

LaRouche: Bring Oil Inflation Under Control

This memorandum was originally issued by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. on Sept. 19, 2000, embodying the same proposed policy-change LaRouche is proposing in the current oil hyperinflation crisis.

1. The following statement constitutes a preliminary statement of policy “On the Subject of Emergency Action by Governments to Bring the Present Petroleum-Price Inflation Under Control.”

2. Broadly, the current global inflation in petroleum prices threatens to be the detonator of a chaotic breakdown in many, if not all of the economies of the world. The actions proposed here to deal with that emergency situation will not solve the more general problem of the world’s financial and monetary systems at large, but will contribute an important, and perhaps decisive step in that direction.

3. The underlying cause of the crisis, of which the petroleum-price crisis is but the presently leading political-economic consequence, is a general hyperinflation in financial asset-prices, which is now being expressed, at increasing rates, as a hyperinflation in commodity prices now following a trend similar to that suffered by Weimar Germany during the interval March-November 1923.

4. For sundry, converging, and relatively obvious reasons, the most brutal effect of that upward spiral of financial hyperinflation is being expressed in devastating rates and magnitudes of rises in the costs of petroleum. The increasingly desperate effort to secure inflows of financial assets into the U.S. dollar sector, has seized upon several combined factors, as the opportunity to increase asset-price accumulations from hyperinflationary trends in the delivery prices of petroleum products.

These factors include: recently increased concentration of ownership of major oil companies through mergers and acquisitions, the increased role of the spot market in petroleum deliveries, the significance of denomination of deliveries in U.S. dollars, and an intensity of speculative activity, especially in the form of financial derivatives, in this area which threatens to bring the per-barrel price of petroleum to between \$40 and \$50 per barrel, soon, and not much later, much higher.

5. No ordinary means could bring this problem under control during even the short term. Only drastic measures taken in concert between and among sovereign national governments, could bring the petroleum-price crisis itself under control. Any other proposal would be a childish delusion. For the immediate future, either such governmental action will be

taken, or the eruption of international chaos within the weeks ahead were the likely result.

6. The appropriate action, which must be led by the U.S. government, must aim at immediate emergency cooperation among the governments of principal petroleum-exporting and principle petroleum-consuming nations.

7. These governments must: 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 and among governments, of not less than twelve months government scheduled deliveries of petroleum from exporting to consuming nations; c) Define reasonable prices for these contracts; d) On the grounds of a global strategy emergency in petroleum prices and supplies, these governments must set priority on processing of such contracted petroleum flows through relevant refiners to priority categories of consumers in each nation, causing other stocks to be shunted to one side in the degree that these priority deliveries must be processed first.

8. Such action will, obviously, collapse much of the current hyperinflationary trends in petroleum. That will have a significant political effect, in the form of reactions from the speculators currently gorging themselves on the suffering of national economies suffering zooming speculative prices of petroleum. We can not permit the cupidity of a powerful few speculators to destroy enterprises essential to the national interests of nations, and to the relations among those national economies. That opposition to urgently needed measures must be resisted on grounds of overriding national strategic interests.

9. This proposed action will not cure the more general hyperinflationary trend in progress. It will only bring a most critical segment of this speculative inflation under control; but it will set standards of cooperation now urgently needed, for dealing with the general international banking and related crises about to strike the world as a whole during the weeks and months immediately ahead.

10. There are many details of the current speculative marketing of petroleum contracts which require closer scrutiny and related assessment. That investigation should proceed; it is urgent. However, those representatives of governments who understand the politics of oil, must play a leading role in implementing the general measures I have indicated, now, without delay. After a thirty- to ninety-day initial period of operation of the proposed agreements, secondary and tertiary features of the problem will be clearer, and, most important, governments and others will have developed the mechanisms needed for further courses of action.

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