

sentatives must uphold the oath of office to defend and secure the General Welfare of all citizens; and

**Whereas:** The following actions proposed by economist Lyndon LaRouche to deal with that emergency situation contribute an important, and decisive step in the direction of moving the government of these United States to act in concert with other nations to solve the more general problem of the world's financial and monetary systems;

**Therefore Be It Resolved:** That the City Council of Boston urges the President of the United States, the U.S. Senate, and the House of Representatives to take emergency action to reduce oil and natural gas prices, including the following measures:

A. Declare a general strategic emergency in the matter of stability of flows and prices of essential energy-supplies of national economies;

B. Establish contracts, directly between the U.S. government and the governments of petroleum-exporting nations, of not less than twelve months government-scheduled deliveries of petroleum;

C. Define reasonable prices for these contracts;

D. On the grounds of a global emergency in petroleum prices and supplies, set priorities on processing of such contracted petroleum flows through relevant refiners to priority categories of consumers in the United States, causing other stocks to be shunted to one side in the degree that these priority deliveries must be processed first;

E. Urge governments of other oil-consuming nations to take these same actions, in the context of this global emergency;

F. Investigate petroleum market manipulation, through financial derivatives speculation or other unfair speculative practices, and probe allegations that some portion of the U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserve recently released for the benefit of citizens of the Northeastern United States, are in fact being exported overseas for profit by U.S. refineries;

**Be It Further Resolved:** That the City Council of Boston urges the Government of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Massachusetts General Court, and other state and local governments of the United States to support these emergency actions in the vital interest of the General Welfare of its citizens.

## Why Tony Blair's Britain Is 'All Wet'

by Mark Burdman

In our Oct. 13 issue, *EIR* published an article entitled "Britain's Blair Has That Sinking Feeling." The article highlighted the fact, that all the late-September British press were running photos of the beleaguered British Prime Minister Tony Blair soaked in sweat, as he made his keynote address before the annual Labour Party conference. It concluded with the advice, that given the further trouble he was soon to find himself in, Blair "should make a special appointment with his dry cleaners."

This author didn't know how prophetic those words would be. Less than six weeks later, the British print and electronic media of the weekend of Nov. 4-5, were featuring pictures of Blair wading knee-deep through water, visiting areas in Britain that had been hit by the worst floods in decades. The city of York, in northern England, was experiencing its most massive flood in 375 years.

Even though it was certainly the case that Britain, as well as France and other European countries, was hit by terrible storms in early November, the vast flooding in the U.K. only further conveyed to growing numbers of people in Britain, that the current government is itself a disaster. The flooding—which affected more than 20 rivers, caused more than \$2 billion in damages, and produced other terrible consequences—occurred after several other debacles had already hit Britain, including the British railways crisis (as we reported last week) and the September national protests against the high prices of fuel.

Blair and his entourage became so agitated about the situation, that he indefinitely postponed a scheduled Nov. 4-5 trip to Moscow, where he had hoped to wheel and deal with Russian President Vladimir Putin, at a key strategic moment, when the United States was distracted by its bizarre Presidential campaign. Blair was nervous, that if he went to Moscow, he could be caught in the act, being "wet" in a different sense: As one British commentator put it, he couldn't be photographed drinking champagne with Putin, while people back in Britain were slogging through water.

Blair and his team frantically sought to come up with an additional explanation for the horrid flooding—beyond the weather only—claiming that the calamity is proof of the consequences of alleged "global warming," and the "dangerous effects of mankind's influence on the environment." This is part and parcel of Blair's late-October/early-November speeches espousing "green" causes.

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The Blairites were abetted in this fraudulent effort by the royal air-head, Prince Charles, who told a British Medical Association conference on Nov. 6, that the flooding revealed “mankind’s arrogant disregard of the delicate balance of nature,” especially as “advances in technology” threatened to “become the agents of our own destruction.” Charles was, the next day, bitterly attacked by leading British scientists, for himself showing “arrogance and ignorance.”

## Gigantic Drop in Infrastructure Spending

The Nov. 5 *Sunday Times* let the cat out of the bag, about what is *really* going on in Queen Elizabeth II’s United Kingdom.

The paper wrote that two years ago, i.e., well after Blair had been elected Prime Minister, the British Environment Agency “gave a clear warning to ministers, that lack of spending on infrastructure would mean more flooding. Defenses [against flooding] were underfunded by £40 million a year — a relatively modest sum.” The then-director of water management for the agency, Geoff Mance, warned that “the consequence of this will be progressively increasing the risk of failure of defenses”; his report recommended a national strategy to prevent disaster. But, the *Sunday Times* commented, “nothing happened.”

Much worse, is what has happened to national investment in vital infrastructure as a whole. The *Sunday Times* reported that, in the 1960s, the British government was spending the equivalent of £30 billion a year on “public investment,” but by the late 1980s, after a decade of rule by Margaret Thatcher, spending “had dropped to less than £5 billion annually.” For a while in the 1990s, the figure went back up again, but by 1999, after two years of Blair’s Thatcher-look-alike “New Labour” government, capital spending was back down to the miserable £5 billion level.

## Britain Is Like a ‘Banana Republic’

Reflecting a view widespread throughout the United Kingdom, and one endorsed by influential Britons with whom *EIR* has spoken, the Nov. 5 *Sunday Times* lead editorial was entitled, “A State of Utter Chaos.” The paper asserted that “a Third World visitor arriving in Britain this weekend would feel entirely at home.” Putting aside for the moment this somewhat condescending blanket characterization of the developing world, we report the uncontested points that immediately followed:

“The trains are barely running thanks to a chaotic system and years of under-investment, the army is on the streets to fend off natural disasters, motorists fearful of fuel shortages are forming queues outside petrol stations, and the prime minister has postponed an overseas trip while his government is in emergency session. The health minister has admitted that a crisis in hospitals this Winter is inevitable. . . .

“Digby Jones of the Confederation of British Industry says the state of the country resembles a ‘banana republic.’ That may be a little hard on tropical economies, but there is no

doubting that Britain’s reputation has taken a blow in recent months as we have floundered from one catastrophe to another. Public confidence in the government’s ability to manage crises has been eroded.”

In a sign of a changing paradigm among leading circles in Britain, the paper, which more often than not is on the “liberal free market” side of things, argued that the fundamental problem afflicting “Britain’s crumbling infrastructure and poor services,” is not a lack of money as such, but “a chronic aversion to strategic planning.” It blasted the Blair regime, for insisting on progressively privatizing the “essential service” of air traffic control, rather than “expanding our airports to meet the inevitable increase in traffic.” At the same time, it said, the failure to improve “our rail links with France has been a national disgrace.”

# British Rail Disaster Has Come to Germany

by Rainer Apel

When, on June 3, 1998, one of Germany’s modern high-speed, Inter-City Express (ICE) trains crashed at Eschede, in an accident unprecedented for the entire century, which killed 101 passengers, people were suddenly raising questions as to the real situation in the nation’s rail sector.

The Eschede disaster occurred, because a broken steel wheel of a rail car got stuck in an outmoded rail switch. The wheel broke because of bad maintenance; the old switch was there because the state-owned Deutsche Bundesbahn (DB) railway company never built the modern track which the ICE requires, for speeds of up to 280 kilometers per hour. Instead, the track at Eschede was used by trains of all categories, old and new. This is the situation in many parts of Germany, and it is so because of disinvestment.

Many experts have known about this disinvestment, but the exact figures were not made available, because the Bundesbahn’s management did not want a public debate on that, as it would have jeopardized plans to privatize the rail company by 2005 at the latest. Instead, DB’s managers have, since the start of the “railway reform” in 1994 that was to prepare the way for privatization, put the emphasis on glamorous aspects of that reform, such as new, futuristic railway central stations, or stylized locomotives and rail cars of the latest ICE. The disaster at Eschede destroyed that glamor, and there would have been a broad public debate, had the government not suppressed it with unkept promises about “improvements,” while it held onto its plan to privatize Deutsche Bundesbahn.

But, two years of suppressed debate came to an abrupt