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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

IRGC commander: Hizbullah more prepared than ever for massive attack on Israel

by WorldTribune Staff, March 16, 2017

Hizbullah is producing its own missiles in well-protected factories in Lebanon and has raised its level of preparedness for a massive attack on Israel, an Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) commander said.

Iran has opened factories in Lebanon to manufacture long-range missiles as well as other munitions and has recently passed ownership of the factories to Hizbullah, the commander, who opted to remain anonymous, told Kuwaiti daily Al-Jarida.

Hizbullah has missiles that can reach every part of Israel, an IRGC commander said. The IRGC official said that Iran’s decision to set up the factories in Lebanon was made due to “Israel’s [alleged destruction] of munition factories in Sudan, as well as the damage caused to munition sources from Syria.”

The manufacturing facilities were built some 50 meters deep and are protected by several defense systems to fend off Israel’s fighter jets in case of attack, the IRGC commander said.

The factories are able to manufacture surface-to-surface missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles and drones that carry anti-tank missiles, the commander said. The missiles have a range of over 500 kilometers (310 miles).

A special faculty facility was opened at Imam Hossein University, which is owned by the IRGC, where hundreds of Lebanese as well as foreign students are trained to manufacture rockets, the commander said.

Addressing Hizbullah’s repeated threat to launch rockets that could reach every part of Israel, the IRGC official quoted Iranian Defense Minister Hossein Dehghan who has recently claimed Hizbullah was now capable of manufacturing rockets that could target all of Israel, from the very north to the southern border with Egypt.

Hizbullah leader Hassan Nasrallah has declared the terror organization ready to launch an attack against Israel.

"I call on Israel not only to empty the ammonia tank in Haifa, but also to dismantle the nuclear reactor in Dimona. Our military capabilities will strike Israel and its settlements," he threatened as recently as February, the Jerusalem Post reported.

Syria And Israel - One Missile Away From Conflict

www.prophecynewswatch.com

MARCH 20, 2017

The firing of S-200 missiles by Syria at Israeli air force planes on Thursday night marked a significant escalation in the ongoing conflict between the two nations, who are technically still at war.

Over the past few years there has been several airstrikes carried out by Israel against targets in Syria, most believed to be related to weapons transfers to Hezbollah.

Both Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman have stated publicly that Israel will do whatever is necessary to prevent "game changing weapons" getting into the hands of this terrorist group.

Israel does not usually confirm or deny such attacks, but it was forced to do so this time by the circumstances of the incident, including the firing of the Arrow defense system.

The Arrow's first-ever operational interception was the result of Syria's air-defense forces launching a long-ranged S-200 missile in an attempt to shoot down Israeli planes. Syria's military has claimed it downed one of the Israeli planes and hit another, however Israel denies any of its planes were hit.

The loud explosion that many residents of the region heard as far away as Jerusalem was the interception by the Arrow 2 missile, which was forced to fire due to the long range missile endangering civilian populations.

The Syrian retaliatory missile launch occurred when IAF aircraft had already passed into Israeli airspace and had now become a direct threat to civilian populations.

Parts of the missile have been found in Jordan which also forced Israel to issue an official explanation for the event.

Many analysts believe the firing of the missile demonstrates a new confidence by Assad in the region after winning several key battles with rebels and ISIS, including the important city of Aleppo.

Perhaps even more important is the strategic backing of Russia which seems to guarantee his survival as Syria's continued leader.

With this being the most serious incident between the two countries in many years, the big question is what happens next time?

Arms shipments to Hezbollah are unlikely to stop and neither is Israel's response to what it says are "red lines" that can't be crossed.

Israeli Defence Minister Avigdor Lieberman may have already answered the question when he responded to the incident on Sunday threatening to destroy Syrian air defense systems should they fire on Israel again.

Israel Navy Official: Russia is Here to Stay in the Region

BYJPOST.COM STAFF MARCH 15, 2017

Israel Navy Chief of Staff Rear Admiral Dror Friedman tells Army Radio that the Russians appear to be setting down roots in the region.



An image grab taken from a video footage made available on the Russian Defence Ministry's official website on November 15, 2016, reportedly shows a jet taking off from the Admiral Kuznetsov aircraft carrier in the eastern Mediterranean off the Syrian coast during a strike against Islamic State (IS). (photo credit:HO / RUSSIAN DEFENCE MINISTRY / AFP)

The scope of Russia's military preparations in the region suggest that Moscow is planning to stay in Israel's neighborhood for the long term, Israel Navy Chief of Staff Rear Admiral Dror Friedman told Army Radio in an interview aired Wednesday.

"You see their activities in the field and you see them putting down roots, you see their activities in the Port of Tartus and you understand that this isn't the activity of someone who is planning to pack their bags and leave tomorrow morning," Friedman said of Russia's presence in Syria.

You can see this through the amount of weaponry, the equipment they are bringing, the bases they are building. You understand that they are thinking long term," he added.

Friedman said that the Russian military presence in Syria changes the way that the Navy operates in the area. "There have been instances in which we assessed the situation and changed or chose not to carry out operations," he said.

Friedman suggested that the Navy would not want a situation in which certain of its abilities were revealed to the Russians through its operations.

He said that the Russians stationing of the Admiral Kuznetsov aircraft carrier in the Mediterranean off the coast of Syria was also something that the Navy had to account for. "When such a force is stationed here, our behavior changes," Friedman said.

Syria Has Become a Torture Chamber, Says UN Human Rights Chief

REUTERS MARCH 14, 2017

The UN boss noted that the conflict, which has raged for six years, began when security officials detained and tortured a group of children.

Residents look for survivors at a damaged site after what activists said was a barrel bomb dropped by forces loyal to Syria's President Bashar Assad in Aleppo. (photo credit:REUTERS)



The top UN human rights official called on Tuesday for the release of tens of thousands of detainees held in Syria's prisons and said that bringing perpetrators of crimes including torture to court was vital for reaching a lasting peace.

"Today in a sense the entire country has become a torture-chamber; a place of savage horror and absolute injustice," UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussein told the UN Human Rights Council.

"Ensuring accountability, establishing the truth and providing reparations must happen if the Syrian people are ever to find reconciliation and peace. This cannot be negotiable," he told the Geneva forum at the start of a session on Syria.

He appealed to the warring sides to halt torture and executions and to free detainees or at least provide basic information: "names and localities of those in detention and the place of burial of those who have died".

The destruction in Sheikh Saeed area of Aleppo, aftermath of years of Syrian Civil War
Destruction remains in Sheikh Saeed area of Aleppo, aftermath of years of Syrian Civil War

He lamented the fact that efforts to end "this senseless carnage" had been repeatedly vetoed, an apparent reference to Russia and China's decisions to veto UN Security Council resolutions on several occasions since the war began.

Zeid noted that the conflict, which has raged for six years, began when security officials detained and tortured a group of children who had daubed anti-government graffiti on a school wall in Deraa.

The Time of Antichrist's Debut Advances :: By Matt Ward

Published on: March 19, 2017 Matt Ward

"The EU must strengthen its representation and defend its interests better. For this purpose France proposes the creation of a high level representative appointed by the Council for three to five years, who would provide Europe with a face and a voice." —Former French President Jacques Chirac, Liberation, 1996

The French view was and is that "all means" should be used to "strengthen that high representative." (Istituto Affari Internazionale, 1996; page 46)

Events today are moving at quite some pace. Almost twenty years ago I wrote a university thesis titled, "What are the prospects of the European Union developing a coherent Common Foreign and Security Policy into the new millennia?" It was indeed an eye-opener.

In that thesis I discussed the prospects of the European Union reaching such a point of political integration that it would develop a single, functional Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). I was examining the possibility that the EU might in the future develop a unified European army.

That was in 1999, and my conclusions could have been summed up succinctly in just four words: it will never happen.

At the time the reasons for this were complicated. First, it was inconceivable that Britain or France would allow their own soldiers to fight and die in a war fought entirely over an obscure piece of land that was totally unrelated to their own national interests. Yet that is what a unified European army may have meant.

As an example of this, consider Greece in 1999. Owing to its border problems with Turkey, Greece had asked the EU at that time to specifically guarantee its external national borders against Turkish aggression. As a part of this, Greece asked the EU for future mutual assistance (should Turkey at any point infringe its sovereign territory).

In 1999, the chances of the British government allowing its men and women to go to war with another sovereign nation like Turkey, essentially because of a dispute arising out of the ownership rights to a far flung, irrelevant and strategically unimportant Greek Island—were nil.

Equally unlikely in 1999, was the very real prospect under a unified European army, that Britain or especially France, would allow their forces to be led by a commanding officer from Germany; senior German officers commanding entire French army units and men.

Although membership of NATO at that time did inevitably mean devolved military leadership to other nations, with German officers commanding French troops. For example, the command and control structures of an EU army would have been fundamentally different in one key regard; within NATO, the UK and the USA were always in guaranteed overall leadership positions, which would not automatically be the case in a combined EU army.

Although at this time both countries are on very friendly terms, the memory of past wars between the two meant that German officers commanding French troops was unthinkable to France—or Britain in 1999. But that was in 1999, and that was before Brexit and Donald Trump.

The shock waves caused by Brexit on the European continent continue to be huge. Equally, the election of Donald Trump has had immense global ramifications, especially in Europe. The global dynamic has clearly shifted, leaving a whole new paradigm forming before our eyes; something that European leaders are keenly aware of.

Brexit and Donald Trump's election success is provoking enormous and rapid prophetic development. I think it no over exaggeration to say that the changes sparked by Brexit and then by Trump's assumption to high office are currently setting the stage for the emergence of the Antichrist himself. I believe the two events are that significant.

In 1996, at a European Intergovernmental Conference held specifically to address the subject of integrating European foreign policy, all member states present agreed to the creation of a new role within the upper leadership apparatus of the EU— a Mr. or Ms. CFSP. A man or woman who alone would be responsible for the foreign and security policies of the European Union. This individual would hold in his or her hands the combined might of Europe's unified future defense structures. [1]

This man or woman would wield immense power. France, at the time along with other core EU nations, clearly and publically urged the creation of such a post. Britain, however, vehemently opposed it, jealous to guard its own foreign policy and military sovereignty.

So although the post of a leader of the CFSP, that singular individual in whom all foreign policy and, upon the creation of an EU army, military power would also rest was passed, it was also quietly shelved. Until now.

When Britain voted to leave the European Union in Brexit and Donald Trump assumed the presidency of the United States of America, everything started to change. Now, in 2017, alliances are being tested within Europe and core perceptions about U.S. and British security commitments to the EU are being challenged in a way we have never seen before.

The Europeans are rattled. Brexit has served only to exacerbate this and played on the whispered fears most European leaders have that they are going to be left all alone to fend for themselves militarily. Many leaders in Europe, though they would scarcely admit it publically, fear for the future viability of NATO, especially under Donald Trump. [2]

Although there has traditionally been a reluctance on the part of EU member states to engage in the types of deep integration required by a common foreign and security policy, and especially that required by a European army—that is now changing. Brexit and Donald Trump, as well as the mass migration into Europe which is breaking down and destroying the fabric which holds European society together, is forcing many EU member states to recognize the great benefits increased integration will bring them.

The perceived diminishment of NATO as a security guarantor for Europe against the ever present Russian threat has only exacerbated this. The calls for developing a European army are not whispered anymore, they are being shouted from the rooftops. Jean-Claude Juncker, president of the European Commission tweeted from his official Twitter account on May 20th, 2014 the following:

“In the very long run, we will need a European army. Because we have to be credible when it comes to foreign policy #wahlarena #withJuncker.”

In the wake of Brexit and Donald Trump it would seem that “in the very long run,” actually means “now.”

Speaking to a German newspaper just a few days ago on March 8, 2017, Juncker said this to a reporter: “...the European Union needs its own army to face up to Russia and other threats, as well as to restore the Bloc’s standing around the world.” [3]

Again, on March 8th, Juncker went further this time as published in the German newspaper Welt am Sonntag: “A joint EU army would show the world that there would never again be a war between European countries. Such an army would also help us to form common foreign and security policies and allow Europe to take on responsibility in the world.”

Juncker believes that a common EU army would also serve as a deterrent to Russia. He stated:

With its own army, Europe could react more credibly to the threat to peace in a member state or neighboring state. One wouldn’t have a European army to deploy it immediately. But a common European army would convey a clear message to Russia that we are serious about defending our European values.” [4]

Critically, Juncker’s views are echoed by senior ministers in the German government. German Defense Minister Ursula von der Leyen, told German radio last week that, “Our future as Europeans will at some point be with a European army.”

This is a view backed up by increasing numbers within Germany, too. In an opinion poll conducted by Forsa for German news magazine Stern published, 49 percent of the more than 1,000 people surveyed said they were in favor of creating a European army while 46 percent were against it. [5]

This is according to German newspaper, Süddeutsche Zeitung: In the wake of the British referendum to leave the European Union, Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President François Hollande have

decided to demonstrate the EU's strength and to push the remaining member states to show more unity. Especially in defence policy, many projects were put on hold because Britain vetoed them. Without London, the two EU founding states, France and Germany, hope for swift decisions.

The EU already has battle groups, manned on a rotational basis, which are meant to be available as a rapid reaction force, it would seem that these are no longer enough. The main players in the EU want an army, and they want that army to be equipped with more than conventional weapons too. They want nuclear weapons.

For decades, the final line of defense for Europe against possible Russian aggression has been provided by the American nuclear arsenal. But since Donald Trump's election as the 45th president of the United States, officials in Berlin and Brussels are no longer certain that Washington will continue to hold a protective hand over Europe.

An essay in the November issue of Foreign Affairs argues that if Trump seriously questions the American guarantees, Berlin will have to consider establishing a European nuclear deterrent on the basis of the French and British capabilities.

Their final strategic aim seems to be nothing short of the full weaponization of the European Union. To this end, Roderich Kiesewetter, a foreign-policy expert in the Christian Democratic Union—the party of Chancellor Angela Merkel and a high-ranking member of the Bundestag, has now openly expressed what many leaders in Germany and Europe are privately thinking:

“...if the United States no longer wants to provide this [nuclear] guarantee, Europe still needs nuclear protection for deterrent purposes. Europe must start planning for its own security in case the Americans sharply raise the cost of defending the continent, or if they decide to leave completely.” [6]

All this has dramatic implications for end time Bible prophecy. Many Bible prophecy experts believe that the Antichrist will one day soon emerge from within Europe. I agree with them. Europe will be the Antichrist's initial seat of power and his primary power base. The great paradox though is that the EU's economic might is in no way matched by its military capabilities. The EU is militarily impotent.

This presents us with an eschatological problem. If the Antichrist, this final world dictator, rises from within Europe, and uses this European base to project himself upon the world stage, in the process subduing other nations as the Bible predicts, this cannot happen as Europe exists today. That military powerbase does not yet exist.

But Brexit, Donald Trump and mass European migration is provoking huge change in Europe, resulting in the rapid formation of completely new power structures within the EU, ones which will come sharply into focus during the Tribulation period itself.

The European military powerbase which it seems the Bible predicts the Antichrist will rise from, is forming before our eyes right now. The will now exists for the creation of a European army, and the momentum is growing. The individual leadership position of a Mr. or Ms. CFSP is being brought down off the shelf and prepared for one very special individual, in whom will rest vast political, foreign policy and military power.

As Jacques Chirac said in 1996, one unique individual “...who would provide Europe with a face and a voice?”

European People's Party (EPP) president Joseph Daul sums up the situation best in his comments reported by London's Express newspaper, “We are going to move towards an EU army much faster

than people believe.” [7]

With this power, this man will embark on extraordinary conquest, so brutal that Daniel speaks plainly of its aftermath, “He shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people” (Daniel 8:24).

Everything before him will be swept away, so that ultimately—all the world will proclaim, “Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?” (Rev. 13:4).

He will literally “shake kingdoms” and “make the earth to tremble” (Isaiah 14:16).

Daniel says in Dan.12:8-13 that the prophetic “...words are sealed until the end of time.”

Many people, including myself, now believe these “words” are being progressively and rapidly unsealed, meaning that with each passing day and month the revealing of the Antichrist, and the mechanics of how this will occur, are becoming increasingly clear to all who are waiting and watching.

“And do this, understanding the present time: The hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed” (Romans 13:11).

[1] Foreign and Security Policy in the European Union, edited by Kjell A Eliassen

[2]

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/feb/18/trump-pence-eu-nato-munich-conference-germany-britain>

[3]

<http://www.euractiv.com/section/global-europe/news/meps-call-eu-countries-to-boost-defence-cooperation-in-times-of-external-crises/>

[4] <https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/8935/european-army>

[5] <http://uk.reuters.com/article/eu-defence-germany-poll-idUKKBN0ME0SS20150318>

[6] <http://carnegieendowment.org/2016/12/06/sudden-german-nuke-flirtation-pub-66366>

[7] <http://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/612710/European-leaders-EU-ARMY-close-to-reality-Juncker>