

ida Deregulation Up in Smoke, Power Companies Move On.” Writer Christopher Boyd reported that regardless of how hard Gov. Jeb Bush pushed, “a year after the movement to reshape Florida’s electricity market collapsed,” those who “want to trade kilowatts like pork bellies concede it won’t happen any-time soon.” Boyd quotes Florida Power & Light spokesman Bill Swank: “We have rates that are below the national average, and reserve margins of electricity, which is the result of the Florida regulatory climate.”

Other states, that have already started down the slippery slope, are considering how they can turn back. At the end of 2002, the Virginia State Corporation Commission (SCC) released a 32-page report on electric competition, noting that going ahead with the next stages of deregulation means turning over what regulatory authority remains, to the Federal authorities at FERC—which sat through 2001 doing nothing while California went bankrupt. The SCC states that “retail competition is not successful in most areas of the nation.” In California, it resulted in “severely damaging the economy. . . . Ultimately, California abandoned its retail choice and has moved back toward more traditional regulation.”

The SCC is concerned about FERC’s current drive to conglomerate utility transmission systems and wholesale power markets into Regional Transmission Organizations (RTOs), which FERC would “regulate.” The SCC warns that “investigations centered upon the California and Midwest crises and the collapse of Enron have revealed abuses, improper trading, and misleading reporting practices of a number of energy companies.” The Commission recommends that Virginia’s utilities stay out of the RTOs.

In Ohio, the Consumer Counsel, in his annual report on the state’s electric market, warned on Jan. 9 that residents could face “volatile electric rates” next year, when power is fully deregulated. After a three-year transition, the utilities can start charging “market prices” for power, beginning on Jan. 1, 2004. Dayton Power and Light Company is trying to have the regulatory commission scrap the current plan, and extend the current rate freeze for another two years, to keep rates down and preserve the financial health of the industry through reasonable, guaranteed rates-of-return.

On Jan. 19, the Connecticut Post reported that “Connecticut’s new competitive energy market is a mess.” Consumers will be thrown into the “free market” in less than a year, but residential suppliers are “all but non-existent.” There is fear that “residential electric bills will skyrocket once the state fully converts to a deregulated market.”

But not everyone has yet learned to take the re-regulation advice of Lyndon LaRouche. Connecticut State Rep. Terry Baker (D-Stamford) said that the state had invested millions of dollars in deregulation. “You can’t turn a pickle back into a cucumber,” was Baker’s new saw. LaRouche has proved you can put the toothpaste back in the tube, and deregulation into the trash can.

LaRouche in 2001

Put the Toothpaste Back in the Tube!

In two webcast speeches on Feb. 18 and 19, 2001, Presidential pre-candidate Lyndon LaRouche addressed the mobilization he had started the previous month with a mass campaign pamphlet demanding re-regulation in the California electricity crisis. When many young LaRouche organizers put pressure on California legislators, the officials all began parroting the same “talking point” they had been given to resist the pressure of the truth. “You can’t put the toothpaste back in the tube” (i.e., reverse deregulation), they told the LaRouche forces. LaRouche responded, and his campaign escalated. By May, changes in California and Washington were sealing Enron’s fate.

Let’s take the case about this California problem. Our organizers went out in California, organizing in the state capital and other areas, and they ran into a prepared talking-points argument, “You can’t put the toothpaste back in the tube.”

Well, you see, the answer is the obvious answer. Well, people who are not stupid can do that. How do you put the toothpaste back in the tube?

Very simply, you take the tube. Get yourself some toothpaste. Get the relevant tube. Now, it’s probably a used tube, so what you have to do, is you take the bottom end of the thing, where it’s crimped; you cut through the crimp. Now, you use a careful tool to open the rear end of the thing up. Now, before you put anything inside it—this is very important, they tell you, you can’t put the toothpaste back in the tube; you have to show them how stupid they are!

Now, before you put the toothpaste in, you’ve got to think. This may be a great challenge for some of you guys. You have to say, well, there’s a lot of gunk inside that thing, isn’t there? So, what’s the sense of putting the toothpaste in the tube, if when I’ve got in there, and I try to get it out for my toothbrush, I can’t get it out, because it’s plugged. So the first thing you do is, you clean out the interior of this thing, including the apertures through which the toothpaste comes. Once you’ve

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The weapons of the national campaign which brought down Enron and other energy pirate companies, and forced the beginning of the shift to “put the toothpaste back in the tube” [re-regulate], were these mass pamphlets of the LaRouche in 2004 Presidential campaign. The California crisis pamphlet went out in February, 2001; the follow-up three months later.

cleaned it out thoroughly, now you fill up the tube with the paste. Then you crimp and close the end, the way the manufacturer did. Now you've got toothpaste back in the tube — you're in business!

'Is This Disaster Preventable?'

But, in this process, we have a new President, who comes into a world which is desperate. He comes in, with a machine behind him, which, in its philosophy, its composition, and its habits, dreams of a world which will never be: They dream of a world, in which the Bush crowd—Enron and similar agencies—loot everything! The carpetbaggers of the South are looting the world as a whole. These are Enron. . . .

You have a buildup in the United States, over the period of the past 35 years, since the budget change in the United States in the year 1966-67. The first collapse of the aerospace industry, at that time, in which areas, which had been concentrations of high-tech for the space program, were cut back, in very significant quantities.

And we've been going downhill ever since.

1966 was also the time that Richard Nixon, then a candidate for nomination as the Republican President, went and met with the Ku Klux Klan, in places like Meredith, Mississippi. And also met with people like Trent Lott, the present Republican leader of the Senate, who practically was a Klan member, or should have been. (Maybe he couldn't wash his sheets regularly, at that time. Couldn't make it.)

But, at that time, you had a shift in the country. The areas of the United States, which used to produce most of its wealth—the family farms of 200 acres or 400 acres; the ranches of 1,000 or 2,000 acres; the industries of the urban

centers, the steel industries, the machine-tool shops: These industries have been turned into a rust belt. And the people living in these areas have been suffering a disaster. . . .

For 35 years, the United States has been destroyed. For 35 years, the economy of much of the world has been destroyed. This can't go on forever: We've now reached what I shall indicate to you today, is the end-game. And, the end-game is George Bush and his administration, an administration which has no future, which is on a short fuse to destruction—self-destruction. But it has a large explosive charge, and when it blows up—which will be soon—anything standing near it, in most parts of the world, can be severely injured.

And the question before us, therefore, is what can we do, to prevent this disaster? Is this disaster inevitable? Is it in the cards? Is it irreversible?

Can we “put the toothpaste back in the tube”? I say, we can! As a matter of fact, if you knew anything about production, you'd know how to do that! People who can't put the toothpaste back in the tube, are not employable in skilled jobs in industry!

So, we're going to put the toothpaste back in the tube. That's essentially our program.

Why are we going to put the toothpaste back in the tube? Because, in a crisis, when you must suddenly mobilize a people, into a great adventure, which frightens them, you can not come up with something which seems to them, harebrained ideas. In a longer process, you can make great revolutions, for the future. But, in the short-term time of emergency, when people are terrified, when action must be rather immediate, you must rely upon the examples from the past, and return to those things that did work, before the disaster struck, and, put

them back into operation, as Franklin Roosevelt tried to do, with some degree of success, between 1933, when he was inaugurated—even before he was inaugurated—until the time he died, in 1945.

In times of crisis, you must look at history. You must look backwards, to find the good times, when problems and crises of the type you face today, occurred then. And, you look to a time, when somebody came up with solutions, that worked—that worked as well as those things we did between 1933 and 1945, in getting out of the Depression, and getting through the war. The things that were done between the United States and Western Europe between 1945 and 1965, to rebuild prosperous economies, which generally benefitted all of the people in them (at least in those parts of the world), during that period. Incomes increased, the standard of living improved, employment increased, and so forth and so on. Life expectancy increased. Conditions of life improved.

So, we will have to go back, to things that we did, to the kinds of policies that worked in the past, especially between 1933 and 1965: those morals. Because, we can show the people that these things worked. Whereas the things that have been done, increasingly, since 1965, have not worked, have brought us to a disaster.

Therefore, put that toothpaste back in the tube! It can be done, and it must be done. And, in the meantime, we can go on to some of the great things, that we can do beyond that.

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AIDS Plague Won't Reach Peak for 40 More Years

by Colin Lowry

The AIDS epidemic is still increasing worldwide, and in Africa it threatens to literally wipe out entire nations. In December 2002, UNAIDS released their epidemic update, which estimates, that globally there are now 42 million people infected with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). At least 5 million people became infected last year, and 3.1 million were killed by AIDS. The vast majority of cases, about 30 million people, live in Africa. Previous forecasts by experts that the epidemic had reached a “natural limit” have been proven false, as four countries in southern Africa now have HIV prevalence rates higher than 30% of their populations.

The Presidents of Botswana and Malawi have declared that their nations may become extinct, unless drastic interventions to halt the spread of the disease are made. The U.S. National Intelligence Council has projected that one-quarter of the population of the nine countries of southern Africa will die from AIDS in the next decade. The death toll, already at 24 million, will continue to rise as the impact of AIDS rolls virtually unchecked across Africa.

Could this devastation by AIDS in Africa be only the beginning? The National Intelligence Council (NIC) report of October 2002 predicted that the epidemic will move east, striking India, Russia, China, and Southeast Asia, and that if current trends continue, 70 million more will worldwide die from AIDS over the next 20 years. Even so, once HIV is set loose in Asia, home to the majority of the world's population, it may not peak for 40 years, killing hundreds of millions.

Impact on Africa

In six countries of southern Africa, HIV prevalence is at 20% or higher. The hardest hit are Botswana, with an astounding 40%, and Zimbabwe with 34%. However, prevalence rates do not show the real story of the epidemic. The damage being done by HIV is worse than could be accomplished by conventional warfare. The biggest casualties are the women of child-bearing age (see Figure 1), and the youth. Life expectancy has plunged to only 38 years in Botswana. Half the pregnant women in Botswana are infected with HIV.

Child mortality has skyrocketed in every southern African nation. In South Africa, 5.6% of children between the ages of 2 and 14 are HIV infected. South Africa estimates that it will lose 12% of its workforce to AIDS by 2005. Schoolteachers