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Editorial

God Said No

[In the last edition, we mentioned the incident of a rogue Soviet submarine that approached Pearl Harbor with the intention of launching missiles with nuclear warheads and destroying the U.S. Naval Base and the city of Honolulu. This little known fact was included almost as an afterthought, not essential to the central theme. Since then we have felt that a broader look at this happening might help us to realize how vulnerable we are in a volatile world.

We are taught from small up that we shouldn't tell a lie, because one lie requires another. In international diplomacy the ability to tell a successful lie, and another and yet another, and when occasion demands it, to vehemently deny the truth, is an art honed to a razor edge. Indeed, the worth of a diplomat is largely dependant on his ability to deny the truth and convincingly project the untruth. The story that we will tell about the Soviet ballistic submarine, the K-129, contains enough lies and treachery to sink a battleship.]

Isaiah talks about "the waters of the great deep." During the day and while you sleep at night—this very instant, as you read these words—large "fish," 350-400 feet long, up to 40 feet in diameter, displacing over 9,000 long tons, are cruising the waters of the great deep, some at speeds of over 25 knots (30 m.p.h.). The "great fish" that swallowed Jonah carried only one passenger; these "fish" carry a hundred, some more some less, between officers and enlisted men, who work, eat and sleep in a silent, dark, eerie, hostile world.

The men in these large nuclear fish are not on a pleasure cruise. Theirs is a deadly business. In the belly of each fish there are twelve multi-targeted cruise missiles with nuclear warheads, each with hundreds of times the destructive power of the first bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, If right now all the missiles in all the submarines at sea were to be targeted on major cities of the world, and permitted to reach their targets, civilization, as we know it today, would end in a scorching cloud of fire and brimstone, as so many Sodoms and Gomorrahs.

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Back in the sixties, when the Cold War was still very cold and very real, most of the submarines were diesel-electric craft, as was the case of the Soviet K-129, known to the Americans as a Golf-class sub. With a normal crew of 73, conditions on board were cramped. With only 27 bunks in the aft torpedo room for 70 sailors (top officers had their private bunks), the crew had to resort to “hot bunking”—sleeping in shifts. The air in these subs, which were often submerged for weeks at a time (only coming to snorkeling depth to recharge batteries and take in fresh air), was almost unbearable. The constant stench of diesel fuel, grimy bodies and inadequate restroom facilities created a nauseous stench. The only amenity aboard these subs was the food, the very best to be found in Russia, including caviar.

It is said that the sailors on these subs came as close to being the “new Soviet man” as the Marxist system would ever produce. Fanatically patriotic, they were prepared to give their lives for the Motherland at the drop of a pin. They were trained, trained, trained, to follow orders down to the last jot and tittle. If given the order to launch a missile that would crisp out a million lives, they would unquestioningly set in motion the launch procedure.

(It was this exact “Soviet virtue” that put these men at a tremendous disadvantage with their “free-world” counterparts. The “new Soviet man” was trained to blindly follow orders, which precluded personal initiative. In the absence of orders, this “new Soviet man” was reduced to a pillar of salt. He was taught to obey, not to think. Really, there is nothing surprising about this. The reward for personal initiative in the Soviet Union was often the firing squad. So why take a chance and think? Kremlin strategists believed that America’s greatest weakness was its inability to sacrifice its people for the good of the nation. History shows us that a nation that values and trusts its own people need not demand blind sacrifice.)

During communism’s heyday in the Soviet Union, both industry and the armed forces were constantly monitored by a political officer. His official function was to indoctrinate, but his real work—of which everyone was aware—was to spy, to report any anti-Soviet action or behavior. This *zampolit*, as he was called, packed more power than men of higher rank. This was also the case aboard Soviet subs. Although outranked, the final decision in any area that could possibly have political repercussions was always his.

The commander of the K129 was Captain first class Kozbar, age 38, his first officer was Captain second class Zhuravin, age 34, and the *zampolit* was Captain third class Fedor E. Lobas. The ship’s doctor was Major Sergey Chereponov.

The Golf-class submarines were 324 feet long and 27 feet wide. Fully fueled and fully armed, they displaced approximately 2,850 tons when submerged. Propulsion came from three 2,000 horsepower diesel engines, two 1,350 horsepower electric motors and one 2,700 horsepower electric motor, plus a small 180 horsepower electric motor for slow, ultraquiet operations, used when under intense surveillance. Even though a structural carryover of World War II submarines, the Golfs packed a fearful arsenal: six torpedo tubes, with up to 16 torpedoes onboard, two of which with nuclear warheads for obliterating armadas or seashore installations and three missile silos just aft of the conning tower. Each missile, tipped with a one-megaton warhead, had

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a 375 mile range. The maximum operating depth was 853 feet, although they would withstand pressure of nearly 1,000 feet.

Life aboard a submarine bears little resemblance to life as we know it...

Darkness. Submariners take darkness for granted. Their ears are their eyes; they see by hearing. Sophisticated sonar and electronic listening devices constantly funnel data into the sonar room, where technicians with headphones monitor all outside sound. Even with modern navigation equipment and highly accurate charts, it is nonetheless nothing short of a miracle for a nuclear sub to circumvent the earth while submerged, without surfacing a single time.

Pressure. We talk about working under pressure. Submerged submarines are constantly under pressure. When under attack, the deeper they dive, the greater their protection from enemy torpedoes and depth charges—and the closer they are to being mercilessly destroyed by a crushed hull.

Lack of air. Modern nuclear subs can remain submerged for prolonged periods, up to months. Most diesel/electric models, like the Golfs, must surface regularly. After 24 hours submerged, the normally foul air becomes almost unbreathable. Thus in warfare, surface ships that manage to maintain sonar contact with a submerged sub, need but patiently wait topside until it is forced to surface for air.

(During the Cold War, U.S. and Soviet subs played constant “games” by stalking each other. To be forced to surface was always extremely humiliating; a tacit admission of having “lost the battle.” For the Soviet commanders, it meant a severe reprimand when returning home, and at times, demotion.)

Constant surveillance. An effort is made to constantly monitor all “enemy” submarine activities at all times by an array of sophisticated spying devices located in satellites, surface ships, submarines and underwater devices planted on the ocean floor. Some of these devices are so precise that a piece of silverware dropped can be heard in another ship miles away. In a game of cat and mouse, when a sub knows it is under intense surveillance, talk must be reduced to a whisper. The moment a new Soviet sub is launched, US Navy intelligence begins making acoustical sound tracts of its diesel and electric motor noises, as well as the peculiarities of its propeller noises. All this information is fed into the Navy’s Cray computers and becomes available to specialists involved in tracking enemy subs. An experienced submarine sonar operator commits these sounds to memory and can in an instant identify an enemy sub by its “signature,” as these sounds are known.

A 70-day stint at sea in a diesel/electric sub, submerged most of the time, is no picnic. The omnipresent stench, as well as diesel fumes and battery gases, create many health problems. Thus, upon returning to port, while the sub is being serviced, the crew is given an extended leave, which includes medical treatment, as needed.

K129 had been in port only a short time when the crew was ordered back to duty for a longer than usual tour. Instead of a complete maintenance, that usually took three to six months. No explanations were given. Needless to say, it wasn’t a happy bunch that interrupted a much deserved vacation and reported to duty. This was the first warning that the mission about to be embarked on was by no means routine. It also meant that

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the K129 crew with this mission would spend eight months submerged in a 12 month period, something to be expected only when at war or during a severe crisis.

The second warning that something unusual was underfoot was the number of crew members who would be sailing. The normal complement was 83 crew members. This time, they were told, there would be four extras, which would make things just a bit more crowded. But, then just as the K129 was about to sail, twelve additional men showed up with written orders to board. To add to the confusion, these additional men were a strange assortment of sailors who did not integrate with the normal crew. Doubtlessly many eyebrows were raised by this inexplicable last-minute addition to the crew.

Now, instead of the normal complement of 83 crew members, there were 98. With a regular crew, barely enough food and water could be stored for a voyage. All the submarine's facilities would be strained to the maximum. Each crew member was allotted one liter of water per day for *drinking, bathing and laundry*. There were but three toilets on the sub. Even with hot bunking, where would all the men sleep?

There was a strange premonition among some of the crew that something was desperately amiss. After Irina, the first officer's wife, had said good bye to her husband and boarded the plane for home, she looked out the window and saw he was crying, something she had never seen him do before.

The K129 sailed out of the Avachinskaya Bay in the predawn hours of February 24, 1968. It traveled on the surface with no running lights, hoping to avoid detection by any American sub that might be prowling in the area.

Once the bay was cleared, a vicious sea was encountered that caused the K129 to roll and buck. Even seasoned seamen became seasick. As the seabed fell away, the sub dived and after routine tests, began cruising at 200 feet, powered by its huge electrical motors.

The captain and the zampolit opened the sealed envelopes given them by an admiral just before sailing, which gave them their patrol orders. The nature of these orders have never been made public, but everything indicates the K129 was ordered to an area some 650 miles northwest of Pearl Harbor, in the Hawaiian Islands.

The sea through which the K129 traveled was a gelid 33°F. Except for in the engine room, the interior of the sub was miserably cold and humid—and already smelly.

The K129 was put through a series of maneuvers designed to detect or shake off American surveillance. Little did the officers know, nor Navy headquarters, that neither darkness nor depth could hide them. They were tracked from the minute they left base. Satellites, lurking submarines and cables surreptitiously strung on the ocean floor almost up to the base harbor doorstep told a progressive story.

It is obviously necessary for not only subs, but for all warships to communicate. Thus messages were compressed into tiny packages that were transmitted in microbursts of several milliseconds. Even though US surveillance could seldom decipher these messages, they nonetheless were a giveaway as to the location of the sub. Thus the K129 was tracked as it crossed the ocean en route to Pearl Harbor. All the data collected was sent to the powerful Cray computer and stored in the K129's dossier. A note was made that the K129 was sailing sooner than expected.

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The officers of the K129 were unaware how closely the US Navy was following their trail. Nor were they aware that in the Kremlin a shady group of men were anxiously accompanying their progress.

As the journey of the K129 progressed, the ocean water became warmer and warmer. By the time the Tropic of Cancer was reached, the water temperature was 60°F. As tropical waters were approached, temperatures inside the sub became almost intolerable. In the engine room, the mercury rose to 120°F. The odors of nearly a hundred bodies, diesel and gas fumes created an almost septic environment in the sub.

Cruising depth during the day was 200 feet. At night the K129 would ascend to within 40 feet of the surface and raise its snorkel, making it possible to run the diesel engines. Two would propel the sub and the third would recharge the 440 two-volt batteries.

On March 6, the K129 was nearing the end of its journey. Using its small auxiliary electric motor, traveling at a mere two knots to avoid sonar detection, it slowly crept toward Pearl Harbor.

March 7, fourteen days after leaving port and having traveled 2,396 nautical miles, K129 was reaching its destination.

The stillness aboard was broken by an order given over the intercom: “Prepare to Surface.”

The K129 rose to 30 feet, which permitted deployment of the periscopes. The horizon was carefully scanned in all directions and then another order was given: “Full surface.” Even as the craft broke surface, orders were given to be prepared for an emergency dive, should it become necessary.

The inrush of fresh air when the hatch was opened was greedily inhaled by part of the crew. But not all. By now most of the regular crew members were tightly confined in the two forward compartments of the sub. We are unaware of how this came about.

A nuclear missile is not fired on the spur of the moment by anyone who can manage to get his finger on the trigger. In the case of the Soviet Navy, the first step in setting the launching procedure in action was a red-alert from the Soviet General Staff in Moscow, which alerted those responsible for launching the missile that a nuclear strike against the motherland was imminent or already taking place. At this point the captain and zampolit would open a safe and remove a sealed package with instructions on how to position the sub for the launch.

The captain would then await a launch confirmation from headquarters, together with codes that would have to be added to a second packet of codes stored in the safe. Once these codes had been combined, the missile fail-safe system would be unlocked.

In the final step, the captain, the first officer and the zampolit would individually verify the General Staff launch orders. This would generate a launch key for each officer, which they would have to simultaneously insert in the console for the missile to fire.

“This is not a drill. Compartments sealed. Coordinates confirmed. Prepare for launch.” The hatch covering missile number one was opened. The countdown echoed through the control area of the sub: *shyest, pyat, chetyre...tri...dva...odin—Zero!*

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Everyone braced for the terrible jolt as compressed air would thrust the missile out of its tube, before its liquid fuel would ignite and hurl it toward its destination.

What occurred at liftoff was not at all what the submariners had been trained to expect. Instead of a jolt and the hiss of compressed air being released, there was a terrible roar that shook the whole sub as though it were a mere rag doll.

At that moment, thousands of miles away, Irina, the wife of the first officer, had taken her son, Misha, to an office party in the Ministry of Economics, for International Woman's Day festivities. She was enjoying herself, until suddenly—as she would relate years later—“I know exactly the day and the hour when they died. We were celebrating International Woman's Day at work. I was there with my son, and we were having a good time. All of a sudden, I went into hysterics. I broke down, went crazy—I didn't know what was happening to me.” Her friends took her home, where she remained inconsolable. The next day she quit her job at the Ministry.

Within several minutes of the explosion, the K129 was taking its final dive, plunging toward the ocean floor three miles below, striking at a 35 degree angle and a speed of over 60 m.p.h., breaking into several parts.

What happened?

The story of what happened is doubtlessly one of the most brilliantly executed intelligence coups of all times. And we only know part of the story. Those responsible for the subsequent investigation were sworn to lifetime secrecy and give out information only as it is declassified. To tell everything that is known would reveal to the Kremlin the extent of US surveillance...

In 1984 Tom Clancy wrote a book called *The Hunt for the Red October*. It is rumored that he got wind of the K129 episode while most details were yet classified. Yet he heard enough to come up with the plot that involves an ultra-secret Soviet sub that was successfully handed over to the US by its disgruntled captain and a few loyal officers, *without* the rest of the crew ever catching on as to what was taking place. The book is spellbinding and should be read in one sitting. The book is fiction.

The story which we are about to tell, in a few words, is not fiction. Yet, it goes far beyond what Clancy was able to imagine. It is the account of how the CIA put the pieces together—literally—to tell a true story that is stranger than fiction.

A US satellite recorded the flash of the exploding K129 and a sonic station caught the blast. Those monitoring the instruments were not immediately aware of what was happening. Pearl Harbor and Honolulu slept through the entire incident without the slightest inkling that the death angel, intended to extinguish hundreds of thousands of lives, crashed while yet at sea.

But it didn't take long until U.S. Intelligence became aware that something unspeakably terrible had just about happened. We don't know what President Lyndon B. Johnson's reaction was when briefed on the failed plot. He doubtlessly was horrified, but left it up to the C.I.A. to deal with the situation.

Enter Richard M. Nixon. Shortly after being sworn into office, Nixon was briefed on the K129 incident. His agile mind immediately grasped the immense political harvest

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that it could yield. His Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, the eternal diplomat, just as quickly saw what he would be able to accomplish if the full story were known. The C.I.A. was given a free hand and a limitless budget to investigate the accident, three miles below the ocean surface—with one restriction: Total and absolute secrecy.

To understand how such an undertaking, that went even beyond Tom Clancy's fictional dreams, we must understand that the C.I.A., and other similar organs, are made up of some of the nation's top brains. It would take men with an astronomical I.Q. to look down three miles into the ocean and do an autopsy on a sunken sub. In total secrecy.

Project Jennifer. Not only would the C.I.A. have to deceive the world, specially the Russians, but the American people and much of the C.I.A. itself. Only a handful of people would know the whole story; everyone else, including those involved in the project, would have only fragmentary knowledge, never the full picture. In fact, not even the President of the United States was aware of the magnitude of Project Jennifer.

During the time of the K129 disaster, U.S. billionaire Howard Hughes was still in his heyday. One of his specialties was deep-sea exploration. Thus Hughes became both the executor and cover-up of Project Jennifer. For this a fantastic story had to be fabricated and an enormous ship built, that would be christened the Glomar Explorer. The surreal mission of this ship would be to mine manganese from the ocean floor. It never seems to have occurred to anyone that there was no shortage of manganese which could be mined conventionally—thus there being no need to mine from the ocean floor three miles down.

That was the cover story.

When the K129 failed to make contact with base, the Russians realized something serious had gone wrong—and that the Americans probably knew more about what had happened than they themselves knew. This hunch was reinforced when American ships, apparently searching for something, began congregating on an area some 400 miles from where the actual tragedy occurred. This ruse worked so well that when the Glomar Explorer began operation at the actual site, no suspicions were aroused, or should we say, no suspicions that couldn't be dissipated with additional doses of deception.

We must remember, however, that the Glomar Explorer had to be built before it could begin "mining" on the ocean floor. In the meantime a nuclear submarine that could remain submerged months on end was customized with a bottom hatch from which miles of cable could be uncoiled and the area swept with strobe lights, cameras and a mechanical hand for retrieving objects. It must be remembered that on the ocean floor the darkness is absolute. Also, even though the coordinates of the explosion were known, the sub didn't drop vertically, but veered off to one side. Thus the K129 had to be located in an area of many square miles in an operation that one submariner said was like looking for a baseball in a field on a pitch dark night with a penlight.

Slowly the Halibut—the name of the customized sub—had to troll back and forth as men sat glued to monitors, watching as the sea bottom was slowly illuminated by strobe lights. In mid August the sub was found.

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Since the K129 had broken into a number of sections, a special robot camera attached to the cable was able to penetrate most of the compartments of the sub and take 22,000 high resolution pictures. Not only did these pictures give a very good idea of what happened, but it showed most of the crew members, perfectly preserved by the gelid water three miles down and by the fact that no predatory fish or microorganisms exist that far down.

President Nixon wanted more than photos. He wanted *the sub itself*, which is why orders had been given to build the Glomar Explorer. This extraordinary ship weighed 63,000 tons and was as long as a modern battleship. The derrick in the middle of the deck was the height of a 23 story building, 263 feet tall. Below the waterline submerged legs, with powerful thrusters, descended 100 feet. Thus, except for in a most violent storm, the ship was constantly stationary.

What made the Glomar Explorer a truly unique ship was its “moon pool,” a 199 x 75 foot pool in the bottom of the ship, underneath the derrick, that would open like a clam. The photographs taken gave an accurate assessment of the exact size of each section that was to be brought up. The “moon pool” was large enough to hold two sections at a time.

A “claw,” as well as hydraulic thrusters, strobe lights and cameras, were attached to a “drill stem” that was to be lowered to the bottom of the sea, ostensibly to mine for manganese. The supporting system and the claw assembly, nicknamed Clementine, weighed more than six million pounds—three thousand tons.

Interestingly, to place the claw in the ship, a special barge was built weighing forty-seven hundred tons. It was 180 feet long and had an 80 foot high retractable arched roof. The claw was hidden under this roof and the barge made its way to where the Glomar Explorer was anchored at sea. Once alongside each other, the barge slowly submerged, pulled under the “moon pool,” which was opened, the roof of the barge was retracted and the claw taken onboard by the Glomar Explorer. (After the operation was completed, the ship returned to the place of departure and the operation performed in reverse. The claw was taken to a secret warehouse and torched into small pieces as so much scrap iron, to destroy all evidence of the operation.)

If there is one thing in this whole story that is more impressive than the facts already quoted, it is the extent of the cover up story. No stone was left unturned to make sure there would be no credibility cracks. An example of this is that Glomar Explorer was supposed to be on a mining expedition. Thus potato-sized nodules of ore were dredged up on the coast of Mexico and then given to interested people as proof of what was being brought up from three miles down. If all the lies told and the misinformation given during Project Jennifer were dumped on a pile, Mt. Everest would look like a mere hill.

Almost equally amazing is the fact that some 6,000 men and women were involved in Project Jennifer. They were either sworn to secrecy or misled on what was really taking place, to where no word ever leaked out in a forceful enough way to create a major problem, or better stated, which a new set of misinformation wasn't able to counteract.

The sections of drill stem were 60 feet long and from 12 to 17 inches in diameter,

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made of steel used in cannon barrels. Once the claw reached the sub, operations were run from inside a C.I.A. van that was parked on the deck. As each section was brought up by the claw, the moon pool doors closed, the water was pumped out, and they were taken to special compartments where workers, and spies, began ferreting out every bit of information to be had. This included taking care of the well-preserved bodies, plus recovering code books and letters written by the crew, all preserved in the cold, high pressure water three miles down.

The brain, the backbone, of the technical part of this operation was Dr. John Craven, the legendary U.S. Navy underseas scientist. Probably no one has a better overall picture of what happened than this flamboyant scientist. Yet he has told only a fraction of what he knows. With so much high level planted misinformation, we will never know all the details of the K129. Yet, out of the murky waters of deliberate mistruths, half-truths and manipulated truths, we do come up with a general picture of what *probably* happened.

The official government of the Soviet Union was the Politburo. The de facto ruling power, however, was the KGB. It was bound by no law (although laws certainly did exist), had no scruples and saw human life as secondary and subservient to their own goals. The KGB was an incarnation of ungodliness, the very heart of what President Reagan called an “evil empire.”

Back in the sixties, both the United States and the Soviet Union feared a Chinese nuclear attack. However, the geographical proximity of the Soviet Union to China obviously put the Soviets in a far more vulnerable position. It was during this time that the KGB, under the direction of Andropov—later president of the Soviet Union—became even more violent than the infamous Gestapo of Nazi Germany. It is believed that the K129 became the unwitting star player in a diabolical nuclear attack against the US, by all appearances, made by China. The reasoning was that if Pearl Harbor and Honolulu could be wiped off the map by an apparent Chinese attack, the United States would immediately unleash their nuclear arsenal on China, repaying with a one hundred to one retaliation. The reasoning, really quite sound, was that the Soviets could sit back in the bleachers and watch as their principal enemy went up in smoke—all for free.

Only a handful of people next to Andropov were aware of what was taking place. So ingenious was the plan, that it would take only a handful of people—plus the eleven mysterious men who boarded the K129 that last minute.

The plot was doomed from conception, for to be successful the K129 would have had to leave port unnoticed and travel undetected to the launching point near Pearl Harbor. Yet we know that American surveillance knew the exact minute the sub left port and tracked it almost all the way.

The K129 was capable of firing its missiles while submerged. Andropov and his men were aware that the United States knew that the Chinese Golf class sub did not have this capability. Thus—so was the reasoning of these men—the very fact that the missile was fired from the surface, would prove to the US that the sub was Chinese.

We have said before that the Soviet people are a noble people and should not be judged by the renegades in their midst. During the Cold War, there was a sincere desire by both

the Soviets and the Americans to avoid an accidental nuclear war. The US designed a “fail-safe” device that was attached to all missiles with nuclear warheads, making it virtually impossible for a rogue crew to carry out a launch without authorization from military officials and the president. In secret technology sharing, the United States offered this “fail-safe” device to the Soviets, who gratefully accepted it and installed it on all their missiles.

Everything indicates that the eleven mysterious men who boarded the K129 believed they had the necessary technology to override this system. And it is believed that after the launch procedure had been carried out and the fire button hit, that it was this “fail-safe” device that destroyed not only the missile, but the sub as well.

We have ample reason to believe that the US made considerable political hay with their knowledge of what happened. It must be remembered that neither the Soviet Navy nor Politburo members had any idea of what was taking place. In fact, it is more than possible that many of the details were leaked out to them by US intelligence. This would explain their absence of any kind of criticism or recriminations, even knowing that the US had broken international law by illegally retrieving their property from the bottom of the ocean. Should they have made a public scene, the US would have told the story of what really happened. It would have been embarrassing for the Soviets, to say the very least.

There are many explanations and theories for what almost happened. Some surely are true and others obviously are false. We have no idea of how close the men sent by the KGB got to overriding the “fail-safe” device on the missile. What we do know, without a doubt, is that if that missile, and the other two, would have been fired and reached their target, the world today would be far different than it is.

Did God say no? We believe He did. The handful of men in the KGB who hoped to set off a nuclear conflagration and then sit back in the bleachers and watch the fireworks were brought up and trained under Josef Stalin. It is believed that Stalin’s maliciousness was as great, or greater, than that of Adolf Hitler. Stalin ordered the execution and banishment of tens of millions of his own citizens—many of the best. To describe him as anything less than diabolic would miss the point. The fact that Andropov and his henchmen took positive steps to unleash a nuclear war that could have resulted in the eventual loss or disability of possibly hundreds of millions of lives and indescribable destruction boggles our imagination. (With American intelligence, the war would have been between the Soviet Union and the United States, and not China and the US, as planned.)

God said no. There is no other explanation. God reserves for Himself the destruction of nations. Yes, He frequently uses nations, even heathen nations, to do so, but we believe that God would never permit a few heathen plotters to unleash such a fury if that was not in His plans.

The American historian, Eliot Cohen, possibly one of the most brilliant analysts of contemporary world conditions, believes that what we call the war against terrorism, in reality is war against Islamism. Terrorism is merely the most powerful weapon they have at their disposal to fight the rest of the world, that is, anyone not of their religion. Or more specifically, any people or nation that is sympathetic toward the Jews. America, as the protégé of Israel, finds itself in the crosshairs of the Islamic sights.

Hitler's Third Reich ran its course in less than two decades. Stalin and Mao dwindled to almost nothing in less than half a century. Will Islamism, with its accompanying terrorism, eventually just go away?

We don't know the answers. What we do know is that Stalin and Mao purged their own people in a terrible genocide. And if we correctly read the palm of Islamists, we see a fanatic desire to purge the world of *infidels* — non-Islamists. It is no consolation to know that one out of every six inhabitants of the earth is an Islamist. Their thoughts toward the five billion *infidels* are not thoughts of peace, but of terrible destruction. Everything indicates that Islamism won't just go away, like Hitlerism, Maoism and Stalinism.

This little article isn't meant to entertain. Rather, it is meant to show us what could have happened if God hadn't said no. We don't know in how many other occasions, unbeknownst to us, He has said no. Nor do we know how much the prayers of the saints have touched the heart of God when He raises His hand and again says no. We needn't know. But if there has ever been a time in which God's people should put on sackcloth and cry to Heaven for the peace of Jerusalem—and for the whole world—it is now, that God may yet say no. ▲

Readers Contribute

We Reap What We Sow

Billy Graham's daughter, Anne, was interviewed on the Early Show and Jane Clayson asked her (regarding Hurricane Katrina), "How could God let something like this happen?"

Anne Graham gave an extremely profound and insightful response. She said, "I believe God is deeply saddened by this, just as we are, but for years we've been telling God to get out of our schools, to get out of our government and to get out of our lives. And being the gentleman He is, I believe He has calmly backed out. How can we expect God to give us His blessing and His protection if we demand He leave us alone?"

"In light of recent events—terrorist attacks, school shootings, etc., I think it started when Madeleine Murray O'Hare (she was murdered, her body found recently) complained she didn't want prayer in our schools, and we said OK.

"Then someone said you better not read the Bible in school. The Bible says thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, and love your neighbor as yourself. And we said OK.

Then Dr. Benjamin Spock said we shouldn't spank our children when they misbehave because their little personalities would be warped and we might damage their self-esteem (Dr. Spock's son committed suicide). We said an expert should know what he's talking about. And we said OK.

"Now we're asking ourselves why our children have no conscience, why they don't know right from wrong, and why it doesn't bother them to kill strangers, their classmates, and themselves. Probably, if we think about it long and hard enough, we

can figure it out. I think it has a great deal to do with “WE REAP WHAT WE SOW.”

“Funny how simple it is for people to trash God and then wonder why the world’s going to hell. Funny how we believe what the newspapers say, but question what the Bible says. Funny how you can send ‘jokes’ through e-mail and they spread like wildfire but when you start sending messages regarding the Lord, people think twice about sharing. Funny how lewd, crude, vulgar and obscene articles pass freely through cyberspace, but public discussion of God is suppressed in the school and workplace.” ▲

What would happen if we treated our Bible like we treat our cell phones?

What if we carried it around in our purses or pockets?

What if we turned back to go get it if we forgot it?

What if we flipped through it several times a day?

What if we used it to receive messages from the text?

What if we treated it like we couldn’t live without it?

What if we gave it to children as gifts?

What if we used it as we traveled?

What if we used it in case of an emergency? ▲

God’s Garden

Why do I always have to be the one that starts to do laundry and there’s no detergent? I guess it was time for me to do my “Dollar Store” run, which included light bulbs, paper towels, trash bags and Clorox. So off I went. I scurried around the store, gathered up my goodies, and headed for the checkout counter only to be blocked in the narrow aisle by a young man that appeared to be about sixteen-years-old. I wasn’t in a hurry, so I patiently waited for the boy to realize that I was there. This was when he waved his hands excitedly in the air and declared in a loud voice, “Mommy, I’m over here.”

It was obvious now, he was mentally challenged, and also startled as he turned and saw me standing so close to him, waiting to squeeze by. His eyes widened and surprise exploded on his face as I said, “Hey Buddy, what’s your name?”

“My name is Denny and I’m shopping with my mother,” he responded proudly.

“Wow,” I said, “that’s a cool name; I wish my name was Denny, but my name is Hal.”

“Hal like Halloween?” he asked.

“Yes,” I answered. “How old are you Denny?”

“How old am I now Mommy?” he asked his mother as she slowly came over from the next aisle. “You’re fifteen-years-old Denny; now be a good boy and let the man pass by.”

I acknowledged her and continued to talk to Denny for several more minutes

about summer, bicycles and school. I watched his brown eyes dance with excitement because he was the center of someone's attention. He then abruptly turned and headed toward the toy section. Denny's mom had a puzzled look on her face and thanked me for taking the time to talk with her son. She told me that most people wouldn't even look at him, much less talk to him. I told her that it was my pleasure and then I said something I have no idea where it came from, other than by the prompting of the Holy Spirit. I told her that there are plenty of red, yellow and pink roses in God's garden, however, "Blue Roses" are very rare and should be appreciated for their beauty and distinctiveness. You see, Denny is a "Blue Rose" and if someone doesn't stop and smell that rose with their heart and touch that rose with their kindness, then they've missed a blessing from God. She was silent for a second, then with a tear in her eye she asked, "Who are you?"

Without thinking I said, "Oh, I'm probably just a daffodil or maybe even a dandelion, but I sure love living in God's garden.

(Pastor Hal Steenson – This took place July 12, 2006) ▲

This & That

President Lula was reelected for a second four-year term. Farmers are upset. They blame the president for the unfavorable dollar/real exchange rate that keeps the price of soybeans in the cellar. Business and industry, on the other hand, are more optimistic. Only time will tell how this second term will turn out.

The rainy season started early this year. By the first week of November most of the crops were in. This is good and bad: good because it can mean a second crop, bad because it may spell r-u-s-t, which is the farmer's nightmare.

Sugar cane for making ethanol is now being planted on the Colony. F.F. (Bert) Coblantz, presently in the US, has rented his place to a local distillery that produces ethanol. I suspect others will rent their places out, or plant on their own and sell to the distilleries. I understand that one acre of ground rented out for sugar cane brings in considerably more than one acre rented for soybeans.

Glenn & Elizabeth Hibner from the Monte Alegre Cong. are spending some time at Rochester unit as house parents.

Carolyn Dirks from the Palmas Cong., in Tocantins, is working at the Moundridge Manor.

Márcio & Wendy Ambrósio have moved to Rio Verde from Palmas, Tocantins, and are going to the Rio Verdinho Congregation.

Frank & Zelinda Burns from Hesston, KS are spending some time on the Colony as they work out her Green Card.

We enjoy visitors in Brazil. If you have F.F. (Frequent Flyer) miles, use them up for a visit to the Colony. The red carpet is out for you.

Lee Roy & Marlene Toews and daughter spent several weeks in Brazil. As a boy, Lee Roy moved to Brazil in 1968 with his parents, Dick & Frieda Toews. After a couple

Brazil ¹⁴ News

of years he returned to the US with his family. Listening to Lee Roy and Tim Burns talk about their boyhood experiences, first in Anápolis and then on the Colony, made it clear that Brazil still holds a special corner in his heart.

The crash of a Gol 737 with a Legacy executive jet at 37,000 feet, killing all 154 Gol passengers, kept the media busy for a while. The winglet on the Legacy sheared off approximately one third of the 737's wing, sending it into a fatal plunge to earth. The Legacy was able to make an emergency landing in a nearby airport. The passports of the two American Legacy pilots have been confiscated by the Federal Police until the investigation is complete. At this point it appears the crash was caused by a number of small errors committed by both the tower and the Legacy pilots.

Some of our phones are working again. Others aren't. We had a big meeting with a representative from the Brasil Telecom company, responsible for our phone service—and lack of service. They have promised that within several weeks we will all have new phones with the latest GSM technology. Many on the Colony are unhappy with these phones because fax machines won't work with them. They have also suggested that we will be able to keep our old numbers. The next issue of BN should have an updated phone list.