

PRAYER ALERT...

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BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

■ INSIGHT ARTICLE A secret party within politics

'Islamists have infiltrated the Labour Party to exercise political influence and power' said Jim Fitzpatrick Minister of State for the Environment in an article in the Sunday Telegraph. (See <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/politics/labour/7333420/Islamic-radicals-infiltrate-the-Labour-Party.html>) Their aim is removing democratic principles and exercising political influence and power to create an 'Islamic social and political order' in the United Kingdom. The group IFE (Islamic Forum of Europe) based in London has placed sympathisers in elected Government offices claiming to be able to achieve 'mass mobilisation' of voters for the upcoming elections. They also state 'dedication to changing the very infrastructure of society, its institutions, its culture, its political order and its creed from ignorance to Islam.' IFE has received £10m in taxpayers' money from government funds designed to prevent violent extremism; but moderate Muslims were being targeted by group leaders for their 'un-Islamic' behaviour. For reports on Government support and sharia 'courts' in Britain click the info button.

Pray: for God to place His people in positions of authority in politics. (Is.22:22)

Info: <http://www.prayer-alert.net/info/1010IslaminBritain.pdf>

■ Bullying campaign to marginalise Christians in UK

Christians are being 'bullied' out of public life in Britain while politicians fail to stand up for their beliefs, according to the former Archbishop of Canterbury. Lord Carey said there was a 'strident campaign' by atheists to ban faith schools despite their pupils gaining good results. Meanwhile 'politically correct' councils go to 'absurd' lengths to avoid causing offence to followers of other faiths by not honouring the country's Christian heritage. Lord Carey, who was the spiritual leader of the Church of England between 1991 and 2002, said it was a 'scandal and a disgrace' that politicians care so little about Britain remaining Christian. Lord Carey said: 'What is happening in Western Europe is not persecution but a marginalising of faith which seeks to portray it as a matter of personal conscience only. Some examples of this originate from a mistaken but well-meant political correctness that is anxious not to upset minority faiths by seeming to 'privilege' Christianity'.

Pray: for God's help as each of us witness to our faith as a key part of national life. (2Ch.20:20)

More: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/religion/7347335/Lord-Carey-Strident-and-bullying-campaign-to-marginalise-Christians-in-UK.html>

■ New Moderator of Presbyterian Church in Ireland

The Rev'd Norman Hamilton, minister of Ballysillan Presbyterian Church in north Belfast, has been elected as Moderator. He was nominated by 11 out of the 19 Presbyteries who met throughout Ireland on Tuesday. Last month, an election ended in a tied vote between Rev'd Hamilton and Rev'd Norman McAuley. Rev'd Hamilton will take up the post on 7 June, the present moderator Dr Stafford Carson continuing in office until then. Rev'd Hamilton, who has been minister of Ballysillan

for the last 22 years said, 'I am greatly humbled and surprised that this has come to me. I hope during my year to bring a very Biblical perspective to a wide range of issues that are important to both church and society.' Rev'd Hamilton is a well-known evangelical, considered by some to be on the progressive wing of evangelicalism.

Pray: for Norman as he takes over leadership of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. (Ps.25:12)

More: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern_ireland/8546546.stm

■ Christian activists lobby embassies on nuclear arms

On 1st March members of the Christian Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CCND) called on fifteen London-based embassies to ask what steps their countries are taking towards achieving international nuclear disarmament. The visits were focused on states which currently own nuclear weapons and those advocating nuclear disarmament. CCND's action comes ahead of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference, due to take place in New York in May. The NPT, which came into force in 1970, is currently the only international agreement that creates a binding multilateral commitment for the abolition of all nuclear weapons. It commits the first five nuclear weapons states – the USA, Russia, the UK, France and China - to 'pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race'. Michael Pulham, co-chair of Christian CND, said he considered the embassy visits important. 'Our liaison with the nuclear-related countries is crucial for finding out their position on disarmament and urging further progress towards the elimination of nuclear weapons.'

Pray: for the forthcoming NPT Conference so that the delegates would move to a further reduction of nuclear weapons. (Mi.4:3)

More: <http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/node/11399>

■ Churches to pray for justice

Thousands of people are joining with one voice to pray for an end to poverty as they connect with God's heart for justice. Beginning on March 1, churches and individual Christians worldwide are spending time with God and praying about issues of poverty and justice as part of the One Voice prayer campaign led by Tearfund, 24-7 Prayer and CompassionArt. The ministries have developed prayer resources for the week, including material giving guidance on prayers for Haiti following the January 12 earthquake that left more than 200,000 people dead and another 1.5 million homeless. Some churches have planned to open their doors 24 hours a day for the duration of the week to allow people to come and pray in creative prayer spaces.

Pray: for this prayer event that it may connect with God's heart for justice and support all those working in this area. (Ps.33:5)

More: <http://www.christianpost.com/article/20100224/churches-to-pray-with-one-voice-for-justice/index.html>

■ Clergy could be sued if they refuse to carry out 'gay marriages'

Traditionalist bishops and peers fear that vicars could be taken to court and accused of discrimination if they turn down requests to hold civil partnerships on religious premises (see Prayer-Alert Issue 0510). Their concerns have been raised following a landmark vote by peers that will allow the ceremonies for same-sex couples to be held in places of worship for the first time. It is also feared that the changes would blur the line further between marriage – which we say must be between a man and a woman - and civil partnerships. Until now civil partnerships, entitling same-sex couples to the same legal rights as married spouses, have been restricted to register offices and secular venues. But under an amendment to the Equality Bill tabled in the House of Lords by Lord Alli, a homosexual Labour peer, the ban on the events taking place on religious premises will be lifted.

Pray: that the sanctity of marriage is sustained despite mischievous law-makers. (Jude:1:17-19)

More: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstoppers/religion/7361378/Clergy-could-be-sued-if-they-refuse-to-carry-out-gay-marriages-traditionalists-fear.html>

EUROPE

■ EU: Considers protecting persecuted Christians

The European Union, using a document published recently by Open Doors, has formed an association to protect the rights of Christians where they face persecution. 'We've set up a working group and are defining what joint action can be taken between Europe and the countries where Christians' rights are threatened,' said Italy's Foreign Minister Franco Frattini. 'We're studying which international initiatives the EU can adopt to bring this problem more clearly into focus.' Also the E U hopes to draw up a manual for embassies where persecution is present, focusing in particular on the treatment of Christian religious minorities in the most sensitive countries.

Pray: for God to thwart all plans of the enemy and use the EU to prepare a way forward for religious freedom. (Is.33:3&6)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/eu.considers.protecting.rights.of.persecuted.christians/25398.htm>

■ Armoured trains return to the Russian North Caucasus

First used for anti-insurgency purposes in the American Civil War, armoured trains and the tactics associated with their use were most fully developed in the vast expanses of Russia, where they were used in large numbers in WW I, the Red-White Civil War of 1917-22, WW II and the Sino-Soviet border conflict of the 1960's. More recently, Russian armoured trains were deployed to secure railway lines against Azeri nationalists during the 1990 Soviet military intervention in Baku. Now Russia's defence ministry has announced the return of armoured trains for use against Islamist insurgents in the North Caucasus. Bombings of Russian trains in Dagestan have become a major security problem, with some seven explosions

occurring on trains in the last six months of 2009 alone. The attacks appear to be part of a new campaign by North Caucasus Islamist insurgents to strike Russian infrastructure, including railways.

Pray: for reconciliation between the peoples of the old USSR and the newly-independent territories. (Isa:2:4)

More: http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=36077&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=7&cHash=5a90c0b06e

WORLDWIDE

■ Iraq: Elections March 7

The parliamentary elections on March 7th will not only determine who will lead the nation forward at this juncture in its history but could also test the ability of Iraqi security forces to maintain order. Elections in 2003 were boycotted by Sunnis. There have been accusations that these election will be illegally tampered with. The suicide attack on February 18 by al-Qaeda that killed 11 people is believed to have been an election protest. An Iraqi journalist noted, 'New alliances, divisions, conflict, and uncertainty define the political climate in Baghdad as the parliamentary elections approach.' The independent catholic news reports, 'Flyers were posted through doors of Christian homes in Mosul stating, 'Do not go to vote and do not elect Christians or you will die.' The Christian community is becoming increasingly fearful, at least 870 Christian families have already left and others will flee, perhaps to return after the vote when the situation has calmed down.' ICN report: <http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=15746>

Pray: for Iraq to follow the destiny God has planned, and for His Kingdom power to be revealed. (Da. 2:21& Mt. 6:10)

More: <http://www.kurdishherald.com/issue/v002/001/article03.php>

■ Pakistan: Christians accused after Muslim attack

In the wake of an attack this week by 150 armed Muslims on the Christian colony of Pahar Ganj police have filed a false First Information Report (FIR) against 40 unnamed Christians and arrested five Christians who were only visiting the area. Two churches were also damaged, Christian houses were shot at and Christian shops burnt. Rev. Edward Joseph of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Karachi said the Muslim mob of armed mainly Pathan men gathered at the entrance of the Christian slum and charged in attacking homes and desecrating and vandalizing St. Mary's Church of Pakistan and the Interdenominational Calvary Church. Rev. Razzaq Mathews said Muslims have frequently levelled baseless charges of blasphemy against area Christians and in the sad Pahar Ganj episode Christians were attacked for no reason.

Pray: that local politicians and clergymen from both sides would broker a truce.

More: <http://www.compassdirect.org/english/country/pakistan/15668/>

■ Chile: Delivery of food and supplies

World Vision working in Chile for 30 years with over 100 staff distributed water, food, blankets, and diapers in Dichato, a town that was destroyed. World Vision's communications manager said, 'In Dichato there's nothing, nothing! They have been hit with the earthquake and again with the tsunami.' Elsewhere, in Juan Fernandez a twelve year old girl sounded the alarm in the park after seeing the boats in the bay leaping and warned the village of the imminent tsunami after the earthquake. She did not know the code specified for such tragedies but the alarm woke up several neighbours and the news spread rapidly leading to many people reaching safety in the highest part of the island.

<http://momento24.com/en/2010/03/01/girl-warned-about-the-tsunami-in-juan-fernandez-island/>

Pray: that in the midst of devastation NGO's would find innovative ways to meet every need. (Pr.1:5)

More: <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/world-vision-delivers-food-supplies-to-outlying-areas-devastated-by-chile-quake-tsunamis-86313147.html>

■ China: Spiritual malnutrition

A Catholic priest who does not want to use his real name, from a traditional Catholic family in northern China, and who has been giving spiritual retreats to lay Catholics and nuns and translating work in mainland China says urgent attention is essential to resolve challenges that lie in the China Church. He calls for reconciliation because of many conflicts and divisions within the Church communities - not only in China but the situation affects the ongoing problem facing the Church of China because of its unfortunate historical background. The Catholic Church in China needs new leadership with vision and courage. But the Holy See also has a lot of work ahead of it when it comes to diplomatic negotiations with the Chinese government. The most important outcome would be to establish a direct chain of command within the Church with some kind of collaboration and consultation with the government agencies concerned.

Pray: for the catholic church in China to grow in unity under God's authority.(Ne.6:16)

More: <http://www.ucanews.com/2010/03/02/spiritual-malnutrition-in-china/>

■ India: Violence continues against Christians

A depiction of Christ with a cigarette and beer has led to even more violence against Christians in India. The picture was included on a poster for the upcoming Hindu festival, Ram Naumi. The poster included depictions of other religious deities as they normally appear. Outraged, Christians protested and Hindus reacted. Hindu extremist sects Bajrang Dal and Shiv Sena beat a pastor of the Church of North India and a Salvation Army officer. Then, they also burned and looted two churches, resulting in more opposition by Christians.

Pray: for Christians to continue to remain strong and to defend their faith peacefully despite dangers to their physical well-being. (Ro.8:38)

More: <http://www.mnnonline.org/article/13936>

■ Middle East: Protests continue over land

Palestinian activists say they will continue protests against an apparent re-occupation of an abandoned Israeli army outpost on the outskirts of Beit Sahour near Bethlehem, despite being repelled by the Israel Defence Forces. 'We are going to be there next week. We object to the military presence there, and will demonstrate peacefully against that presence there,' said Bethlehem University professor Mazin Qumsiyeh, who belongs to the Greek Melkite Church and lives in Beit Sahour. People last Saturday's protest said it turned violent after Israeli border police officials fired stun grenades, tear gas and rubber bullets at a group of about 75 banner-waving demonstrators who marched up to the outpost to protest about the Israeli presence there. Although demonstrators began leaving the area after a sudden heavy downpour of rain, the border police continued firing at the group as they dispersed.

Pray: for God to bring a peaceful resolution to land disputes. (Zec.9:8)

More: <http://www.eni.ch/featured/article.php?id=3844>

PRAISE REPORTS

■ Canada: Olympic 'BURN' report

A massive strike for God's Kingdom resulted from 27 hours of continuous worship and prayer by over 600 passionate Christians in the midst of the 2010 Olympics. The event organisers Cityscape were joined by YWAM, More Than Gold, Bethel teams, The Bridge, Vancouver Chinese Intercessory Team, Worship Invasion and many more. (see INSIGHT article 0710) 'We were overwhelmed with the response from the Lord and from the Body of Christ. The worship was extraordinary as God's presence continued to increase by the hour, ending with a massive breakthrough as the weighty presence of God made it hard to stand and 500 faith-filled worshipers made a prophetic declaration that Vancouver was shifting to become a city that loves the presence of God. Our prayers were quickly answered as we saw salvation beginning to break out in the city with spontaneous testimonies of the atmosphere of Vancouver having dramatically shifted. When light comes darkness has to flee!'

Praise: God for His wake up call to Canada, and ask Him for a Canadian revival. (Eph.5:14-16)

More: <http://cityscapeprayer.org/city/page4/page4.html>

■ Haiti: Thousands profess faith in Christ since earthquake

A reported 40,127 Haitians have made professions of faith in Jesus Christ since the January earthquake. 'People were in the streets begging God for forgiveness and mercy' said a Minister from Port-au-Prince. Professions of faith also have been reported by Florida and Southern Baptist medical and disaster relief teams as volunteers shared the Gospel. This news of light in the midst of such darkness came from the Confraternite Missionnaire Baptiste d'Haiti (CMBH) a partnership of nearly 900 Haitian Baptist churches throughout Haiti. Also in February during a citywide holiday observance in Cap Haitien, 'thousands upon thousands filled the streets seeking God and asking Him to spare them from what happened in Port-au-Prince. The total for professions of faiths reported is based on written reports by churches and pastors forwarded to the director of ministry. The regional missionaries provide numbers of professions of faith and baptisms as part of their reports on disaster relief ministry.

Praise: and thank God for the spiritual evidence of His presence, and pray for complete renewal of Haiti. (Ps.104:30)

More: <http://www.bpnews.net/bpnews.asp?id=32370&ref=BPNews-RSSFeed0225>

PRAYER FORUM OF BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

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