



PRAYER ALERT...



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BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

■ BBC internal memo admits anti-Christian bias

The British Broadcasting Corporation has admitted to a marked bias against Christianity and a strong inclination to pro-Muslim reporting among the network's executives and key anchors, in a leaked account of an 'impartiality summit.' The Daily Mail reported Sunday on the secret London meeting of key executives, called by BBC chairman Michael Grade and hosted by veteran broadcaster Sue Lawley. The report revealed that many senior executives are deeply frustrated with the corporation's commitment to 'political correctness' and liberal policies at the expense of journalistic integrity and objectivity. BBC executives admitted the corporation is dominated by homosexuals. They acknowledged that ethnic minorities held a disproportionate number of positions and said the BBC deliberately encourages multiculturalism and is more careful to avoid offending the Muslim community than Christians. 'The BBC is not impartial or neutral,' said Andrew Marr, 'It's a publicly funded, urban organization with an abnormally large number of young people, ethnic minorities and gay people'.

Pray: for our media especially the BBC that those speaking out against its liberalisation will gain favour and we will see a return to its foundational Christian values.

More: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/news/news.htm>

■ Prince Charles plans to break tradition with multi-faith coronation

Despite calls from Christian leaders that Prince Charles should be a defender of 'the' faith, reports indicate that the heir to the throne has made it clear he wants to be crowned King in a multi-faith coronation service in a dramatic break with tradition. The Prince of Wales is said to have decided that the Christian service in Westminster Abbey must be followed by a separate ceremony involving religious leaders from other faiths. Prince Charles believes reforms to the coronation are vital to reflect the changes in British society that have taken place since the Queen was crowned in 1953, according to a report in this week's Spectator magazine. But the Evangelical Alliance, which represents over one million Evangelical Christians in the UK, is calling for him to swear the traditional coronation oath to be 'Defender of the Faith'. The Archbishop of Canterbury Dr Rowan Williams and most Anglican bishops oppose such a move.

Pray: for Prince Charles and the royal family that Charles will make wise decisions and uphold this nations Christian values. (1 Pet 2:17)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/prince.charles.plans.to.break.tradition.with.multifaith.coronation/8135.htm>

■ BA cross worker offered backroom job

A British Airways employee who was banned from wearing a cross round her neck has been told she can return to work if she agrees to take a backroom job. The airline wrote to Nadia Eweida, 55, a Heathrow check-in worker, telling her she would not be allowed to resume her duties in the terminal if she continued to wear the religious symbol. Miss Eweida and

British Airways became locked in a row over her crucifix last month after she refused to remove it on the grounds that it breached the airline's uniform policy. She was offered a choice of suspension on paid leave, which she feared would be an admission that she had done something wrong, or unpaid leave pending disciplinary action. A decision on whether the company should change its policy, which does not allow any visible jewellery, is expected in three weeks. In the meantime, Mark Gardiner, BA world cargo general manager, has written to Miss Eweida offering her a 'non-uniform' job.

Pray: for all those who are being challenged for making a stand for their faith (See Prayer Alert 4006)

More: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml;jsessionid=WHE2LM04MELRVQFIQMFCFFOAVCBQYIV0?xml=/news/2006/10/26>

■ Adams and Eames talks 'positive'

Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams and Church of Ireland leader Lord Eames have held their first formal meeting. Afterwards, Lord Eames, who led a delegation of the four northern Church of Ireland bishops to Stormont, described the meeting as 'positive'. Monday's meeting lasted for about one and a half hours. Lord Eames stressed the need for what he called 'full and equal participation in the structures of democracy with support for policing'. Speaking after the meeting, Mr Adams said he and Archbishop Eames discussed sectarianism, which he described 'as one of the biggest blights of our society'. 'It was a public event which, I think, sends its own very positive signal,' he said. 'It was a very open, transparent, positive and hopeful discussion'. The meeting followed a recent ground-breaking meeting between Ian Paisley and Catholic Primate Sean Brady.

Pray: Continue praying for the developing situation in NI that the Lord will direct the thoughts of all those involved. (Math 5; 9)

More: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern_ireland/6075142.stm

■ Pensioners march on Westminster

Pensioners have begun a rally to protest over planned reforms which they say do not help people struggling to pay bills. Organisers say the government's Pensions White Paper contains 'nothing of immediate benefit'. The National Pensioners Convention will call for the link between earnings and pensions to be restored and for a £30 a week rise in the state pension. The government said its initiatives had helped lift millions out of poverty. The NPC - organisers of the rally - are lobbying Parliament and presenting a petition to Downing Street. One male pensioner taking part in the rally asked BBC News: 'Do we eat, e-a-t, or do we heat, h-e-a-t because there are going to be thousands of pensioners that are going to possibly die if we have a hard winter this year.' Pensions minister James Purnell defended the Government's policy on pensions. He told BBC News: 'The average income of pensioners has been growing faster than the average earnings of the rest of the population'.

Pray: that parliament will listen to the protests of the people and not forget vulnerable sectors of society. (Lev 19: 32)

More: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/6083888.stm>

■ Leading Methodists to join march on climate change

Little over a week remains until thousands of campaigners gather in London to take part in a march on climate change. Leading figures from the Methodist Church will be joining them to make their voices heard. The I Count rally has been organised by the Stop Climate Chaos coalition and is backed by Operation Noah - an ecumenical Christian movement backed by The Methodist Church. Campaigners will put pressure on the government to take urgent action on climate change at the rally on 4 November. Dudley Coates says 'We hope as many people will join us on the day, to make their voices heard and to demonstrate that this is an issue that affects us all. But there are many things people can do even if they can't join the march on the 4th. Climate change is one of the key issues we face: none of us will be immune from its effects and all of us have a part to play in addressing it.' The rally has been timed to coincide with key climate change talks taking place in Nairobi, Kenya, next month.

Pray: that those in authority will rise to the task and take a lead in seeking ways to reduce the effects of climate change.

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/leading.methodists.to.join.march.on.climate.change/8138.htm>

EUROPE

■ European ministers discuss terror

Tackling extremist ideas and finding ways to pre-empt terror attacks are being discussed as six European interior ministers meet in the UK. Home Secretary John Reid is hosting his counterparts from Germany, France, Spain, Italy and Poland for two days. They are also due to discuss how to encourage dialogue with Muslim communities, international organised crime and illegal migration. The Home Office said the meeting would 'explore how they can work together'. On Thursday, the ministers will discuss how to shut off illegal immigration routes and how to work with unspecified third world countries to control migration flows. They will also debate reducing harm caused by organised crime, including value added tax (VAT) fraud and trafficking of drugs and people. Known as the G6, the group has no formal decision-making powers and is not an official body of the EU. But agreements on cross-border co-operation can be made between the six countries - which account for three-quarters of the EU's population - without needing EU approval.

Pray: for Gods wisdom for our leaders, and that they would agree on His way forward, not relying only on the intelligence of man.

More: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/6081850.stm

■ Vice President of European Parliament criticises attitude towards Churches

The European Parliament (EP) has come under fire from one of its most senior officials, who criticised the attitude of the EP towards traditional churches. The Vice President of the European Parliament, Mario Mauro, said in an interview with Russia's Interfax news agency that the EP had an 'unfair policy' towards traditional churches Catholic newspaper The Universe reported. He also warned of the damaging effect that opposition to churches could have on efforts to unite Europe. 'Certain countries are trying to build a society without God, and this is bringing very serious problems. Those who oppose the participation of churches in European public life may become a source of destruction for the political project of a united Europe,' he said. The EP Vice President made the comments while in Moscow for a conference on 'Europe at a turning point'.

Pray: for the Christian voice of truth humility and justice to be heard over Europe, regardless of the opposition from other belief systems. (Ps.68:1)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/vice.president.of.european.parliament.criticises.attitude.towards.churches/8125.htm>

WORLDWIDE

■ Cross on museum brochure stirs uproar

A religious Jerusalem city councilman on Wednesday called for the immediate resignation of the director of the Israel Museum following the distribution of a museum brochure featuring a girl wearing a cross on its cover. The brochure, detailing upcoming events at the Israel Museum from October-November, was mailed to Jerusalem residents and included wishes on its cover for the Jewish New Year. 'It is unnecessary to point out the offence [this] caused to the feelings of the Jewish public,' city councilman Yair Gabbai of the National Religious Party wrote in a Sunday letter to Israel Museum director James S. Snyder. 'You can imagine the reaction of the Muslim public if a similar [New Year] blessing including a cross was sent to [Arab] homes in east Jerusalem for Ramadan,' he wrote. The image of the girl wearing the cross on a necklace which appears on the cover of the museum brochure was taken from an exhibition at the museum. The museum declined comment on the issue on Wednesday.

Pray: that Christians and Jews in Jerusalem would be united and cry 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.' (Luke 13: 35)

More: <http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?cid=1161811205360&pagename=JPost%2FJPArticle%2FShowFull>

■ At 92, academic to face court for remarks on Islamic headscarf

At 92, Muazzez Ilmiye Cig, doyenne of Turkish academics, goes on trial November 1st for scientific writings deemed offensive to Islamists who disagree with her interpretation of the origins of the Muslim headscarf. Cig, an expert on the Sumerians, an urban civilization of Mesopotamia dating back to 5000 BC and credited with inventing the art of writing, has been a defender of the secular values established in Turkey by Mustafa kemal Ataturk, the founder in 1923 of the modern republic. A lawyer from the western city of Izmir launched a process that resulted in a lawsuit against the eminent academic and her editor on grounds of 'provoking racial and religious hatred'; both could be jailed if convicted.

Pray: against the eroding of Turkish values that make them unique in the Middle East, and that God would use Turkey as a bridge between Islam and the western world. (Rom.9:25)

More: http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticleNew.asp?xfile=data/theworld/2006/October/theworld_October969.xml§ion=theworld

■ Archbishop celebrates Chinese churches at the end of his visit

Dr Williams has raised questions of religious freedom with the Chinese authorities on his trip, but has wished to do so in a way which is positive rather than confrontational. He has spoken both about the general question of civil rights and faith groups, and also about six particular cases. The Chinese government officially sees religious communities as potential sources of integration and morality in a fast-changing society, but its regional religious affairs officials often crack down hard on unregistered churches or 'sects'. They also have a concern for the overriding priority of Chinese identity. Last week Christian Solidarity Worldwide, through its deputy national director, Tina Lambert, said that 'Chinese officials cannot credibly claim to be showing the Archbishop the face of Christianity in China when they suppress the majority of churches in the country and punish those who refuse to come under state control.'

Pray: for doors to be opened for our Christian leaders to spread the gospel of peace globally; and that the international media would give honest accounts of their comments.

More: http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/content/news_syndication/article_061025china.shtml

■ Video shows Chinese border-guards shooting refugees from Tibet

Amnesty International fears for the safety of persons detained and those unaccounted for after an incident on 30th September. An international group of mountaineers climbing in the Himaayas witnessed Chinese border control guards shooting at a group of Tibetans, including children, who were trying to flee to Nepal. At least two children and a nun are thought to have been killed (link below includes video). Nine children, thought to be aged between six and 10, and one man are known to have been detained by the Chinese authorities, and around 20 other individuals are unaccounted for. The mountaineers claim the shooting took place about 300 yards away from them, on the glaciated Nangpa Pass, a commonly-used escape route for people fleeing China. Chinese security personnel fired two warning shots at the group of Tibetans, who numbered about 70 people. The group got dispersed, and the security personnel took aim at some 20 of the group.

Pray: that Amnesty International would successfully highlight and bring about justice for these and other Chinese

detainees, particularly in light of article 3 above.

More: <http://www.amnesty.ca/urgentaction/index.php>

■ **Oxfam report Starbucks denying Ethiopia fair trade**

US coffee chain Starbucks is denying Ethiopia earnings of up to £47m a year, the charity Oxfam has claimed. The charity says the firm asked the National Coffee Association to block Ethiopia's bid to trademark two types of coffee bean in the US. The move would have given farmers a greater share of profits. But Starbucks denies approaching the NCA, and the association says Ethiopia is being badly advised and there is no economic case to back Oxfam's views. The Ethiopian government filed applications to trademark the coffee bean names Sidamo and Harar in US courts. The charity claims that Starbucks flagged up the application to the NCA - of which the firm is a leading member. The NCA then filed its opposition at the US Patent and Trademark Office. Oxfam said the charity had worked with Starbucks in the past and appealed to the firm to 'act responsibly'.

Pray: for justice for the oppressed. (Ps.72:4)

More: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/6086330.stm>

■ **12 million trapped in slavery worldwide**

A human rights activist claimed that at least 12 million people, most of them children, are still trapped in slavery worldwide. Children are forced into pornography and prostitution, and exploited as cheap labour and child soldiers, highlighted Sarah Williams of the pressure group Anti-Slavery International. 'They are more vulnerable, cheaper to hire and less likely to demand higher wages or better working conditions,' she said of the 8.4 million children who are modern day slaves. 'This is unfinished business,' she told a London seminar reviewing how multicultural Britain plans to mark the bicentenary next year of the abolition of its slave trade. According to Williams, thousands of people have been abducted and enslaved in Sudan since the outbreak of civil war in 1983. In addition, hundreds of thousands of people in Burma have been forced to work as farm labourers, army porters or construction workers for little or no pay.

Pray: for continued highlighting of this traffic in human lives, and for the appropriate authorities to be enabled to break its hold on communities. (Ps.68:5)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/12.million.trapped.in.slavery.worldwide/8127.htm>

PRaise REPORTS

■ **Islamization of Europe is being interrupted by God**

Jack Shiflet with the Association of Baptists for World Evangelism says 'There are more Muslims coming to Christ today, than any (other) time in the history of Islam.' Shiflet says while five-percent of Muslims fall into the 'radical' category and receive all the media coverage, 50 percent of the Muslim population is considered moderate. 'We feel this is a wonderful opportunity to share Christ - with the average Christian sharing Christ with the average Muslim,' he says. While the media covers the bombings, effigy burnings and other radical Muslim violence, Shiflet is quoted as saying that it's having another effect on moderate Muslims. 'When they see tragedy going on, or bombs going off because of protests for cartoons and what have you, God is working,' he says. 'He's teaching the Muslim people that Islam is not what they thought it was.'

Praise: God for this encouraging news and pray that we, as the Church, will take up the challenge. (Ps 150)

More: http://www.breakingchristiannews.com/articles/display_art_pf.html?ID=3186

■ **Salvation Army receives legal status in Russia after 5-Year battle**

'This is an example for other churches in Russia - it tells them that they can hope for justice,' said Salvation Army Moscow's Aleksandr Kharkov to Forum 18 on Oct. 11. For five-years Russia has denied the Salvation Army legal status, claiming it was a militarized organization. However, the European Court of Human Rights ruled unanimously that the Salvation Army should not only receive status but be compensated with 10,000 Euros. The Salvation Army has been at work in Russia for ten years now, and was denied registration in 2000. It has brought much needed relief to a country in need, and its humanitarian efforts will only be strengthened by this new turn of events. 'The Salvation Army Moscow case was the first ruling by ECHR on a Russian religious organization. Kharkov and the group's lawyers believe the case will be a precedent for others to follow.' The Salvation Army's lawyers have declared this an 'historic' decision with hopes it will be closely followed by many more such victories.

Praise: God for this breakthrough for the Salvation Army and pray that this will be the precedent for others.

More: http://www.breakingchristiannews.com/articles/display_art_pf.html?ID=3184

PRAYER ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

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