

Newsbytes

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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

France is New Boss of Europe as ‘Strongman’ Macron Steps into Merkel’s Power Vacuum

FRANCE’S President Emmanuel Macron is poised to become the “strongman” of Europe stepping into the European – and EU - power vacuum resulting from the resignation of German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

By ROMINA MCGUINNESS



French Conservative Senator Jean Bizet claimed Macron had to step-up but warned the new unofficial role would be “very difficult” for Mr Macron.

Mrs Merkel’s decision to quit politics after her current term as Chancellor ends in 2021 sent shockwaves across Europe and the world yesterday.

Sen Bizet said: “Germany has been the strongman of Europe for many years but today it has become the weak man, if I may say so.

Emmanuel Macron wants to be the strongman of Europe (Image: Getty)

“Everything rests – and will rest more and more – on president Macron’s shoulders. It will be very difficult for him.”

Emmanuel Macron is poised to take over from Angela Merkel as the leader of Europe (Image: Getty)

Mr Bizet, the chairman of the senate’s committee for European affairs, told the TV channel Public Sénat the German leader’s decision to not seek a fifth term as chancellor was “a great disappointment but sadly an expected disappointment.”

He added: “It’s bad news for the coalition, bad news for Germany, bad news for France but also bad news for Europe”.

Mrs Merkel, 64, announced her decision to retire in 2021 and also step down as leader of the Christian Democrats (CDU) after her party on Sunday suffered its second regional election setback in as many

weeks.

The CDU and its Social Democrat coalition partners suffered heavy losses in the weekend's regional election in the large central state of Hesse, home to the financial capital Frankfurt.

While Mrs Merkel has dominated European politics since 2005, helping guide the Brussels bloc through the eurozone crisis, her decision in 2015 to open Germany's doors to more than one million migrants fleeing war in the Middle East caused deep divisions within the EU and weakened her support.

Mr Bizet said: "Big European issues cannot be solved alone. But in this case, Angela Merkel did not consult with her European partners before making a unilateral decision that completely upset the European Union's social balance."

He added that mass immigration "weakens the single market".

But while Mr Macron is thought to be plotting for France to take over from Germany as Europe's engine, he was effusive in his praise of Mrs Merkel when commenting on her looming retirement later on Monday.

The 40-year-old centrist hailed his allies "very respectable" and "dignified" decision to not run again after the end of her term, as he paid tribute to her ability to face financial and migrant crises in recent years without forgetting Europe's fundamental values.

"She leads her country with much courage," he told a news conference in Paris.

Palestinians escalate their diplomatic warfare against Israel, risking their own destruction in the process

United with Israel Staff

The Palestinian Central Council (PCC), which met in Ramallah over two days, decided on Monday to end all commitments in the agreements the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) has signed with Israel, to end security coordination and to revoke the Paris Economic Protocols which govern the economic cooperation with Israel.

Such moves mean the end of all peace protocols with Israel and the complete collapse of the Palestinian Authority (PA).

The PCC alleged that "in view of Israel's continued denial of the signed agreements," it again recommends eliminating all of the PLO and PA's commitments under their agreements with Israel, as well as suspending their recognition of the state of Israel until it recognizes the non-existent state of Palestine on the June 1967 borders with the eastern portion of Jerusalem as its capital.

By way of background, "Palestine" never existed within the 1967 "borders," which are in reality boundaries. Jordan occupied these areas for 19 years prior to their liberation by the IDF in the 1967 Six Day War.

Security cooperation with Israel, largely aimed at protecting Abbas from his rivals in the Hamas terror group, is unpopular among Palestinians but has survived repeated crises and years of deadlock in talks with Israel, as it is first and foremost in Abbas' interest.

Abbas' unelected government would likely collapse if he cuts ties with Israel.

The PCC gave the power to PA head Mahmoud Abbas, who chaired the PCC meetings, and the PLO's executive committee to implement these decisions, and Abbas has the final say on such drastic moves.

No to Israel, No to the US

The PCC also expressed support for Abbas' opposition on the US' as-yet unreleased peace plan, accusing the US of "siding with the Israeli occupation" and of being "part of the problem and not part of the solution."

The Palestinians reject any notion of a US-brokered diplomatic solution and have boycotted Washington since December 2017, when President Donald Trump announced official US recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

Since then, the Palestinians have escalated their rhetoric and actions against the US.

Abbas has also blamed Hamas for failing to implement the reconciliation agreements signed with his Fatah party over the years, which would have brought an end to bitter and bloody internal Palestinian enmity.

The PLO also stressed the Palestinians "right to resistance by all means as per international law," which represents a call to arms for intents and purposes.

Together 2018 – "A New Jesus Movement" for a Mystical All-Inclusive "Christianity"

October 16, 2018 by Lighthouse Trails Editors

Nick Hall's Together event is back again (October 20-21), this year as Together 2018 at the Texas Motor Speedway in Fort Worth, Texas (which can hold around 1/2 million people). On the event's Facebook page, it reads:

Love Matt Chandler? See him and many more for free on October 20-21 as we bring the nation together for an event that we believe will spark another Jesus movement!! Join us for this FREE EVENT at Texas Motor Speedway in Dallas-Fort Worth as we #MoveCloser to Jesus and the world around us! Visit togethergeneration.com to learn more!

On the promotional video (near the 26-second mark) on the Facebook page, it calls this effort "a new Jesus movement" (obviously referring to the Jesus movement of the 1970s). On the promotional video below, it lists the line up of speakers and musicians which includes a conglomeration of popular evangelical and charismatic celebrities including Bethel Music from Bill Johnson's extreme charismatic, contemplative Bethel Church, Jesus Culture (an offshoot of Bethel Church), Hillsong, Francis Chan (who recently said God was going to kill those who criticize Christian leaders), Priscilla Shirer (a long-time strong advocate for contemplative prayer), her father Tony Evans, Ravi Zacharias (who will share a platform with "anyone" in order to share "his" message), and Loren Cunningham (founder of YWAM, which recently announced it wanted "all" YWAMers to practice contemplative prayer).

According to an article on RNS announcing Together 2018, the "aim [is] to promote unity and lift up the name of Jesus":

"In an age defined by division that often labels us as those who are for and against politics, issues and each other—Jesus invites all of us to move closer," said Nick Hall, PULSE founder and evangelist. "He alone offers the hope and leadership we desperately need and Together is about calling people from all backgrounds to move closer to Jesus and the world around us."

The last Together event took place in 2016. Lighthouse Trails wrote about it in our article titled "DRESS

REHEARSAL FOR A FALSE REVIVAL? – Evangelical, Charismatic, Emerging Leaders, & Pope Francis Unite for “Together 2016” in Washington, DC.”

The basic premise of this and other similar events happening throughout evangelical/charismatic Christianity today is: The only way the world is going to see Jesus is if all things and every person identifying as “Christian” unify regardless of doctrine or beliefs. In fact, doctrine stands in the way of unity and must be laid to the sidelines. This is how Nick Hall was able to include the Pope in Together 2016. That is the only way to have this all-inclusive mass unity take place. Catholic mystic Thomas Merton explained how this could happen. During a conversation with a Sufi (Islamic mystic) teacher, Merton acknowledged that unity and fellowship could never happen if doctrine (such as the Cross, he said) was given precedence. Merton said the only way interspiritual unity could take place is through mysticism.¹ Tony Campolo, in his book *Speaking My Mind*, said the same thing. When you consider that a large number of the celebrities speaking or singing at Together 2018 are contemplative mysticism advocates, it is easy to see that the underlying current for this event will draw from the same fountain from which Merton drew.

While doctrine is not equivalent to “faith,” it is the framework of our faith, and without it, there is no Christian faith but rather a watered-down, greyed-out false religious movement led by “another Jesus.”

DARPA Pushes For FAA Approval For Military Drones Over American Cities

prophecynewswatch.com

Just a little over 10 years after drone surveillance inside U.S. borders was declared a conspiracy theory, it is now an indisputable fact of life. So, too, are military grade drones along the “border,” which in reality constitutes a 100-mile-wide swath that encircles the continental United States and 2/3 of its population.

According to a new report from Defense One, this level of access is still seen as a restriction by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency or DARPA. As new forms of autonomous aircraft take to the skies such as the latest Blackhawk helicopter drones that could be ready by 2019, DARPA and aircraft developers want permission to fly over large cities as needed.

Utilizing a new artificial intelligence system that is literally called MATRIX, developers see an opportunity for more flexibility in potential use. Of course, surveillance isn't mentioned among those uses:

After that, similar to Predator drone maker General Atomics, they have their eyes on FAA certification to fly large, unmanned aircraft within the continental United States, to help ferry people and supplies from the mainland to offshore oil rigs, among other potential jobs. Today, large drones like Predators are forbidden to fly over the U.S. except in a handful of largely unpopulated areas along the U.S.Mexico border.

The FAA is now figuring out how to change guidelines to allow unmanned planes and helicopters to fly over big cities. “We are working with the FAA on that. Our stated goal is 2030. It very much depends on rule making. We are certainly hoping for sooner, for the mid-2020s, to field it,” he said.

The long-range plans of converting military aircraft to drones and incorporating them anywhere and everywhere inside America is also detailed and expanded upon as a potential replacement for the already controversial use of police drones.

By 2025, enormous military-style drones - close relatives of the sort made famous by counterterrorism strikes in Afghanistan and Iraq - will be visible 2,000 feet above U.S. cities, streaming high-resolution video

to police departments below.

That is the bet that multiple defense contractors are placing, anyway, as they race to build unmanned aircraft that can pass evolving airworthiness certifications and replace police helicopters. And if that bet pays off, it will radically transform the way cities, citizens, and law enforcement interact.

We are now seeing various trends beginning to dovetail into what could become the ultimate in military presence over the United States. As I recently reported, new A.I. algorithms are being devised that look for emotional indicators in an attempt to predict crime and social unrest.

The "Eye in the Sky" system, developed by Cambridge University, seeks to use small Parrot drones to identify "violent poses" in crowds. The system will be powered by biometric recognition and artificial intelligence.

Imagine a system like this being applied to the far more sophisticated military systems that already exist, then connecting all of it to the growing federal biometrics database.

I suspect that if the FAA does grant access to larger military aircraft over U.S. cities, it will be with the "strict guidelines" that no forms of surveillance or weaponry will be permitted onboard. Of course, once granted even the slightest access, all it will take is one catastrophic event to remove any restrictions at all.

Drones have already been developed that are equipped with camera systems like DARPA's Autonomous Real-time Ground Ubiquitous Surveillance Imaging System (ARGUS). This sensor system can instantly see an area roughly the "size of a small city" with an "all-seeing" eye according to retired Lieutenant, David A. Deptula. The next generation of surveillance tech sees the landscape through a 1.8 billion pixels camera, the highest resolution yet created.

Using a touchscreen interface that can produce up to 65 windows for analysis, military observers can see down to the individual object level to track the movements of vehicles and people. Beyond the real-time surveillance, the system can store everything for future review right down to the minutes and seconds.

The New Jihad: More Threatening Than Ever

GATESTONE INSTITUTE NOVEMBER 06, 2018

When the Barcelona terror attack took place August 17, 2017, as horrible as it was (13 deaths, 130 injured), the jihadists did not consider it a success. They had a more lethal project. They wanted to drive vans packed with explosives into the Sagrada Familia basilica and two other tourist areas of the city.

That, however, was the last major jihadist attack in a Western country. The Manchester attack had taken place two month earlier, on May 22, 2017; the attack in Nice, France, had taken place on July 14, 2016; and the in Orlando attack, in Florida, on June 12, 2016.

The destruction of the Islamic State under President Donald J. Trump has not only deprived jihadists of what had become a rear base and training camp; it also deprived them of the idea that they could quickly defeat the West.

Soon, awareness of the danger embodied by radical Islam faded in the United States and was largely erased in Europe. Knife attacks and the slaughter of passers-by in France or Britain were not treated by the mainstream media as more important than road accidents. Jihadist murderers were usually immediately defined by the authorities as mentally disturbed.

In Europe, the names of the murderers were often hidden to avoid possibly firing up anti-Muslim "prejudices".

What happens in other parts of the world rarely makes headlines and is usually treated as a local problem of no global importance. Stabbing Israelis and launching rockets and incendiary kites and balloons from Gaza into Israel are looked on as strictly part of "the Middle East conflict." Attacks on Coptic Christians in Egypt are defined as an Egyptian problem.

More than 1,800 Christians massacred in Nigeria are barely mentioned in the news. The death sentence for blasphemy in countries such as Pakistan are not mentioned at all.

Radical Islam may be on the defensive, but its offensive has not stopped. The main Islamist organizations appear to be waiting for the moment to strike again. Al Qaeda was recently described in a January 2018 UN report as "strong," "influential," and "resilient."

Islamic State may have lost territories it once ruled in Syria and Iraq, but, according to the UN report, "The group continues to transform into a terror organization with a flat hierarchy, with cells and affiliates increasingly acting autonomously."

Groups of Islamist jihadis are still active in Libya, where they control people-smuggling activities and infiltrate their operatives among the migrants trying to cross the Mediterranean to Europe. The police keep seizing components used to make explosive devices and have foiled attempted attacks on European soil, but instructional videos still circulate.

What is important to emphasize is that radical Islamists use means other than terrorism to gain ground. The Muslim Brotherhood, the main Sunni Islamist organization, has never rejected violence, but says it prefers da'wa (proselytizing, infiltration and influence) to attain power in the Muslim world and beyond. Sayyid Qutb, its leader in the 1950's, said that the aim of the Muslim Brotherhood was to "establish Islamic rule" wherever it was possible, by "any means available".

Its members may have thought they were achieving their objective during the uprising journalists called the "Arab spring." Unfortunately for them, former Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi's attempt to make Egypt an Islamic totalitarian state, and the economic collapse that resulted, led to a takeover of the government by Egypt's current president, Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, and to a crackdown that eradicated the organization there.

The Muslim Brotherhood, however, has not vanished. It still has the support of Turkey and Qatar, and Hamas was founded as the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Reports show that members of the Muslim Brotherhood can rely on a network of affiliates in over 70 countries. They keep up their hope of winning throughout the Muslim world, but their main target seems to be to transform the West.

Leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood appear to think that if the West falls, the rest of the world will fall thereafter. In the US, the Muslim Brotherhood has unofficial branches that try to hide what they actually are, but that are extremely active: these include the Council for American Islamic Relations (CAIR), and the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA).

The Muslim Brotherhood is deeply implanted in Western Europe, where it controls many organizations and charities that also do their best to hide what they are. These include the "The Islamic Community of Germany," the Muslim Association of Britain, and "The Muslims of France."

The Muslim Brotherhood has, in addition, created vast networks of mosques and schools that recruit, indoctrinate and claim that the future of Western Europe will belong to Islam and that Europeans will continue to submit.

This week, the unelected judges of the European Court of Human Rights submitted to the demands of Sharia blasphemy laws and decided not to allow criticism of Muhammad, lest Muslim feelings be hurt. The court actually chose hurt feelings over freedom of expression and truth as a defense. It is probably time to unelect these unelected judges.

Islamist organizations are present and growing. Often, they join forces to advance intimidation campaigns that push governments, the mainstream media and universities to ban all criticism of Islam and to enforce a growing Islamization of everyday life.

Examples include efforts to change academic programs to present Muslim civilization in a more attractive light; efforts to have hospitals accept that Muslim women may be examined only by female doctors, and that social service agencies must respect polygamy.

Many organizations rely for support on "fellow travelers" -- mainly Westerners who hate Western civilization and may see the rise of Islam as a means of destabilizing it. They want, and get, results.

Western European politicians, left and right, increasingly rely on the Muslim vote to get elected: they see that the birthrates (now well below replacement levels) and migratory flows create a population change; they calculate that being too hostile to Islam could lead to their political defeat.

Although the Swiss Islamist author Tariq Ramadan remains jailed in France over rape accusations, his books are still moving up bestseller lists. Islamic bookstores are becoming more and more numerous. They sell anti-Semitic and anti-Western books that incite violence. No-go zones continue to proliferate in France, Britain and now in Germany. In his book No Go Zones, Raheem Kassam shows that female genital mutilation, sexual assault, and sometimes honor killings take place in these areas.

A few politicians -- Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, Italy's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior Matteo Salvini, and Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz -- are trying to defend European civilization. They are dragged in the mud by Merkel, May, Macron and other Western European leaders. The chance of Orbán, Kurz and Salvini to win the fight in the short term is limited by the rapid aging of their country's populations.

Authors criticizing Islam are still allowed to write in Western Europe, but, with some exceptions, such as Éric Zemmour in France or Thilo Sarrazin in Germany, they are now almost totally ignored by the mainstream media. All of them are harassed by Islamists and sometimes by prosecutions. Anyone who has left Islam risks being killed.

Some have chosen to escape to a safer part of the world. Ayaan Hirsi Ali left the Netherlands in 2006 and is now an American citizen. Others, who stayed in Western Europe, have to live under police protection. Hamed Abdel-Samad, a former member of the Muslim Brotherhood who now lives in Germany, is the author of Islamic Fascism. Abdel-Samad says what Western European leaders refuse to see: "Islam is a religion of war". In a recent interview, he added that when a non-Muslim country is strong, "Islam can end up agreeing to coexist", but when a non-Muslim country is passive, "war comes back" on the horizon. This war, he added, "can be violent. It can be non violent". Western European countries show all the signs of being passive.

The United States is stronger. Will it remain a safe haven for ex-Muslims and freedom of speech? The Islamists are at work. Some in mosques incite violence. They find support. They intimidate institutions. In

April 2018, M. Zuhr Jasser, a practicing physician and founder and president of the American Islamic Forum for Democracy, which advocates the separation of religion and state, was invited to speak at Duke University. Under pressure from Islamist students, the invitation was cancelled; it was then reinstated.

In 2014, when Brandeis University wanted to honor Ayaan Hirsi Ali, an author who abandoned Islam, Islamic organizations and "progressives" demanded that Brandeis to revoke the invitation. She was "disinvited" and the invitation not extended again. Hirsi Ali said:

"As someone who has known what it is to live without freedom, I watch in amazement as those who call themselves liberal and progressive - people who claim to believe so fervently in individual liberty and minority rights - make common cause with the forces in the world that manifestly pose the greatest threats to that very freedom and those very minorities... We need to say to Muslims living in the West: if you want to live in our societies, to share in their material benefits, then you need to accept that our freedoms are not optional".