like spirits issued from:

- out of the mouth of the dragon,
- and out of the mouth of the beast,
- and out of the mouth of the false prophet. v13.

So we can see why there were three unclean spirits—one for each mouth. Out of a *mouth* we expect to hear words. It symbolises the government enacting its policies.

An *unclean spirit* is used of false teaching in Zec. 13:2,3. The Greek word for *unclean* in this passage is associated with devils, or rather demons, and frequently appears in the gospels. In the Greek world mental illnesses were attributed to demons. How appropriate that these policies represent the madness of man's thinking at this time.

So why *frog-like spirits*? Frogs inhabit the marshy places. They first appear in Scripture in the plagues in Egypt. Frogs were the second plague, and their coming brought Pharaoh to his knees, with a promise to let Israel go free—a promise he soon reneged on (Ex 8:1-15). Now freedom for people was the spirit of the French Revolution, the very matter that the earlier part



of Rev. 16 was concerned with. Is it just a coincidence that the frog is associated with France? It is a symbol used by cartoonists. The British speak of the Frogies, when being derisory about the French! The symbol is rooted in fascinating history. Although we associate the *fleur-de-lis* with France, this was not its initial symbol. The Frankish King Clovis (reigned AD 481-511) had three frogs as his emblem. The Franks were a freedom loving people. In fact, "Frank" comes from the French word *francus* meaning free.

So we can see that the spirit of the French Revolution with its cry of *liberty, equality, fraternity*, which is very much the spirit of this age, is appropriately symbolised by the phrase *unclean spirit*. But the freedom man promises is in opposition to the Truth which alone can make us free

(John 8:32). The *spirit of demons* is appropriate too. In Britain we are acutely aware of the madness of many of the proposals that come from Europe in the name of human rights. (To illustrate—today the farmers are protesting at regulations that will prevent them driving a tractor for more than 2 hours at a time!) Human rights also promote ‘gay’ rights, woman’s lib and politically ‘correct’ actions, all in opposition to God’s word.

We are also told that they *perform signs* that bring the *kings of the earth* together to the *battle of that great day of God Almighty*. Signs is the word used in the gospels for miracles. Jesus and the apostles performed miracles as a sign that the power was of God, to authenticate their message. So it is with these signs, they put the stamp of legitimacy and truth on what are false teachings. The peoples are deceived. They think that freedom is a “God-given right”. They are prepared to defend their so-called freedoms with laws and actions. This is what we are seeing. The kings of the earth (= habitable—primarily the countries of Europe) are putting together a judicial system, with a police force and now an European army, which will override those of individual nations, in order to defend their rights. It is not difficult to see how it will bring them against the land of Israel. A Jewish religious revival under the hand of Elijah, as spoken of in Malachi ch. 4, may challenge to the religious freedoms that Europe is embracing.

	7 Heads	10 Horns	Prophetic Signs	Prophetic Signs (1260 yrs)	Signatures of the Beast	Sign of the Beast	Sign of the Beast	Sign of the Beast
Daniel's Fourth Beast - ROME (Dan. 7)		7v7	7v21	7v25	7v8,25	7v22	7v22	7v12
Great Red Dragon (Pagan Roman Empire)	12v3	12v3	12v13	12v14				
Beast of Sea (West. Roman Empire-Papacy)	13v3	13v3	13v7	13v5	13v1,5			
Beast of Earth (Holy Roman Empire)			13v15		16v10,11	16v16		
Scarlet colored Beast (Revived Roman Empire)	17v3	17v3	17v6		17v3	17v4	17v14, 18v6	19v20

Source: *Revelation - Which interpretation?* by Graham Pearce, page 125

So wonderfully we can see the appropriateness of the symbology here. The forming of modern Europe flows out from the French Revolution some 200 years ago.

We now have to identify the beings behind the three mouths, *the dragon, the beast and the false prophet*. Two of the three have appeared earlier as divisions of the Roman Empire. The dragon we find in Revelation 12 and the beast and the dragon are featured in chapter 13. The chart above brings together the characteristics of the various Beasts and the Dragon.

We propose to give a brief exposition of these three beings as we come to the appropriate chapter in *Milestones*. Suffice it to say that we equate the **Dragon** with Russia, the **Beast** with Western Europe, and the **False Prophet** with the Papacy—the Roman Church. We shall find that all three are “singing to the same song-sheet”!

The chapter in Revelation continues with a most important verse. We can see that it is directed by the Lord Jesus to his brethren and sisters living at the start of the 21st century. Although applicable to all ages, the Master saw a particular appropriateness to our generation, which is a sad reflection on the lack of vision of many at this time.

Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. v15

So here in the sequence is the return of the Master. Not to the world, but to his household. This is the call to judgement. Before the work of delivering the Jews from the hands of the gathering nations can begin, his workers must be prepared. Men and women from all ages and from many parts of the world will be assembled and judged. The rejected will perish forever. It may well be that those who are alive at the time of the call, and who are rejected, will be sent back to their countries evidence of the Lord's return. For the accepted there will be the incredible change to immortality, an immense multitude who are ready to challenge the nations who have pitched their might against the Jews.

We then find the next verse referring again to this battle. Verse 15 is a hinge verse. Before the return of the Master it is the frog-like spirits that gather the nations to the battle. After this verse it is a different and additional power—that of God!

And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. v16

Armageddon

arama *a heap of sheaves*
ge *a valley*
don *judgement*

**A heap of sheaves in a valley
for threshing.**

See Eureka Vol. 3, p 603, 604

How does God gather the nations? We are not directly told, but piecing Scripture together, it would seem reasonable that the Elijah work may be one of the things that brings them down. As we shall see, there are many claims on Jerusalem, and what

these other claimants will not tolerate is a Jewish claim of divine right to this city. A revival of the things of the Law of Moses, as indicated in Malachi 4:4, may arouse the wrath of the nations. And so they will be gathered on the mountains of Israel, to the battle of Armageddon to be threshed like sheaves (Joel 3:12-14).

Ezekiel 38

There are two aspects of this extensive prophecy that we want to examine.

1. The association of Gog with the land of Magog.
2. There is indicated a time of revival for Gog prior to his coming down into the land of Israel.

Gog seems to be a title of those who are enemies of Israel. The Septuagint uses the word Gog where in the AV we have Agag in Num. 24:7. We remember it was his tribe, the Amalekites, which attacked Israel in the wilderness, intent on destroying them. They were thwarted. Our Esther readings bring before us Haman the Agagite.



Ezekiel is told to *set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him* – v2. Before looking at Magog, let's see the territory over which Gog is a prince. It is widely recognised that the word *chief* is better translated as *Ros* or *Rosh*. So it reads *Gog, prince of Ros, Meshech...* Ros is the ancient name of Russia; *Meshech* has long been associated with Moscow and *Tubal* with Tobolski.¹

¹ See *Ezekiel* by J. Alfree & *The Last Days* by D. Hilsden for evidence.

Magog

Gog is *of the land of Magog* (RV). So who is Magog? He was a son of Japheth (Gen. 10:2); and according to Josephus the Greeks called the Magogites the Scythians (Anti 1 vi 1). Herodotus says that the Scythians were originally found in central Asia but migrated to Germany. They could be found between the rivers Don and Danube. Siculus writing around 100 BC speaks of them spreading to the shores of the Baltic. Some Jewish sources translate the word as Goths. So all focus on the region of Germany.

The indication is that though Gog is prince of Russia, he has his origins in Germany. This is the remarkable situation that we find today. As we shall see when looking at Russia there are many strands that link the two.

I will turn thee back

And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour Ezek. 38:4

The phrase *turn back* can indicate defeat or restoration! The context has to be used to give the correct meaning. It is the word frequently used to describe Israel being restored—*I will turn thy captivity*. Indeed this is the same word as is translated in verse 8 as *brought back*. So it is reasonable to see this as a phrase of restoration. So we look for a time when Gog will be restored to power and might, in order that God may lead her army forth, together with innumerable associates who are in league with her. They are being led to the mountains of Israel. So this is the time spoken of by so many of the prophets—the invasion of the land of Israel. It will be against this host that conquers Israel, which Christ and the saints will come. The battle to be fought on the mountains of Israel is the Battle of Armageddon.

What is so interesting to see is that Russia is in a period of restoration. With the fall of communism, Russia experienced great economic problems. She ceased to have any claim to be a world super-power, and she had to endure seeing America reign without opposition in that role. This year has seen the arrest of that decline. She has a long way to go to become a great world power again—the role that scripture has indicated for her. But a start has been made, as we shall see in chapter 4. They have been greatly helped by the great rise in oil prices. Russia sits on extensive reserves of oil and natural gas. She has many minerals beneath her territory. We can see the Creator's foreknowledge in arranging these things to be so. Her harvests have improved; industrial production is up. Also there is a strong desire on the part of her people to regain their former position in the world.

Ezekiel says of her armies that they are a *guard unto* her many compatriot forces. Not a guard **over** but **unto** them. In other words she has not conquered these other nations, it is a freely entered into confederacy, of which she is supplying the bulk of the military might. This is now a scenario that seems eminently possible. With Britain and America being

opposed to this confederacy, the armies of Western Europe are not very mighty, as we are hearing with the current debate over the European Army. Without Nato support, it will not be able to achieve much. What is more natural than for Europe to turn to Russia? Just as we read in Old Testament times, Europe may be prepared to contribute many “talents of gold and silver” for Russian support in what is, basically, a religious crusade against Israel.

The iron/clay feet of Daniel 2

We must bear in mind the picture revealed in Daniel 2 of the image. It stands upon two iron/clay feet. So we expect there to be a similar situation as existed in the past when the Roman Empire was divided into east and west. So for there to be two feet we must have an eastern power and a western. When the image stands upon its feet for the first and only time, we shall see all that is represented by the metals of the image **united together** in plan and purpose to stand in defiance of the God of Israel. Its head will be golden—Babylonian. The latter-day Babylonian power is the Papacy.¹ We see the nations of Eastern Europe banding together again, as are the countries of Western Europe in preparation for their future role.

One of the distinguishing features of the image is its feet and toes of iron and clay. A strange mixture! Evidently the iron reinforces the clay sufficiently to enable it to stand on its feet for the brief duration of its existence. We know the iron represents Rome. The parallel vision in chapter 7, which reveals the nations from God’s viewpoint, tells us that the Roman 4th beast continues right to the time of the end. So we expect to see a similar situation at the time of the end as existed when Rome consisted of a two-legged empire. There was a western half, strongly under the control of the papacy, and an eastern half, centred on Constantinople, representing the military side of Rome, with its emperor. Yet this is tempered by the miry clay.

Clay, in scripture, stands for peoples. So in the time when the image stands upon its feet, we expect to see a strange mixture of people power—democracy, and the iron—the authoritarian rule of Rome. We have no problems seeing the clay of democracy—the French Revolution transformed and is still transforming the face of Europe and the world.

We have to look a little deeper to see the iron, remembering that iron we equate with Rome, especially its military might. When the image stands it will be through the military might of Russia, who will in that day occupy Constantinople, the old centre of the Roman world. We also see the influence of iron Rome in the spiritual influence of the Roman Church in the West and the Russian Orthodox in the East. Allied to this Roman iron are also the Greek Orthodox churches that are separate from the Roman

¹

See *Milestones* 1997 Ch. 2

Catholic Church, but they come from the same rootstock. Their differences will be subsumed in their united desire to come against Israel. We also recognise that the basis of EU law is that of Roman (Justinian) law, as opposed to the 10 commandments that form the basis of British law.

It was Constantine who transferred the political and military centre of the Roman Empire from Rome to Constantinople. Much later, with the fall of Constantinople in AD 1453, these elements moved to Moscow, which became the third Rome. The Russian title “Tsar” is the Roman “Caesar”! As we shall see, Russia is hankering after its Tsarist past! The day will also come when Russia will move down into Turkey, thus completing *the drying up of the river Euphrates*, and bringing Constantinople—renamed Istanbul by the Moslems—to a centre of power again.

So let’s start our review with events in Russia—the eastern leg.

Chapter 3:

THE DRAGON SPEAKS WITH A FROG-LIKE VOICE

In the next two chapters we will be examining two of the prophetic aspects that we saw in the previous chapter—in this chapter that of Russia speaking with a frog-like voice, and in chapter 4 the turning back or revival of Russia.

Both these aspects are remarkable signs for our times. For many years when the Soviet leaders held sway, there were no frog-like voices. There was no freedom of speech, no freedom for the individual. People had to toe the party line. Even with the fall of communism, things didn't change radically. What a change we see under Mr Putin. Not that he brings true democracy, he is very autocratic, and critical opposition has been crushed. But the "mouth" has been speaking of freedom and human rights, and that is what is required of this symbolism.

We shall see that the change in the Russian Orthodox Church has also been remarkable. We have witnessed a frog-like voice from the Vatican for over a century, now, during this year it has reached Russia for the first time.

Putin's frog-like words

We reproduce part of Mr Putin's New Year speech from *Milestones* 1999.

Freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, freedom of the mass media, the right to private property—all these basic freedoms of a civilised society will be reliably protected by the State. *The Times* 1-1-00

This was the first time that Russians had heard such words!

His position as President was confirmed at the elections held in May. He won an outright victory, though later, reports of poll rigging emerged. This itself was a measure of the change in Russia. Such allegations by the prestigious *Moscow Times* were previously unheard of. True, the Jewish press magnate Vladimir Guisinsky was arrested in one of Putin's crackdowns and later had to go into self-exile.

At his election speech Mr Putin pledged that "honesty, clarity and openness would be the features of his leadership." He vowed several times to defend democracy and the Russian State. He pledged to make it respected abroad and a source of pride for its citizens.

We are one nation and one people, we believe in our strength and in our ability to transform and transfigure the country.

Dwarfed by the Kremlin's vaulted ceilings, Mr Putin invoked past leaders who championed Russia's dignity and "made it great, powerful and

mighty”, but it was unclear whether he was referring to Stalin, for whom he has a great admiration, or to the Tsars! *The Times*, DT 8-5-00

This was the first time there had been a peaceful and democratic transfer of power. Mr Putin remarked:

The transfer of power is always a test of the constitutional system, a test of its strength. We have passed this test with dignity. We have proved that Russia is becoming a truly democratic state. The peaceful succession of power is the crucial element of the political stability of which we have dreamed. *The Guardian* 8-5-00

He admitted that there was still a long way to go on the path to democracy. What is clear is his commitment to the Russian Church. He attends mass regularly, is totally familiar with the intricacies of the Orthodox ritual. The Patriarch Alexis is often to be found at his side—Putin attends church ceremonies, Alexis attends state ceremonies. Alexis was at hand to “bless” his confirmation of presidency. Indeed, after the short ceremony in the Duma, the President and the Patriarch proceeded to the religious service at the new Moscow cathedral.

The Russian Church speaks “frog-like” words

An article by an *Associated Press* writer 21-1-00 carried the headline **Russian Church Gets Closer to State**. It highlighted the apparent piety of Putin, despite being 15 years in the KGB.

It is impossible to gauge how much of Putin’s faith is genuine. Some who saw Putin on Christmas Day [Jan 7th] say he touched an icon in the wrong place and didn’t bow when he was supposed to, but they conceded what he did do was unprecedented for a modern Russian politician. “It didn’t look forced or unnatural” when Putin prayed, Father Alexander said, “Yeltsin was never so smooth.” “It shows that we have reached a new threshold of acceptance, when it’s not a surprise when the president goes to church.”



Many Russians have turned to Orthodoxy to fill the ideological vacuum left by the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union.

Few Russian’s will forget the image of Orthodox Patriarch Alexis II, in his imposing gold-and-white cape, presiding over Boris Yeltsin as he resigned and handed over Russia’s helm to Putin in a Kremlin ceremony on December 31st.

The article also quoted from Valery Kichin, a commentator who wrote an article in a Russian liberal daily paper entitled: **Ordered to believe**.

Orthodoxy is unconditionally recognised as indisputable, and the concept is more and more identified with the concept of “Russian.” In place of a red (Communist Party) card in your breast pocket you must carry a holy cross.

The main article concluded with the statement:

Even today’s Communist Party has stripped atheism from its charter and the party chief calls Jesus Christ the first real communist.

The Russian Orthodox Patriarch leader, Alexis II has regular meetings with Mr Putin. Alexis, like Putin, worked for the KGB, his code name was “thrush”—was this an indication that he “sang well”? He attends most big state functions and gives addresses on TV—which would have been unthinkable a few years ago.

A significant development this year has been the change in official policy concerning social matters. At the end of 1999 the Russian Bishops held what was termed *The 5th World Russian People’s Council*. The matter under discussion was *Russia on the Eve of the 2000th Anniversary of Christianity: Faith, People and Power*. A weeklong meeting of the 120 bishops and archbishops of the Russian church followed this in August 2000. It was here that the matter of canonising the Tsar was agreed, but the main matters for discussion were “the church’s first-ever ‘social doctrine’ and a concept for relations with non-Orthodox churches.” The commission that presented its secret draft on social doctrine had been working on it for six years.

The doctrine addresses many issues that have never been officially considered by the Orthodox Church, either in Russia or abroad: genetic engineering, contraception, organ transplantation, attitudes toward public education, mass media and sports. The doctrine also deals with attitudes toward private property and the social role of the church. *Moscow Times* 12-8-00

The lightning speed at which such a sweeping and potentially controversial “social doctrine” was rammed through without debate suggests the synod [of bishops] is in the driver’s seat.

Unlike the Roman Catholic Church, which issued its first social doctrine in 1891—the papal encyclical *Rerum Novarum*—and which ever since has spoken out on many aspects of public and private life, the Orthodox Church has previously had only private opinions on many modern matters.

It also spoke of the restoration of the monarchy

While monarchy is enshrined in Orthodox tradition, the doctrine reaffirms that the church accepts any form of government. But it also states that only a true spiritual rebirth in society can bring about conditions under which an Orthodox monarchy—carefully described as spiritually “higher” than democracy—could be restored. *Moscow Times* 18-8-00

Chapter 4

THE DRAGON STIRS

We continue our look at Russia and see the turning back or revival of Russia. There is a deep desire for greatness again. Under Mr Putin there has been a remarkable turn-about in her fortunes. There is also a growing movement back to the Imperial days under the Tsars. In many ways the clock is being turned back. The "good old days" of her greatness are being nostalgically examined, and step-by-step things are being re-introduced which would have been unthinkable just a few years ago. Thrilling times indeed!

Making Russia great again

There has been considerable progress on economic reforms. There is still a long way to go however! But these are some of the headlines that appeared during the year.

"Russian economy. Surplus to requirements." This was in *The Economist* 8-7-00; which rarely has much good to say about Russia! It was reporting that Russia had a huge current-account surplus, thanks to high oil and gas prices, up from \$16 billion for the 1st qtr. a year ago to \$23 billion.

"Manufacturing output rises for 20th consecutive month." *Moscow Times* 2-9-00.

"IMF sees upbeat mood in Russia." *Moscow Times* 13-9-00

A drive toward a workable, law-based society and economy is prompting new optimism about Russia. . . "I've been very impressed with the consistent and clear message coming from the current leadership that they have to behave like a civilised country, which is a special expression used in Russia that means a law-based society and economy", said a senior official from the International Monetary Fund.

"State revenues reach 10-yr high." *Moscow Times* 15-9-00

The government has collected more revenue in the first half of 2000 than in any other six-month period in the past decade...the gross domestic product [GDP] increased by a total of 7.3% and industrial production rose 10.3% during the same period—growth unprecedented in Russia's recent history.

"Economy to grow by 7% in 2000." *Moscow Times* 25-11-00

"Agriculture Industry sees production, profits rise." *Moscow Times* 12-11-00. The Agriculture Minister reported that Russia had produced nearly enough food to feed itself this year and agricultural profits were up by about 8% on 1999. It has climbed out of the black hole it fell into in the crisis year 1998.

“Soaring economy a pleasant surprise” *Moscow Times* 23-12-00

2000 looks set to go down in history as the year that the economy finally turned the corner and picked up steam thanks to market reforms. For the second year in a row, industries pumped more crude oil and cast more steel while the government collected fatter taxes.

Mr Putin signed the Russian 2001 budget on December 27th, the first to balance spending and revenue since the collapse of the Soviet Union. It set a high priority on defence—18.3% of budget. *Moscow Times* 27-12-00

In all these reports we must remember that she is working from a low base-line. Her economy as measured in GDP is a fraction of what we in the west enjoy. But progress is being made. She is to be strong according to scripture, and so it will happen.

The revival of the Orthodox Church

	2000	1989
diocese	128	67
parishes	19,000	6,893
monasteries	480	18
theol. academies	5	2
seminaries	26	3

This year saw the completion of the Cathedral of “Jesus Christ the Saviour” in Moscow¹, a remarkable building feat, as the foundations were only laid in 1995. It is a source of great

pride to many in Russia; it symbolises to them the heart of the country. The “spiritual” growth of the nation is important. Not only does it give the Russians a better feeling; it is clear that in the coming invasion of Israel there will be a uniting of Europe to a common religious cause—the destruction of the Jewish revival in the Land. So hand in hand with Russian economic growth, we expect to see a similar growth in religious matters.

Communist overtones

What has been so fascinating has been Putin’s desire for the trappings of the past; not only things communist but also Tsarist. There is this uneasy mixture of “iron” and “clay.”

The main party which backs Putin—the recently formed Unity Party—held its first party conference in March. It is also known as “the Bear”!

Unity, a vaguely centrist party backed by President Putin, has not broken from the country’s communist past, but is embracing it. Sergei Shoigu, Unity’s unprepossessing yet popular leader, wants to take “the best” from

¹ See *Milestones* 1996 ch 3.

communism. This includes reviving symbols, which provoke nostalgia in many and fear in others. He intends to reintroduce the party card.

The intentions of the Unity party are perhaps most significant in that they illustrate how little Russia has broken with the past. "This is yet another sign of the degree of continuity between the old and the new systems, which is under-rated. It is Soviet-lite", says Jonas Bernstein of the Jamestown Foundation, a USA thinktank." *TT* 25-4-00

In Russian politics the President is not the party leader, but both back each other! Putin backs the ideals that Unity stands for.

It is a sign of how Russia has changed since Vladimir Putin assumed power on December 31st 1999, that 12 months on, the Kremlin bells will ring in the New Year with Joseph Stalin's Soviet anthem. *Russia Today* 14-12-00

Part of translation of Anthem

Russia – our sacred nation
Russia our beloved land
Mighty will, great glory
These are your riches for ever
more!

(Refrain)

Glory to our free Fatherland
Union of fraternal peoples down
the ages

The people's wisdom handed
down from our ancestors

Glory to our country! You are our
pride!

.. You are unique in the world!
You are unique!

Our motherland, protected by
God!

The Russian parliament has agreed that the old communist anthem should be reinstated. Russian athletes were embarrassed at the Olympic Games by a wordless anthem they could not sing along to like other athletes could. This unpopular tune that Yeltsin introduced has now been replaced by the Soviet anthem written in 1943, but the words updated by the lyricist that wrote the original words. The Russian Patriarch has backed this change. It was unveiled in time for the New Year, a significant date for the Russians as they regard this as the start of the 21st century.

In addition they are proposing to make the army's famous—or infamous—red

flag, but apparently without its hammer and sickle, the official emblem once more of the army, and the tricolour white-blue-and-red flag the official national flag.

Harking back to the Tsars

Such is the Russian contradiction, that at the same time as embracing the former Soviet communist emblems, Russia is harkening back to its Tsarist past. This is especially significant. The word comes from the Latin word "Caesar" and so has interesting links back to Rome. Bro. Thomas wrote of his expectation that Gog would be the "Autocrat of all the Russias." "Autocrat" was a title that the Tsar's used, and is still used in Russia in reference to them. In his day the monarchy was still strongly in power, only being swept away in 1917. Under communism all association with the imperial past was excluded. But not now! There are now many exciting

strands to the Tsarist monarchy of the past. Russia is not the only country interested in bringing back the monarchy. Spain reinstated their monarch in 1975. The Yugoslavian monarch has just returned home from exile.

It was on December 31st 1996 that President Yeltsin announced that the heir-apparent to the Tsarist throne was to be “re-instated as head of Russia’s imperial family”.

Grand Duke Georgy Mikhailovich Romonov, 15, is to return to Russia with his mother, Grand Duchess Maria Vladimirovna, and grandmother, Grand Duchess Leonida Georgyevna, who live in Madrid. *Daily Telegraph* 31-12-96.

This was indeed exciting news! However the young man seemed to disappear without trace, until this year. Prior to the ceremony marking the dedication of the new Moscow Cathedral, the Orthodox bishops held a weeklong synod. Amongst the list of those who were present at the conclusion of the synod, to hear the speeches, appeared the names of Georgy and his mother and grandmother. The following day was the actual ceremony to dedicate the cathedral and to mark the canonisation of the last Tsar; again their names appeared! In fact Georgy has his own web site. He is attending school in Great Britain.

The succession to the Tsar is a matter of dispute as there are no direct heirs. However Georgy is widely accepted as the legitimate heir and is backed by the Orthodox Church, Yeltsin, and Putin, which would make it difficult for any other claimant to succeed. The official web site of the Russian Assembly of Nobility¹ concludes its 6-page article on *The problems of succession to the Russian imperial throne* with these words.

There are periods in the history of many countries when the Monarchy either voluntarily or involuntarily separates from its thrones. However we know very well indeed that there are even periods of restoration of monarchies... Such a restoration cannot be excluded from Russia, but is only possible if firstly we prepare the nation to confide their faith to the Lord and secondly by preparing the Monarch to take his responsibility for his subjects... Maybe soon we will stop talking about Emperor Nikolai II [Nicholas II] having been the last Russian Monarch. Our present head of the Russian Imperial Family Grand Duchess Maria Vladimirovna [Georgy’s mother] is always ready to serve her subjects and country. Her motto, announced at one press conference is *With Faith – for Fatherland*. [interesting, for *Fatherland* we associate with Germany, *Motherland* with Russia.] . . . As in any case our Patriarch [Alexis II] will bless the reign of the monarch.

Restoring the Tsar’s throne. Is it just a co-incidence that the old throne has now been restored?

¹ www.rds.org.ru/eng/nic

The Russian imperial throne, upholstered in shimmering red velvet, was restored to its original home in St Petersburg's Winter Palace on Saturday, more than 80 years after it was trashed by communists during the bloody demise of the empire it represented.

The St George throne room was unveiled in a pomp-filled ceremony in the ornate palace on the Neva River, home to the world famous Hermitage Museum. The museum paid for the painstaking six-year restoration.

The hall's centrepiece is the gold throne, topped with a double-headed eagle, the tsarist state emblem. *St. Petersburg Times* 12-12-00

The Winter Palace is contained within the Hermitage Museum, which also contains a Scythian museum—Scythia being the Greek name given to the Magogites, as we shall see later.

The 16th century throne of Tsar Ivan the Terrible that was used for the actual coronation of the Tsars is on show in the Armoury Museum in Moscow. The wooden throne is covered with carved plates of ivory, depicting among other things the double-headed eagle. In 1856 a gilt eagle was attached to the back.

“Tsar Putin spends £25m on a palace”

That was the headline in *The Times* 25-9-00.



President Putin will spend £25 million restoring a Tsarist palace near St Petersburg to be used as a second residence, in what may be perceived by many as an attempt to set himself up as an imperial Russian leader.

Mr Putin, in contrast to Mr Yeltsin, has shown a marked fondness for the trappings of power and appears keen to create a Tsar-like image for himself that will detract from his past as a KGB spy. It will also play on the national desire for an authoritative leader who will give Russians back their lost pride.

Known as the Konstantin Palace, it was built in 1720 for Grand Duke Konstantin. An interesting link, as this son of Tsar Paul I, would have been named after Constantine the founder of Constantinople.

Canonisation of Nicholas II. During August there was an elaborate ceremony to “canonise” the last Tsar, Nicholas II. It was somewhat overshadowed by the *Kursk* submarine disaster which had happened 10 days earlier and Russia was still trying to reach the crew. The ceremony was to mark the “high point” in the Millennium celebrations. It was attended by thousands of people including Georgy and his mother and

grandmother. The Church insisted that Nicholas was being declared a saint, not for his life, but because of his humility in facing death. However for the ordinary Russians this marked an important step in the restoration of the monarchy's place in Russian history. In 1998, at the ceremony to rebury the remains of Nicholas, the Russian Church was reluctant to acknowledge the authenticity of the remains, and the Patriarch boycotted the proceedings. Such was the growth in popular opinion, with many claims that miracles had been performed, that the Church was persuaded to change ground.

The work of the commission was absolutely free from any political pressure from any side. At the same time, the commission did not consider it possible to ignore the opinion of dozens of thousands of citizens and organisations who supported in their appeals the idea of the glorification of the last Russian emperor and his family among the holy passion-bearers [the lowest rank of "sainthood"]. *Russian Orthodox site*.

At the ceremony there were 1,100 others who were likewise canonised!

They now constitute the Assembly of New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia. *Moscow Times* 15-08-00

Describing the 4-hour ceremony the Russian Orthodox news site said that

His Holiness the Patriarch blessed the congregation with icons of the newly glorified saints, after which the icons were placed at the lectern for veneration and honouring.

There may also be a hidden agenda in taking this step of canonisation!

The Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, which split from the Moscow-based church in Soviet times, has already made Nicholas II a saint, and the issue has been a obstacle to reuniting the two churches. *AP* 14-8-00

Double-headed eagle. The Russian parliament has also officially re-adopted the double-headed eagle as the state emblem. It has been widely used unofficially in recent years, notably as the dramatic backcloth to Yeltsin's inauguration of his second term in office in 1996. The eagle was the common emblem of the Roman legions. In Deut. 28:49 the rise of Rome is prophesied in symbols, one of which was *swift as the eagle flyeth*. The eagle was the emblem on Titus' standards when he conquered Jerusalem in AD 70. The double-headed eagle first seems to have appeared in Constantinople some centuries before the fall of that city. The Tsars in Russia adopted it after the city was conquered to symbolise the transfer of Roman authority to Moscow. It therefore gives us a strong link with Rome.

It was also the emblem of the German Holy Roman Emperors. Charlemagne adopted this Roman emblem to signify that he considered himself as the successor of Caesar. So we have two powers sporting the Roman emblem, both considering themselves as successors to Rome.

We will now see in the next chapter the thrilling links that emerge between Russia and Germany foretold so long ago by God through Ezekiel.

Chapter 5:

GOG OF THE LAND OF MAGOG

We saw in chapter 2 the linkage between Gog and the territory known as Magog. The Magogites, or Scythians, occupied the area of Germany and Middle Europe. In this chapter we will explore the many historical links between Germany and Russia; and then look at the growing links being established between these two countries—certainly a thrilling picture is emerging.

The Tsars and Germany

The Romanov branch of the Tsars goes back to 1613. We quote from *Milestones 1996*, where we traced their decent from a German family.

The Romanoffs [Romanovs] were not of Rurik stock, [the line of the previous Tsars] nor were they even of very ancient lineage. They descended from a German nobleman who had emigrated to Moscow early in the 14th century. His fifth son, nicknamed Koshka (the cat), became head of the family of the Koshkins, many of whom were prominent at the court of Moscow in the 14th and 15 centuries. Early in the 16th century one of them, whose first name was Roman, called himself Romanov. His daughter Anastasia, was Ivan the Terrible's first wife; it was her son Theodor, who was the last Tsar of the Rurik dynasty.

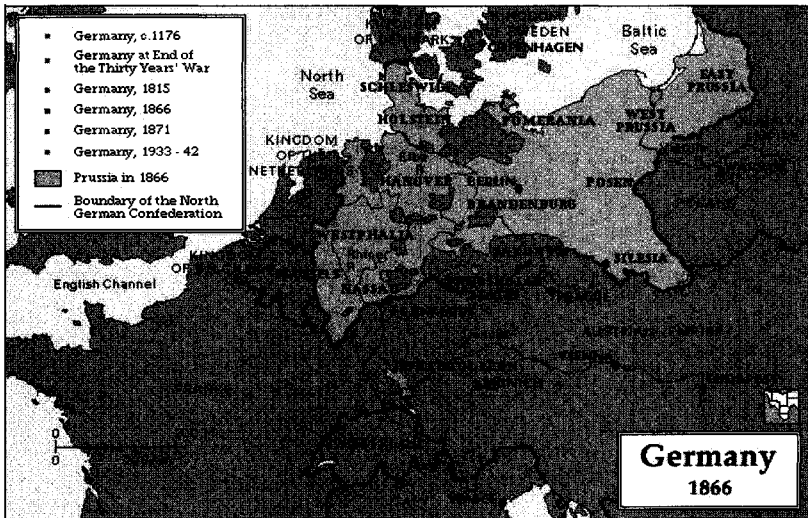
...Theodor and his wife were forced to divorce and become a monk and nun, ...It was their son Michael who was elected Tsar in 1613. *Enc. Brit. 14th ed.*

The present claimant, Grand Duke Georgy Mikhailovich Romanov, also has much more recent German blood.

Vladimir Kirillovich married Grand Duchess Leonida Georgeevna [these are Georgy's grandparents]...Out of this marriage was born the daughter Maria, who married Grand Duke Mikhail Pavlovich in 1976 [i.e. his parents], who up until the acceptance of orthodox faith and entrance into the Russian Imperial House called himself Prince Franz Wilhelm of the German Imperial and Prussian Royal Family of Hohenzollern. Their marriage resulted in 1983 in the birth of a son, Grand Duke Georgii Mikhailovich.

It could be assumed that in future our dynasty be called more specifically Romanovi-Holstein-Gottorp-Hohenzollern. There is nothing surprising about this as the Hohenzollerns, one of the oldest Royal families in Europe has on several occasions been related to the Romanovs. The sister of the German Emperor was the wife of Emperor Nikolai I, and the head of the Imperial family was married to Kira Kirillovna, sister of Grand Duke Vladimir Kirillovich [who was

Georgy's grandfather]. *Official site of the Russian Assembly of Nobility*
www.rds.org.ru/eng/nic7.htm



Now there are a lot of unfamiliar names here! Basically Georgy's grandfather was a German and Prussian prince. As this map of 1866 shows, Prussia extended across what were East Germany and Poland, with the Baltic as its northern border. The point the commentator is making is that Georgy can claim title to many areas.

Romanovi – or Romanov – the Tsar of Russia.

Holstein – “Schleswig-Holstein is a state of the Federal Republic of Germany occupying the southern half of the Jutland Peninsula.” *Groliers*

Gottorp – on the N. German – Denmark border.

Hohenzollern “is the name of a European dynasty whose most illustrious ruling line became electors of Brandenburg (1415-1806), kings of Prussia (1701-1918), and emperors of Germany (1871-1918).” *Grolier's*.

The significance of these titles is the addition of the last element - Hohenzollern.

Beginning with Emperor [Tsar] Peter III, [1728-62] the official name of the Russian Imperial Family was Holstein (or rather Schleswig-Holstein)-Gottorp-Romanov. *www.icon.fi*

So with Georgy comes the additional element of Hohenzollern—recognition of his claim to the German throne!

If this young man Georgy became Tsar, and so head of the military might of the invading forces who come down into Israel, then the words of God

through Ezekiel will be seen to be so apt—*Gog of the land of Magog, prince of Rosh*—Russia, *Meshech*—Moscow, and *Tubal*—Tobolski.

Russian links with Germany

Who would have thought that the man who had spied upon Germany would be sitting down to Christmas dinner with the German leader! Yet Putin, the ex-KGB spy, has become great friends with Chancellor Schröder. They are both of a similar age and neither man has experienced the effects of the Second World War. They both are ambitious for their countries. Putin speaks fluent German—a necessary qualification for his job as a spy! Germany has invested heavily in Russia and is Germany's main creditor, having provided some \$67 billion in loans, grants, credits and other guarantees. Russia has the minerals and oil and gas that German manufacturing industries need. Germany has the money to invest. It is an economically based partnership.

When Mr Putin became acting-president in January, he had a telephone conversation with Mr Schröder and emphasised “the crucial need to maintain a high level of Russo-German partnership, despite the oscillations of international politics.” *Moscow Times* 19-1-00

In July Putin made state visits to Spain and Germany. France was left out because of the harsh criticism by France of the war in Chechnya. In Germany the two men expressed their cordiality in glowing terms.

Russia and Germany declared a new and fruitful start to a vital European alliance on Thursday when the President Vladimir Putin, once a communist spy in Dresden, met German Chancellor Gerard Schröder.

“We agree that we want a real substantive new start in our relations,” Schröder told a news conference at his office. Schröder hailed the new Kremlin leader's knowledge of the country, his command of German and his “open-minded” approach.

“The start given by the Chancellor in the course of the meeting today gives us reason to think that talks will be very intensive and bring positive results,” he said, describing Germany as a vital economic partner and key to the new Europe.

“Germany is interested in a strategic partnership with a Russia,” Schröder said. “Not just Germany but all Europe has an interest in maintaining close and friendly relations with Russia.”

Putin made it clear that he sees Germany, Moscow's biggest trading partner, as pivotal in Russian access to Europe.

To express the closeness of the two leaders Putin jokingly said “What more do you want us to say? That we're in love?”

They agreed to upgrade the hotline from the Kremlin to Schröder's office in Berlin, and the Schröder family accepted the invitation to spend

time with the Putins at Christmas. [Early January in the Orthodox calendar. It will also be Mrs Putin's birthday] *Reuters & AP* 15,16-6-00

In September, when it was clear that President Milosovic would fall, Chancellor Schröder paid a flying visit to Moscow, rather than have a telephone conversation. Again they stressed the links between the two countries, and the friendship between the two men.

"Investing 2 hours on a plane from Germany to Russia is always worth it in order to develop ties," said Schröder.

Putin certainly appreciated the gesture.

For me, personally, the Chancellor's visit to Moscow today represents a change in the quality of our relations, he said. He took Schröder on tour of the Kremlin after the talks.

They discussed economic co-operation, how Russia could help overcome European fuel problems long-term, freedom of the press and a new bilateral conference to mirror a successful British-German forum for high-level talks.

The unusual day trip added a new personal dimension to improving relations between Germany and the Kremlin—Germany's largest creditor and trade partner.

They also discussed how Russia could help Europe overcome problems with supplies of fuel.

"Russia can do much in this respect, if there is good will aimed at the long term prospects of building our relations," he said. Schröder and Putin have been steadily building a personal relationship since the Russian leader took over from Yeltsin. *Moscow Times* 26-9-00

To mark the 11th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, and also the 10th anniversary of a bilateral co-operation treaty that the two countries signed in Moscow, special newspaper articles were written. Mr Putin wrote in a German newspaper, and Schröder wrote an article for a Russian newspaper.

"Mutual respect and trust between Russia and Germany have reached a new level since signing. The process of historical reconciliation between Russians and Germans was essentially formed from the remorse in the face of the millions of victims of National Socialism and responsibility for the past which politicians in today's Germany recognise," wrote Mr Putin.

"German-Russian relations today exist on the basis of trust and partnership unimaginable just a few years ago. I say this mindful of the tragic chapter in our history that we do not want to suppress. Only when we remember this dark moment of our history can the agreement of people for the joint future of Europe go forward," wrote Mr Schröder. *Russia Today* 10-11-00

Germany planning to buying up Russian firms

The German Economics Minister and his Russian counterpart met in Berlin in mid-December to discuss an extra-ordinary plan!

Germany is forging an extraordinary economic deal with Russia that will, if it succeeds, change the balance of power in the east of Europe. The idea is simple: a large chunk of Russia's huge £14 billion debt to Germany will be converted into equity stakes in Russian companies. Germany, in other words, could soon become a major shareholder in Russian industry and come to enjoy quite unprecedented influence over the country's economic policy.

Whether this is a desirable aim is a matter of debate, but it marks a strategic repositioning. While US foreign policy is on automatic pilot and the European union exhausts itself with pocket-sized reform, Germany is developing a radically new approach to dealing with Moscow that will deepen an already extensive mutual dependency.

One option being considered is to give Germany a bigger share—Ruhgas has a 4% - in Gazprom, Russia's gas exporter. *TT* 13-12-00

The *Stratfor Intelligence service* 29-12-00 had a lengthy analysis of this exciting development. We make a few extracts.

The deal will represent an important move in forging a close geopolitical partnership between Germany and Russia. This may help Russia's revival, and Germany could emerge as the leader of a united Europe with Russia on its side. Such a development would significantly weaken U.S. influence in Europe while dramatically strengthening Germany and Russia and helping them to advance to the front stage of world geopolitics.

Germany seems to be both able and willing to support Russia's revival, while not demanding humiliating concessions. Berlin sees a close partnership with Moscow as a future geopolitical benefit.

First, for its own further growth, Germany needs Russia's enormous natural resources, the last in the world to remain largely untapped. By giving Russia economic and political aid, Germany makes sure these resources will flow to its territory from a stable, German-friendly Russian government, such as that of Vladimir Putin, who speaks German.

Second, a stable, Germany-backed Russia would provide the cheapest, fastest and safest transportation corridor for shipping goods and resources between Germany and the rest of Europe and the world's most dynamic economies in the Asia Pacific.

Third, Germany feels building a secure, united Europe would be impossible if Russia were left without support, destabilised and hostile...In a broader sense, Germany foresees Russia as guarding the

outer borders of a larger European community from Islamic radicals and other growing external threats. For the same reasons, Germany would be glad to see Russia's vast resources come to Germany and Europe rather than to the east, particularly future geopolitical rivals China and Japan. Berlin would also prefer these resources do not move overseas to the United States, Germany's current geopolitical rival.

Europe and the European Union—except for U.S.-oriented Great Britain—seem to be solidly behind Germany in its Russian policy. The difference is that Germany is pioneering and leading this process, while aiming to benefit from it the most.

The Russian Gazprom Company is building a pipeline that stretches from Siberia to Germany, via Poland. It was discovered that at the same time they were laying 24 fibre-optic cables capable of carrying 38 million simultaneous telephone conversations! The Polish authorities were very concerned to find that it was considerably more than was necessary to control the flow of fuel through the pipe! In the light of the moves to unite Germany and Russia, it seems that careful foresight led to this secret cabling, which could form a major telecommunications link between Russia and Germany. *Agence France Presse* 20-12-00

Russia, oil and the EU

Oil prices have increased sharply in the EU. Because purchases are in dollars, the fall in the value of the euro has been particularly damaging, pushing prices up still further. The EU is almost totally dependent upon imported fuel, and so is at the mercy of OPEC which supplies 75% of it. Recently there has been considerable discussion on the supply of Russian fuel to the EU. Presumably this would not need to be priced in dollars and would thus avoid the currency fluctuations. It would avoid also being held to ransom by Middle East suppliers. The EU already takes a considerable quantity of Russian fuel. It has been estimated that the reserves of oil and gas in Russia exceed that of the Middle East.

The matter first seems to have been raised by Romano Prodi, the head of the European Commission, in a telephone conversation with Mr Putin. Mr Putin indicated that Russia was keen to co-operate and would supply whatever was required. This was then followed up by Mr Schröder's visit to Moscow in late September.

Bent on averting a future fuel crisis, the European Union turned to energy rich Russia on Tuesday to start hashing out a deal that could double fuel exports to Europe. Representatives from the EU sat down with officials from gas and oil companies in Moscow to begin negotiations on setting up a strategic partnership, Itar-Tass reported.

Under a draft of the deal, the partnership would oversee the construction of an entire infrastructure for transporting oil and gas to Europe. The

European Union is volunteering to finance the building of pipelines, and the project would be completed by 2020.

“We want to change the commercial relationship into a long term strategic partnership that would benefit both parties considerably”, said an EU spokesman.

With the project, the European commission wants to double Russian exports, a move that could see a huge windfall for Russia's economy... Despite the task ahead EU officials seem determined to push ahead. Prodi said this week that he would present more proposals...at a meeting of 15 EU leaders on October 13-14 in Biarritz, France. *Moscow Times* 4-10-00

Then followed a Russia-European Union summit arranged for the end of October in Paris. On Mr Putin's part it was regarded as a foreign policy success. The gulf between President Chirac and President Putin was healed. He also met French top business leaders who indicated they were willing to increase trade.

The main purpose of the summit was how Russia could help with the EU's fuel needs. An EU official summed it up with the phrase, “We need energy. Russians need money.” Russia confirmed that they were ready to contribute to “long-term energy independence for Europe.” Mr Prodi said that they had set the blueprint for an “EU-Russia energy partnership”.

A consortium of German, Italian and French oil companies have already signed initial contracts with the giant Gazprom Company of Russia. This is to investigate the feasibility of building a pipeline from the Belarus-Polish border to Slovakia. This is designed to bypass the troublesome country of Ukraine. This has upset some of her neighbours, notably Poland, and it is significant that Romano Prodi, the president of the EU was sent to the Ukraine to smooth matters. *TT* 30, 31-10-00.

This summit was followed up by a visit to Paris by the Russian Prime minister, Mikhail Kasyanov, in mid December. He met French business leaders, in an effort to further promote economic ties. He suggested the EU should consider authorising the European Investment Bank to help fund the estimated \$20 billion expenditure to drill new oil wells and build the necessary pipeline infrastructure. *Russia Today* 20-12-00

The significance of these moves is that it locks Europe and Russia together. The EU is hardly going to take action against the country upon which it is dependent for energy, nor is Russia going to take actions that harm this potential money-spinner. That has been in the past a **commercial** relationship, is now being turned in to a **strategic** partnership—something one only does between friends. What a change from the Cold War!

Russia and Europe should appreciate shared interests

An important article appeared in the *Moscow Times* 14-12-00 with this heading, which will well repay careful study.

Recent developments—including plans for enlarging the European Union, uncertainties surrounding the U.S. presidential election and President Vladimir Putin's ongoing efforts to forge a new Russian foreign policy—indicate an opportunity to enter a new phase in Russia's relations with Europe. The Brussels-based European Press Agency has just completed a study of this subject, examining this dynamic from Mikhail Gorbachev's proposal for "a common European home" to talk of a "strategic partnership" during November's EU-Russian summit.

Our study found plenty wrong with the EU's programs in the 1990s. The lesson that European models may not always be the right ones for Russia was learned at the cost of misspent billions. But today there are new minds at work in Brussels, people concerned not just with economic and commercial relations that were the basis of the 1994 Partnership and Co-operation Agreement, but with broader political and security questions.

The key step was last year's decision to establish a common foreign and security policy and the appointment of former NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana to develop it. The new EU foreign affairs commissioner, Chris Patten, has also shown lively interest in Russia.

Experience in the Balkans has shown that there can be no stability for Europe without the active co-operation of Russia. And without such co-operation, plans for the EU's expansion will be seriously undermined. At the same time Europe is deeply interested in the stability of Russia itself.

Russia has no objection to the enlargement of the European Union, in contrast to its fierce opposition to the further enlargement of NATO. Apart from the attraction of long-term trading arrangements is the fact that applicants for membership include difficult neighbours on whom EU rules may have a restraining influence. But what can be done to take full advantage of these favourable circumstances?

First it is necessary to know what should not be done or even attempted. This particularly concerns steps being taken to create an EU military capability. On the face of it, the creation of a European peacekeeping force should be welcome to Russia, which has long called for European solutions to European situations. But much depends on how that force is designed. The Russians can be supportive if the force is for peacekeeping within Europe, if Russia is kept fully informed about its development and possible missions, and if Russia, like other non-EU countries, is on the list of force providers. In order to do this, Brussels must create a mechanism similar to the Russia-NATO permanent joint council.

What certainly will not attract Russian support is anything that looks like a proxy arm of NATO. And since Russian policy-makers are realistic enough to see the limitations imposed on Europe by its military dependence on NATO logistic and other resources, they are unlikely to go further than trying to persuade the EU to maintain whatever autonomy it can.

However, this leaves scope for action on important advances in the economic and political aspects of the EU-Russian relationship. More than ever before, Europe has come to acknowledge the dependence of its economic and industrial expansion on Russian oil, gas and electricity.

For geographical reasons, Russian gas and oil supplies will always be cheaper for Europe than those of any other foreign source. They may also be more reliable. Other Russian imports will also have a place. However, Russia must recognise that the present market for its manufactures is closer to home—in the CIS and southward.

In the political field, too, there are limits to a "strategic relationship." Russia must by now understand the futility of earlier attempts to split Europe from its relationship with North America. Ties of history, trade and sentiment are simply too strong to be exchanged for an alternative—to say nothing of Europe's continued reliance, despite changes since the Cold War's end, on the U.S. security guarantee.

On the other hand, there is no shortage of Europeans sharing Russia's apprehensions about the effects of a "uni-polar" world, in which the interests of the other side of the Atlantic would dominate Europe. A strengthened European relationship with Russia would serve two purposes in addition to the obvious one of cementing stability.

First, it would enhance Europe's sense of collective autonomy. Second, it would provide Russia with a valuable interlocutor inside the wider Russia-Europe-U.S. relationship. Particularly, it could show, in some cases of dispute, that Russia's is not a lone voice. For instance, no one would count on Europe's swaying the United States against deploying a national missile defence, but if Europe and Russia were able to adopt a common position, then the discussion's dynamics would be altered. Finally, for Europe's relations with Russia to have a firm basis in popular support, it is necessary to refresh each side's cultural attitudes. Russians need to understand that when Europeans speak against horrendous excesses on both sides in Chechnya, it is not necessarily an echo of the Cold War.

Similarly, Europeans need to be reminded of the long history that makes Russia part of the European heritage. Certainly Russia's claim in this regard is considerably greater than Turkey's. Europe could benefit from looking at some of the better aspects of Russian society and seeing if it cannot extract lessons useful for itself.

[Written by Andrew Wilson and Nina Bachkatov who are co-editors of the European Press Agency's monthly intelligence report "Inside Russia and the FSU"]

This report has served as a link to take us to the other "lung" of Europe, Western Europe and the EU in particular.

Chapter 6:

THE BEAST – “LAYING THE FINAL BRICK IN THE EUROPEAN HOUSE”

Under the term “the Dragon”, we have been looking at developments in what was the eastern leg of the Roman Empire. We now look at the western leg. A different creature is used of this area—the Beast. As well as Daniel’s four beasts that covered in turn parts of what became the Roman Empire, Revelation 13 gives details of several Beast systems. They covered the history of Europe—mainly in the west—for over a thousand years. The events of the French Revolution brought them to an end. The guidance that the Lord Jesus has given us in Revelation 16 to 18 instructs us that the beast system is to be very much a feature at the time of the end. Ridden by the harlot woman, it opposes the Lord Jesus at his return, and is destroyed by the Lord and his helpers, the saints.

In the two World Wars, Germany sought to become ruler over Europe. This was not to be. The time was not ripe; Israel was not a nation in its own land. Over the past 50 years we have seen a step-by-step union of the many countries that make up Western Europe. First it was a core of 6 nations, and then it enlarged to 10 and has grown now to 15, with the prospect of enlarging greatly eastward. France and Germany have always been in the driving seat of this union. They have always made it clear that political union was the ultimate goal of what was initially just an economic union.

The basis of the present situation was set out in the Maastricht Treaty of 1991, which declared in its opening statement that

This Treaty marks a new stage in the process of creating an ever-closer union among the peoples of Europe. . .

However, it was perceived—rightly—that Britain would be opposed to the step of political union. So they concentrated on the intermediate step of monetary union, knowing that this would lead inevitably to political union. Britain’s opposition remained and the euro was launched in January 1999 with only 11 of the 15 members. That milestone having been achieved, France and Germany are actively pushing for the next—and final step in what they are wishing to achieve—political union.

We review these recent events in a spirit of excitement and fear! Excitement at seeing the nations being inexorably being drawn along the pathway laid out so long before by the prophetic word. Yet fear, knowing that behind it all is the Harlot, who persecuted both saint and Jew in the past, and is eager to regain her spiritual control over the nations. Let us cherish the religious freedom that we enjoy, while we can. It is clear from events in Russia and incidents in Europe that this may not last.

Putting into place the last brick in European building

The figure of a house for Europe takes us back to the tower of Babel. This was the original city of Babylon. Nimrod built it as a place of commerce—the city—and a place of worship—the tower. It integrated the people of his day under one central control, and united them in one religion. This was a false religion, based on truth, but corrupted by man’s philosophy. Although the city and its tower were destroyed, they were both to be built again, many centuries later by Nebuchadnezzar. It became the centre of control and religion of his day. We read of its opposition to the true religion in Israel in the books of Daniel, Kings and Chronicles. The Babylonian Empire was in its turn overthrown by the Medes and Persians. Centuries later it re-flourished on a new site—that of Rome and again dominated men’s minds and lives, through the long ages of history.



The birth of the euro was hailed as the “capstone” of the European house. The Newsweek cover adapted for the *Milestones* 1998 issue dramatically illustrated this. It was the culmination of many years of debate and planning, but it was only an intermediate step! As Romano Prodi, the President of the European Commission told the European parliament,

“The single market was the theme of the Eighties; the single currency was the theme of the Nineties; we must now face the difficult task of moving towards a single economy, a single political unity.” 13-4-99.

So the euro wasn’t really the capstone—there is still the final brick to be laid. The German Foreign Minister, Joschka Fischer declared:

“We must put into place the last brick in the building of European integration, namely political integration.” 12-5-00

Although political union was being widely talked about on the continent, in Britain the subject was swept to one side as “scare-mongering”. When in September the Danes dramatically rejected joining the euro, the matter became much more of an issue. Tony Blair and his government still saw their role as being in the heart of Europe and a leading player in European affairs. The country as a whole does not reflect this, as we shall consider in a later chapter. What we will concentrate on here is the build-up to this emerging “super-state”.

The many facets of the New Europe

Many aspects control the political affairs of a country. Most countries have a constitution—written or otherwise. Day-to-day rules and regulations are

passed by a parliament, and put into effect by a police force and a judiciary system. Its frontiers are defended by its armed forces. A whole host of officials and bureaucrats at central and regional level ensure the success or otherwise of the country's policies. A banking system ensures that payments are made. For many older countries there is an official state religion to feed the minds of the people.

The European superstate is no exception to this kind of organisation. Many elements are being organised ready for the time of political integration.

- The euro—the common currency
- The Charter of Fundamental Rights—the constitution
- The European Parliament—the parliament (though an elected central parliament is being mooted)
- Europol—the police force
- Eurojust—the judicial system
- Euro-army—the military defence force
- The Roman Catholic Church—the recognised religion.

Some of these elements are only just being put into place, but all the elements are already there.

Not so nice at Nice

The office of European Union President rotates around the leaders of the 15 EU countries, each taking a 6-month turn. It is a matter of great pride to be successful at one's turn in office. For the latter-half of 2000 it was the turn of President Chirac of France to take the chair. It was seen by France as a wonderful opportunity to promote the wishes of the French people.

Towards the end of each term of presidency, the country hosts a summit meeting. For France this took place at Nice in December. The main agenda for the meeting was supposed to be about laying the foundation for future enlargement. Many of the rules need to be changed to accommodate more members. There was a call to withdraw the right to veto measures in many areas, allowing changes to be carried on a majority vote.

Each country had its own agenda and own “line in the sand” that they said they would not pass. The summit proved to be a messy affair, greatly over-running the scheduled timetable. There were many displays of irritation and many disagreements. One felt that aspiring entrants were left wondering whether they really wanted to join this unruly “club”!

What was of great interest was the new-found assertiveness of Germany. Until now she had been content with being an equal partner to France. This time she was prepared to ignore the French wishes and campaign vigorously for her own wishes. Germany wants to have a greater weight in the decision making process to reflect her now much larger size following re-unification with Eastern Germany. France was bitterly opposed to this. France has always seen the economic and now political union as a means of

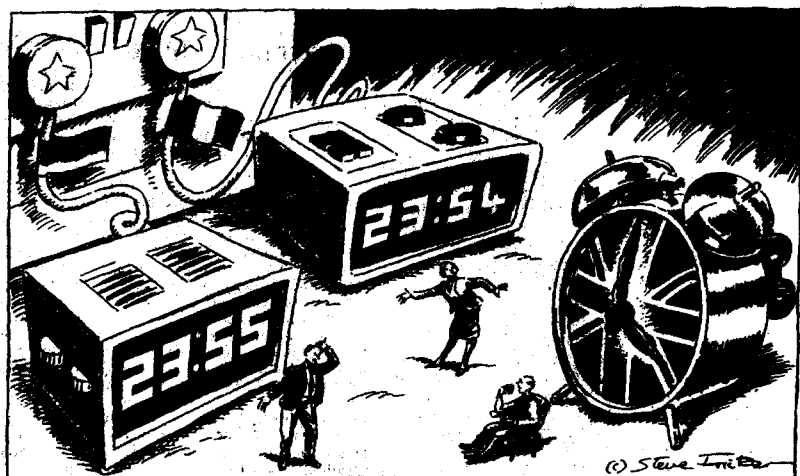
curbing Germany's desire to dominate Europe. The younger generation of Germany is not held back by collective guilt for the past. Germany desires to be the leader. This is being helped by the friendship between the Russian and German leaders that we considered in the previous chapter.

It had been expected that at Nice a clear agenda for political union would be set out. With all the bickering, this seems to have been postponed, with Germany holding out for the matter to be resolved by the May 2004 summit. There is a lot of ground to be covered before political union can take place, and we shall doubtless see many steps taken before then.

In many ways it is Britain that is the obstacle to the realisation of their plans. She didn't join monetary union, and with the strength given to the euro-sceptics by the Danish vote, any short-term possibility of Britain joining the euro is virtually non-existent. Even Tony Blair when asked how he would vote if there were a referendum that day on joining, said that he would vote no, the conditions were not right!

However, the Danish No vote and the British scepticism were turned to the rest of Europe's advantage. It was no good waiting for Britain! A wonderful cartoon that had appeared earlier in the year summed it all up. It was entitled:

***Federalism finds its time.** A great debate about the EU's future is now raging on the Continent*



It does need a few words of explanation. The two modern alarm clocks indicate the midnight hour is nearly there. The two flags on them are those of France and Germany. They are beckoning agitatedly to the Briton. His old-fashioned clock says it is only tea-time, what's all the hurry, we are all right as we are!

So what is being talked about is a two-speed Europe. This was raised some years ago—see *Milestones 1994 ch. 6*. The concept has been quietly developed since then. At the core would be those countries that would give up their national governments and elect a new European Parliament specifically for these countries, manned by a council of ministers elected by and from this inner core. It would then be the representative of this group of nations, and speak on their behalf to the existing European Parliament, which would bring together all the other members. This inner core would have achieved political union. The outer ring would consist of those EU members who were not part of this inner core. New members would initially join the outer ring. A variation is a 3-tier Europe, with new members being part of the outermost ring.

As well as Britain’s obduracy, there are great problems regarding new entrants. Poland, who is well placed to be one of the first new members, is a very agricultural country. It is said to have more farmers than all the existing 15 members put together! The CAP—Common Agricultural Policy—is an outdated system of government support that is a great drain on the EU finances, swallowing up almost half of the EU’s annual expenditure. France benefits the most, hence the lack of progress in making reforms! The prospect of Poland swallowing up vast billions of euros is frightening to France and Germany. Britain has long been pressing for wholesale reforms to this policy. The Nice summit was supposed to have been where matters were tidied up in preparation for expansion, yet CAP reform did not even feature on the agenda.

Under a two-tier system, new members in the outer ring would not be allowed to take advantage of the benefits enjoyed by the inner core. What then of countries like Britain, Denmark and Sweden in the outer ring? Would they too be denied benefits? This would be a further blow to Britain, who already contributes far more to the EU than she gets out of it.

Because the British are subject to the government’s propaganda machine that plays down the reality of the European “superstate”, we will devote the next chapter to looking at the evidence.

Chapter 7:

THE DEVELOPING EUROPEAN SUPERSTATE

We devote this chapter to looking at the detailed calls for the setting up of a united Europe, and the practical steps that have already been taken to achieve this aim. What the European leaders are planning will indeed be the recreation of the Beast!

Europe's view on political union

Christopher Booker, one of the *Sunday Telegraph* contributors who writes against closer political links, published a booklet just before the Nice summit entitled *Nice and beyond—the parting of the ways?* We shall consider the actual question of Britain leaving the EU in the next chapter. The booklet sets out through extensive quotations of speeches made by continental Europeans, the unquestionable thrust of their aim—political union.

These were three Germany visionary statements at the end of 1998 and early 1999.

Creating a single European state bound by one European constitution is the decisive task of our time. Joschka Fischer 25-11-98

A united Europe remains a vision to which we are all committed. Gerhard Schröder 26-11-98

We want to see the European Union develop into a political union. Oskar Lafontaine 17-1-99

Then during early 1999 there was much concern over the reports of corruption amongst the European Commissioners, leading to their eventual resignation. Mr. Prodi, an Italian ex Prime Minister, was given the task of building a new team. He is an outspoken advocate of political union, speaking at his first address to the European Parliament of “moving towards a single economy, a single political unity.” 13-4-99

Gerard Schröder addressed Professor Hans Tietmeyer, on his retirement as President of the Bundesbank:

You were always conscious that the European monetary union would have to be based on a closer political integration within Europe...It was an original political act to hand sovereignty over one of the most important areas of national authority, namely monetary policy, to a European authority. For this reason alone monetary union requires of us Europeans decisive advances in the field of political integration. September 1999

Earlier a commission was set up to examine how the EU could be successfully enlarged. It reported to the European Parliament in Oct 1999:-

In a larger and more diverse union, flexibility in the institutional framework is even more important than at present. This does not imply that Member States should be allowed to opt out of any policy they choose; the European Union would not survive if member states were allowed to pick and choose among obligations to the Union. But it does imply that...some will wish to go faster than others. They will want to build on the union's agreed common policies, of objectives and achievements. 18-10-99

This in a veiled way promoted a two-speed Europe. This was followed by a speech in Berlin by Jacques Delors who is a tireless champion of European unification. He suggested “the new treaty should allow” an “avant-garde” of nations to move ahead “further and faster”, to achieve full “confederation” ahead of the others. Furthermore, to avoid any confusion, “this avant-garde should have its own institutions”. This was the only way to stay “faithful to the ideals and political thinking of Fathers of Europe, Monnet, Schuman, Adenauer, de Gasperi and Spaak”. 14-11-99

In February 2000 the European Commission issued a remarkable document entitled *Shaping the New Europe; Strategic Objectives 2000—2005*. It stated:-

Over the next decade we will complete our economic integration and, even more importantly, give shape to a new political Europe. The next five years will be decisive. . . .

We are already pushing forward with political integration by establishing an area of freedom, security and justice, and by developing common foreign, security and defence policies.

The Commission has a pivotal role to play. It is Europe's executive arm, and the initiator of ideas and proposals and the guardian of the treaties. The commission has always been the driving force for European integration....Enlargement must be seen as a factor driving deeper integration.

The paper sets out a vision of Europe being made a global actor with its own distinctive foreign, defence and aid policies.

As the year wore on, increasingly France and Germany were pressing for political integration. We have quoted already from Joschka Fischer's speech on May 12th about putting in place the last brick, namely political integration. He also explained that:

The introduction of the euro was not only the crowning point of economic integration, it was also profoundly political, because a currency is not just an economic factor but also symbolises the power of the sovereign who guarantees it.

His vision was of:

...the transition from a union of states to full parliamentarisation as a European federation, something Robert Schuman demanded 50 years ago. And that means nothing less than a European Parliament and a European government, which really do exercise legislative and executive power within the federation.

Achieving this might be difficult for “all EU members to move ahead” at the same time. He cited Jacques Delors, Helmut Schmidt and Valéry Giscard d’Estaing as having

...recently tried to find new answers to this dilemma. Delors’s idea is that ‘the federation of nations states’ comprising the six founding states of the European community should conclude ‘a treaty within a treaty’ with the view to making far-reaching reforms in the European institutions. Schmidt and Giscard’s ideas are in similar vein, though they place the Euro-11 states at the centre.

When President Chirac took up the role of European President at the start of July, he made it clear that steps towards political integration would be taken as rapidly as possible. Agreement to the Euro-army and the Charter of Fundamental Rights were important steps. These matters were indeed pushed ahead. A few days before taking up the Presidency, he made the first state visit to Germany by a French head of state for 13 years. In a speech delivered to the German Parliament in the newly reopened Reichstag building in Berlin, he spoke of France and Germany being the driving force behind the achievements of the EU. Not once in his 45-minute speech did he mention any other nation! He called for a two-speed Europe with France and Germany forging ahead in the top tier. He wanted to see the concept of “flexibility” inserted into the Union treaties to be agreed this year. He also called for a “first European constitution”. *The Economist* 1-7-00

The Times reported, 3-7-00:

France is threatening to forge ahead with a two speed Europe...if Britain and other member states failed to sign up to its plans for wide-ranging integration and curbs on national vetoes.

The Daily Telegraph, 7-7-00, reported Joschka Fischer’s speech in Strasbourg:

You can’t tie progress in the Union to the slowest ship in the convoy. The best solution is for all 15 states to do their historical homework and rise to the challenge together. But if they can’t, countries that want to proceed will march on.

Let us be clear. The 11 countries in the Euro have already given up part of their sovereignty. They have transferred it to the EU. Adopting the

euro was a step towards a certain objective. We try to avoid the word ‘federation’ but how else can it be described?

At the Biarritz summit in October, held to make final preparations for the forthcoming Nice summit, Britain abandoned her long-standing opposition to a “two-speed” Europe. She agreed to this, with the proviso that any country that didn’t initially join the inner core could do so later. *Daily Telegraph* 14-10-00

In November, Tony Blair had dismissed any idea of an EU superstate being formed. The next day Joschka Fischer replied to his speech making it clear that Germany was keeping up the pressure for further political integration. He again used the simile of a building. The Nice summit, he declared, would set the:

keystone in the edifice of European integration—that is political integration. *Daily Telegraph* 15-11-00

The Nice Summit

At the Nice Summit there was much debate over these matters. The basic elements were agreed, but there was much internal bickering, especially between France and Germany, and it took some time to find out what had really been agreed. France was accused of slipping last-minute deals into the final text of the Treaty of Nice without the knowledge of all the leaders! It did emerge that:

The summit also formally permitted groups of up to eight countries to “fast-track” moves towards closer integration in certain areas, although not including (at Blair’s insistence) defence. *Sunday Times* 17-12-00

Immediately after Nice, the French and Germans sought to rebuild bridges, and arranged a summit between the two countries for January 2001.

One of the key agreements was the reweighting of votes and numbers of MEP’s after enlargement. Germany seemed to emerge the winner in the reshuffle. It still left the bigger countries able to block anything that they did not like. In fact Germany emerged as the main victor in the marathon battle of Nice, winning more power and achieving most of her objectives in the new EU treaty.

The emerging superstate

Let’s briefly look at some of the key elements in preparation for a superstate.

The Rapid Reaction Force, alias Euro-army. This has generated many columns in British newspapers. Britain and France have pushed for the setting up of a European defence force. The initiative really took off at the St Malo Summit in December 1998 with the signing of an Anglo-French defence agreement. For Britain it gave the chance to show “what good Europeans we are” in a field that they are good at. For France it gave the

opportunity to be independent of Nato, which predominantly is American led. Britain resists any such thoughts. For them it is not a fledgling European Army, but a Rapid-Reaction Defence Force under Nato and used for peace-keeping and humanitarian action where Nato does not need to be involved. Britain is, however, being out-manoeuvred on the matter. As Romano Prodi famously remarked,

“when I was talking about the European Army, I was not joking. If you don't want to call it a European Army, don't call it a European Army. You can call it 'Margaret', you can call it 'Mary-Ann', you can find any name, but it is a joint effort for peacekeeping missions—the first time you have a joint, not bilateral, effort at European level.”

Fischer declared that the St Malo agreement “was another pillar of the process of European unification.” At the summit a year later, the EU committed itself to building a 60,000 strong European Army. The French Prime Minister on May 30th declared that, “if we manage to achieve this in the second half of 2000, we will have crossed a milestone towards the creation of a united political Europe.”

At a meeting in Brussels in November the 15 members of the EU pledged their commitment in terms of troops. Germany will contribute 13,500; Britain 12,500; France 12,000 with the smallest number of 100 from the tiny country of Luxembourg. Denmark has opted out of troop contributions. In total 100,000 troops, 400 combat aircraft and 100 warships were pledged. Its field of operation was put at up to 2,500 miles from Brussels which would encompass much of Africa, beyond Moscow and the Middle East. Troops serving are to wear a Euro insignia badge. A German has been appointed to head the new force, much to France's annoyance.

In spite of all the talk in Britain that the force would be under Nato control, at the Nice summit no mention was made about any formal links between the new force and Nato. It was soon apparent that France and Germany had other ideas. At a meeting of Nato foreign ministers in December, the French insisted that the force be independent of Nato. Nato struggled to find a form of words acceptable to France, whose tactics were described as “a war of attrition.” The French Foreign Minister didn't help by not attending the meeting, deciding he had more pressing business in the Middle East. *Daily Telegraph* 14-12-00. Before the Nice summit, Romano Prodi had insisted that it would have operational independence from Nato.

Turkey has pledged 6,000 troops, even though she is not in the EU, but is in Nato. Russia too has expressed an interest in contributing troops! Germany has indicated that she is interested in this. America greatly fears that Nato will be weakened by these moves.

It is not difficult to see the scenario; with an America inward looking and Nato an anachronism, it will be Russia supplying the troops and heavy lifting gear that America had traditionally supplied. This could soon be

another area where Russia and Europe co-operate together, as we have long expected.

The Charter of fundamental rights. Most nations have a written charter—Britain is an exception. In their desire to make Europe “one nation”, EU leaders have been hankering after a Constitution. This year saw it being drafted. A 62-member committee, which modelled itself on the committee that formed the 1787 American Constitution, took 9 months to draw it up.

It proved another area of contention between Britain and her fellow EU members. For Britain it was a “showcase of existing rights”, but of no legal status. All the other countries saw it as a document that would be given legal status and will become the Constitution of the planned united Europe!

“It is a milestone in European integration,” according to one German minister. “A turning point in the integration of Europe, moving it away from the essentially economic logic of its origins to becoming a real political union,” according to the European Commission.

It was presented to the heads of government at the October summit at Biarritz and, in spite of previous opposition, Tony Blair signed it and without it having been agreed or not as to whether it would be legally binding. At Nice in December, the matter was not decided, but Sweden, which takes over the Presidency in January 2001, stated that it would be one of their objectives during its spell in office to achieve legal status for it.

One of the most controversial clauses could be used to suppress the rights of EU citizens when “necessary” to “meet objectives of general interest being pursued by the union”. It was described by a lawyer as “sinister”, saying that it could be exploited for authoritarian purposes *Daily Telegraph* 14-9-00. It could well be used to stifle criticism, as has already been done against “whistle-blowers” such as Bernard Connolly who wrote *The Rotten Heart of Europe*. One of the ironies is that the EU champions freedom of speech, provided it is not directed against the Union!

Criticism of the EU is akin to blasphemy and could be restricted without violating freedom of speech, according to an opinion issued by the Advocate-General at the European Court of Justice. Most states, including Britain, allow abridgement of free-speech rights in the special case of religious blasphemy. *Daily Telegraph* 28-10; 11-11-00

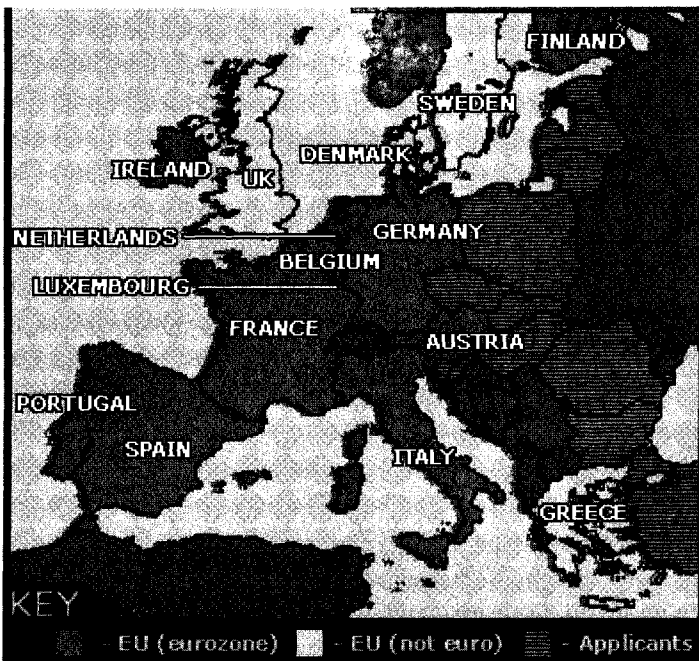
Europol. This EU police force is already up and running. Its duty is to counter cross-border crime. It was set up as an intelligence gathering force, but like most EU matters it has grown and changed identity! It was given operational powers this year, and although nominally it has to seek permission to operate within a country in pursuit of its inquiries, few see that being more than a formality. It draws its manpower from individual countries, but the intention is to set up a European Police Academy to provide new recruits.

In June it was agreed to set up a rapid reaction unit of 1000 police officers, able to operate anywhere in the world. It would operate alongside the Euro army. It aims to be fully operational in 2003, and is seen as Europe's challenge to the UN.

Eurojust. The EU wants to set up a system similar to that of America, where petty crimes are tried under state law, but serious offences are dealt with under federal law. What is being planned is a new criminal code, with a European prosecution service—Eurojust—to tackle such areas as drug trafficking, terrorism, money laundering and fraud. The legal system proposed is based upon the Napoleonic system, *Corpus Juris*, rather than the British, *Habeas Corpus* system. The continental system has its origins in Babylon, laws that were incorporated into Roman law; compared to the British laws that had their origins in the Bible.

The nations who want political integration

We can see in so many ways the strands that are being woven to tie Europe together, just as it used to be under the Beast systems, such as in the time of Charlemagne or under the Holy Roman Empire. It still has a way to go. Not all the EU members are keen on integration. The UK, Ireland, Denmark, and Sweden are not interested. Spain is on the margins. The remaining countries all seem to want to press ahead. If one compares these countries and the territory of Charlemagne's empire in AD 800, they virtually co-incide!



Two Speed Europe

Chapter 8:

BRITAIN – THE LONG GOODBYE?

The gloomy predictions for Britain's economy if she failed to join the rest of Europe in signing up to the euro have signally failed to materialise. Of all the EU countries she has the lowest rate of inflation, is enjoying record inward investments, and a continued period of growth—the longest in her recorded history! True there are firms closing—mainly on the manufacturing side, but new jobs are constantly being created. Unemployment is at a low level, especially compared with the continent.

Dissatisfaction with the EU is at a record level. The main British newspapers are openly hostile to so much that comes from Europe; only the BBC is wedded to the pro-Europe line. Talk of Britain leaving Europe is no longer subject to ridicule; many can see the advantages as Britain's independence is eroded step by step.

Bible students were disappointed when Britain did join the Common Market as it was then known in 1973. Earlier brethren were convinced from the prophetic word that Britain had an important role to play outside Europe. While Europe would oppose Christ, Britain, they believed, would be there early on to assist Christ, in using her resources to bring the Jews back to their homeland, when Christ is King in Jerusalem. Britain's position was seen as the latter-day Tarshish power—matters expounded in earlier Milestones.

Were their expectations wrong? No. It is all a matter of timing. What we see now is not necessarily the situation that will be at Christ's revealing to the nations. While we expect Christ's return soon, there is an important work to be accomplished after that and before the Lord Jesus reveals himself as the saviour of his nation. Saints of all ages must be gathered to stand before the judge. This will not be a work of an instant. It is a time of judgement and preparation for the change that God has promised—to immortality. So although there are things that remain to happen, they may not happen until after we are called away.

It is encouraging to see that Britain may well be driven to leave the beast system. As we shall see, it may not be a matter of Britain leaving Europe, but of Europe leaving Britain!

Points of conflict

There are many areas where Britain does not see eye-to-eye with her continental colleagues. Britain has ties with America, that of language and kinship and similar ways of life. Europe is largely anti-American, the French extremely so. Britain wants power over her rates of tax, which are lower than Europe's, over the way she runs the City, which is more open, and therefore more attractive. She is mainly interested in trade, rather than political union. Her judicial system is so different, "innocent until proved

guilty”, with jury trials for fairness, this contrasts strongly with the continental system. Her religion was predominantly protestant, compared with the high percentages of nominal catholicism on the continent. She is interested in world-wide trading; the continent mainly trades among itself. The British spirit is to be independent, compared with Europe’s centuries of being told what to do by state and church.

The falling euro

We saw last year the steady decline in the value of the euro against the £ and the \$. That decline has continued this year (with a gloomier forecast for the American economy), although at the year-end it did rally considerably to show only a 10% fall from its high spot in Jan. 2000, and a fall of 20% since its launch. The weakness of the euro has made it more difficult for Britain to export her goods into Europe, and conversely made it easier for the euro-zone to export world-wide. Certainly the fall in value has helped the continental economies considerably.

Denmark’s surprising No! result in her referendum in September on joining the euro, strengthened the euro sceptics in Britain. In spite of all but one of the Danish parties supporting the euro, as did the press, the people of Denmark showed their distrust of the aims of the EU. Since their No vote, instead of suffering a downturn, her markets reacted favourably to their decision.

Foreign investment flooding into Britain

This was a headline in the *Daily Telegraph*.

Britain attracted a record-breaking £51.3 billion of foreign direct investment in the 12 months since the launch of the euro, a rise of £8.6b on 1998...The Office of National Statistics show that Britain owns more American assets than any other foreign country, while the reverse also applies...However the biggest inflow of new money came from European countries that shrugged off the strength of sterling to acquire £32.3 billion of British assets. The merger and acquisitions boom also boosted British direct investment overseas by £53.7 billion to a highest ever £127.2 billion...Confidence among exporters is reported to be at its highest for four years. 14-12-00.

Britain is now the second most popular country in the world for inward investment, behind America. In fact both Denmark and Sweden, who like Britain, chose not to join the euro, haven’t suffered. Sweden displaced France last year as the second most popular destination for inward investment in Europe. Indeed, between them, the four “outs” (Greece is the fourth) received almost as much inward investment as the rest of Europe put together. *Daily Telegraph* 4-10-00

Foreign investors in Britain launched 757 projects in the year to March 200, up from 652 in the previous year and 434 five years ago. A third were entirely new projects, a third expansions of existing operations, and

the balance were take-overs or joint ventures. America led with 48% of the projects followed by Germany 8% and Japan with 7.7%. The fact that prestigious German firms chose to move their headquarters to London, rather than Frankfurt, reflected Britain's favourable taxation and working conditions compared with Germany's stifling regime. BASF moved its pharmaceuticals headquarters and Commerzbank, its electronic banking headquarters, here. London is one of the most linguistically diverse cities in the world—a survey found a staggering total of over 300 languages spoken here! With the flurry of international take-overs, English is becoming the standardised language of the boardrooms. *Sunday Times* 28-1-00; 9-7-00

As a financial centre, London dominates Europe. It is the largest fund management centre in the world, controlling £1,410 billion of institutional equity holdings. By comparison Frankfurt ranks in 12th place.

Even Britain's car industry is doing well, in spite of closures by Ford and General Motors of unproductive lower-end-model factories. These are being replaced by investment in high-tech lines to build luxury models, which are in strong demand. The industry is set for prospective record sales.

Britain's exports also have done well, running at their highest level for 3 years. *The Sentinel* 24-7-00. In fact for the first time in five years her exports to the rest of the EU exceeded her imports from them, in spite of the disadvantage of the low euro. It has been helped by the higher oil prices; Britain is an oil exporter to the EU. As mentioned earlier, at the end of the year, figures showed that British overseas investments had leapt to £127 billion. Three of the areas of growing trade are India, Israel and Egypt. Indian trade has quadrupled in the past 10 years.

North Sea Oil

One great advantage that Britain has over the rest of the EU is that she is an oil exporter. North Sea oil and gas supplies are in great demand, and the higher prices have re-stimulated further investment in new wells. Shell is increasing its investment by 50% over the next two years, and BP by a third. "There is plenty of oil and gas still to be developed there," said a Shell spokesman. Rising fuel prices has given the British government a bonanza in increased tax revenue, both from the producers and the motorists. The British government released 4 more exploration licenses at the year-end, which is expected to lead to a £1 billion investment in the North Sea oil industry.

"Time to pull out"

This double-page headline in the popular *Daily Mail*, 9-12-00 said it all! The subheading was:

For years, the Mail former city Editor was a lone voice against a single currency. Black Wednesday was his vindication. Here he argues why he

believes it is inevitable that Britain will withdraw from the EU.

Britain will one day leave the EU. The timing may be hard to predict but not the inevitability of our eventual departure. The Nice summit is merely serving to underline our incompatibility with the structure and the aims of the Union, with the certainty of more differences to come.

...We shall depart because the balance of advantage—both politically and economically—is already so plainly in favour of leaving, will be overwhelming. The narrow majority which said in a recent Mori poll that it would vote to leave the EU, will grow steadily

Sales of British exports to Europe comprise just 40% of our total world-wide exports of goods and services. But, in fact, exports make up but a minor part of our total production. Those to the EU account for little more than 10% of our annual national output...

The only real barrier to us leaving the EU, apart from some hard bargaining, is psychological. Many people worry how we could survive 'on our own'. It is an odd question to ask about the world's fourth largest economy and a country which has a larger network of diplomatic and trade relationships than any other EU nation, and incidentally, the largest, and most effective military forces too. *Andrew Alexander*

A similar article appeared in *The Times* 28-12-00 by John Major's former advisor. He insisted that the UK could prosper outside the EU. "We no longer have to accept that there is no alternative."

The alternative is that America and Canada would welcome Britain as a member of Nafta, the North Atlantic Free Trade Association. Like the previous year there have been several articles about this possibility. Indeed the U.S. International Trade Commission, an independent body that conducts research for Congress, conducted a 6-month study of the effects of extending Nafta membership to Britain. It reported in August 2000.

Senator Phil Gramm, the leading US advocate of British entry into Nafta, said: "This report demonstrates the potential benefit of cementing our strong relationship with Britain by joining with them in a free-trade partnership. I am also convinced that such a partnership would go far toward removing the trade barriers that are being erected around the European Union." *Daily Telegraph* 29-8-00

The *Export Times* 11-00 carried the results of a survey of British exporters. The headline –EU- **it's not for us** summed up the general feeling. 13% wanted to remain in the EU, 14% wanted Britain to leave and join Nafta, and 73% wanted the best of both worlds, Britain in both.

In the booklet already referred to: *Nice and Beyond—the parting of the ways?*, Christopher Booker concludes with the at first startling suggestion, that it may be a question of the EU leaving Britain, rather than the other-way-round! Having commented on the fact that Britain does not seem to be

discussing its position as a member of the outer ring of a two speed Europe—all the thinking on the matter has come from France and Germany, he comments:

...It will only happen because, after 30 years of tolerating Britain's fractious, semi-detached participation in a project to which it came late and always remained an outsider, her partners could put up with it no longer.

The prospect which comes into view through the events of the year 2000 is not that Britain may decide as an act of her own free will to leave the European Union. It is that the European Union may have set herself on a course that makes it impossible for Britain to remain within it. It will be "Europe" which leaves Britain, rather than the other way round.

So a Britain freed from the encompassing grasp of the Beast, is a distinct possibility. It was folly to link her future with the alien culture of Europe and maybe the dawn of a new future for her is nearer than we thought. It would be a wonderful vindication of the correctness of our traditional understanding of prophecy.

A useful extract from *Milestones 1991* by Bro. Graham Pearce:

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.

Chapter 9:

THE FALSE PROPHET – DECEIVING THE PEOPLE

We now come to consider the third element in our trilogy of the Dragon, the Beast and the False Prophet. Guided by the word of God we are drawn inevitably to the conclusion that the False Prophet is the Papal system, whose head is the Pope. The same power as described in 2 Thessalonians chapter 2 as The Man of Sin. It is described in Daniel. 7 as a “little horn speaking great words, which wore out the saints through persecution.” This identification is a matter that disturbs many in our community. How can such a benign leader be head of a system described as a False Prophet? How can the organisation he heads be described as a persecuting power, full of the blood of the saints, which is to be destroyed in the last days?

It is only by a careful attention to scripture that we learn the dreadful truth about this power that is described with these sobering words by the Lord Jesus in Revelation 17.

:3 So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

:4 And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication:

:5 And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

:6 And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.

No other system fits the descriptions of the prophets. Daniel makes it quite clear that it is a Roman system, that existed in the past as an empire, but continues as a power long after the Roman Empire has disappeared, who opposes the Lord Jesus at his return. Only the Roman Church fits the prophecies. The Arabs/Muslims do not fit the detail; neither does Israel, as some have suggested! It is sad but true that the system which deceives the nations, and we can be among that number, uses religion as a mask for power. Hence the appropriateness of the title we are considering—the False Prophet. There were many examples of false prophets in Israel and Judah, who were roundly condemned by the true prophets because of the fair, flattering words that they spoke which were pleasant to Israel, and led them astray. Unless we allow the study of the Word of the Living God to be

our guide, instead of our “feelings” and our “love of mankind,” how can we be waiting to fight the Lord’s battles against a foe he has clearly identified? When the Lord commanded us to watch, to keep our garments pure, these were matters he expected us to discern. Unless we correctly identify Christ’s foes, how can we be prepared?

Out of the mouth of the False Prophet

The following extract from *Rome & Jerusalem* by Bro. G. Pearce gives an excellent overview of the scriptural identification of the False Prophet, and the coming contest over the land of Israel. [My emphasis added.]

The prophecy of a frog-like spirit in the mouth of the False Prophet going forth into the world is most interesting. This is a prophecy the fulfilment of which has only recently become apparent, and is a thrilling proof that events have been brought by God near to the great moment when He will send Jesus.

The False Prophet occurs only in this sixth vial, and in Revelation 19 where it is destroyed. It would appear, therefore, it is a symbol for something particular to the vials and the time of the End.

Paul defines a prophet as one who teaches the word of God (1 Cor. 14:3). A false prophet will be a teacher of false Christianity. In the book of Revelation, a false prophet must be understood as a symbol, and it will signify something greater than an individual false prophet. The Roman Catholic hierarchy is the outstanding “false prophet” of our time. The pope, cardinals, bishops and many other officials who make up the hierarchy, promulgate the false teaching of the Catholic church on all matters of faith and practice.

The False Prophet symbol takes the place of the earlier “Image of the Beast”. Before the French Revolution the pope was a temporal and spiritual king ruling at Rome over the Vatican States, and over the vast empire of the Princes of the church—the leaders of the various churches of Europe were appointed and controlled by the pope, as in Spain to this day. The revolutionary call that swept through Europe during the first half of the century changed all this. *In 1870 two things happened: the pope lost his temporal power in the Vatican States; and he promulgated the dogma of Papal Infallibility. This would mark the change from the Image of the Beast to the False Prophet symbol.* By the dogma of Infallibility the pope forced upon the whole world-wide Roman Catholic church the absolute acceptance of the idea that when he speaks as pope—when he “prophesies”—he is infallible. He claims that his utterances are God-inspired, that he is God’s prophet; but in truth he is the False Prophet!

Having established the papal hierarchy directed by the pope as the False Prophet of the sixth vial, we now look for the fulfilment of the prophecy of a frog-like spirit emanating from the Vatican and the Papal hierarchy. The frog-like spirit—the French Revolutionary spirit—working through the Papacy, must strike one as a very remarkable sign. For the

French Revolution was primarily aimed *against* the Papacy, and the privileged classes; and it provoked a very *anti-frog* spirit in the mouth of the False Prophet. For centuries the Papacy had kept the people in subjection, choosing to keep them uneducated, and more or less slaves to their masters. By this means it had ruled...Europe, stolen half of the lands of Europe, and grown rich and powerful. The French revolutionary spirit in the various countries of Europe rose against this tyranny, and fulfilled, in one sense, the prophecy of hating the whore and burning her with fire. How, then, can it come about that a frog-spirit is found in the very mouth of the False Prophet? It must require a great change in the working of the Papacy. This is in fact what has happened. And it reminds us that the Papacy has long experience in adapting herself to new circumstances, and overcoming new enemies.

After suffering, complaining, and resisting through the first half of the 19th century, she saw that the new forces of the Revolution were permanently established, and there could be no going back to the old Order. In the second half of the century she began slowly to adapt herself to the new spirit and power of the masses. A policy was begun which has now worked itself out sufficiently for all to see. Especially in the last twenty years or so, we are able to see the many ways in which she is successfully turning to her own account, the circumstances of the present age and is managing to harness the forces of socialism. The Papacy aims to build a Catholic socialist society as the successor to "godless" Marxist-Communism. This will be the iron-clay feet under the direction of the military-ecclesiastical Babylonian head of Nebuchadnezzar's Image. The Vatican system is enlisting the masses in her cause. She is working boldly within democracy, championing the cause of the people, and they are becoming intoxicated with her wine.

The frog-like spirit going forth from the mouth of the False Prophet has been manifest in a variety of ways. We list them as follows:

1. The pope's socialist pronouncements in Encyclicals.
2. The Catholic church in politics and trade unions.
3. The lay apostolate, Catholic Action.
4. The Ecumenical Council.
5. European Justice and Peace commission.

The False Prophet and the EU

In many ways the hand of the papacy can be seen in the affairs of the EU. The excellent book *The Principality and Power of Europe—Britain and the emerging Holy European Empire* has just been revised and updated by its author, Adrian Hilton. He sketches the backing that the Roman Church has for the establishment of a united Europe, with the Pope its spiritual head—matters that we know from scripture will be the case. Daniel's image has its golden Babylonian head. We piece together some of the statements and happenings of this year.

The Charter of Fundamental Rights

Although this charter does not make any reference to religious faith in its pages,

Europe's Catholic bishops...together with the Pope have urged heads of states and governments to vote in favour of it having a binding effect, a move fiercely opposed by the British Government. *CH* 20-10-00

Due to conflict with France's existing laws, a reference in the opening preamble to Europe's "religious heritage", had to be modified to "moral and spiritual patrimony". The opening makes interesting reading.

The peoples of Europe, in creating an ever-closer union among them, are resolved to share a peaceful future based on common values.

Conscious of its spiritual and moral heritage, the union is founded on the indivisible, universal values of human dignity, freedom, equality and solidarity; it is based on the principles of democracy and the rule of law. It places the individual at the heart of its activities, by establishing the citizenship of the Union and by creating an area of freedom, security and justice.

The Holy See and the UN

Unlike any other religious organisation, the Holy See—the Vatican's political entity—enjoys representation at the UN as a Permanent Observer, although this position was challenged this year. The US Congress strongly backed the Vatican's right to a seat by a 416 to 1 vote, and paid tribute to "its contribution on behalf of peace and the promotion of human rights."

The picture in Rev 17:1 is of the harlot woman "sitting upon many waters." This is the situation we see today, she currently has formal diplomatic relations with 169 nations, and maintains 179 permanent diplomatic missions abroad. *L'Osservatore Romano* 19-7-00

Kofi Annan invited the Heads of State to a Millennium Summit in New York in September. Its aim was to discuss the future role of the UN. Representatives from 150 nations attended including Cardinal Sodano, the Holy See's secretary of state and UN representative. He addressed them and talked among other things of the duty of the UN to promote human rights. *L'Osservatore Romano* 20-10-00

A "patron saint" for politicians

On November 5th 2000, the Pope declared a patron saint for statesmen and politicians—Thomas More. He was an English Chancellor under Henry VIII, and refused to sanction Henry's divorce of Queen Catherine and the establishment of Henry as head of the English Church. When Henry asked his subjects to abjure the authority of the Pope, More refused and was imprisoned and eventually executed for treason in 1535. What is interesting is More's persecution of many Protestant "heretics". He wrote of himself as

a hereticus molestus. “His own words and unimpeachable documents speak of his severity.” Enc. Brit. 14th ed. He formed a network of spies and informants across London to hunt down Lutherans, “a rather modest progenitor of the Soviet Union’s 20th century communist secret policeman.” Many Lutherans were imprisoned without trial and perished there, others were flogged, and six were burned alive. ST 5-11-00 He used his political position to champion the position of the Roman Church.

What More stood for has nothing to do with what the present generation would stand for. He was not at all in favour of liberty of conscience or freedom of religion, as his modern admirers think. He was convinced that Catholicism had the truth and people not subscribing to it should be punished and, as a result of this belief, he had many heretics executed. *Clifford Davies*, history fellow at Wadham College, Oxford, quoted in *Catholic Herald* 6-10-00

Was it just a co-incidence that the Pope chose November 5th for this announcement—the day when the British celebrate the failure of Guy Fawkes’ attempt to blow up parliament and kill James I?

If Thomas More’s life is being held up as an example for politicians, then Protestants beware!

Papal supremacy

There have been several important steps towards the recognition of Papal supremacy this year. Earlier in 1999 the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) issued a statement “recognising the Pope as the overall authority in the Christian World.” “There is no turning back in our journey towards full ecclesial communion.” “It expects every subscriber to confirm the authority of the Pope ‘in all matters of faith and morals.’”

That was followed up this year by a joint Anglican-Roman Catholic conference in Toronto, where the Church of England delegates acknowledged the Pope as Universal Primate. *The Reformer* 7-00

The Lutheran Church signed a declaration of reconciliation in November 1999 (see *Milestones* 1999) In the light of all this progress towards Rome, it was a logical next step to restate the Roman Church’s position on Papal supremacy. Bearing in mind her motto “Always the same,” it could not be otherwise.

The Pope issued an important 36 page document this year entitled *Dominus Iesus*. Jesus is Lord. He said that:

The Document clarifies essential Christian elements, which do not hinder dialogue but shows its bases, because a dialogue without foundations will be destined to degenerate into empty wordiness. *L'Osservatore Romano* 4-10-00

The spirit of the document was summed up by the *Catholic Herald* 1-9-00

The Catholic Church has asserted its primacy over the Protestant churches. Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, prefect for the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, wrote to all Bishops' conferences to address misuse of the phrase "sister churches" in the ecumenical dialogue—asserting the Catholic Church's unique identity as "mother" of all Christian Churches.

The term "sister churches" could only be used as to describe relationships between local Catholic churches, including the Orthodox, which had valid episcopates and the Eucharist. The one, holy, catholic and apostolic universal church is not sister but "mother" of all the churches.

How apt is the description of the harlot woman in Rev. 17:5: **THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.**

"Memory and Reconciliation, the Church and the Faults of the Past"

This was another important document aimed at reassuring Protestants and Jews that the Roman Church had indeed changed and was seeking forgiveness for the wrongs of the past! It was a bold decision to publish this 53-page document. Many feared that the authority of the Roman Church would be undermined.

An unprecedented ceremony took place yesterday in St Peter's Basilica. Before the world, Pope John Paul II asked God's pardon for the sins of Roman Catholics over the centuries. Seven heads of the Curia read the intentions, which covered, *inter alia*, acts of violence and oppression during the Crusades and coercion applied by the Inquisition. After each, the choir sang the *Kyrie*, the Pope said the *Mea Culpa* and a candle was lit. . . At the end, the pontiff kissed the 15th century cross brought to St Peter's for every Holy Year. *Daily Telegraph* 3-3-00

The seven "confessions" covered such areas as "Sins against the People of Israel," "Sins which have Harmed the Unity of the Body of Christ," "Sins in Relation to the Fundamental Rights of a Person."

The Guardian's headline the following day was **The Pope's hypocrisy**, because of his intention to press ahead with the beatification of Pope Pius IX. He was Pope from 1846–1878. He is mainly remembered for the proclamation of the immaculate conception (1854) and infallibility (1870). He was notoriously anti-Semitic, and in the words of a "leading church historian", his record verges on the criminal. *The Guardian* 13-3-00

Michael de Semlyen—the author of *All Roads lead to Rome* has published an interesting counter to this Day of Pardon, which can be downloaded from the web¹. In it he quotes from a Prof. Arthur Noble:

"This "apology" is no apology at all: it contains no statements of wrongdoing by the Roman Catholic Church as such, but only for the excesses committed by "some". The wrongs and evils instigated,

authorised and committed by the Popes themselves receives no mention whatsoever. NBC News put it well: *“The Church...is not admitting guilt—the sweeping apology is for human sins by the Church’s sons and daughters, not by the Church itself.”* The subtle language of the Pope’s statement reeks of Jesuitical equivocation. The word “apology” has a double meaning: besides signifying an acknowledgement expressing regret or asking pardon for a fault or offence, it can be the opposite—a statement justifying or defending an action or policy. Now combine the two definitions, and you have a perfect example of the Vatican’s language of equivocation as professionally taught and practised by the Jesuits. What is said is not what is meant, and vice versa. Deceit is the name of the game.”

The “ecumenical gathering of the year”—at Rome

The Pope had designated the year 2000 as a “Holy Year”. It was inaugurated on Christmas Eve 1999, by the opening of “the bronze Holy Door of St Peter’s Basilica”. This was followed by a “New Year Eve’s Mass” and an opening of a door at the basilica “St Mary Major”. Then on the 18th January, which had been designated “The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity”, there was a celebration of the opening of the “Holy Door at St Paul-Outside-the-Walls.” Pilgrims have to visit these three basilicas plus a fourth in Rome “as part of their itinerary to gain remittance from punishment for their sins”. (It was in protest of such ‘indulgences’ that Martin Luther set out his Theses).

To mark the opening of this third and last door, the Pope had invited representatives of all mainstream churches to attend. “Although only about a third of the Protestant churches took part in yesterday’s ceremony, four-fifths of eastern Christendom were represented”, even Alexis sent a representative. The Church of England, Methodists, Lutherans and Pentecostals were included. In all, “over 20 Christian Churches and ecclesial Communities attended.” *LOR* 19-1-00; *DT* 19-1-00.



In this photo, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Carey (leader of the Church of England) and the Metropolitan Athanasios (representing Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople—the spiritual head of the Orthodox Church) knelt with the Pope before the newly opened door. Only one cushion had been provided as it was expected that only the Pope

would kneel, but when they too fell to their knees, the Pope exclaimed “Unity! Thank you!” *DT* 19-01-00; *BBC News* 18-01-00

The symbolism of opening doors is fascinating to Bible students. Those who have read Hislop's "Two Babylons"² will know the significance of "St Peter's Keys". In ancient Rome, Janus and the goddess he was always associated with—Cybele—each carried a key. Janus was worshipped in Rome as the god of doors and hinges, and was called "the opener and shutter". He was also revered as the "Grand Mediator"; the one whose favour must be sought in order for "doors to open". In this respect he carried the "power of turning the hinge" (Latin *jus vertendi cardinis*)—of opening the doors of heaven—or shutting them. Additionally, he was regarded as "God of gods."

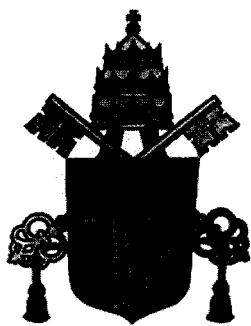
Cybele, with her key was worshipped as "Domina" or "The Lady" or Mea-Domina—Madonna—"My Lady". Now the ruler of Rome, the Caesar, was the Sovereign Pontiff or "Pontifex Maximus". As the earthly representative of Janus and Cybele, he held the two keys. They became the symbols of his authority as Pontifex Maximus. He was known by the Latin title "Pater Patrum" or "Father of Fathers"; he was also addressed as "Your Holiness." Moreover as the head of Mysteries of the religion that had come from Babylon, he also had the title of "Interpreter"—he revealed the secrets to the initiated. Now in the Chaldee this title is the equivalent of "Peter". And as chief interpreter his title of "Grand Interpreter" is in the Chaldee the equivalent of "Peter-Roma"!

We see the modern day equivalent. Amongst the many papal titles is *Pontifex Maximus*, and the correct form of salutation is: *Your Holiness* or *Most Holy Father*. The two keys are seen on the Pope's badge—the alleged keys of "St Peter of Rome" *Peter-Roma*. The letter M is for Mary—the *Madonna*. A door turns on its hinges. The Latin for hinge is *Cardo* and in the Latin phrase quoted earlier we see where the word *Cardinal* comes from. It is the College of Cardinals that appoints the Pope, that assists him in running the Vatican, the Pope being the chief Cardinal, or hinge!

Do we not see in this assembly at Rome the "daughters" of this mother acknowledging her as their mother? They all look up to the Pope as leader—what a change in just a few short years. No wonder that the Pope called out, "Unity! Thank you!"

A Marian Millennium

The Pope chose to deviate from tradition, and instead of giving his New Year talk from St Peter's, he gave it this year from St Mary Major. This building, which in ancient times was the Liberian Basilica was transformed into a church in the 4th century, and rebuilt in the 12th century. My guidebook says that it still retains Ionic columns taken from pagan



buildings, and that it has in the centre of the apse “the figures of Jesus and Mary enthroned.” Here he delivered his New Year homily, which concluded:

“Today, on the first day of the new year, the church recalls the experience of the mother of God...At the start of the year 2000, as we launch into the holy year, we trust in this your maternal memory, oh Mary. We entrust to you the days of the new year, the future of the church, of humanity, of the entire universe. Mary, mother of God, queen of peace, watch over us. Mary, health of the Roman people, pray for us. Amen.” *Sunday Times* 2-1-00

This entrusting of the new year to Mary is being taken a step further. The new **Millennium** has been entrusted to her!

John Paul II made the solemn act of entrustment in front of 1,500 bishops and in union with Catholics all over the world. Standing on Sunday noon before the statue of our Lady of Fatima, brought specially from Portugal, he asked Mary to intercede for the Church and the world in the third millennium.

“Today we wish to entrust to you the future that awaits us, and we ask you to be with us on our way,” the Pope said...The Pope then entrusted “all people” to Mary, beginning with the unborn and ending with the elderly and all “who are alone and without hope”.

“To you, Dawn of Salvation, we commit our journey through the new millennium, so that with you as guide all people may know Christ, the light of the world and it’s only Saviour.” *Catholic Herald* 13-10-00

A Vatican statement said the celebration put “a Marian seal on the Holy Year” and described the act of consecration as a “coronation of the Great Jubilee.” *Catholic Herald* 29-9-00

Mary—Co-redemptrix?

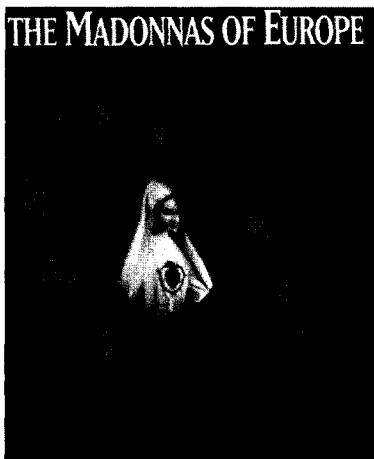
In *Milestones 1997* we reported on the discussions that the Vatican was holding to elevate Mary to a position of Co-Redemptrix—in other words of equal importance to her son in the work of redemption. In theory this has been the church’s teaching for some time, but there was caution about making it an “official” teaching—it was feared that it would offend the Protestants. The matter seemed to have disappeared from public view; however in the *Catholic Herald* 28-1-00 was a half page article headed **The case for Mary the redeemer**. Accompanying it was a page advertisement, sponsored by the *Catholic Herald*, for a one-week international symposium on **Marian Co-redemption—theological Contributions and Developments**, at Ratcliffe College in the UK. A series of 18 conferences around this theme were being given with titles ranging from “Our Lady Co-redemptrix, Pope John Paul II and the Conversion of Russia Today” to “Marian Co-redemption and Mediation in relation to the Most Holy Trinity”.

Already Mary is addressed as the *Mother of God*, so it would be but a short—though controversial—step to elevate her to the “4th member of the trinity”. Indeed this matter was discussed in newspaper articles in 1997.

The 20th International Mariological-Marian Congress was held in Rome during September 2000. The general theme was The Mystery of the Trinity and Mary. There was also a concert called Mary, Mother of the World.

Mary, “the most powerful and popular cultural symbol of the last 2000 years”, will have with this Congress her rightful place alongside the celebrations of the Great Jubilee of the incarnation. LOR 19-7-00

Her symbol of the 12 stars adorns the European flag. The *Catholic Herald* 8-9-00, reviewed a coffee-table book entitled *The Madonnas of Europe*. It revealed:



the face of Europe that most people never see: the inner landscape of a spiritual commonwealth of nations that stretches from the Atlantic to the Urals and from the Aegean to the Baltic.

There is an underlying message in the book, conveyed as much by the pictures as by the written text. Europe cannot be reduced to an economic zone or an alliance of states without losing its human and spiritual meaning.

The cover of the book features a striking image of the Immaculate

Heart surrounded by the 12 stars of the European flag. The text points out that the French artist, Arsen Heitz, who designed the flag was consciously inspired by the biblical vision of the Virgin at the time of the end, “clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and on her head the crown of 12 stars” (Rev. 12:1).

Whether or not you believe that the European Union is itself a work of God, the symbolism of the flag recalls Europe’s Christian roots and identity. Perhaps whenever we see it we should remember to pray for the re-evangelisation of our continent, encouraged by the beautiful and heart-warming images in this book.

In keeping with this powerful version of Christian Europe and Christian unity, Eastern Orthodox as well as Catholic shrines are included here.

The third secret of Fatima

The present Pope is a great devotee to the worship of Mary. Wherever he visits he tries to go to the Marian shrines. He openly expresses his belief

that it was her intervention that prevented his death at the hands of an assassin's bullet in 1981. His especial place of pilgrimage is to Fatima in Portugal. Here it is alleged that Mary appeared in 1917 to three shepherd children and revealed 3 secrets. The first was interpreted as dealing with the 2nd WW, the 2nd about the evils of Russia, and how they should be converted to Rome. The third was revealed this year and was widely interpreted as the assassination attempt in 1981.

This scripture comes to mind as one reads these so-called secrets:-

And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all **power and signs and lying wonders.** *2 Tim 2:8,9*

The worshipping of images of this long-dead mother of the Lord Jesus has its origins in the false worship of Babel. Mary the handmaid of the lord would be horrified at what is perpetuated in her name. Yes, the nations are drunk with the wine of her fornication (Rev. 17:2)—let us not be taken in by it all.

Links between the Roman and the Orthodox Churches

Little progress has been made this year on the coming together of these two branches of Christendom that split in AD 1054. The Patriarch is opposed to this move—he is concerned with the active proselytising within Russia by the Roman Church. However there is growing opposition from within to his concern.

“It is unacceptable, in a democratic and secular state, that one religious confession can create obstacles to a visit by the head of another,” said Orthodox priest Kiriak Temertsidy.

One of the Church's most outspoken dissidents, Gleb Yakunin, called on President Vladimir Putin to invite John Paul II despite the patriarch's refusal.

Despite the criticism, Alexis II sent his best wishes to the Pope for Christmas and the New Year. *Russia Today* 26-12-00

ⁱ <http://www.angelfire.com/de2/spritiof88> May/June 2000 bulletin. M. de Semlyen & R. Bennett

Chapter 10:

ISRAEL'S TROUBLING YEAR

1999 saw the election of Ehud Barak, who energetically renewed the stalled Peace Talks. At the start of 2000, it appeared as if, at long last, there could be a negotiated settlement with the Palestinians. At the year-end with some 350 dead, peace seems far away. The impression left by the news media is of Israel the aggressor, and the Palestinians the victims. The Israeli papers try to put the other side, but news editors around the world appear biased in what they wish to use.

Jerusalem being a burdensome stone, which all nations are involved against, is a scenario that has a grim reality. We know the situation will only intensify, prior to the invasion of the land. Yet there is to be a time of peace as spoken of by Ezekiel in his 38th chapter and also Paul when he wrote to the Thessalonian believers.

For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. *1 Thess. 5:3*

Its first fulfilment was in AD70. The Roman threat was lifted, the Jews seemed safe, but the Roman armies returned with a vengeance and Jerusalem was destroyed. There may well be a repetition of this scenario. When Israel seems safe, destruction will come. But this time there is a Saviour to deliver them out of the hand of their enemies.

We also see the disunity between the different Arab countries, which recalls to mind the words of the angel to Hagar the mother of Ishmael, the father of many of the Arab nations:

And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren. *Gen. 16:12*

We will take a brief look at some of the events of 2000 in Israel.

Israel, Syria and Lebanon

President Assad of Syria died in June, bringing to an end any hopes on Israel's part of concluding a Peace Treaty with the Syrians. His son Bashar Assad, a 34 year-old ophthalmologist, had only recently began to be groomed for the position, following the death of his older brother in a traffic accident in 1994. Bashar has received a western education, and is striving to bring his country into the 21st century. At the moment the Israelis do not see him as a threat, and await developments.

Israel withdrew her troops from Lebanon during May. They had been there for 18 years as a buffer-force to protect Israel's northern border. Over these

years, Israel has lost over 1,000 troops in Lebanon. With increasingly sophisticated detection equipment, the need for ground troops had lessened. Also, Israel hoped that by abiding by the UN Resolution 425, which called for withdrawal from this region, she would give Syria no excuse to be in Lebanon, and the blame for any terrorism attacks could then be laid at Syria's door. So far it has been relatively peaceful here.

The struggle over Jerusalem

The Palestinians have been pressing their demand for a right to Jerusalem. As we see in the next two chapters, with the backing of the Russians and the Vatican, they have been bolder in their claims. In sight of the Temple Mount, just a mile or so to the south is the Arab village of Abu Dis. Here the Palestinians have been building an "Assembly Hall." This magnificent 4 or 5 story building is clearly intended to be their new parliamentary building. It is closer to the Old City than the Knesset building!

Many have been the prophetically significant headlines: "**Jerusalem riven by ancient enmities**", "**The battle for Jerusalem has begun**", "**Weeping over Jerusalem**", "**The eternal stumbling-block**".

Arab disunity

The Arab world has many divisions. There are moderate states, like Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, and militant ones like Iraq. The Syrians have an intense dislike of Yasser Arafat. Iraq's Saddam Hussein desires to see Israel wiped off the map. Others, mindful of the power and the allies of Israel, seek to find some way out of the current impasse.

The Arab leaders held an emergency summit in Cairo in October. The *Daily Telegraph* headline was **Strife behind summit show of Arab unity**.

Presidents, kings, sheikhs and ministers from 22 countries are gathering as an act of solidarity with the Palestinians. But many leaders have, over the years, shown themselves to be far from friendly toward their Arab brothers. 21-10-00

The headline proved to be accurate. Libya's representative walked out in protest at the muted protests against Israel. The final text of the summit rejected the radical position of Iraq and Libya by 21 out of 22 votes. It promised to put £550 million into a fund to preserve Jerusalem's Arab character, and called for a cut in trade ties with Israel. The Israelis saw it as a triumph for moderation. The Arab leaders plan to hold another summit in March in Jordan.

At the Organisation of the Islamic Conference in Qatar in November, they argued amongst themselves over Israel and their own rivalries. The *Jerusalem Post's* pithy heading was **The limits of Islamic solidarity**. 24-11-00

The most blatant sign of the much-heralded three-day event's impotence was its dispersal 24 hours before its planned conclusion.

The Peace Talks

Israel eventually completed in March the promised handover of more territory originally scheduled for January 2000. The Palestinians now control some 40% of the West Bank. In May Mr Barak seemed willing to hand over control of part of Jerusalem, including the village of Abu Dis which is expected to be the capital of any future Palestinian State. On the 5th May, the two leaders met at the home of Arafat's deputy, "to advance talks on the framework agreement on permanent status". A week or so later the Israeli Knesset agreed to the handover of this village and other territory, although in the event the transfer has not yet been made. A few days afterwards a violent gun battle, following a Palestinian attack on Israeli troops, left several dead and nearly 200 injured.

At the end of June, Madeleine Albright engaged in a 35-hour bout of intensive diplomacy to persuade both sides to come to America for a US-Israel-Palestinian summit. It resulted, eventually, in a Camp David II meeting during August. Unlike the first such meeting in 1978, organised by Jimmy Carter, these talks ended in failure. Mr Barak was prepared to go further than any previous Prime Minister in the amount of control over Jerusalem he was prepared to give up. The Palestinians wanted complete control and also the right of return for some 3 million refugees, matters that were far beyond anything that the Israelis would contemplate. Both sides left empty handed.

As the September deadline for Yasser Arafat's declaration of a Palestinian State grew closer, Russia, China, the EU and America urged him not to take this step, but to continue negotiations. Israel and the US had worked hard behind the scenes, contacting foreign leaders and getting them on their side. *Time* 18-9-00. He agreed, mooting a possible date in November.

There was much activity during September to persuade Arafat to negotiate a deal. The EU hosted a meeting in Paris in October, against the background of a growing number of casualties in Israel. Again it ended without progress. Mr Clinton made another effort by arranging a Middle East Summit in the Egyptian resort of Sharm El-Sheikh. This too ended in failure, as the agreed cease-fire was quickly broken as violence mounted. *DT* 17-10-00

The stumbling block at all these talks was Jerusalem!

In December Mr Barak made a last-ditch attempt to bring peace, by proposing that they put off for 3 years the discussion on Jerusalem and the return of the refugees, in order to concentrate on less emotive issues. This again was rejected. Arafat having postponed his declaration of a State in September and again in November, much to his followers' dismay, obviously was holding out for an all or nothing deal.

Then in mid-December Mr Barak announced he was resigning and that, in accordance with Israeli law, elections would be held within 60 days. His

popularity in the polls was at rock bottom, and he needed a new mandate from the country. With President Clinton only having a short time in office, and with the prospect of a less accommodating administration being in charge, coupled with the fear that Israel might elect a less compromising Prime Minister, the Palestinians agreed to meet in America for Mr Clinton's last ditch attempt to bring peace. Mr Clinton met with negotiators from both sides and put forward a bold plan to solve their differences.

It gave the Palestinians control over the Temple Mount, and the Israelis control over the Western Wall and the ground under the Temple Mount. The Arab areas of Jerusalem would become part of the new Palestinian State. The Palestinian refugees could return, but to be settled in Palestinian areas, not their old homelands. Israel would retreat mainly to the pre-1967 borders, with the Palestinians having some 95% of the west Bank. The Palestinians must give up any further claims on Israel. Both sides must declare an end to their conflict.

Both Barak and Arafat were due to meet with Mr Mubarak, to discuss these issues, but at the last moment Mr Barak did not attend. Mr Mubarak urged Arafat to accept this offer, "as he would get no better deal, short of war." *The Times*, *BBC News* 28-12-00

As we close the year the prospects of both sides accepting the deal look slim. However Mr Arafat has flown to Washington to discuss the proposals. (2-1-01). Mr Clinton wants their replies by Jan. 10th 2001.

Meanwhile Israel is making plans for an economic and physical separation between the Israeli and Palestinian areas. They are planning to erect an electronic fence along 70km of the 1967 border in the West Bank, at a cost of \$25m. Already concrete walls are being erected around parts of Jerusalem to shield buildings from bullets and people.

The Palestinian economy is in tatters as a result of the *intifada*. Israel is employing few Arabs living in the Palestinian areas. Tourism in Bethlehem is virtually non-existent. A UN report put the Palestinian losses at \$500m in wages and sales of goods. Unemployment has tripled, and all the gains of the past three years have been wiped out. A Palestinian Economic Council spokesman said that the economy is paralysed at every level. Half the population is now below the UN's Palestinian poverty rate of \$2 a day. *BBC News* 18-12-00.

So it is with uncertainty that we leave our briefer than usual look at Israel. As we remark so often, Israel is seeking a man-made peace. True peace will only come when they recognise their King. Ezekiel 39:26 indicates that in God's eyes the situation of peace at the time of the end is a time of "trespass" or, as the Hebrew indicates, treachery.

Chapter 11:

RUSSIA & THE M.E. – BUSINESS AS USUAL?

Ezekiel chapter 38 indicates that Gog comes down at the head of a large confederacy of nations, because it “thinks an evil thought”.

Thus saith the Lord GOD; It shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought: (an evil ⁷⁴⁵¹ thought ⁴²⁸⁴)

And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwallled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates,

To take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land.

There is an implication that this invasion is a result of a previous involvement in the area, which has brought about the state of “peace and safety”, of which he now takes advantage. A crafty move, an “evil” thought. My lexicon (Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius) has just two occurrences of this particular form of this Hebrew word. The other is Esther 9:25

:24 Because Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had devised against the Jews to destroy them, and had cast Pur, that is, the lot, to consume them, and to destroy them;

:25 But when Esther came before the king, he commanded by letters that his wicked device, (wicked ⁷⁴⁵¹ device ⁴²⁸⁴) which he devised against the Jews, should return upon his own head,

So fascinatingly it has to do with the Agagite—the LXX uses the word Gog to translate Agag in Num. 24:7. Haman planned to exterminate the Jews and plunder their wealth; this was his evil thought. It was sparked by Mordecai the Jew refusing to bow down to him. The Hebrew word for bow is used of idols. Haman in his pride wanted to be worshiped as a god. He realised that Mordecai's actions were not just personal, but a part of the beliefs of the Jewish nation. In his wrath he sought to destroy the whole Jewish people. We see the parallels with Gog; he too plans to similarly destroy the Jews. Although the invasion described by Ezekiel is couched in terms of taking plunder and spoil—which was an aspect of Haman's scheme—other scriptures indicate that there certainly is a religious element. Indeed it is the main element as we shall see in the next chapter.

And so it is exciting to the watcher on Zion's towers to see again the involvement of Russia in the Middle East Peace Talks.

The other matter, which we shall be looking at, is Russia's involvement with many of the countries listed in Ezekiel 38. We have already seen her links with Western Europe; here we shall be looking at the Middle East and Libya, encompassed in the countries of Persia, Libya and Togarmah. Her moves to these countries are mainly in pursuit of her former trade as arms salesman to these Middle Eastern countries. We sketch the changing picture that has unfolded this year.

Russia and the Middle East Peace talks

Right from the Oslo days, Russia and America have been the co-sponsors of the Middle East Peace Talks, though Russia has been very much a weaker partner, greatly overshadowed by America. Why is Russia so interested in Israel and the Middle East? Remember that Christianity came to Russia from Constantinople. This city was the centre of the Roman Empire, and the Orthodox Church bore rule over the land of Israel. Constantine's mother "St Helena" travelled to "the Holy Land" and many of the spots that she marked out as "holy sites" are venerated to this day. With the overthrow of Constantinople in 1453, Russia took over the mantle of protector of the "holy places". The Russian Church has extensive land holdings in Israel today, and it was concern for these that started negotiations leading to Russia resuming relations with Israel in the early 90's. Like the Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church desires to have control of these many sites of pilgrimage.

When the UN debated in 1947, the setting up of a Jewish State, the Soviet ambassador, Andrei Gromyko surprised everyone, especially the Jewish delegation, with an impassioned pro-Zionist speech. Subsequently, however, Russia backed the Arabs against Israel.

Many of the returning Jews are from Russia; in fact Israel now has one of the largest Russian-speaking expatriate populations anywhere in the world.

At the signing of the Oslo Peace Accord in 1993 at the White House, a ceremonial role was found for the Russian Foreign Minister to acknowledge the small role that Russia had played. The situation may well be changing. Mr Putin has cast himself in a more positive role as a peacemaker. He shares similar problems with Israel, problems from Moslem extremists.

Last week as Russia stepped into the bubbling Mideastern fray, a new chapter was opening in that troubled superpower's history in the Middle East.

It does not take a political scientist to understand that Bill Clinton's successor will not spend nearly as much time as his predecessor did on the Arab-Israeli conflict, and it takes no Russian-affairs scholar to realise that Moscow is eager to restore its role as an effective player in the Middle East's regional affairs.

The article ended on a word of caution!

Surely, the Russian card is not quite as attractive as all this may make it seem. Moscow's diplomats were reared in an ecosystem where anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism were a norm, tradition, and habit no less than an ideology imposed on them from above. An active Israeli pursuit of the Russian alternative to the US, or even just as a counterbalance, remains far-fetched. But a Russian-initiated entry into the fray can be welcomed, considering that Moscow still is sufficiently respected across the Middle East. *Jerusalem Post* 1-12-00

The growing Russian involvement in 2000

In January, Putin took the initiative and hosted a two-day meeting in Moscow on the M.E. peace process. The US, Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and representatives of the Palestinians and the EU were invited. *Moscow Times* 22-1-00

Then on May 5th it was announced that Russia was launching a “new M.E. peace initiative”, coinciding with the visit to Israel of the new Russian peace envoy, Pavel Kratozov. It was a three-track scheme involving a Palestinian track, a Syrian track and a Lebanon track”. *Haaretz*.

When the Camp David talks ended in failure in July, Mr Arafat travelled to Moscow to consult with Mr Putin and to encourage him to play a more active role in the peace process.

Putin supported Arafat's desire to establish a state, but advised him to continue to negotiate with Israel rather than unilaterally to declare independence. Interestingly—and this is where we see the religious strands—he met Alexis II, the Russian Patriarch, who also backed his cause.

Igor Ivanov, the Russian Foreign Minister, undertook two Middle East trips, one in early October and one in mid-November. This took in Iraq, Egypt, Israel, the Palestinian territories, Jordan, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia.

On the occasion of Tony Blair's second visit to Russia in late November, the situation in the Middle East was one of the subjects that they discussed in detail. *Daily Telegraph* 25-11-00

A day or two later Yassar Arafat re-visited Russia, to “urgently seek support from Moscow and signalling a desire to restart stalled peace talks”. Both Israel and the Palestinians have been putting pressure on Moscow to help find a solution. The headline to the BBC report of this visit was “**Russia enters Mid-East fray**” 23-11-00.

For his part, President Putin sees an opening for Russian diplomacy in the Middle East—especially at a moment of political uncertainty in the US.

Arafat wanted Russian backing for his proposals for an international observer force to be placed in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. *BBC* 23-11-00

The visit certainly seemed to move things forward. The dramatic headline in the *Jerusalem Post* was **The Russians are coming**, with the subheading *While Washington is preoccupied with its electoral mess, Moscow is re-entering the Mideastern diplomatic fray.* 1-12-00

Russia emphatically stepped back into the Middle East peace process Friday when President Vladimir Putin got visiting Palestinian President Yassar Arafat to speak by telephone with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak.

Israel immediately announced that its foreign minister, Shlomo Ben-Ami, would travel to Moscow next week. [The visit was in fact postponed]. Russian diplomats were gratified at developments and pledged Moscow would use its unique position to promote peace in the region.

“We must try to use Russia’s unique situation as a friend of the Arabs and the country with a broad and trusting dialogue with the Israelis to persuade both sides to stop confrontation and move toward a Palestinian–Israeli peace,” said the Russian First Deputy Foreign Minister. *Moscow Times* 25-11-00

The two leaders proposed the setting up of an International Middle East Peace Conference.

“The Russian plan calls for the European Union, Middle Eastern countries and China to all join the negotiating process alongside the United States and Russia,” a Palestinian envoy said. *Russia Today* 29-11-00

Mr Putin later sent a message to Mr Arafat, giving Russian support for his efforts to establish a separate Palestinian State. *Russia Today* 30-11-00

One must assume that Russia’s efforts will come to the fore after the handover to Mr Bush as president.

Russia—“moving back to her old policy”

In the Soviet era, weapons poured out of Russia into many of the Middle Eastern countries. She is set to re-enter that lucrative market, in spite of US opposition. Mr Putin has merged the two top arms firms in an effort to increase profitability and to reduce wasteful competition. We look at a few of the areas where she is actively seeking to sell her products.

Iran. Russia is constructing three more nuclear power stations in Iran, and is planning to resume the supply of arms. There exists a secret memorandum between Russia and America—the Gore-Chernomyrdin agreement. It was brokered by the losing presidential candidate, Al Gore,

and signed in 1995, to stop the signing of any new deals to supply conventional arms. The existing contracts ran out in 1999. Mr Putin, however, does not feel bound by it and is determined to ignore American threats to re-impose sanctions. Iran is interested in assembling under licence the MiG-29 fighter plane and the T-72C tank, lucrative deals which could earn Russia many billions of dollars—\$7 billion is being talked about. Iran has indicated that it would sign deals worth \$1.5 billion immediately, with others to follow, if Russia decides to defy the US. Iran is awash with oil money at the moment, and so there would not be the payment problems that dogged past deals with Iran. *St. Petersburg Times* 24-11-00; *Moscow Times* 30-11-00

At the end of December the Russian Defence Minister, Igor Sergeyev, made an historic visit to Iran, the first since the 1979 Islamic revolution.

The purpose of the visit is to examine ways of developing an increase in Irano-Russian co-operation at the regional and international level. High on the talk's agenda is the development of military co-operation, the discussion of ways to settle the situation in Afghanistan and the problems of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The geographic position of two countries in the sensitive region of the world makes the necessity for a close co-operation between Iran and Russia inevitable. *Russia Today* 24-12; 25-12-00

These talks went very well and the headline in the *BBC News* 28-12-00 was – **Russia and Iran open new chapter**. They agreed a long-term programme of political and military co-operation. "A new chapter in our relations", "a historic day" commented the two Defence Ministers.

Iraq. Here again Russia is willing to act in defiance on the heavy trade embargo imposed on Iraq because of Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. Senior Iraqi officials have paid several visits to Moscow, in an attempt to persuade Russia to defy the embargo and supply arms again. It has been reported that Iraq has ordered 150 advanced Russia mobile air defence systems that would be able to shoot down Allied aircraft patrolling the no-fly zones. *Sunday Telegraph* 16-7-00

Russia has been active in the campaign to get the American sanctions lifted. The Russian Foreign Minister's visit in November was the first such visit since 1994. He came with a letter from Mr Putin to Saddam Hussein "on bilateral relations and current developments in the Arab region." The letter also stated the Russian leader's firm intention to obtain a rapid political settlement to the Iraqi problem, including the lifting of sanctions against Iraq.

Tareq Aziz the Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister gave him a "red-carpet" welcome. *Russia Today* 14-10-00

In November Mr Aziz visited Moscow, where he praised Russia's efforts in getting the sanctions lifted and said that Moscow was restoring traditional

ties with the Arab world. The headline to the article in *Russia Today* was **Iraq's Aziz says Russia moving back to old policy.** 3-12-00

Moscow has reopened its cultural centres in Baghdad, in order to promote business contacts and cultural information exchange. They have also resumed flights between the two countries, again in defiance of UN sanctions. Both Russia and France argued that the sanctions did not in fact cover civilian planes. *Moscow Times* 15-9-00

A Russian-Belarussian oil firm is seeking UN permission to develop a new oil field in Iraq, thought to contain a billion barrels of crude oil. *Moscow Times* 25-11-00

Libya. In the Soviet days, Libya was a good customer for arms, but under Mr Gorbachev, Russia backed the UN sanctions against Libya. Once again Russia is busy re-establishing trade, following the lifting of UN sanctions in May. A joint Russian-Libya investment company is being set up and a joint investment bank. Several contracts worth over \$600 million are expected to be signed before the year-end. Mr Putin has accepted an invitation to visit the country. *Russia Today* 11-11; 6-12-00

Qatar. This small state on Persian Gulf sent its Foreign Minister to Moscow in November for talks on economic opportunities, especially in the natural gas sector. Qatar is due shortly to start its term of chairing the Islamic Conference Organisation. *Russia Today* 6-11-00.

Russia in the Far East

India. Russia has increased her ties with India following Mr Putin's visit in October, the first such visit for more than 7 years. Trade between the two countries had fallen drastically, from \$5.5 billion in 1990 to \$1.5 billion last year. A £2 billion arms deal was finalised—Russia will supply aircraft, tanks, and an aircraft carrier. India is also to build fighter planes under license. India's current foe is Pakistan, which is a Moslem country. Russia shares similar problems in Chechnya, and so is keen to develop mutual links. Moscow would like there to be a strategic partnership between the two countries. However India is not too keen in being dependant on Russia, she is strengthening her ties with the US and Israel, and sees the present arrangement as just a commercial transaction. India is hoping to increase her exports of tea and tobacco to Russia. They have also opened a transport route from the western ports of India to Moscow and other Russian cities via several Iranian ports. 40ft container lorries make the journey in about 21 days. *Jane's Intelligence Digest* 24-3; 22-8-00; *Moscow Times* 4-10-00

China. These links are interesting, even though China does not feature in Bible prophecy, and does not appear to be part of the Gogian confederacy. Russia's links with China are to counter American world dominance. Today's world is described as a "uni-polar world"—just one power centre. Europe, Russia and China, all wish for a "multi-polar world", where America's dominance is challenged. Mr Putin visited his Chinese

counterpart, Jiang Zemin, in July. They vowed to “forge a close strategic alliance to curb Washington’s dominance of world affairs.” They signed a strongly worded statement accusing America of seeking strategic military and security advantages in her proposed National Missile Defence system, which would be a threat to both countries. *Daily Telegraph* 19-7-00

Russia is supplying China with two more destroyers, which will be armed with super-sonic anti-ship missiles, armaments that China can use to counter threats from Taiwan. *The Times* 18-7-00

Chapter 12:

THE FALSE PROPHET & THE MIDDLE EAST

In our introduction to the previous chapter we indicated that other scriptures indicate that there certainly is a religious element to the coming invasion of Israel. We will briefly see that it is indeed the main element, and then look at the practical outworking of this contest during the year 2000. It is Isaiah who couches the coming destruction in terms of a religious contest.

:2 For the indignation of the LORD is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter.

:3 For it is the day of the LORD'S vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion. Isaiah 34

The controversy of Zion sums up the religious nature of the contest. It has its roots in the revelation in Genesis chapter 3 that there would be strife between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman. We see the practical outworking of this throughout scripture. Babylon v Zion was followed by Rome v Zion. Jew and saint have endured centuries of persecution during their enemy's ascendancy. The invasion of Israel is the crowning act of their anti-Israel schemes. Christendom will be united in their desire to obliterate the name of Israel. Why?

There is of course their common and deep-seated anti-Semitism. Rome's hatred of Judaism, as we shall see later in this chapter, would be another major factor. Also it may be that the work of Elijah in preparing the hearts of some in Israel to receive their Messiah could be another factor and a generator of anger in the Catholic-influenced confederacy. The time of Elijah's work may be the time when the condition of dwelling in peace and safety is fulfilled.

As we considered in chapter 2, "the gathering of the nations into the place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon", as detailed in Rev. 16:16, is also "the battle of great day of God Almighty". The battles in the past described as being "days of the Lord" were battles against enemies of Israel who sought to destroy them. Indeed the description of the outcome of this battle of Armageddon is that:

*...the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and **great Babylon** came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. Rev. 16:19*

"Great Babylon" is a description of the false system of worship that passes as "Christianity", but is indeed far from the truth of the Word of God. This battle is the opening blast of the Lord Jesus' campaign of re-educating the

nations as to what the true gospel is. Only those nations that turn and repent will be spared "the wrath of God."

Joel 3 uses an interesting word to describe the nations coming to Jerusalem.

:9 Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up.

The word prepare is mainly translated sanctify. In this passage it is to "consecrate war or warriors by purification, - from the custom of opening a campaign by sacrifice". An indication of the religious nature of the contest.

There is another aspect too, which concerns the Jewish people. Joel in his third chapter indicates that the outcome of this battle is to make Israel acknowledge the supremacy of her God.

:11 Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O LORD.

:14 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.

:16 The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the LORD will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel.

:17 So shall ye know that I am the LORD your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall **Jerusalem be holy**, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more.

Isaiah 2 speaks of this day of the LORD as a time when the Gentiles shall abandon their idols, their religious way of life.

:12 For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low:

:20 In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats;

Even in Ezekiel 38, which appears to speak only of an invasion for economic reasons, the phrase that is used to describe all the nations with Gog is "great company" (Vv4,7,13,15.) The word for company occurs 105 times, and in 86 of those occurrences is translated synagogue by the AV.

We see from these scriptures that this contest is basically a religious one. The nations will seek to defile Jerusalem and destroy God's people. It will be the work of the Lord Jesus and the saints to establish peace and

righteousness upon this earth. Sadly it takes the severe judgements of God to achieve this change of outlook and way of life.

We are therefore interested in seeing the involvement of christendom in the present crisis in the Middle East.

The background to the present situation

The Vatican has long had an interest in Jerusalem. Dr Rivera, who was a high up Jesuit priest, but who left the Roman Church in 1967, revealed many of their secrets in a series of booklets issued by *Chick Publications*. He claims that long ago the Vatican set out to find a suitable leader who could unite the Arab people together in an uprising and conquer Jerusalem for the "Church". A wealthy Arabian widow, a devote Roman Catholic, was sent to find a suitable husband who could be trained in the Vatican's plan. She married Muhammad, and through her cousin, Waraquaah, also a devote Roman Catholic, the young man was groomed for the role of leading the uprising. The plan succeeded, the Arabs were united, Jerusalem was taken, but the plan, Rivera claims, backfired. With this taste of power, they turned upon their former friends, determined to conquer the whole of Europe in the name of "Allah", the moon god of the Sabeans of Arabia. Long centuries of war followed between "Christian" and Moslem—the time period described so graphically in Revelation 9.

We have only Rivera's word for the truth of this, yet how it all makes sense. The late Avro Manhattan, author of many books that give a deep insight into the workings of the Vatican has an interesting section in his book *The Vatican, Moscow, Washington Alliance*, published in 1986. [Out of print]. The chapter is headed *The Vatican's watch on Israel*. The Vatican's view of Israel is that the stronger she becomes, the stronger becomes the ambitions of world Zionism, and therefore a rival to the Roman Church.

Apart from the geographical presence of a Jewish state in the Middle East, the most controversial characteristic of an Israeli establishment, with Jerusalem as a territorial and mystical omphalos [hub, centre], was its messianic nature, the central focus of the Hebrew teleological [doctrine that all things created to fulfil a specific purpose] dream.

Because of this, the Vatican could not and would not tolerate the establishment of an Israel which claimed messianic privileges, or rather, messianic uniqueness and which, therefore, would compete with the Roman Catholic Church as the centre of the future spiritual kingdom.

It is important—though it may be difficult for some—to recognise the religious nature of the Communist-Zionist-Catholic political configuration. Although deliberately muted in public pronouncements, behind the Zionist banner there was to be found the ancient messianic hope for the coming of a global theocracy, as predicted by all the seers and prophets

of Zion. It would be a theocracy in which Jehovah, not Christ, would be king.

In Vatican eyes, therefore, the millenarian yearning for a global Hebrew theocracy represents the deadly threats to the teachings of the Catholic Church. When translated into concrete political terms, such a view spells not only rivalry, but implacable enmity.

A Vatican fundamentally opposed by a powerful Jewish theocracy, therefore, would become not only hostile to Zionism and consequently to Israel; it would seek powerful allies to neutralise both. In political parlance, it would seek as an ally another imperial power—the Russian or the Communist, or both, to checkmate the imperialist dream of Zionism.

Avro Manhattan argues that it would be sensible for Russia to aid the Israeli State in order to drive the Vatican to seek to co-operate with Russia, to stop Russia's helping of Israel!

Because a powerful Israel, as a visible expression of Zionism in territorial, political, and military matters, in the long run was bound to antagonise the Vatican. The interests of each would clash, religiously and politically. The result of the forthcoming hostility between the Vatican and Israel would mean that the Vatican will be compelled to diminish its opposition to Soviet Russia. Indeed, the Church would seek a form of co-operation with her, the better to contain Israel's ambitions.

Bearing in mind that this book was written in 1986, before the fall of communism, his words have shown to be very perceptive. Russia's present role of helping the Jews, may be a cover for seeking greater co-operation with the Vatican. Remember that Russia is an excellent chess playing country, and many of her moves politically are those of a chess player. So likewise are Vatican's!

The Vatican and Israel

It was Pope Pius X (Pope from 1903–1914) who stated, "We cannot prevent the Jews from going to Jerusalem, but we would never sanction it...the Jews have not recognised our Lord; we cannot recognise the Jews."

It was during the crusades that the Vatican claimed the title "King of Jerusalem" for the Popes. It was not surprising therefore that the Vatican did not recognise the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. Indeed it was only in 1993 that she saw the advantage of recognising Israel's existence. It was in December 1993 that the Vatican and Israel signed a 14-article "Fundamental Agreement" which established full diplomatic relations between them. (See *Milestones 1994*)

The Vatican commits itself to joining Israel in the fight against anti-Semitism. Israel for its part, vows to uphold the right to freedom of

religion, 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 subcommittees. *Daily Telegraph* 31-12-00

A seeming innocuous accord, but one can see that when the aforementioned "holy places" are threatened the Vatican will be able to claim its right to regain possession of these places!

It may not just be a co-incidence that the year that has seen the worst fighting between the Israelis and the Palestinians also saw the first visit of a Pope!

The Vatican and the Arabs

In the light of Dr Rivera's claims about the setting up of Muhammad, it is not surprising that the Vatican should make every effort to regain the situation, even after all these centuries.

The wooing of the Muslims began in earnest with the alleged visions of Mary in Portugal at a place called Fatima. The spot had been carefully chosen for its place name. The Muslim forces conquered Spain and Portugal and the village of Fatima was named after Mohammed's daughter Fatimah.

"Our Lady's appearances at Fatima marked the turning point in the history of the world's Moslems, the most difficult of all religious people to convert to Christianity. The Moslems occupied Portugal for centuries and have left their mark". *Bishop Fulton Sheen* quoted in *The Woman shall Conquer*.

The same Bishop predicted that Islam would be converted to "Christianity" "through a summoning of the Moslems to a veneration of the Mother of God." He based his reasoning on the fact that:

The Koran...has many passages concerning the Blessed Virgin. First of all, the Koran believes in her Immaculate Conception and also in her Virgin Birth...Mary, then, is for the Moslems the true *Sayyida*, or Lady. The only possible serious rival to her in their creed would be Fatima, the daughter of Muhammad himself. But after the death of Fatimah, Muhammad wrote: "Thou shalt be the most blessed of all the women in Paradise, after Mary." *Mary and the Moslems* by *Bishop Sheen*

Muslim's throughout the world venerate Mary. When images of her are carried throughout Moslem areas of Africa, India and elsewhere, they turn out in their thousands to worship her. We see the success in the Vatican's scheme to win over the Moslems in the frequent visits of Yasser Arafat to the Pope. I know of no other "leader" who has made so many visits to the Vatican. He went twice this year and one source said that he has paid a

total of 16 visits to the Pope! What other leader comes anywhere near to that figure? Yet he is not a “Christian”! It only makes sense if they are working together against a common foe. Bear in mind also that Arafat’s wife, Suha was a devout Roman Catholic, only converting to Islam after she had married Arafat, in an attempt to appease his generals, and in fact, according to a BBC News report is still spoken of as a “Christian”. (Echoes of Muhammad and his wife?) Pictures of the Pope adorn her apartment walls in Gaza. *Time* 3-4-00; *Arafat. In the eyes of the beholder* Wallach. p. 456.

The Basic Agreement between the Vatican & PLO

On the 15th of February, Yasser Arafat was once more at the Vatican, this time to witness the signing of an important document and to make plans for the Pope’s visit to the Middle East. The 12 section Agreement marked the culmination of nearly 6 years of discussions since the Vatican officially recognised the PLO in 1994. (It was only a year earlier, in 1993, that the Vatican officially recognised Israel!) In anticipation of a shortly to be established Palestinian State, the Vatican obtained the right to be given freedom of worship by the Palestinians, and recognition of their rights in “economic, legal and fiscal matters”. In the preamble it called for “a peaceful solution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, which would realise the inalienable national legitimate rights of the Palestinian People”. It declared that “an equitable solution for the issue of Jerusalem, based on international resolutions, is fundamental to a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, and that unilateral decisions and actions altering the specific character and status of Jerusalem are morally wrong and unacceptable.” It called for a special statute for Jerusalem. *LOR 23-2-00* It was signed by Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran, the Vatican’s Foreign Minister and Emil Jarjua, a PLO executive leader, in the presence of the Pope and Mr Arafat. Inalienable rights? Those belong to God, it is His land!



This cartoon, from the *Jerusalem Post* 25-2-00 wonderfully summarises the situation. Arafat is using the cross —“Christianity”, to unlock access to Jerusalem. In truth

there are two sides to this picture. The Pope is using Arafat to stop Israel having control over Jerusalem, wishing to have that right himself!

The Israelis were upset at what they regarded as meddling in the Peace Talks, especially as they were at a critical stage. Only two years earlier the Archbishop Tauran, the Vatican Foreign Minister described Israel presence in east Jerusalem as an “illegal occupation.”

The Pope's visit to Israel

The following month the Pope paid his first visit to Israel. As is his custom, the Pope kisses the soil of the countries he visits, in dedication to "Mary" in the hope for their "conversion." On landing at Tel Aviv, three children, Jewish, Christian and Muslim brought him a bowl of soil to kiss and "bless"! Interestingly at Bethlehem he was given a golden bowl of "Palestinian" soil to kiss! "A gesture seen by the Palestinians as tantamount to recognising their self-rule territory as a sovereign state" *DT* 22-3;23-3-00. Included in his schedule was a meeting with Arafat and his wife Suha at Bethlehem.

In his speech at Bethlehem the Pope said:

The Holy See has always recognised that the Palestinian people have a natural right to a homeland, and the right to be able to live in peace and tranquillity with the other peoples of this area.



We must all continue to work and pray for the success of every genuine effort to bring peace to this land. Only with a just and lasting peace—not imposed but secured through negotiation—will legitimate Palestinian aspirations be fulfilled. Today and always the Palestinian people are in my prayers. *LOR* 29-3-00

Suha said in private the Pope implicitly called for an independent Palestinian State. During his visit to a squalid refugee camp he again called for the Palestinians to have their own homeland.

The visit was widely seen as a success.

He was credited with strengthening the Palestinian cause, furthering the Holy See's interests in the region and most of all winning over the Israelis. *Daily Telegraph* 28-3-00

The Pope and Jerusalem

Israel claims Jerusalem is her capital. At one time she would not even contemplate sharing it with the Palestinians. Now she is driven to consider such a move. The Vatican however wants to go much further, and remove Israeli control from their capital city and replace control through an international force. This obviously upsets the Israelis, as they have been very careful to allow freedom of worship since they took control of Jerusalem in 1967. Before then, when the city was under Arab control, the Jews were not allowed into the city. There was no freedom of worship

then! The Vatican's promotion of the internationalising of Jerusalem is aimed to weaken Jewish influence in the city.

In July the Pope was issued a statement emphasising that Jerusalem should be given special international status. Having commented on the on-going Peace Talks he asked both sides not to overlook the importance of the spiritual dimension of the city of Jerusalem, with its holy places and the communities of the three monotheistic religions surrounding them. The Holy See continues to maintain that only a special, internationally guaranteed statute can effectively preserve the most sacred parts of the holy city and ensure freedom of belief and worship for all believers who, in the region and throughout the world, see Jerusalem as the crossroads of peace and coexistence. *L'Osservatore Romano* 26-7-00

This statement was issued while the Camp David talks were in progress. Shortly afterwards, America sought Vatican help to persuade the Palestinians to be more flexible.

Madeline Albright, the US Secretary of State, flew from Tokyo [from the G8 summit] to Rome on Monday, in what was said to be an attempt to involve the Vatican in plans to revive the Middle East peace process.

...But while her declared intention was to brief Archbishop Tauran on the failed Camp David talks, her real aim was said to be to draw the Pope's representatives into future discussions. *Catholic Herald* 4-8-00

The following week a top Palestinian official was in the Vatican to brief Tauran of the progress—or lack of it—in the Peace Talks. *CH* 18-8-00

In the middle of the fighting that erupted in October and continued unabated during November, “Christian and Moslem leaders” issued a joint statement condemning “the actions of the Israeli forces during the recent Palestinian uprising.”

“The dangerous procedures and orders taken by Israel are really a violation of human rights and international law,” the statement, by clerics in the district of Janin, said. *Catholic Herald* 10-11-00

In October the Arab countries held a Summit at Cairo to discuss the Peace Talks and the violence in Israel. Apparently in one of the photographs of Arafat can be seen a Roman Catholic priest!

In many ways we see clearly the Vatican's hand behind the events of 2000.

Saddam calls for a Jihad

The Iraqi president, Saddam Hussein, has delivered a Christmas message calling on Christians and Muslims to declare a holy war, or Jihad, on Israel. He accused the Israelis of defiling both Christian and Muslim sanctuaries, and of wanting to exterminate Palestinians, with the support of the United States. He said the Jihad was the only way of achieving the eventual goal of peace. *BBC News*. 24-12-00

Chapter 13:

SOUNDING THE TRUMPET

*Ezekiel ch. 33 describes the work of the prophet as a watchman, whose duty it was to blow the trumpet of warning to inform his people of the coming day of trouble. That was **his** duty - whether his people responded or not, was **their** responsibility.*

The closer we approach the Master's return, the more we feel impelled to sound loud the trumpet within our community, in the hope of rousing some from the state of spiritual apathy that we are sinking into.

It is not pleasant to warn of the dangers, to point out the truth about the False Prophet and her daughters. Yet we would be failing in our duty as watchmen if we did not. A correct understanding of the book of Revelation is vitally important. False interpretations will cloud our understanding of the message that the Lord has given us. The book was given in symbol, not that we should not be able to understand it, but that those whose hearts were not set on the truth, should remain in ignorance of the message. Like the parables, the Lord gave it to those who had "ears to hear what the spirit had to say to the ecclesias". It was given that we might be aware of the dreadful, persecuting power, which is drunk with the blood of saints. Because the symbolism is based upon Old Testament scriptures, we have to have a good comprehension of these in order to unlock its message. Many are the sound books and now tapes and videos that can help us to understand aright our traditional understanding of this precious message, which rounds off the Divine revelation to His people.

Organise Bible Class studies on the book of Revelation. Read daily from the word of God—Old Testament as well as New. Urge every effort towards keeping awake and alert to the things that are happening not only in the world, but also within the brotherhood. Personal study is seen less and less. The truth is not a social activity. It is a matter of life and death!

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, **and his wife hath made herself ready.** Rev. 19:7

*Personal preparation is vital. The time is short. A study of the prophetic word will lift us up to rejoice in the great power and foreknowledge of our God. And to marvel at the mighty hand of the Lord Jesus and the angels, into whose hands God has entrusted the preparation for the Kingdom to come. It will bring the assurance that every last piece of the prophetic jigsaw **will** drop into place.*

And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. Rom. 13:11

May the Lord grant us an answer of peace in that day.

Further reading

Basic expositions: *Eureka, Elpis Israel* by Bro. Thomas; *Apocalypse and History* by Bre. Barker & Boulton. [From Christadelphian Office]

More recent works: *Christadelphian Expositor—Revelation*, by Bro. Mansfield; *Study of the Book of Revelation*, by Bro. Knowles. [From Logos distributors]. *Rome and Jerusalem; How will Christ Come? Revelation – which interpretation?; The True Gospel—Defended and Explained!* By Bro. G. Pearce. [From CSSS distributors or *Milestones*]

The Bible Magazine contains *Milestones* updates, and many articles on prophecy. They also carry a range of booklets and videos on Bible prophecy such as *United Europe—from the Atlantic to the Urals; Bible Prophecy and the Middle East; Cry of the Prophets*, by Bro. Billington. [From CSSS distributors or Bible Magazine www.biblemagazine.com]

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Milestones 2000

This 24th issue of ***Milestones*** reviews the past year in the light of Bible prophecy. 2000 has indeed been an exciting year to Bible students. In many areas our traditional understanding of Bible prophecy has been dramatically confirmed.

It examines three main time-of-the-end prophecies:

- ◆ The **frog-like spirits** which proceed from **the Dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet** (Rev. 16).
- ◆ **Gog and the land of Magog, and Gog's revival** (Ezek. 38).
- ◆ The **iron-clay feet of the image** (Dan. 2).

In the light of these, ***Milestones*** looks at the following:

- ◆ The great changes in Russia, in Church and State. The Tsar's throne has been restored (see front cover), its heir is being prepared!
- ◆ The many links between Russia and Germany. Russia has **enormous** supplies of oil and gas but is short of money—Europe has money but is short of fuel & agreed to build a pipeline and buy supplies from Russia. So we have an economic situation that binds the two together. The two leaders also celebrated Christmas together!
- ◆ The relentless drive by the core members of the EU for political union—and Britain's increasing isolation.
- ◆ Israel's troubled year with Russian and Vatican involvement in the Palestinian cause. (Note the key on cover).

Milestones 2000 is an invaluable source of material, reminding us of the events of the past year, and encouraging us to watch for our Master's return. Let us, if necessary, be warned into action by these events.

