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“Let us be alert to the season in which we are living. It is the season of the Blessed Hope, calling for us to cut our ties with the world and build ourselves on this One who will soon appear. He is our hope—a Blessed Hope enabling us to rise above our times and fix our gaze upon Him.” Tozer

Scientists are making genetically modified cyborg dragonflies

They could be used for guided pollination... or for surveillance.

Mariella Moon 01.26.17 engadget.com



A biomedical solutions company called Draper is developing a technology that can turn a dragonfly into a living drone. They call it the DragonflEye project, and the technology's main component is a tiny backpack equipped with solar panels to harvest energy. It also has integrated guidance and navigation system composed of optogenetic tools that Draper made with the help of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) at Janelia Farm. The idea is to use those tools to send commands from the backpack to the "steering" neurons that control the insect's flight inside the dragonfly's nerve cord. It's a totally different approach to hijacking an insect's muscles.

To be able to control those steering neurons, the HHMI researchers found a way to make them sensitive to light by incorporating genes naturally found in eyes. With those genes in place, the tools or the "optrodes" in the backpack will be able to guide the insects using pulses of light. In an interview with IEEE Spectrum, the program's lead researcher, Jesse J. Wheeler, said his team already created the first-generation version of the system, though it sounds like they haven't been able to test it yet. He said:

"In the first year of the project, we focused on developing core enabling technologies like the backpack, optrode, and synthetic biology toolkit for the dragonfly. As we begin our second year, we are preparing to equip dragonflies with our first-generation backpacks in a motion capture room that can monitor their precise flight movements as data is captured from navigation system. This will allow us to develop precise onboard tracking algorithms for autonomous navigation."

If the technique ends up viable for practical use, it could turn dragonflies into tiny surveillance systems or pollination machines. Since the key to the technology is the backpack, though, Draper believes it could also be used with honeybees and other insects of the same size.

Pentagon Pursues "LOCUST" Drone Swarm Technology - Precursor To Revelation 9?



The Pentagon continued its quest to unleash a 21st-century version of locusts on its adversaries this week after another successful test of drone swarm technology was completed using 103 Perdix micro-drones.

This large scale drone army is made possible by advancements in artificial intelligence, which allows groups of robots to act together to demonstrate advanced swarm behaviors such as collective decision-making, adaptive formation flying and self-healing.

"Perdix are not pre-programmed synchronized individuals, they are a collective organism, sharing one distributed brain for decision-making and adapting to each other like swarms in nature," said William Roper, director of the Pentagon's Strategic Capabilities Office.

"Because every Perdix communicates and collaborates with every other Perdix, the swarm has no leader and can gracefully adapt to drones entering or exiting the team."

Such drone swarms could change the face of modern warfare and some prophecy watchers find both the technology and name of the US Naval program behind it perhaps more than coincidence.

A few months ago the US navy also demonstrated its Low-Cost UAV Swarming Technology (LOCUST) program by putting 30 drones flying together in perfect formation.

These drones are launched from a special tube in less than a minute to create a vicious swarm designed to overwhelm an adversary autonomously.

What makes the swarm unique is that any hostile aircraft, manned or unmanned, can be brought down by a single missile, but a swarm can take multiple hits and keep going.

The drones are self-reconfiguring so that if one drone gets taken out, the others autonomously change their behavior to complete the mission.

Several test simulations by the Navy have shown that drone swarms are consistently able to get past ship defenses that are geared towards shooting down single planes.

This weakness means it makes sense to attack an enemy ship with a large number of cheap drones rather than one missile costing the same. Ironically, the best counter to drone swarm attacks being studied is a defensive drone swarm that can intercept the offensive ones.

The aim is to have thirty or more drones flying together without having to be individually controlled, maintaining separation safely like a flock of birds. They are different from any other drone in that the operator does not control an individual aircraft, but pilots the whole swarm as a single unit.

With manned aircraft and ships, the pilot's life counts for a lot; but swarming drones are expendable and high "casualties" do not matter as much. This is a very different world to the dogfights that, historically, have made up modern warfare and could drastically alter the course of air warfare forever.

Experts predict that as drone swarm techniques are perfected they will expand both in number and use. The Office of Naval Research has already experimented with a swarming configuration of 13 robotic boats on Virginia's James River. The boats were able to perform a variety of tasks to protect a high-value ship from incoming craft.

Some prophecy watchers find it interesting that the Bible describes "locust" type creatures that play a significant role in end-time conflict. Revelation 9 describes them this way:

"The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were something like crowns of gold, and their faces were like faces of men. They had hair like the hair of women, and their teeth were like the teeth of lions. They had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running to battle. They had tails like scorpions and stings in their tails. Their power was to hurt men for five months. They had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek his name is Apollyon." (Revelation 9:7-11).

What on earth was the Apostle John talking about? Exactly what kind of locusts did he witness on the Isle of Patmos where he received these prophetic revelations?

The traditional interpretation is that these locusts could be evil entities and/or demonic physical or spiritual beings that will rise up out of the bottomless pit (abyss) to torment people and assume the characteristics of locusts, some even feel CERN experiments could be responsible for such an occurrence.

Others speculate they may be some form of grotesque variation of natural locusts as we know them today (perhaps even some form of chimeras or other DNA manipulation that scientists are now moving ahead with), or did John the Apostle perhaps see some advanced military aerial machinery that he lacked the words to describe?

The revelations were given to him about 2,000 years ago when there would have been no way for him properly to describe 21st-century technological inventions that would follow many centuries later. Is it possible John was describing some type of technology in our day similar to the LOCUST program?

Until recently, the most common technological correlation was that of helicopter gunships but, as insect looking drones and swarm technology become more common, this may present an interesting possible explanation and the name of the program being called "LOCUST" could not be more ironic.

Either way, Revelation 9 suggests a time of immense pain and suffering that no one will want to experience, regardless of what final form it takes.

IMAGE:

<http://www.prophecynewswatch.com/images/recent/droneswarmaug232016.jpg>

BY PNW STAFF JANUARY 25, 2017

Is China the new world power? The view from Davos

Anna Bruce-Lockhart Editor, World Economic Forum January 20, 2017

This article is part of the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2017

As America and parts of Europe contemplate protectionism, and globalization and free trade come under threat, can China emerge as a leader in the new world order?

Let's look at the evidence. With a population of 1.3 billion, China recently became the world's second-largest economy. It contributed 39% to world growth in 2016, according to the IMF, and its influence in the global economy is growing. President Xi Jinping's participation at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting this week was the first time a Chinese president had ever attended Davos and has been viewed as a signal of his growing engagement with world affairs.

In his opening address, Xi told a packed conference hall that the Chinese were "leaders of our times". He said his country was ready to make globalization work for everyone, and not just the few. "The people of all countries expect nothing less from us, and this is our unshirkable responsibility as leaders of our times," he said.

Xi also emerged as a global voice on free trade. Speaking only two months after US President Donald Trump announced plans to ditch the Trans-Pacific Partnership, Xi called for nations to reject the protectionism threatening multilateral trade agreements and embrace the win-win potential of interconnected growth.

"We should commit ourselves to growing an open global economy," he said. "No one will emerge as the winner in a trade war."

There's really nothing to fear in Chinese expansion, says business magnate Jack Ma, also speaking at Davos this week. In fact, China's rise should be seen as a potential benefit to both sides of the Atlantic, offering the US the opportunity to export goods to the increasingly stable economy. Ma is the founder of Alibaba Group, the Chinese e-commerce phenomenon now considered to be the world's largest retailer, surpassing Wal-Mart last year.

But it's not only China's political and economic clout that is in the ascendant: its clean energy sector is growing too. In his Davos address, Xi urged countries to stick to their emissions targets and honour international contracts such as the Paris climate deal.

This is no empty rhetoric: China has made striking progress in green energy over the past decade, investing over \$100 billion in renewable sources, an increase from \$3 billion just over 10 years ago.

As America's status as the world's foremost economic power hangs in the balance, does the world stand ready to embrace China's rising star?

In an increasingly multipolar world, the answer is not clear-cut, the economist Nouriel Roubini told an audience at Davos.

"China is not the global leader, it's one of the rising great powers in the world."

Davos 2017: In A Cloud World, The World Economic Forum Warns Of Social Unrest If Gov'ts Fail To Employ Technology With Humans In Mind

By João Marques Lima PUBLISHED: 12:12, 16 January, 2017

The world's political, technology, academic and economics elite is this week descending to Davos in Switzerland for the 47th edition of the World Economic Forum (WEF).

Cloud, automation and job losses. These three topics have over the last few years gained more importance as the first mass-dismissal of workers start taking place all over the world.

Of the many hot off the press topics around geo-political and economic themes affecting the world, the event will focus on technology, mainly how the world can shape up to meet the demands of a digitalised society, especially around automation and the above-mentioned job losses including also the need for ever stronger cyber security methodologies in the cloud economy.

The kick-off is on January 17 and the hundreds of attendees, including Prime Ministers, Presidents, CEOs, technology moguls such as Bill Gates and many more, will be reaching the Swiss Alps with a warning from the WEF: nations should be aware of the rapid development of technologies which could lead to destabilising effects in economic growth which in its turn could spark social unrest.

In "The Inclusive Growth and Development Report", the WEF asks: "As technological disruption accelerates in the Fourth Industrial Revolution, how can societies organise themselves better to respond to the potential employment and other distributional effects?"

This will be the motto for 2017's edition. The report highlights the decline of labour shares, which have been partially caused by the adoption of labour-saving technology in addition to globalisation of trade, pressure from financial markets to increase dividends, decline in workers' bargaining power, and weakening of labour market institutions.

However, the report also says that "while digitisation in particular will continue to create enormous challenges for employment in many industries and countries, it also has the potential to create extensive opportunities for new entrepreneurs and small businesses by reducing barriers to entry and transaction costs as well as disintermediating and unbundling existing activities performed by larger organisations, including in international trade".

Cloud hailed as breakthrough, but caution is needed

In the report, the WEF also pays attention to cloud computing and hails the technology as a significant breakthrough.

"The world has entered an era of rapid transformation with amazing potential to not only serve business but also help address the most pressing issues of the day.

"At the heart of this revolution is cloud computing, where innovations are enabling the collection, storage, and analysis of data at breath-taking speed and scale.

"Such breakthroughs will surely help serve humankind, though society must remain conscious of technology's disruptive potential."

Yet, just as technology poses new questions to governments and society in general, the WEF highlights that one crucial question remains: how can society ensure that the benefits of the cloud are universally

accessible and equitably shared?

For the non-profit organisation, the situation calls for a broad-based approach by governments, coupled with shared responsibility and action by the private sector.

“To ensure technology benefits everyone, collaboration is needed to foster a cloud that is trusted, responsible, and inclusive. In other words, ‘a cloud for global good’,” it reads in the report.

The WEF mentions Microsoft’s approach to the development of the cloud economy and its partnership with governments, non-profits, and other organisations.

One example is in the area of affordable Internet access, where there is great disparity between developed and developing countries.

To help bridge this divide, Microsoft is utilising TV white spaces, the unused or underutilised spectrum frequencies, to support more than 20 affordable Internet-access projects in over 15 countries by the end of 2017.

Furthermore, the WEF says it is also important to ensure that people everywhere have access to educational opportunities that provide the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in a digital economy.

Taking on Microsoft once more, the organisation mentions Microsoft Philanthropies which is working with non-profits, schools, governments, and other businesses to improve the digital skills of people of all ages, and to make computer science education accessible to more young people around the world.

The WEF says: “Bringing the power of cloud computing to the non-profit organisations that are empowering others and addressing vital societal issues is a critical investment for the future.

“While these examples indicate significant steps forward in making the cloud more inclusive, the challenges and solutions are bigger than any one company can attempt.

“All stakeholders must work together to realise a technology revolution for all.”

Are human jobs really threatened by automation?

Despite the need for discussion around the topic of cloud automation used through the deployment of robots and artificial intelligent machines, recent reports show that automation and technology is in fact going to create more job opportunities, at least in the short term .

In a study named “The Skills Revolution” released ahead of Davos 2017, by workforce think tank Manpower Group, it has been found that most employees expect automation and the adjustment to digitisation to bring a net gain for employment.

Eighty-three percent of 18,000 employers surveyed in 43 countries said they intend to maintain or increase their headcount and upskill their people in the next two years.

Only 12% of employers plan to decrease headcount as a result of automation.

The study has found that headcounts are expected to decrease the most in countries like India (somewhere between a decrease of 20% to 30%).

Switzerland, Germany, Sweden, Romania, Belgium, Finland, France, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Slovakia

and Bulgaria are also posed to see a decrease of up to 9% in headcounts.

Italy, with an increase of 40%, is where digitalisation is expected to increase headcounts the most. Followed by Guatemala, Peru, Panama and Portugal with an average increase between 21% and 30%.

Other countries like the US, the US, South Africa, Canada, Australia, Poland and Japan are also tipped for an increase in jobs.

Almost three-quarters of the respondents said they are investing in internal training to keep skills up to date, 44% are recruiting additional skillsets rather than replacing and more than a third are easing the transformation by bringing in contractors or third parties to transfer expert skills to their own workforce.

Jonas Prising, chairman and CEO of ManpowerGroup, said: "Those with the right skills will increasingly call the shots, create opportunities and choose how, where and when they work. Those without will look to the future and not be able to see how their circumstances will improve.

"This polarisation of the population that is playing out in front of our eyes is no good for society or for business. We need aggressive workforce development to address the widening gap between the Haves and the Have Nots."

Prising called upon the "leaders" to be responsive and responsible as the industry cannot slow the rate of technological advance or globalisation, "but we can invest in employees' skills to increase the resilience of our people and organisations".

"Individuals also need to nurture their learnability: their desire and ability to learn new skills to stay relevant and remain employable."

Trump Executive Order Will Defund UN and All Agencies Recognizing Palestinian State

By Valerie Locke January 26, 2017 breakingisraelnews.com

"Hashem preserveth all them that love Him; but all the wicked will He destroy." Psalms 145:20 (The Israel Bible™)

President Donald Trump has signed an executive order halting all US funding to United Nations agencies which recognize the Palestinian Authority (PA) or Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as a full member, the New York Times reported on Wednesday. Other international bodies and programs which recognize the Palestinians will also be targeted.

The order, entitled "Auditing and Reducing U.S. Funding of International Organizations", will create a committee tasked with investigating U.S. aid to all international programs and determining if the organizations meet the criteria for defunding. The review process will result in either a drastic reduction or complete cutting of monies to agencies which violate that criteria.

Along with giving full membership to the PA or PLO, agencies will also be defunded for supporting reproductive rights or engaging in activities which violate international sanctions against Iran or North Korea.

The order also calls for withdrawing funding from any organization that "is controlled or substantially influenced by any state that sponsors terrorism."

The executive order is actually based on an existing U.S. statute which mandates that US funding must be withdrawn from any UN agencies which “accords the Palestine Liberation Organization the same standing as member states.”

That statute forced President Barack Obama to defund UNESCO in 2011 after it accepted the Palestinian Authority as a member.

Trump’s executive order calls for “at least a 40 percent overall decrease” in the total amount of aid which the U.S. gives to international organizations. If signed and enacted, the order would drastically slash the budgets of UN agencies, which rely on billions of dollars in U.S. aid annually. Making up 22 percent of its budget, the U.S.’s contributions to the UN far outstrip that of any other country.

The U.N.’s anti-Israel bias is well-documented, as is its noted sympathy to the Palestinian cause. Trump has denounced the international body’s targeting of Israel, warning after the U.N. condemned Israeli settlements in a resolution last month that “things will be different” after his inauguration.