

Newsbytes

The First Watch

August 14, 2019

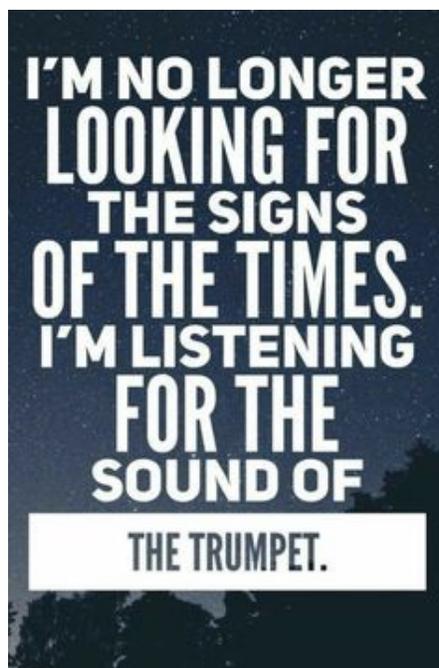
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"Let us be alert to the season in which we are living. It is the season of the Blessed Hope, calling for us to cut our ties with the world and build ourselves on this One who will soon appear. He is our hope—a Blessed Hope enabling us to rise above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



This expresses pretty well what a lot of us are feeling, doesn't it?

It just serves to remind us all how very late the hour is.

Unfortunately, a lot of the churches are pushing the snooze button on their smoke alarms and have no idea what is pending on earth.

They do not know the signs despite being commanded to do so.

We want to help equip you to understand the times and be able to share with others our Blessed Hope. Come on trumpet sound.

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*Hope you can join us, now read these Newzies like there is no tomorrow, because --
there may not be.
Maranatha!!*

Meanwhile, the bones of Ezekiel himself are crying out:

Russia, Turkey, Iran: Adversaries of the West's NATO Alliance

by Con Coughlin August 5, 2019

<https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/14650/russia-turkey-iran-adversaries-nato>

● Germany's outright rejection of Washington's request [to support Washington's proposal for a maritime protection force in the Arabian Gulf to protect shipping from attacks by Iran] is likely to inflame tensions further between Washington and Berlin. U.S. President Donald J. Trump is already at odds with German Chancellor Angela Merkel on a range of issues, from Germany's obstinate refusal to meet its Nato funding commitments to its pursuit of closer energy ties with Russia through the construction of the controversial Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline.

● Mr Trump is highly critical of the project. He argues that it will make Europe, and especially Germany, too dependent on Moscow for its energy needs, which could undermine the resolve of the Nato alliance to take a robust stand against Moscow in any future confrontation.

● So, at a time when the Western alliance is already struggling with how to respond to Turkey's deepening military ties with Russia, Germany's refusal to fulfil its obligations to protect shipping in the Gulf will be interpreted by adversaries of the West such as Moscow and Tehran as yet further evidence of what would doubtless please them very much: deepening divisions within the Western alliance.

Germany's point-blank refusal to support Washington's proposal for a maritime protection force in the Arabian Gulf to protect shipping from attacks by Iran is yet another example of Berlin's diplomatic and economic sabotage of the Western alliance.

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Following the recent upsurge in Iranian aggression in the all-important Strait of Hormuz, the Gulf shipping artery through which flows one-fifth of the world's energy needs, Washington has sought international backing for Operation Sentinel, its naval operation to protect shipping in the region.

This search follows a series of Iranian attacks, including the shooting down of a US Navy drone operating in international waters in the Strait of Hormuz, as well as a number of attacks against merchant shipping, such as last month's seizure of the British-registered oil tanker Stena Impero.

But while Washington has responded to Iran's deliberate escalation of tensions in the region by deploying an aircraft carrier battle group, as well as troops, missiles, and fighter aircraft, its appeal to other nations to support its effort have received a muted response.

In particular, Washington would like to see Britain, France and Germany -- the three European signatories to the 2015 nuclear deal with Tehran -- provide tangible support for the mission.

From Washington's perspective, the fact that Europe is far more reliant on the Gulf for its energy supplies than is the US, whose energy imports from the region today are negligible, it seems only fair that Europe, as well as other beneficiaries such as Japan, pay their fair share towards ensuring no further Iranian disruption of Gulf shipping takes place.

To date, though, only Britain has deployed warships to the Gulf -- a frigate and a destroyer -- while France is considering its options.

Germany, however, the country that enjoys Europe's largest economy and is therefore more than capable of contributing to the American initiative, has bluntly rejected a State Department request to support the mission.

In an attempt to shame the Germans into joining the operation, Washington's request was made public through the US Embassy in Berlin earlier this week. "We've formally asked Germany to join France and the UK to help secure the Straits of Hormuz and combat Iranian aggression," an embassy spokeswoman announced. "Members of the German government have been clear that freedom of navigation should be protected... Our question is, protected by whom?"

The US ploy, though, has fallen on deaf ears in Berlin, where there is considerable opposition within German Chancellor Angela Merkel's ruling coalition to becoming involved for fear that it might exacerbate tensions with Iran. Germany, like the rest of Europe, is still wedded to the naive notion that the Iranian nuclear deal can be saved, irrespective of the Trump administration's decision last year to withdraw from the agreement.

Olaf Scholz, the German vice-chancellor, who is deputising for Mrs Merkel while she is on vacation, responded by confirming that his country would not take part in a US-led naval taskforce; he warned about the danger of the world "sleepwalking into a much larger conflict".

Germany's outright rejection of Washington's request is likely to inflame tensions further between Washington and Berlin. U.S. President Donald J. Trump is already at odds with German Chancellor Angela Merkel on a range of issues, from Germany's obstinate refusal to meet its Nato funding commitments to its pursuit of closer energy ties with Russia through the construction of the controversial Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline.

Mr Trump is highly critical of the project. He argues that it will make Europe, and especially Germany, too dependent on Moscow for its energy needs, which could undermine the resolve of the Nato alliance to take a robust stand against Moscow in any future confrontation. Moreover, Germany's refusal to support the Western alliance in combating Iranian aggression in the Gulf comes at a time when Nato is facing another major dilemma over the future participation of Turkey as a member.

This follows the decision by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to press ahead with the purchase of Russian S-400 anti-aircraft missile systems in the face of strong opposition from Washington, which has responded by cancelling Ankara's continued involvement in the F-35 stealth fighter programme. So, at a time when the Western alliance is already struggling with how to respond to Turkey's deepening military ties with Russia, Germany's refusal to fulfil its obligations to protect shipping in the Gulf will be interpreted by adversaries of the West such as Moscow and Tehran as yet further evidence of what would doubtless please them very much: deepening divisions within the Western alliance.

France Slowly Sinking into Chaos

by Guy Millière August 3, 2019

Paris, Champs-Élysées. July 14. Bastille Day. Just before the military parade begins, President Emmanuel Macron comes down the avenue in an official car to greet the crowd. Thousands of people gathered along the avenue shout "Macron resign", boo and hurl insults.

At the end of the parade, a few dozen people release yellow balloons into the sky and distribute leaflets saying "The yellow vests are not dead." The police disperse them, quickly and firmly. Moments later, hundreds of "Antifa" anarchists arrive, throw security barriers on the roadway to erect barricades, start fires and smash the storefronts of several shops. The police have a rough time mastering the situation, but early in the evening, after a few hours, they restore the calm.

A few hours later, thousands of young Arabs from the suburbs gather near the Arc de Triomphe. They have apparently come to "celebrate" in their own way the victory of an Algerian soccer team. More storefronts are smashed, more shops looted. Algerian flags are everywhere. Slogans are belted out: "Long live Algeria", "France is ours", "Death to France". Signs bearing street names are replaced by signs bearing the name of Abd El Kader, the religious and military leader who fought against the French army at the time of the colonization of Algeria. The police limit themselves to stemming the violence in the hope that it will not spread.

Around midnight, three leaders of the "yellow vest" movement come out of a police station and tell a TV reporter that they were arrested early that morning and imprisoned for the rest of the day. Their lawyer states that they did nothing wrong and were just "preventively" arrested. He emphasizes that a law passed in February 2019 allows the French police to arrest any person suspected of going to a demonstration; no authorization from a judge is necessary and no appeal possible.

On Friday, July 19, the Algerian soccer team wins again. More young Arabs gather near Arc de Triomphe to "celebrate" again. The damage is even greater than eight days before. More police show up; they do almost nothing.

On July 12, two days before Bastille Day, several hundred self-declared African illegal migrants enter the Pantheon, the monument that houses the graves of heroes who played major roles in the history of France. There, the migrants announce the birth of the "Black Vest movement". They demand the "regularization" of all illegal immigrants on French territory and free housing for each of them. The police show up but decline to intervene. Most of the demonstrators leave peacefully. A few who insult the police are arrested.

France today is a country adrift. Unrest and lawlessness continue to gain ground. Disorder has become part of daily life. Polls show that a large majority reject President Macron. They seem to hate his arrogance and be inclined not to forgive him. They seem to resent his contempt for the poor; the way he crushed the "yellow vest" movement, and for his not having paid even the slightest attention to the protesters' smallest demands, such as the right to hold a citizens' referendum like those in Switzerland. Macron can no longer go anywhere in public without risking displays of anger.

The "yellow vests" seem finally to have stopped demonstrating and given up: too many were maimed or hurt. Their discontent, however, is still there. It seems waiting to explode again.

The French police appear ferocious when dealing with peaceful protesters, but barely able to prevent groups such as "Antifa" from causing violence. Therefore, now at the end of each demonstration, "Antifa" show up. The French police seem particularly cautious when having to deal with young Arabs and illegal migrants. The police have been given orders. They know that young Arabs and illegal migrants could

create large-scale riots. Three months ago, in Grenoble, the police were pursuing some young Arabs on a stolen motorcycle, who were accused of theft. While fleeing, they had an accident. Five days of mayhem began.

President Macron looks like an authoritarian leader when he faces the disgruntled poor. He never says he is sorry for those who have lost an eye or a hand or suffered irreversible brain damage from extreme police brutality. Instead, he asked the French parliament to pass a law that almost completely abolishes the right to protest, the presumption of innocence and that allows the arrest of anyone, anywhere, even without cause. The law was passed.

In June, the French parliament passed another law, severely punishing anyone who says or writes something that might contain "hate speech". The law is so vague that an American legal scholar, Jonathan Turley, felt compelled to react. "France has now become one of the biggest international threats to freedom of speech", he wrote.

Macron also knows what former President François Hollande said after serving his term as president: "France is on the verge of partition".

Macron knows that the partition of France already exists. Most Arabs and Africans live in no-go zones, apart from the rest of the population, where they accept the presence of non-Arabs and non-Africans less and less. They do not define themselves as French, except when they say that France will belong to them. Reports show that most seem filled with a deep rejection of France and Western civilization. An increasing number seem to place their religion above their citizenship; many seem radicalized and ready to fight.

Macron seems not to want to fight. Instead, he has chosen to appease them. He is single-mindedly pursuing his plans to institutionalize Islam in France. Three months ago, the Muslim Association for Islam of France (AMIF) was created. One branch will handle the cultural expansion of Islam and take charge of "the fight against anti-Muslim racism". Another branch will be responsible for programs that train imams and build mosques. This autumn, a "Council of Imams of France" will be established. The main leaders of the AMIF are (or were until recently) members of the Muslim Brotherhood, a movement designated as a terrorist organization in Egypt, Bahrain, Syria, Russia, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates -- but not in France.

Macron is aware of the demographic data. They show that the Muslim population in France will grow significantly in the coming years. (The economist Charles Gave wrote recently that by 2057, France will have a Muslim majority). Macron can see that it will soon be impossible for anyone to be elected President without relying on the Muslim vote, so he acts accordingly.

Macron apparently sees that the discontent that gave birth to the "yellow vest" movement still is there. He appears to think that repression will be enough to prevent any further uprising, and so does nothing to remedy the causes of the discontent.

The "yellow vest" movement was born of a revolt against exorbitantly high taxes on fuel, and harsh government measures against cars and motorists. These measures included reduced speed limits -- 50 mph on most highways -- and more speed-detection cameras; a sharp rise in the penalties on tickets, as well as complex and expensive annual motor vehicle controls. French taxes on fuels recently rose again and are now the highest in Europe (70% of the price paid at the pump). Other measures against the use of automobiles and motorists still in force are especially painful for the poor. They were already chased from the suburbs by intolerant newcomers, and now have to live -- and drive -- even farther from where they work.

Macron has made no decision to remedy the disastrous economic situation in France. When he was

elected, taxes, duties and social charges represented almost 50% of GDP. Government spending represented 57% of GDP (the highest among developed countries). The ratio of national debt to GDP was almost 100%.

Taxes, duties, social charges and government spending remain at the same level now as when Macron came in. The debt-to-GDP ratio is 100% and growing. The French economy is not creating jobs. Poverty remains extremely high: 14% of the population earn less than 855 euros (\$950) a month.

Macron pays no attention to the growing cultural disaster also seizing the country. The educational system is crumbling. An increasing percentage of students graduate from high school without knowing how to write a sentence free of errors that make incomprehensible anything they write. Christianity is disappearing. Most non-Muslim French no longer define themselves as Christians. The fire that ravaged the Cathedral of Notre Dame de Paris was officially an "accident," but it was only one of the many Christian religious buildings in the country that were recently destroyed. Every week, churches are vandalized -- to the general indifference of the public. In just the first half of 2019, 22 churches burned down.

The main concern of Macron and the French government seems not to be the risk of riots, the public's discontent, the disappearance of Christianity, the disastrous economic situation, or Islamization and its consequences. Instead, it is climate change. Although the amount of France's carbon dioxide emissions is infinitesimal (less than 1% of the global total), combatting "human-induced climate change" appears Macron's absolute priority.

Macron and the French government also seem unconcerned that Jews -- driven by the rise of anti-Semitism, and understandably worried about court decisions infused with the spirit of submission to violent Islam -- continue to flee from France.

Kobili Traore, the man who murdered Sarah Halimi in 2017 while chanting suras from the Qur'an and shouting that the Jews are Sheitan (Arabic for "Satan") was found not guilty. Traore had apparently smoked cannabis before the murder, so the judges decided that he was not responsible for his acts. Traore will soon be released from prison; what happens if he smokes cannabis again?

A few weeks after the murder of Halimi, three members of a Jewish family were assaulted, tortured and held hostage in their home by a group of five men who said that "Jews have money" and "Jews must pay". The men were arrested; all were Muslim. The judge who indicted them announced that their actions were "not anti-Semitic".

On July 25, 2019 when the Israeli soccer team Maccabi Haifa was competing in Strasbourg, the French government limited the number of Israeli supporters in the stadium to 600, not one more. A thousand had bought plane tickets to come to France to attend the match. The French government also banned the waving of Israeli flags at the game or anywhere in the city. Nonetheless, in the name of "free speech", the French Department of the Interior permitted anti-Israeli demonstrations in front of the stadium, and Palestinian flags and banners saying "Death to Israel" were there. The day before the match, at a restaurant near the stadium, some Israelis were violently attacked. "The demonstrations against Israel are approved in the name of freedom of expression, but the authorities forbid supporters of Maccabi Haifa to raise the Israeli flag, it is unacceptable," said Aliza Ben Nun, Israel's ambassador to France.

The other day, a plane full of French Jews leaving France arrived in Israel. More French Jews will soon go. The departure of Jews to Israel entails sacrifices: some French real estate agents take advantage of the wish of many Jewish families to leave, so they buy and sell properties owned by Jews at a price far lower than their market value.

3 Major Developments Happening Right Now That Could Lead To Global War

prophecynewswatch.com

It has been a seemingly quiet summer in America so far, but meanwhile we are witnessing major developments on the other side of the globe that could change everything. We are so close to war, and yet most people have absolutely no idea what is happening.

In fact, if you showed most Americans a blank map of the world, they couldn't even pick out Iran, Hong Kong or North Korea.

There is so much apathy in our society today, and so little knowledge about foreign affairs, and so most people simply do not grasp the importance of the drama that is playing out right in front of our eyes.

But if a major war does erupt, none of our lives are ever going to be the same again. So I am going to keep writing about these things, because I believe that we have reached an absolutely critical juncture in our history.

Let's start with a stunning new development in the Middle East.

Even though most Americans do not realize it, Israel and Iran are already shooting at each other. Israel has been striking Iranian military targets inside Syria for months, but now the rules of engagement have apparently changed, because in recent days the IDF has started conducting airstrikes against Iranian targets inside Iraq...

In an unprecedented move, Israel has expanded its attacks on Iranian targets, with two bombing strikes on Iran-run bases in Iraq in the space of ten days. The Israeli Air Force carried out the military strikes with F-35 jets, according to Asharq Al-Awsat, an Arabic-language newspaper published in London. News of the attacks comes just a day after the US and Israel tested a missile defence system which used targets "similar to Iranian nuclear missiles".

The reason this is being called "an unprecedented move" is because this is the very first time since 1981 that we have seen Israeli airstrikes inside Iraq.

Needless to say, these latest airstrikes have absolutely enraged the Iranians. It looks like the Israeli government has determined that any Iranian military targets outside of Iran itself are fair game, and it is probably only a matter of time before Iran strikes back in a major way.

And if Iran ultimately decides that one of the best ways to strike back is to start hitting targets inside of Israel, that could be the spark that sets off a major war in the Middle East.

Meanwhile, it appears that something major is brewing in China. The political protests that have made global headlines in Hong Kong in recent weeks have greatly angered the Chinese government. They were probably hoping that the protests would quickly subside and soon be forgotten, but that hasn't happened.

So now China is faced with a decision. If such protests were happening elsewhere in China, they would be brutally crushed, but Hong Kong is a special case. If the Chinese are too harsh with the protesters in Hong Kong, that could turn world opinion against them, but if they do nothing that could encourage protests to start happening in other area of the country.

In the end, the Chinese will probably do what they always do, and that means crushing the opposition. And Zero Hedge is reporting that Chinese forces are currently gathering "on Hong Kong's border"...

Massive anti-Beijing protests which have gripped Hong Kong over the past month, and have become increasingly violent as both an overwhelmed local police force and counter-protesters have hit back with force, are threatening to escalate on a larger geopolitical scale after the White House weighed in this week. With China fast losing patience, there are new reports of a significant build-up of Chinese security forces on Hong Kong's border, as Bloomberg reports:

The White House is monitoring what a senior administration official called a congregation of Chinese forces on Hong Kong's border. Technically, Hong Kong is considered to be part of China, but it has always been allowed wide latitude to govern itself ever since it was handed over to the Chinese.

But now things could be about to change dramatically, and some are even using the word "invade" to describe what is about to happen. For example, just consider this tweet from Kyle Bass...

"The White House is monitoring a buildup of chinese forces on Hong Kong's border, a senior administration official said." Here we go..the moment the pla army marches from Shenzhen, it's over. china's army is going to invade HK. It's inevitable. #hk #china

If Chinese forces start pouring into Hong Kong, the Trump administration is going to throw a fit. Relations between our two nations are already the worst that they have been since the end of the Korean War, and the situation in Hong Kong could potentially push things over the edge.

In fact, the Chinese have already been placing the blame for the protests in Hong Kong squarely on the U.S. government...

"It's clear that Mr. Pompeo has put himself in the wrong position and still regards himself as the head of the CIA," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said at a news briefing. "He might think that violent activities in Hong Kong are reasonable because after all, this is the creation of the U.S."

China's position has been to recently declare the protests going "far beyond" what's legal and "peaceful" amid clashes with police. We shall see what happens, but this certainly has the potential to push the United States and China much, much closer to conflict.

On top of everything else, North Korea just fired two more missiles into the ocean...

North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles early on Wednesday, the South Korean military said, only days after it launched two other missiles intended to pressure South Korea and the United States to stop upcoming military drills. The latest launches were from the Hodo peninsula on North Korea's east coast, the same area from where last week's were conducted, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said in a statement. It said it was monitoring in case of additional launches.

The North Koreans are greatly alarmed by the joint military drills that the U.S. and South Korea will soon be conducting, and whenever they get greatly upset about something they seem to express that displeasure by firing off more missiles.

Yes, President Trump and Kim Jong-Un have been talking, but things remain extremely tense and it wouldn't take very much at all for a major conflict to erupt on the Korean peninsula.

Without a doubt, we live at a time of "wars and rumors of wars", and those with discerning eyes can see what is happening.