

MELTDOWN IN ZIMBABWE: A CALL TO PRAYER

JANUARY 25, 09 – DAY OF PRAYER FOR ZIMBABWE

It is easy to grow numb to the suffering in Africa. There always seems to be a famine or pestilence or war there. Yet, this continent is the home of millions of people, people with children, people for whom Christ died. Right now Zimbabwe is in a terrible crisis. The All Africa Conference of Churches declared January 25 to be a day of prayer and fasting for the land of Zimbabwe and has asked Christians around the world to partner in seeking God's face on behalf of this country.

Zimbabwe was once the breadbasket of Africa, a land of plenty that fed itself and its neighbors. Zimbabwe was once a well-developed nation with advanced medical facilities. Now, this southern African country is on the verge of complete meltdown.

The suffering in Zimbabwe is unimaginable. The unemployment rate is over 80 percent. Malnutrition is rampant. People are dying of anthrax after eating the decaying flesh of infected animals. A cholera epidemic is raging through the country and an estimated 37,000 have been infected. Schools are shut down. There are no running public hospitals; they're closed for lack of plumbing and sanitation. Doctors and nurses try their best to help people without running water and few medical supplies. According to the director of one mission hospital:

"A major problem is the loss of life and fetal wastage we are seeing with obstetric patients. They come so late, the fetuses are already dead. We see women with eclampsia who have been seizing for 12 hours. There is no intensive care unit here, and now there is no intensive care in Harare. If we had intensive care, we know it would be immediately full of critically ill patients. As it is, they just die."

Any woman who has ever been in labor can catch a glimpse of the horror. Any father can consider the despair of parents who watch their children die for lack of simple surgery.

The despotic and irrational rule of Robert Mugabe has destroyed the country, yet he refuses give up his death-hold. His supporters continue to threaten and attack people who speak against the government. While a power-sharing agreement was made in September, Mugabe made his true position clear when he said last month, "I will never, never, never surrender ... Zimbabwe is mine."

The churches of Africa ask for our help. January 25th has been set aside as a day of prayer and fasting for the people of Zimbabwe.

AACC general secretary Dr. André Karamaga said, "The call is to join our Zimbabwean sisters and brothers in prayer and in fasting, in words and in deeds, in contemplation and in action."

He continued, explaining that the day of prayer and fasting "is first and foremost a call for all of us to come to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ with a humble heart, in sincere love, spending time with him to get in tune with His sovereign plans and visions for his people and for the world. It's about allowing Him to speak and to share His heart that bleeds for the suffering of our world."

Karamaga referred to Isaiah 58 as the key passage for the day of prayer:

"Shout it aloud, do not hold back. Raise your voice like a trumpet ... Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cord of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter - when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your flesh and blood? Then your light will break forth like the dawn and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard. Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here I am." - Isaiah 58:1, 6-9.

GADHAFI SAYS US SHOULD SEEK PEACE WITH BIN LADEN

Jan 21/09. Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi has an seemingly unthinkable suggestion for new US President Barack Obama: give Osama bin Laden a chance to make peace.

Gadhafi, who is known for outspoken comments, told an audience of American students by video conference that bin Laden has shown signs that he is open to dialogue.

In a speech outlining his views on how to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Gaddafi called for the creation of one state rather than two nations living side by side. "We can call it Isratine," he said.

If Jews did not accept a one-state solution, he said they could move to Hawaii, Alaska or an island in the Pacific. "They could live peacefully in an isolated setting."

- Jerusalem Post & YNET

ANALYSIS : OBAMA PLAN TO NEGOTIATE BUYS IRAN TIME TO COMPLETE NUCLEAR PROGRAM

Barack Obama's arrival in the White House substantially reduces the likelihood of Israel using military force to thwart Iran's nuclear program and accelerates the possibility that within a year the regime of ayatollahs will possess atomic bombs, according to the assessment of experts in Israel and the United States.

Even leading U.S. intelligence officials acknowledge that Iran is likely to produce its first nuclear bomb as early as this year.

This assessment, that Iran is likely to produce its first bomb during the course of 2009 or in early 2010 was expressed, and is now also reaffirmed, by Israel's military intelligence and the Mossad but was viewed skeptically by other intelligence agencies around the world, who considered Israel's approach to be panic mongering and "alarmist."

This is a race against the clock for all parties involved.

The concern in Israel is that if the negotiations end in failure and even if Obama's administration reaches the conclusion that Iran was toying with it and never intended to reach a compromise and suspend its uranium enrichment, it might already be too late. Iran might have nuclear weapons and then it will be too late and too dangerous to attack it.

- www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1057687.html

DESPITE BILLIONS IN BAILOUT, BANKS TEETER NEAR COLLAPSE

NEW YORK - Wall Street is losing faith in Washington's efforts to fix the financial crisis. As bank losses pile up and bank stocks plunge, investors have an urgent question for the new Obama administration: What's the plan?

Timothy Geithner, Obama's pick for treasury secretary, had few answers as he began confirmation hearings Wednesday. He told lawmakers that two goals were to "get credit flowing again" and overhaul the \$700 billion bailout, but he offered few details.

There's a lot riding on the new administration. Several of the largest U.S. banks, saddled with soured mortgage-backed assets, are edging toward the danger zone despite injections of billions of dollars from the government last year.

At the same time, the recession is gathering force, chewing up jobs by the hundreds of thousands and ruining many consumer and business loans that were once thought to carry little risk.

www.newsmax.com/newsfront/bank_collapse/2009/01/21/173876.html

RUNNING AND RUINING AMERICA FOR THE BENEFIT OF CHINA

From the Obama perspective, the only way out is to go further into debt and beg for more money, mainly from the Chinese but also from the oil-rich Arabs.

On CNN on January 16, Lou Dobbs, perhaps the most honest and outspoken major media commentator, told the truth about the Wall Street bailout. “Treasury Secretary Paulson basically used the money to bail out his buddies on Wall Street, and don’t let anybody kid you,” he said.

One day earlier, however, the Senate had voted 52-42 to give Paulson’s successor another \$350 billion. That successor is supposed to be another Wall Street insider, Timothy Geithner. He is just as tainted as Paulson.

As President Obama takes office, America has become an international laughingstock—a “Bailout Nation” that continues to slide further and further into debt as bailout after bailout fails to work. Yet, Obama’s prescription is more of the same.

www.aim.org/aim-column/running-and-ruining-america-for-the-benefit-of-china

UK FACES 'POSSIBILITY OF NATIONAL BANKRUPTCY'



PM GORDON BROWN

Jan 21/09. They don't know what they're doing, do they? With every step taken by the Government as it tries frantically to prop up the British banking system, this central truth becomes ever more obvious.

Yesterday marked a new low for all involved, even by the standards of this crisis. Britons woke to news of the enormity of the fresh horrors in store. Despite all the sophistry and outdated boom-era terminology from experts, I think a far greater number of people than is imagined grasp at root what is happening here.

The country stands on the precipice. We are at risk of utter humiliation, of London becoming a Reykjavik on Thames and Britain going under. Thanks to the arrogance, hubristic strutting and serial incompetence of the Government and a group of bankers, the possibility of national bankruptcy is not unrealistic.

Gordon Brown is engaged no longer in a standard battle for re-election; instead he is fighting to avoid going down in history disgraced completely.

www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/columnists/iainmartin/4295219/Gordon-Brown-brings-Britain-to-the-edge-of-bankruptcy.html

NEW AGE OF REBELLION AND RIOT STALKS EUROPE

Across Europe, protesters demand a change of government. Politicians in wealthier countries can try to prop up banks and industries, but it does not work in heavily indebted nations with bloated and exposed financial sectors.

And there is a shared shock that the good times have gone. “The explosion conceals a compressed desperation,” the Greek psychology professor Fotini Tsalikoglou said of last month's outburst in Athens. “Many young people live with the unbearable knowledge that there is no future.”

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www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/europe/article5563020.ece