



PROPHETIC TIMES

WEEKLY WORLD NEWS UPDATE

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

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U.S. SET TO FUND MORE STEM CELL STUDY

December 3, 2009 The Washington Post reported: "The Obama administration has begun approving new lines of human embryonic stem cells that are eligible for federally funded experiments, opening the way for millions of taxpayer dollars to be used to conduct research that was put off-limits by President George W. Bush.

Launching a dramatic expansion of government support for one of the most promising but most contentious fields of biomedical research, the National Institutes of Health on Wednesday authorized the first 13 lines of cells under the administration's policy and was poised to approve 20 more Friday.

"This is the first down payment on what is going to be a much longer list that will empower the scientific community to explore the potential of embryonic stem cell research," said NIH Director Francis S. Collins. "Today's announcement is the first wave."

An additional 76 stem cell lines are awaiting vetting, and researchers have indicated that they plan to submit at least 254 more for approval. The NIH has already authorized 31 grants worth about \$21 million for research on human embryonic stem cells, money that was contingent on new lines passing government muster. The grants are for a variety of research, including work aimed at developing cells that could be used to treat diseases of the heart and nervous system.

Many other grant requests have been submitted by researchers hoping to use some of the \$10 billion the NIH received as part of the economic stimulus, Collins said.

"We've been waiting with bated breath to get started," said George Daley, a stem cell researcher at Children's Hospital in Boston who created 11 of the lines approved Wednesday. "We could do today what we couldn't do yesterday."

Bush severely restricted federal funding for human embryonic stem cell research because of moral objections to the destruction of human embryos to obtain the cells."..."

PUTIN SAYS NO PLANS TO LEAVE POWER

December 3, 2009 Reuters reported: "Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, in power for over 10 years, ruled out a departure from politics on Thursday, telling a questioner: "Don't hold your breath."

The country's most powerful leader made the comment with a smile when asked on his annual televised question and answer session with the Russian people if he would like to leave politics and start a quiet life.

Putin, 57, also said he "will think about" taking part in the 2012 presidential election, when many Russians expect him to return to the Kremlin for a six-year term.

Looking relaxed and confident, Putin said Russia had passed the peak of the economic crisis and reassured callers worried about job security, pensions and living standards.

"The economy has grown by an average of 0.5 percent per month over the last five months," Putin said in the session, broadcast live nationwide by state television and radio. "I'm counting on these positive trends in economic development becoming more significant in the middle of next year."..."



Russia

OBAMA SCIENCE ADVISERS GRILLED OVER HACKED E-MAILS

December 2, 2009 The Associated Press reported: "House Republicans pointed to controversial e-mails leaked from climate scientists and said it was evidence of corruption. Top administration scientists looking at the same thing found no such sign, saying it doesn't change the fact that the world is warming.

The e-mails from a British university's climate center were obtained by computer hackers and posted online about two weeks ago. Climate change skeptics contend the messages reveal that researchers manipulated and suppressed data and stifled dissent, and conservative bloggers are dubbing it "Climategate."

In the first Capitol Hill airing of the issue, House Republicans Wednesday read excerpts from at least eight of the e-mails, saying they showed the world needs to re-examine experts' claims that the science on warming is settled. One e-mail from 2003 was by John Holdren, then of Harvard University and now the president's science adviser.

The exploding controversy led Phil Jones to step aside as head of the climate research unit at the University of Anglia, the source of the e-mail exchanges. The university is investigating the matter. Penn State University also is looking into e-mails by its own researcher, Michael Mann. House Republicans asked for a separate hearing or investigation into the issue, but were rebuffed by Democrats.

These e-mails show a pattern of suppression, manipulation and secrecy that was inspired by ideology, condescension and profit," said U.S.

Rep. James Sensenbrenner, R-Wis.

The science is proper and this is about a small fraction of research on the issue, said Holdren, a physicist who has studied climate change. The e-mails do nothing to undermine the very strong scientific consensus ... that tells us the earth is warming, that warming is largely a result of human activity," said another government scientist Jane Lubchenco a marine biologist and climate researcher, she heads the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration."..."

FACTBOX-TUBERCULOSIS: A LEADING KILLER DISEASE

December 3, 2009 Reuters reported: "More than 2 billion people, or a third of the world's total population, are infected with Mycobacterium tuberculosis, the bacteria that causes tuberculosis. Tuberculosis is now the world's seventh-leading cause of death. It killed 1.8 million people worldwide last year, up from 1.77 million in 2007. It is one of three primary diseases that are closely linked to poverty, the other two being AIDS and malaria.

Here are some key facts about tuberculosis:

- * Tuberculosis is spread easily through the air. When infectious people cough, sneeze, talk or spit, they expel the bacteria and just a small amount is enough for transmission. Someone in the world is newly infected with TB every second.
- * Nearly all TB infections are latent, with carriers showing no symptoms and they are not infectious. However, one in 10 will become sick with active TB in his or her lifetime due primarily to a weakened immune system.
- * Of the 1.8 million deaths in 2008, or 4,930 deaths a day, half a million were AIDS patients. TB affects mostly young adults in their most productive years. The vast majority of TB deaths are in the developing world, with more than half occurring in Asia.
- * The World Health Organization estimates that 9.4 million people developed active TB in 2008, up from 9.27 million in 2007 and 9.24 million in 2006. Among the 15 countries with the highest TB incidence rates in 2007, 13 were in Africa, while half of all new cases were in six Asian countries -- Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Pakistan and the Philippines.
- * TB does not figure among the top 10 causes of death in developed nations but is the seventh-highest cause of mortality in poor countries."..."

AT MIDNIGHT LAST NIGHT, THE UNITED KINGDOM CEASED TO BE A SOVEREIGN STATE

December 1, 2009 Telegraph.co.uk reported: "We woke up in a different country today. Alright, it doesn't look very different. The trees still seem black against the winter sun; the motorways continue to jam inexplicably; commuters carry on avoiding eye contact. But Britain is no longer a sovereign nation. At midnight last night, we ceased to be an independent state, bound by international treaties to other independent states, and became instead a subordinate unit within a European state.

✔ Yes, a European state. Take a quick dekho at the definition set out in Article One of the 1933 Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States: "The state as a person of international law should possess the following qualifications: (a) a permanent population; (b) a defined territory; (c) government; and (d) capacity to enter into relations with the other states."

Until yesterday, the EU qualified on grounds (a), (b) and (c). Now it has ticked the final box. Under the Lisbon Treaty, which came into force today, it acquires "legal personality", which gives it the right to sign accords and treat with other states. Nor is this right simply theoretical: the EU now has a foreign minister, a diplomatic corps (the European External Action Service) and 160 overseas embassies.

Until yesterday, the EU could not annex additional policy areas without a new treaty, which needed to be ratified by all its constituent nations. Now, it has the so-called "passerelle" clause, or self-amending mechanism.

Parliament, in other words, no longer has the final say on extensions of EU jurisdiction. The EU derives its authority, not from its 27 members, but from its own foundational texts.

British Isles

Until yesterday, Britain could simply walk out of the EU by abrogating the Treaty of Rome and repealing the 1972 European Communities Act. Henceforth, it will have to go through the secession procedure laid down in Lisbon. In other words – in the minds of Euro-lawyers, at any rate, if not of British constitutionalists – the EU gets to settle the terms on which its members are allowed to leave. Formal sovereignty has been shifted from the national capitals to Brussels.

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It is appalling, demeaning, disgraceful that such a thing should have been done without popular consent, and in the absence of the referendum that all three parties had promised."..."

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