

was worsened by the fact, that there was already anger in much of Britain, over the “Millennium Dome.”

That lunatic monstrosity, located in Greenwich, is supposed to signify the great creativity and wonders of the United Kingdom, at the beginning of the new millennium, and has been the pet project of Blair guru Peter Mandelson (a.k.a. “Lord Mandy of Rio,” in recognition of his wild homosexual romps in the Brazilian capital). It was designed to be the greatest attraction in the country, and to draw vast numbers of people, making it self-financing.

Instead, it has been an utter flop, with attendance far below projected levels, and a financial disaster, requiring massive injections of government money to keep it afloat. That itself had become a scandal. But in late August-early September, there occurred the “last straw,” when a new several-hundred-millions pound-sterling injection of funds was made.

Pouring all this money down a sinkhole, stood in stark contrast to the under-funding of education, transportation, and health care, including in vital areas of scientific and medical research.

Adding to Blair’s woes, has been the publication of extracts of *Servants of the People*, a book released right around the time of the Labour Party conference, by Andrew Rawnsley, political editor of the left-liberal London weekly, the *Observer*. Rawnsley is a strong “New Labour” sympathizer. This makes it all the more damaging that, basing himself on insider information, Rawnsley exposes Blair to be vacillating, neurotic, and frequently subject to panics “teetering into hysteria.” He charges that the public image, cultivated by Blair, of a “turbo-charged machine in the masterful control of the driver was a carefully spun illusion.” The book also documents the bitter infighting within the government, particularly between Blair and Chancellor of the Exchequer Brown, but also among other Cabinet ministers. Reportedly, 10 Downing Street is most displeased by Rawnsley’s book, which has become a bestseller in Britain.

In the “business-as-usual” interpretation of British politics, Blair is being kept in power only by the weakness of his main opponent, Conservative Party leader William Hague, the Thatcher protégé who generates as much excitement as an apple core. But Britain is Britain, and the world is at a very volatile historical conjuncture. It would be very easy, at the appropriate moment, for the British establishment to “arrange” for Blair to slip on some kind of political “banana peel,” if he becomes too much of a liability. He would be forced to leave office, replaced either by someone inside Labour itself, or from another political party, or by some combination cobbled together, to “handle” the situation, in British terms.

Tony Blair should make a special appointment with his dry cleaners. He’s going to be sweating a lot, even in the coming cold weather of Autumn and Winter.

Pushkin Monument Unveiled in Washington

by Rachel Douglas

The first monument in the United States to the great Russian poet Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin (1799-1837) was unveiled the morning of Sept. 20 in Washington, D.C., at a ceremony addressed by Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov and U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott. The Hon. James W. Symington, chairman of the Board of Directors of the American-Russian Cultural Cooperation Foundation, presided over the culmination of this project, which his organization helped to initiate. A mock-up of the monument was presented last year, at the time of the bicentennial of Pushkin’s birth.

Several hundred people gathered on a street corner at George Washington University, to see the larger-than-life bronze sculpture by Alexander and Igor Bourganov unwrapped, in bright sunshine. It now stands at 22nd and H Streets. Students, professors, diplomats, Americans, Russians, and Russian-Americans were beaming, as speakers recited and sang Pushkin’s verses, and the formal messages rose to a level far higher than most international discourse.

Former U.S. Representative Symington read out loud a warm message from President Bill Clinton, welcoming the likeness of “this beloved poet” onto American soil. A message of greetings from Russian President Vladimir Putin (whom an interpreter, carried away by the moment, called “President Pushkin”) was read aloud by Foreign Minister Ivanov. “From the bottom of my heart,” Putin wrote, “I greet the organizers and all the participants of the solemn opening ceremony for the monument to A.S. Pushkin, the first one in the United States. This event, without exaggeration, may be considered not only a signal one, but really the most important in the history of the development of cultural ties between our countries. The Russian genius of Pushkin is open to the entire world, and his immortal creations, translated into dozens of languages, are among the greatest treasures of humanity. His creative work belongs to Russia as a nation. But, far beyond the borders of our country, millions of people highly value this great poet for his incorruptible fidelity to the ideals of beauty, freedom, patriotism, and morality.”

Citing Pushkin’s “*Ya pamyatnik vozdvig . . .*” (“A monument I’ve raised . . .”), Putin concluded, “The main Pushkin monument is that one not made by human hands, which is



Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov addresses the crowd at the dedication of the statue of Russian poet Alexander Pushkin, in Washington, D.C. on Sept. 20.

raised in the hearts of those who love his marvelous verses, his easy prose, grand dramas, witty letters, and mischievous drawings. Pushkin always dreamed about travelling to far-off countries, but the poet was not destined to see the New World. Today, thanks to the efforts of true admirers of his talent, America's map now has its 'Pushkin places.' I believe that also 'the people's path' will never be overgrown, to this monument to the poet, whose art remains young in the 21st Century, 200 years after his birth. I sincerely wish all the true friends of Pushkin in America—peace, prosperity, and every success."

The Washington Pushkin monument is a gift from the City Government of Moscow, to the City of Washington, D.C. Greetings from Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov were presented by his First Deputy, Lyudmila Shvetsova. Beverly Rivers, Secretary of the District of Columbia, spoke on behalf of D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams. She noted the high interest among African-Americans, in Pushkin's being in part of African extraction.

Deputy Secretary Talbott introduced Foreign Minister Ivanov, who added his own comments to those of President Putin. Noting that Pushkin was also a diplomat, being employed by the Russian Foreign Ministry, he said that Pushkin's arrival in Washington, D.C., means that "we have another messenger of good will," to help in the difficult task of improving Russian-American relations. (After the ceremony, Ivanov was mobbed by reporters, seeking his reaction to the "Cox Report," issued by Congressional Republicans to denounce U.S. policy toward Russia under the Clinton Adminis-

tration; he replied that he had not studied the report, although he had met some of its authors, and commented diplomatically that while perhaps less has been achieved in U.S.-Russian relations during the past ten years than might have been hoped, there has been progress in the two countries' wiping away each other as an enemy-image, and stabilizing the relationship.)

'To the Poet'

Other speakers were Yevgeni Bogatyrev, director of the State Pushkin Museum in Moscow, Prof. Peter Rollberg of George Washington University, and Father Dmitri Grigorieff, Dean Emeritus of St. Nicholas Cathedral, who blessed the monument. Representative Symington sang his trademark song, a verse from Mikhail Glinka's setting of Pushkin's "*Ya pomnyu chudnoye mgnoveniye . . .*" ("I remember the wondrous moment . . ."); Professor Rollberg recited in Russian and in English, Pushkin's blistering sonnet "To the Poet," in which Pushkin advises that if the *vox populi* is foolish and infantile, ignore it!

In the Bourganovs' bronze statue, Pushkin is wearing a frock coat, and steps forward from a column, as if about to recite. Atop the column is Pegasus, the winged horse of the poets. Champagne was passed through the crowd, and toasts were drunk to Pushkin.

The fall 1999 issue of Fidelio magazine, devoted to Pushkin, is available for \$5 plus \$1 postage from the Schiller Institute, P.O. Box 20244, Washington, D.C. 20041-0244, or call EIR News Service at 1-888-347-3258.