

Greetings from Tyler,

Stand by for the conspiracy theorists to go crazy. In fact they've already started, and not without some justification. U.S. military strength is being slashed. You may have heard something about this on this week's network news breaks. Since World War II it has been the goal of every administration to maintain a level of readiness that would provide for the U.S. to fight two wars at once. For some reason that doctrine of U.S. policy has been judged obsolete by current leadership. *Reuters* projects the loss of military manpower will be somewhere between 76,000 and 114,000 personnel. It is being explained as a move toward becoming "leaner and more agile."

Cuts to defense are expected to amount to 500 billion dollars over the coming years. Isn't this something? While new bureaucracies are being set up to protect us from ourselves, from retailers and banks, the military (which the Constitution actually authorizes the government to maintain) is being cut in the neighborhood of twenty percent. Claiming this new "defense strategy" will rely more heavily on cyber warfare and unmanned drones, *Reuters* says, "But the size of the U.S. Army and Marine Corps would shrink. So too might the U.S. nuclear arsenal and the U.S. military footprint in Europe."

Simultaneously, a new Consumer Financial Protection Agency has just been created, and quite a number of legislators are outraged that the president went around Congress to make a controversial appointment to head the agency. Brace yourself for this quote from the president. "Now that Richard (Cordray) is your director, you (agency employees) can finally exercise your responsibilities under the law. We can help give people the clear and transparent information they need." Some of the more conservative analysts are calling the move outlined in this paragraph the act of a "dictator."

Other domestic news causing concern is the new NDAA, National Defense Authorization Act, which critics say now give both the government and the military the legal ability to detain citizens indefinitely without a trial. We're being reassured that this new wrinkle will only apply to legitimate terror suspects, but given the current administration's record of veracity there are doubts. This new legal authority has gone virtually unreported by media outlets, and was brought to my attention by a member's tip sent to our website.

Another law known as SOPA is also creating a great deal of concern, the Stop Online Piracy Act. It gives the Dept. of Justice the power to seize and or shut down web sites that infringe on copyrights. Critics worry that it will be used to censor the internet and shut down

legitimate sources of information. Surely the Department of Justice would never be used for nefarious purposes! Ever heard of “Fast and Furious?”

We certainly cannot imagine all that 2012 may bring. But wherever you look, things are changing dramatically. The freedoms guaranteed by our founding documents are being trampled under a cavalcade of new laws and regulations supposed to provide government protection from every perceived inequity. In fact our freedoms and securities all fall somewhere behind the need to “protect the environment,” which is of course what the Chevy volt and Government Motors is all about.

Europe's financial quagmire has gone temporarily quiet, but don't expect it to remain that way. The next crisis can't be far off. If the U.S. had embraced current spending habits a few years earlier, we'd have beat them to it. But current leadership seems to be doing everything within its power to make sure we catch up.

Every new article on Egypt shows that the Muslim Brotherhood is very near gaining complete political control over that nation. They support Hamas, and will undoubtedly return to a state of war with Israel. In a list of goals set forth is the establishment of a “caliphate,” as soon as they can get all facets of society and the military under Sharia law. And this is apparently just fine with the current administration. After all, we can deal reasonably with these people!

There is movement on every front lining up very closely with Bible prophecy, and even many of the finer details that Garner Ted Armstrong uniquely told us to look for. Let us hope the pace of our national decline will slow, that the Middle East won't blow up (anywhere outside Iran) and Europe doesn't fulfill our worst expectations.

I'm pleased to report that we had a strong finish to fiscal 2011, and extend our heartfelt thanks to all of you. In the final weeks, we've seen up to 20,000 visitors per week to the website, and have had quite a number of encouraging contacts via telephone here at headquarters as well.

We hope all of you will have a great Sabbath,

Mark Armstrong