

# McKay's America

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## Havoc that could mean the end of the world is nigh

IT is a dark thought to place before you on a June Sunday between the Derby and Royal Ascot. But it seems possible the world is coming to an end.

In America, where they have a jump on the rest of us on most new developments, there is now a whole new parcel of portents, some downright terrifying.

Forget nuclear annihilation. What we are facing, if the signs are right, is natural disaster of Hollywood proportions.

Let me draw together some of the portents.

On Christmas Island in the Pacific — the world's largest coral atoll — the entire 17 million bird population of eight species has disappeared off the face of the earth.

A concerned coterie of American scientists and bird experts are now on their way there to find out what happened.

### Strange

In San Diego last week, a spokesman for the Environment Protection Agency — a U.S. government institution — shocked scientists by predicting the world's seas could rise more than five feet by the end of the century.

In the past they have risen no more than eight inches every 100 years — not counting Noah and the Ark. But all over the world the



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weather is behaving strangely.

Record thunderstorms make Londoners think World War Three has begun.

Terrifying 'twister' tornadoes rage in America. There's unprecedented snow in the Rockies — 50 feet deep and more.

What on earth — or beyond it — is happening to the world?

The 'greenhouse' effect of rising pollution in the atmosphere, leading to escalating temperatures which could melt the Polar Ice Cap, is now well established.

Global temperatures could rise by as much as five degrees centigrade, according to a top American scientist.

NASA expert James Hansen told a conference: 'A warming of that magnitude would put us outside the range of temperature changes experienced by man.'

Back on earth, a new culprit has been found

to explain the mad weather ... El Nino.

El Nino de Davidad — 'The Christ Child' — is a warm current that flows down the Pacific coast. It has long been known to play havoc with fishing and alter the direction of trade winds.

Now it is being blamed for mud slides in Utah, tornadoes in California, storms in Texas and filthy weather all over Europe.

On Christmas Island, El Nino is likely to be responsible for the mass migration — or destruction — of birds.

El Nino has driven up water temperatures. This is thought to have killed fish and squid on which the birds live.

### Threats

There is always a tendency in America to place a divine interpretation on new threats to human happiness.

Now the Elmer Gantry Evangelists, with Apocalypse Now as a possibility, have a rich new source of material ... even better than their suggestion that Herpes and AIDS were sent down by God to punish mankind.

At this seemingly important moment in human history, the American spacecraft Pioneer 10 is due tomorrow week to become the first man-made object ever to leave our solar system.

The question is: Can the rest of us be far behind?