

Newsbytes

The First Watch

Sept 13, 2017

No. 839

Since 2001

Newzbytes is a ministry of Calvary Chapel of Appleton

www.ccapleton.org

“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

Israel Has a Playbook for Dealing With North Korea

Saddam and Assad both tried to build the ultimate threat. The Israelis made sure it didn't happen.

By Zev Chafets

September 7, 2017, 9:41 AM PDT

Saddam's nuclear dream ended in ashes.

Israel and North Korea are on opposite sides of the Asian landmass, separated by 5,000 miles as the ICBM flies. But Israelis feels close to the nuclear standoff between Washington and Pyongyang. They have faced this sort of crisis before, and may again.

Some history: In the mid-1970s, it became clear to Israel that Iraq's Saddam Hussein was working on acquiring nuclear weapons and missiles to deliver them. Saddam had already demonstrated an uninhibited brutality in dealing with his internal enemies and his neighbors. He aspired to be the leader of the Arab world. Defeating Israel was at the top of his to-do list.

After coming to office in 1977, Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin tried to convince the U.S. and Europe that Saddam was a clear and present danger to the Jewish state, and that action had to be taken. Begin was not taken seriously.

But Begin was serious, and in 1981 he decided that Israel would have to stop the Iraqi dictator all by itself. His political opponents, led by the estimable Shimon Peres, considered this to be dangerous folly. Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan, the legendary former military chief of staff, voted against unilateral action on the grounds that it would hurt Israel's international standing. Defense Minister Ezer Weizmann, the former head of the air force (and Dayan's brother-in-law) was also against a military option. He thought the mission would be unacceptably risky.

Begin had no military expertise. But his family had been wiped out in the Holocaust. He looked at Saddam, who was openly threatening Israel, and saw Hitler. To Begin, sitting around hoping for the best was not a strategy; it was an invitation to aggression. If there was going to be a cost -- political, diplomatic, military -- better to pay before, not after, the Iraqis had the bomb.

In the summer of 1981, Begin gave the order. The Israeli air force destroyed the Osirak reactor. The United Nations Security Council condemned the attack. The Europeans went bonkers. The New York Times called it “inexcusable.” But the Israeli prime minister wasn't looking to be excused by the Times or the Europeans or even the usually friendly Ronald Reagan administration. He enunciated a simple

rationale that would come to be known as the Begin Doctrine: Israel will not allow its avowed enemies to obtain the means of its destruction.

The wisdom of this doctrine became clear a decade later, during the Gulf War, when Saddam Hussein made good on his threat to fire Russian-made SCUD missiles at Israeli cities. The SCUDs landed, and caused some damage and a fair amount of panic, but they were not armed with unconventional warheads. Israel had taken that option off the table.

Similarly, in 2007, Israel confirmed what it had suspected for five years: Syria, with North Korean help, was trying to build a nuclear reactor. Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, a Begin disciple, sent Mossad chief Meir Dagan to Washington, to ask for American intervention. The CIA chief, Michael Hayden, agreed with Israel's contention that Damascus (with Iranian financing) was constructing the reactor. But Hayden convinced President George W. Bush that bombing the site would result in all-out war, and who wants that?

Acting on its own, Israel destroyed the Syrian site (reportedly killing a group of North Korean experts in the process). Hayden was wrong about how Syria would react, as he later admitted. If Israel had been reasonable and listened to the CIA, Bashar al-Assad would have nuclear weapons right now.

A few years later, Prime Minister Netanyahu and Defense Minister Ehud Barak spent billions of dollars preparing and training to take out the Iranian nuclear program. Barak, not a member of Netanyahu's right-wing Likud Party, explained: "There are instances where it appears it is not necessary to attack now, but you know that you won't be able to attack later." In such cases, he said, the "consequences of inaction are grave, and you have to act."

Israel was prevented from kinetic action by the Barack Obama administration, which along with five other powers cut a deal with Iran in 2015 -- over Israel's vociferous objections. Netanyahu warned that the deal was full of loopholes; it would allow Iran to hide its nuclear program and continue building new means of delivery. This was confirmed in 2016 when Iran tested a new missile. "The reason we designed our missiles with a range of 2000 kilometers," said Iranian Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh, "is to be able to hit our enemy the Zionist regime from a safe distance."

Since then, Iran has stepped up its aggressive enmity toward the Zionist Entity. It has not only continued its nuclear cooperation with North Korea, it has also copied Pyongyang's tactic of creating a huge artillery threat against civilian populations (through its proxy force Hezbollah in Lebanon and now Syria). This conventional threat to Seoul is what has convinced a great many American commentators that any attack on North Korea would lead to an "unthinkable" number of casualties.

Ruling out harsh thoughts is a luxury Israel doesn't have. It has installed an efficient missile defense system (something not beyond the means of the South Koreans and the U.S.). It is also training to neutralize the threat of a bombardment. The IDF is currently conducting its biggest military exercise in 19 years. The announced goal is to prepare for war with Hezbollah. Israel does not intend to allow itself to be held hostage by an Iranian threat to its civilian population, or to have its hands tied by the theory of unthinkability.

This week, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jerusalem published a condemnation of North Korea: "Only a determined international response will prevent other states from behaving in the same way." Clearly, "other states" was a reference to Iran. It was also a message to the U.S.

Israel, by long experience, knows there is no such thing as an "international" community when it comes to security. What is happening now in East Asia is an American production. The Donald Trump administration has been very clear, not to say belligerent, in demanding that North Korea forgo its

nuclear weapons and ambitions.

This was also the policy of previous American administrations -- but Presidents Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Obama didn't really mean it. They let things slide, drew imaginary lines, held talks that went no place and hoped for the best.

The best didn't happen. It almost never does. North Korea is now truly dangerous -- unlike Iraq and Syria, it already has nuclear weapons -- and it won't get less so as time goes on. Trump has said this in no uncertain terms. But so far it is just words. The president may mean it. He also may not. Perhaps he will come to regret tangling with Kim. Maybe he will see it as a beginner's mistake. He may be tempted to reverse course and try to save face with make-believe sanctions, empty United Nations resolutions or fruitless negotiations. I'm not judging him. I haven't been in his shoes, and I wouldn't want to be.

But if the American president does back down, if Kim Jong Un stays in power, keeps his nuclear warheads and ballistic weapons, and gets away with threatening the U.S. and its allies with nuclear destruction, every friend and foe of Washington will be revisiting its strategic playbook. For Israel, so far away from Korea yet so close to Iranian aggression, that book begins with the Begin Doctrine.

And now, under-the-skin RFID tags replace paper train tickets in Europe

Privacy News Online

The Swedish State Railways has decided to accept under-the-skin RFID tag implants for ticket purchases, arguing it enhances ticketless travel better than having your ticket in your mobile. Actually, they didn't argue that at all. They just said "we're digital" and "it works" as if that would justify the rest.

Sweden is a European state which, until recently, celebrated the fact that people were able to travel between European and Nordic countries without a passport or other identification papers. Since a few years back, the governmental train company, which operates with all the efficiency of one, changed all that on its own — by requiring photo ID to take the train just to the next city. The official reason for going all papieren, bitte on people just going to the next town was to "prevent the second-hand sale of attractive tickets".

This company — the Swedish State Railways — has an insanely bad reputation in the country, known for never arriving on time and for mediocre service. To paint a picture of the service level, the company offers some compensation if passengers get more than an hour delayed with a local train (within the European state of Sweden).

This is the company now priding itself on "being digital" and announcing an extremely privacy-invasive method for travel. It may well be that it's more convenient. That's obviously not where the cause for concern is.

"We will never force somebody to have a chip implanted", says Stephan Ray, press spokesperson for the State Railways. I wish I could believe this — for this has been the standard line every single time a new privacy invasion has been presented. And there's a catch which sounds all too familiar:

"We don't rule out giving special advantages to travelers with under-the-skin RFID chips," Ray adds.

At what point does this translate to putting ridiculous burden on people without under-skin RFID tags, even if it will technically not require them to implant? That's usually a few years before the option is

taken away altogether, judging from history.

As a final note, the article from the Stockholm local paper also notes that the local buses, trams, and subways are also seeking to start using passenger under-skin-RFID-tags for travel. Yes, you read that right: people in Sweden are seriously considering under-skin RFID tags to be a nice, cozy form of bus and subway ticket.

Fortunately, this is not something that would go over well in other European states. If I were to describe the Swedish attitude to this in a few words, I would choose “trusting and naïve”. This is in stark contrast to other states — say, Germany — which take privacy extremely seriously: Berlin’s ticket vending machines to the local public transport sell paper tickets for cash, and it would be inconceivable to remove that option, as was done a long time ago in Sweden (where you can instead buy identified tickets to your identified phone using an identified credit card).

As a final note, the image to this article shows animal tags. That’s because it’s the technology used. “Tagged like an animal” is quite literal. There’s also the concern of malware infecting such chips, which has been proven possible – and with RFID technology, the malware could spread quickly.

Putin Predicts Coming Prince

terryjamesprophecyline.com

One would almost think that Russian President Vladimir Putin has been pouring over prophetic Scripture in the Bible. He has predicted that the entity that becomes the ultimate leader in Artificial Intelligence (AI) will rule planet earth. His is a most interesting prognostication. Here’s an excerpt from the news item laying out ol’ Vlad’s foretelling.

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian President Vladimir Putin says that whoever reaches a breakthrough in developing artificial intelligence will come to dominate the world.

Putin, speaking Friday at a meeting with students, said the development of AI raises “colossal opportunities and threats that are difficult to predict now.” (Source: Putin: Leader in Artificial Intelligence Will Rule World, Houston Chronicle, 9/2/2017)

The former KGB operative turned dictator/oligarch of the nucleus of what was the Soviet Union before perestroika, glasnost, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and finally the dissolution of the U.S.S.R., said further that “the one who becomes the leader in this sphere will be the ruler of the world.”

The Russian warned that “it would be strongly undesirable if someone wins a monopolist position.” He pledged that Russia would share its know-how in artificial intelligence with other nations.

Putin predicted that drones will fight future wars. He said, “When one party’s drones are destroyed by drones of another, it will have no other choice but to surrender.”

The Putin prediction would be amusing, if not so much on the eerie side—kind of like Gog of Ezekiel 38–39 “prophesying” the emergence of the prince that shall come of Daniel 9:26–27.

We have mentioned numerous times that Vladimir Putin displays characteristics that the future leader of the Gog-Magog attack will possess, according to the prophet Ezekiel. Putin, here, is delving into perhaps not the characteristics of Antichrist, but certainly into the technological realm Revelation

seems to indicate that future fuhrer will have at his disposal.

The Russian says that the leader in such advanced technology will eventually rule the world. To be sure, Antichrist is prophesied to rule over most of the world at a point during the seven-year Tribulation era. His rule will be brief and chaotic, but it will be brutal and, according to Jesus Himself, will bring a time upon the people of the planet worse than any before or after.

Artificial Intelligence will mark his despotic control. He will, through the most advanced computer (AI) technology, do the following:

And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. (Revelation 13:16–17)

But AI is, perhaps, prophesied to go much deeper than Antichrist's 666 computer controls. Some would say there will come a destructive military force that appears to be completely robotic, commanded through AI to assault Jerusalem during that time known as the Day of the Lord. It is a terrifying description of a superhuman—or perhaps hybrid or robotic—force destined to rattle the city and ravish its women, according to prophecy.

AI is a hot topic, causing an uproar even among some of the well-known leaders in its development.

SpaceX and Tesla CEO Elon Musk got into a spat recently on Twitter with Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg over the dangers of artificial intelligence.

Musk urged a group of governors to proactively regulate AI, which he views as a "fundamental risk to the existence of human civilization."

"Until people see robots going down the street killing people, they don't know how to react because it seems so ethereal," Musk said.

Zuckerberg shot back, saying fearmongering about AI is "irresponsible." (Source: "Humanlike Robots Provoke Questions about our Humanity," Rosalie Chan, Religion News Service)

Many scientists and futurists are declaring that from some point in the near future, major wars will be waged by beings of intelligence superior to that of mere mortals. However, Bible prophecy tells that, ultimately, it is human blood that will flow to the bridle reins following the fighting at Armageddon. It is the corpses of millions of human beings that will have to be buried following the battle of Gog and Magog.

Israel Could be Forced to Preempt Hezbollah Threat, Rivlin Warns Merkel

by TheTower.org

Israeli President Reuven Rivlin in a meeting with German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Thursday warned that Israel might be forced to take preemptive action against Hezbollah to take out the terrorist organization's weapons arsenal.

Rivlin made the remarks after Israeli warplanes struck one of the Syrian regime's key missile and chemical weapons factories at Masyaf base in Hama province, in an attempt to prevent Hezbollah from

taking over the facility, The Jerusalem Post reported. The plant oversees advanced missile production and remaining stockpiles of chemical weapons, including nerve gas.

Security concerns dominated the discussion between the two leaders in Berlin, as Rivlin stressed the danger posed by Iran's entrenchment in Syria and the consolidation of Iranian power throughout the Middle East with the help of proxy forces.

Rivlin addressed Hezbollah's complete control of Lebanon and the devastating impact on the civilian population, as well as the group's violations of UN Security Council resolutions, a concern that was echoed in recent weeks by U.S. Ambassador Nikki Haley. Constant bombardment of Israel by Hezbollah, Rivlin explained to Merkel, leaves his country with no option but to respond in kind.

Rivlin also discussed with Merkel Israel's humanitarian operation to ease the suffering of the Syrian civil war. Last week, Haaretz revealed that Israel and donors to the country spent at least \$32 million on goods for Syria this year and treated over 3,000 Syrian civilians.

The two leaders further spoke about the global terrorist threat and Israel's commitment to confront the menace together with its partners. Israel, in the past, has trained allied countries in urban warfare and counter-terrorism techniques.

During the meeting, Rivlin also thanked Merkel for Germany's unwavering commitment to Israel's security and the sale of submarines, a vital component to confront Iranian aggression from the air, on land, and at sea.

Concluding the meeting, the two leaders voiced their mutual desire to bring the two countries even closer together in the future.