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A Road Map for Peace or Peril?

...And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.
--Zechariah 12:3

President Bush arrived in Jordan this morning to launch what media pundits are calling his “road map” for peace in the Middle East. The Bush plan calls for the creation of an independent Palestinian state in what the United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 calls “Israeli-occupied territories.” But critics say there is nothing new in the Bush “road map.” It leads, they say, to the same destination called for by the U.N. and the Arab League as far back as the end of the “Six-day War” in June 1967.

Also concerned with the “road map,” are many Christians and Jews who believe that the President’s policy advisors are forgetting that Israel has a very powerful FRIEND who has made a promise to Israel and will keep it!

To wit: In October 1991, former President George Herbert Walker Bush initiated a meeting in Madrid, Spain to discuss a “territorial compromise...essential for peace.” At the core of the “compromise,” was a plan calling for Israel to relinquish land.

At the same time the former President was delivering his opening remarks at the conference, an unusual storm was developing off the coast of Nova Scotia. The storm was unusual in two aspects. First, it didn’t originate in the tropics as most hurricane force storms do, and second, it began moving from the east to the west. The customary weather pattern for the United States is west to east. Within hours, the monster storm, which was hundreds of miles wide, smashed into Maine and went the wrong way down the entire East Coast to Florida, causing hundreds-of-millions-of-dollars in damage. Ocean waves swelling more than 100 feet high, the highest ever recorded, inspired the book and subsequent movie called “The Perfect Storm.”

The former President received news during the second day of the conference that his oceanfront home in Kennebunkport, Maine had sustained heavy damage from 30-foot high waves. Stories of the peace talks and the rare storm were in columns next to each other on the front page of both the *New York Times* and *USA Today*.

The next Madrid peace conference convened in Washington, D.C. on August 23, 1993. On the table was the matter of Palestinian self-rule in the “Israeli-occupied territories.” But, also making its debut on that very day was Hurricane Andrew, the worst natural disaster ever to hit America. The awesome category four hurricane was described by the National Hurricane Center as a 25-30-mile wide tornado! Property damage exceeded \$30 billion dollars and left more than 200,000 people homeless in Florida and Louisiana.

Stories of both the Madrid Peace Plan and Hurricane Andrew were front-page features in the *New York Times*. The Madrid meeting was at top-center; the hurricane was directly to the right. And, to the left—a story about Bush’s collapsing [approval] ratings in the polls.

Could there be a connection between the violent storms and natural disasters that often coincide with U.S efforts to broker a Middle East peace plan? Many insist there is.

Authors John McTernan and Bill Koenig present compelling evidence to support their opinion that God is warning America not to side with the rest of the world against Israel. Documented in their book, Israel the Blessing or the Curse,¹ are dozens of instances of super disasters occurring in cadence with U.S. involvement in “land for peace” talks.

For instance, less than 24 hours after President Bill Clinton met with Syria’s President Hafez Assad on January 16, 1994 to discuss Israel giving the Golan Heights to Syria, a powerful 6.9 earthquake rocked southern California. The “Northridge Quake” was the second most destructive natural disaster to hit America.

On March 1, 1997, Yassar Arafat began several weeks of a U.S. tour accompanied by deadly tornadoes that devastated huge sections of the Midwest. The storms stalled over Ohio, causing widespread flooding. When President Clinton joined Arafat in condemning Israel for building new homes and apartments in Jerusalem, tornadoes swooped down into his own home state of Arkansas. A front-page picture of the two in the *New York Times* on March 4 was captioned, “President Clinton Rebukes Israel.” The adjoining column said, “In Storms Wake Grief and Shock.”

There were more hurricanes—Emily, Georges, Dennis, Floyd, Irene—each arriving and then dissipating as if on queue, and each receiving front-page coverage next to stories of U.S. involvement in land for peace negotiations. And, there were tornadoes. On May 3, 1999 as Arafat was preparing to announce that Jerusalem would be the capitol of a new Palestinian state, the most powerful tornadoes to ever hit the U.S. touched down in Kansas and Oklahoma. Winds were clocked up to 316 mph, the fastest ever recorded. Arafat postponed the declaration until December at President Clinton’s request.

Texas, the home state of President George W. Bush, was also seemingly spanked by an unseen hand in June 2001, when the President sent an envoy to Israel to work out a cease-fire agreement. As the meetings were getting under way, tropical storm Allison suddenly moved ashore, causing \$3 billion dollars in flood damage to the City of Houston and millions more in other communities.

But, perhaps America’s most significant warning came on 9/11. Two days prior, a suicide terrorist killed 19 Jews and wounded over 100 people in a Jerusalem pizzeria. Bush made a speech condemning the terrorist attack, but also insisting that Israel abide by the Madrid peace process, the Mitchell Plan, and the U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338. According to McTernan and Koenig, Secretary of State Colin Powell had planned to inform the Saudi Arabian ambassador on September 13 that the U.S. had formulated a policy recognizing a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capitol. The announcement of that policy change was apparently stopped in its tracks by unforeseen events.

“At the very moment the U.S. was going to force Israel into coexistence with terrorists that were dedicated to the destruction of the Jewish nation,” say McTernan and Koenig, “the U.S. came under attack by the same terrorists!”

Want to know God’s thoughts on the matter? If you don’t have a Bible, try the *New York Times*!

Rick Forcier

Executive Director

¹ McTernan, John., & Koenig, Bill, Israel The Blessing or the Curse, Hearthstone Publishing, Oklahoma City, OK., 2002