Schiller Institute Presents Maglev to Danish Parliament

Tom Gillesberg, chairman of the Schiller Institute in Denmark, challenged the Danish Parliament to take a technological leap into the future, in his testimony April 12 to the Parliamentary Traffic Committee on the Institute's proposal for a national maglev program. Gillesberg proposed that the committee lead the way by preparing an official study of the maglev plan.

Committee members took the challenge seriously. They asked questions about the proposed route, why the need for magnetic levitation instead of conventional high-speed trains like those in France, and what the international context was for maglev.

Gillesberg, in response, stressed the need to make a technological leap, such as that from horse-and-buggy to railroads, which requires thinking of the physical economy in a 50-year perspective. As background, he provided Danish summaries (along with the full English text) of Lyndon LaRouche's writings on the subject: "The Economic Recovery Act of 2006" and "The Lost Art of the Capital Budget" (*EIR,* Dec. 22, 2006). These documents are available on the official homepage of the Danish parliament: www.ft.dk. (Search for "Schiller Instituttet.")

Gillesberg told them that he would provide more detailed written answers to their questions. The committee chairman said that he would forward the responses the committee had requested from the Economy Ministry and Traffic Ministry about our proposal.

Gillesberg had made the Institute's maglev proposal, linking Denmark to the LaRouche plan for a Eurasian Land-Bridge, a central feature of his Copenhagen mayoral campaign in 2006, and the plan was highlighted by Denmark's largest newspaper *Jyllands-Posten,* in an prominent interview March 20, followed by other Danish press coverage.

Gillesberg's power-point presentation is available at www.schillerinstitut.dk.

The Gillesberg Testimony

Here is the text of Gillesberg's April 12 presentation, translated from the Danish.

Greetings. I am Tom Gillesberg, Chairman of the Schiller Institute in Denmark.

Firstly, I would like to thank the Traffic Committee for receiving our delegation on such short notice.

In the Summer of 2006, the Schiller Institute published a 50,000-run campaign newspaper,[1] where we proposed building a magnetic-levitation (maglev) line between Copenhagen and Aarhus, across the Kattegat Sea, which would reduce the travel time between Denmark's two largest cities to 25 minutes. That ought to be the first part of a Danish high-speed train network. This proposal garnered a lot of press coverage a couple of weeks ago.[2]

Such a maglev network ought to be in the Infrastructure Commission's and the Parliament's plans for future Danish infrastructure; therefore, we are here today to encourage the Traffic Committee to order an official study about this proposal.

A Danish maglev network will later be linked up to an international network, which, in time, will cover Europe from north to south, and reach all the way to Asia's east coast (as proposed by the American economist Lyndon LaRouche), called the Eurasian Land-bridge. Maglev trains are already now in daily use between the city of Shanghai and its airport, with a top speed of 431 km per hour.[3]

An Aarhus-Copenhagen maglev line, across the Kattegat

1. "Denmark and the Eurasian Land-Bridge," by Poul E. Rasmussen, Schiller Institute campaign newspaper, July 1, 2006.

2. *Jyllands-Posten* online; *Jyllands-Posten* Aarhus; *Berlingske Tidende; Engineer* online, ing.dk; TV2/North's homepage, among others.

3. "Shanghai Maglev Transrapid Technology," Siemens AG 2001, and two video clips at www.transrapid.de.

EIRNS/Ferida Gilesberg

The Danish Schiller Insitute's Tom Gillesberg at the Danish Parliament, where he testified before the Parliamentary Traffic Committee on the Institute's proposal for a national maglev program.

Sea, should be built now because:

1) If the travel time between Denmark's two largest cities is reduced to 25-40 minutes, that will create a cohesive economic unit, and we will be able to harvest large economic benefits, due to the increase of the population density. As the Oeresund Bridge [between Copenhagen, Denmark and Malmoe, Sweden] has already shown, through the integration of Malmoe and Skane [the region of Malmoe], in the economic life of the capital city [Copenhagen]. The effect of connecting Copenhagen and Aarhus, will be a lot bigger than that, in terms of the economy, as well as in relation to jobs, research, education, health, and culture. The rise in traffic that occurred after the Great Belt Bridge [between the Danish island of Funen, and the Jutland mainland], will be surpassed many times by this new connection. Afterwards, the connection ought to be extended to Aalborg, and developed into a national high-speed network.

2) With a technological leap to maglev, trains will be faster, easier, and cheaper than cars, and, therefore, train traffic will really become competitive. Because of the high speed, a maglev network will also have an almost unlimited capacity, which will reach far into the future. Maglev trains also have low energy usage, which is beneficial to the economy.

3) A European maglev network is faster and more economical for society than planes, and will bring us closer to the other European cities. The maglev is also well suited to freight traffic.

If the Danish economic activity and flexibility are to be upgraded by this new technology, it won't be [by financing the project] through user fees, but through the expansion of the national capital budget, in order to finance the construction of such a network, just as the state paid for the existing Danish infrastructure. The American economist Lyndon LaRouche has described this important aspect of the development of infrastructure, as the necessity of making a national capital budget, in an article addressed to the U.S. Congress, with the title, "What the Congress Must Learn: The Lost Art of the Capital Budget" (*EIR,* Jan. 12, 2007).

The effect of national investments in this type of basic infrastructure, will be multiplied many times over, during the next 50 years, due to the increased economic activity, mobility, and productivity which will be created in the economy. In the case of user-fee-financing, the ticket price will be too high, and the beneficial economic effects for the society will be lost.

Planning for the Long Term

In the short term, it seems like it would be crazy to use so much of the state's money on the project, but in the long term (30-50 years), it is crazy not to do it. And, the sooner we build it, the sooner we will get the positive results.

At the same time, the investments in basic economic infrastructure are the best answer to the current threatening economic downturn, and international economic crisis caused by the bursting housing and other speculative bubbles—both in Denmark, and internationally.

Even though this is part of a future European infrastructure (and uses German-designed technology), we cannot wait for a German initiative, as is also the case with the Fehmer Belt connection [from Denmark to Germany across the Baltic]. The optimism for the future, which is the result of our positive experience with great infrastructure projects here in Denmark, means that we can lead, and then, later, get the Germans to come along, both concerning building the Fehmer Belt connection and a maglev network.[4]

Asia is not waiting for Europe. China has already built a maglev line; and Russia, China and India have commenced close economic, technological, and scientific cooperation. They are already designing new types of nuclear power plants, and similar advanced projects. Russia and China are now cooperating on sending space probes to Mars, and are even discussing a manned mission to the Moon.

If Denmark and Europe are to play a leading role in the future, we must make a technological leap now, which, through scientific and technological progress, will create increased welfare in the future.

Thank you.

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4. "Denmark's Future Role in the World: From Crusaders to Bridge Builders," by Tom Gillesberg, Schiller Institute campaign newspaper 2, December 2006.