Written by **James Murphy** on July 29, 2021

U.K. Government Orders EU Flags Flown in Exchange for Receiving COVID Funds

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The government of the United Kingdom has ordered that the flag of the European Union — the bloc of nations the U.K. officially left in January of last year — to be flown over locations that have received "European" COVID relief funding.

The requirement is a condition for local governments in the U.K. that have received funding under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The fund requires the flag of the EU to be displayed around "every piece of signage, pavement sticker, or temporary public realm adaption" that has received money from the agency.

The result is that thousands of EU flags are again flying all over the United Kingdom even though the country left the EU bloc of nations in 2020.

In addition to flying the flag outside of offices receiving the money, rules also stipulate that the EU flag must be shown on "all electronic and print publication materials used for information and communications supported by the fund." So, every e-mail and every printed document associated with ERDF funding must show the EU flag.

Even after Brexit, under the terms of the withdrawal agreement, the U.K. is still eligible to receive certain funds from the EU until 2023, but with obvious strings attached — some pretty petty strings.

The flag rule is being imposed by Brussels but has to be enforced by the U.K. government — an embarrassing situation for U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson, a prominent Brexiteer who fought long and hard to remove the U.K. from its attachment to the European bloc of nations.

The flag rule has upset many in the country, who see it as a needless capitulation to the EU.

"No British council should be using the EU flag in 2021," said Richard Tice, a former member of European Parliament (MEP) and the current leader of Reform UK, a successor to the Brexit Party.

"We've left the EU — full stop," Tice told Breitbart London.

Another former MEP scorned Johnson's government for allowing the EU flags in the U.K. "The Conservative government continues to make a laughing stock of itself," said Brian Monteith, another former member of the Brexit Party.

The criticism of Johnson and the Conservative government didn't end with former Brexiteers. Liberal Democrat Christine Jardine said, "This shows the absurd hypocrisy of this Conservative government. They have spent years denouncing EU projects and pulling the UK out of funding schemes like this, and now they have the gall to trumpet a fund made possible by exactly the sort of European cooperation they are turning their backs on."

"Instead of worrying about displaying the EU flag, the government should be working hard to support the thousands of struggling high street businesses," Jardine concluded.

The U.K. has received £56 million from the ERDF fund. The money is being distributed under a program called the Welcome Back Fund, which is overseen by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and Member of Parliament Robert Jenrick, the head of the ministry.

"Our Welcome Back Fund gives every city, town and high street support to prepare for a great summer. This funding will help councils and businesses to welcome shoppers, diners and tourists back safely," Jenrick said.

Whomever drafted the official announcement of the fund couldn't resist getting in some globalist buzzwords.

"These measures are part of unprecedented wider support government is providing to communities and businesses, to protect jobs, support the most vulnerable and ensure no one is left behind as we continue to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic and begin to *build back better*." (Emphasis added.)

Also, the extent to which this is "European money" is a matter of some question, since the U.K. generally paid more into the EU treasury than it received back.

"We don't need the EU's help and we don't need their flags needlessly taking credit for recirculating money we give them," Monteith said, adding that "Brexit is certainly not yet done."

It's a bad look overall for Johnson and his government. After a full four years of bickering, deal making, and rancor associated with removing the U.K. from the EU at the request of the people, the EU is still making its presence known in a country that is supposed to be a sovereign entity.

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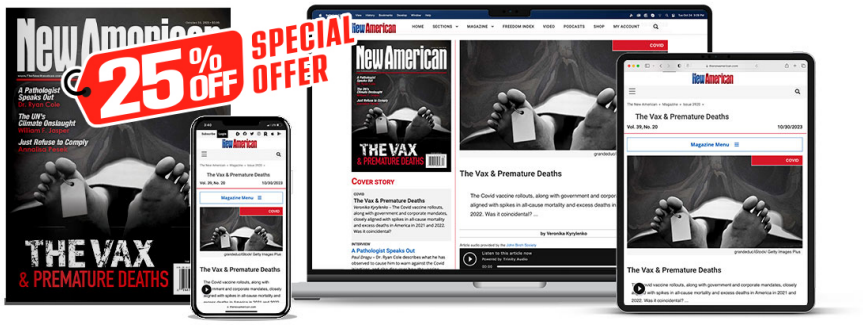

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