

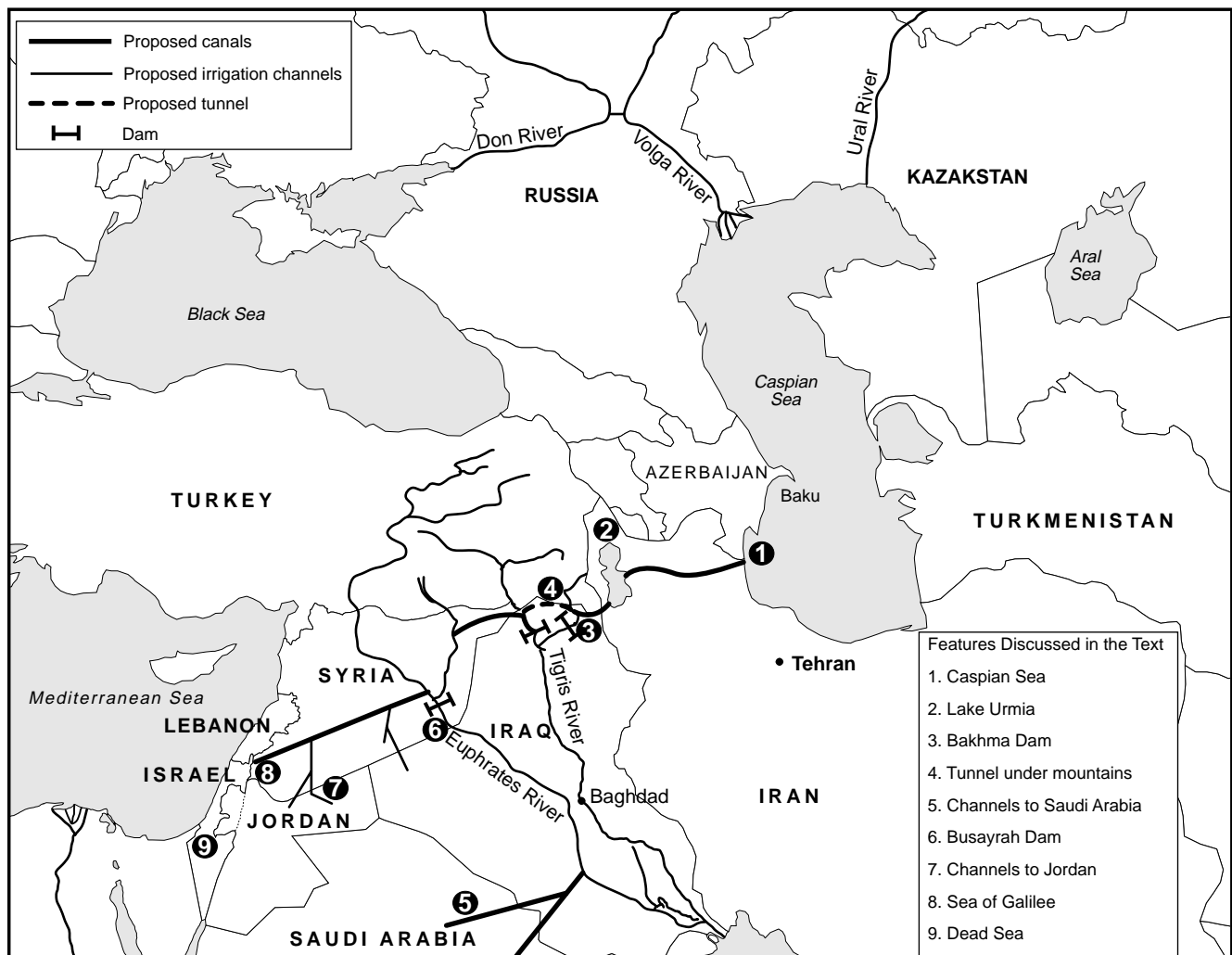
Mexican Initiative for 'Creating' New Water Resources for Mideast Peace

by Marcia Merry Baker

An important contribution to the urgent question of how to provide water and energy resources as the basis for peace in the Mideast, has been provided by Manuel Frías Alcaraz, a prominent Mexican engineer with wide experience in hydraulic and energy projects in his country. Frías' call for a

Caspian Sea-Middle East water transfer project, has been endorsed by Lyndon LaRouche's associates in Mexico, the Ibero-American Solidarity Movement (MSIA). The MSIA president in Mexico, Marivilia Carrasco, wrote an open letter to Mexican President Vicente Fox, urging him to make

FIGURE 1
Frías Caspian-Mideast Water Proposal



use of Mexico's interim-presidency of the United Nations Security Council (for the month of April), to promote a development-based solution to the Mideast crisis, such as proposed by Mr. Frías.

For the Mideast, Frías is proposing a water transfer program, channeling water out of the Caspian Sea to provide added supplies for the water-short areas to the west. **Figure 1** and Mr. Frías' statement below summarize the details of this interesting proposal. Many geophysical questions are posed, as Frías himself notes. The Caspian water itself is three times less saline than ocean water, but still is 11,000 parts per million. And on the continental scale, there are matters of the consequences of large-scale diversion.

The Caspian Sea is the Earth's largest enclosed lake (no connection to the oceans) in volume and surface area. Located in a highly active tectonic region (with vast oil and gas deposits), the Caspian's level has been highly variable over time—by millennia, as well as decades and centuries—a phenomenon for which there are conflicting explanations. But whatever the hydrodynamics, significantly diverting Caspian waters presents the need for considering the consequences to the littoral settlements, the zoology, and similar concerns, most particularly the in-flow rate. Five rivers, chiefly the Volga, account for 90% of the incoming freshwater. The Soviets had plans for diverting river run-off, now flowing unused to the Arctic, southward to replenish the flow to the closed seas (Caspian, Aral, Baikal). These plans were stopped; the Aral Sea is all but destroyed. Now is the time to revive the continental-scale water engineering.

LaRouche's 'Oasis Plan'

The Frías Caspian-Mideast plan complements the long-standing approach by Lyndon LaRouche, known as the "Oasis Plan" for peace in the Mideast. **Figure 2** summarizes some of its features, whose principle is that modern technologies of plentiful, inexpensive nuclear power, coupled with high-tech desalination, can provide the ratios of power and water required to create man-made development corridors and oases in the desert. Technically, just 20 nuclear-powered desalination installations in the eastern Mediterranean and Red Sea/Gulf of Aqaba areas could create freshwater equal to a "Second Jordan River" in volume!

LaRouche wrote on Aug. 6, 2000, at the time of the breakdown in the Camp David Palestinian-Israeli talks, a policy document, "Water as a Strategic Flank; Wherein Clinton Failed," on the necessity of a "desalination-based economic development program we first presented to relevant Arabs, Israelis, and others a quarter-century ago"—the "Oasis Plan." He warned: "In most of the region, and especially for the largest portions of the area, there simply do not exist sources of supply of usable water sufficient to meet the elementary needs of the population. Hence, without large-scale desalination programs being put immediately into operation, there is no hope for durable peaceful relations among the populations of this region."

Water and Energy: Solution to Conflict In the Middle East

by Manuel Frías Alcaraz

Mr. Frías Alcaraz is a prominent Mexican engineer. He is the author and director of the "Mexico in the Third Millennium National Project" (www.mexicotm.com).

The unequal and dangerous conflict in the Middle East is considered to be caused by issues of control and use of water and energy resources. Mesopotamia—whose upper area is located in Syria, while the middle and lower part, which represents the greatest land area and has abundant surface and underground water, belongs to Iraq—is the most coveted basin in that convulsed region of the world.

Without hydrocarbons, a nation can survive and develop itself. Without water, it cannot live. Oil can be exported. Water cannot be imported; each country has to rely on its own resources. If Iraq has both natural riches, and the other countries have deficiencies, insecurity and ambition are generated. Only through a well-conceived, multinational development project can there be coexistence and prosperity.

Under special circumstances, and because it satisfies mutual interests, commitments, and benefits, it is recommendable, if consensus can be reached and a well-planned and important infrastructure project made feasible, that transfers of water between countries take place. In this case, it would be from the Caspian Sea—which lies 28 meters below sea-level, has a surface area of 371,000 square kilometers, and is fed by the Volga and Ural rivers, among others—to the Middle East, an international region with the planet's largest hydrocarbon deposits (735 billion barrels of oil, including the Caspian Sea reserves [see Figure 1]).

To achieve this in-depth solution to the serious problems of water scarcity, the flow would originate in the southern part (which belongs to Iran) of the immense Caspian Sea (1 on the map). It is so large that, with eight centimeters of its stored water—which is the equivalent of 30 billion cubic meters of water—one could irrigate 3 million hectares of land for a year, and convert vast desert terrain into gardens. From there, large quantities of water would be transferred to Lake Urmia (2), located to the west of the Caspian Sea, and also in Iranian territory. In order to make the transfer feasible, the water would have to be pumped to sufficient height to cross the mountains that separate Iran from Iraq in a reliable and economical fashion. In this way, the required charge would also be achieved in the main channel, to ensure that a large

FIGURE 2

Features of the LaRouche 'Oasis Plan'



volume of water would continue along the remainder of the route by gravity.

From this natural reservoir, the flow would be pumped into northern Iraq (Kurdish-controlled area). It will be necessary to build the Bakhma Dam (3) here, as well as a tunnel (4) of sufficient capacity (about 1,000 cubic meters per second) to carry water into the Tigris River, to the north of Mosul. Later, by means of canals and waterways, it would link up with the Khabar River, a tributary of the Euphrates. In these rivers, which delimit Mesopotamia, sufficient water would remain to irrigate land and supply the populations in northern Syria and Iraq. At the same time, and if feasible, additional channels from the Euphrates would carry water to the northeast of Saudi Arabia (5).

With the construction of the Busayrah Dam (6) on the Euphrates, the Caspian Sea-Middle East water transfer would continue through southern Syria, where it would supply the population centers and new irrigation districts, as well as possible derivative channels to supply water to northeast Jordan

(7). This transfer of life and progress, which would help resolve old ethnic and religious differences, would arrive in the north of Israel, to supply freshwater to the Sea of Galilee (8). By providing supplementary volumes of water to this unstable zone, supplying the border cities of Syria, Israel, and Jordan, conflicts over use of water could be eliminated, and political grounds for agreement found.

From the Sea of Galilee, part of the transferred flow would continue to the south through the Jordan River, increasing the amount of land under irrigation and supplying several nearby towns located in the West Bank, Jordan, and Israel; and it would finally discharge its last, valuable waters into the Dead Sea (9). In these two interior seas, both located below sea-level (Galilee at -200 meters and the Dead Sea at -400 meters), a simultaneous process of clean-up, rehabilitation, and conservation would begin, which would make their historic legacy that much more magnificent.

This strategic and fundamental water transfer—in a general east-to-west direction, and descending towards the southwest—over approximately 1,200 kilometers, would consist of treatment and pumping plants (it is necessary to determine if the low salinity of the Caspian Sea allows the water taken from it to be used for agricultural and urban needs), tunnels, large-diameter tubing, natural channels, reservoirs, canals, irrigation works, and the modernization of operating hydraulic installations.

In addition to supplying revitalizing water to thirsty populations and extensive lands, to increase food production notably in Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Palestine, and Israel, this project would also help reconcile interests and controversies in a region suffering constant confrontations for hegemony and control over resources.

Thus, using oil not as loot or a prize, but as an indispensable support-complement to finance, construct, and encourage a *sui generis* and wide-ranging development in the Middle East, around a great infrastructure project that definitively resolves the growing and recurrent wars over water in such a representative region of human civilization, would ensure that the motives, ambitions, and international arguments over administration/control of water, which today produce destruction and desolation, would evolve toward renewed cooperation and multinational coordination of goals and projects, where the primary interest and commitment would be to guarantee peaceful coexistence and progress.

It is necessary to reflect on the fact that the conflicts and

struggles in the Middle East which have prevailed since time immemorial, with alternating periods of domination of old and new populations to achieve supremacy, power, and wealth, today require, more than ever, an opportunity for, and a vote of confidence in its present-day civilizations and nations, to find and develop a common horizon of shared equity and prosperity.

The great project for Caspian Sea-Middle East water transfer would contribute to heal and reconcile divergent goals and aspirations. By respecting sovereignty and the principles of international law, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, and Israel would create the basis for a new era of progress and agreements for peace, which reconciles the actions, will, and efforts to negotiate and distribute water and energy resources among the Muslim, Hebrew, and Christian peoples.

A Mexican Contribution To Middle East Peace

The following open letter to the President of Mexico was issued by the Mexican branch of Lyndon LaRouche's Ibero-American Solidarity Movement (MSIA), on April 18.

President Vicente Fox Quezada:

Today, the world's fate will be determined by what we, the current generation—those of us who assume responsibility; you Mr. President and the citizens of this nation—do or fail to do, in the face of the challenge which history has put before us. Thus, it is perhaps no accident that destiny offers us the opportunity to act, even to change the world.

For a month, Mexico presides over the United Nations Security Council, and during that period, holds in its hands a unique opportunity to provide a solution, to offer the world a way out of the catastrophe of war. Mexico must present to the Security Council an international proposal for the reconstruction of the Middle East through great infrastructure projects, as the only basis upon which a durable peace and stability for the different nations of the region can be founded.

Pope Paul VI once said that “development is the new name of peace.” Well, now Mexico can go from passive “resistance” to the war against Iraq, to an offensive for peace, by means of a proposal that can truly help to rebuild a region of the world so devastated, time and time again, by ethnic, religious, and geopolitical conflicts.

Mr. President, Mexico must pose the necessity of fighting, not nations, but the source of rancors and confrontations among them, offering them the possibility of undertaking a common mission for world reconstruction. Thus, our country has this important international responsibility, not only during its period as president of the United Nations Security Council, but at all times, in its character as a sovereign nation-state, as

part of a community of principle among the different nations of the Earth.

A Mexican, the engineer Manuel Frías Alcaraz, has a viable proposal for a water and energy project of vast scope which integrates the region which stretches from the eastern Mediterranean, to Iran in western Asia, the “Caspian-Mideast Water Transfer Project.” The principal problem faced in developing the Middle East, is that of water, and what Engineer Frías proposes to solve this, is to transfer water from the Caspian Sea, with a surface of 371,000 square kilometers, to different nations in the Middle East, the region which has the largest concentration of hydrocarbon reserves on the planet (735 billion barrels of oil).

For the General Welfare of Man

Only this kind of orientation will succeed, an orientation in accordance with the principles that U.S. Presidential pre-candidate Lyndon H. LaRouche has established in his proposals—which several nations have already adopted—to create a New Bretton Woods, that is, a new and more just international economic and monetary order, and to build an Eurasian Land-Bridge that will link Europe with Asia through corridors of infrastructure and development.

And, in fact, Mr. President, do you not have the power to present this alternative to war, not only to the UN Security Council, but also to the Mexican people, whom you represent, to save them from the prostration of another war—of the same origin, but economic in nature?

Remember what Lyndon LaRouche said during his last visit to Mexico in November 2002: “The problem is, that there is no way, with the current policies that have been imposed on Mexico, in large measure by the United States, that they can be successful. When enemy forces invade your country, you have to take this into account. And the current policies . . . which come from the United States, are crazy policies that can destroy Mexico.”

And the words he addressed to you: “The President of a republic like Mexico, does not personify a contract that he signs, to represent certain policies. Rather, he is the President of a republic. He has to be the leading figure in the introduction and implementation of policies that the country needs. The chief executive of a republic has the responsibility to act as the protector of the nation. He has to act in the interest of the general welfare. He has to take into account the welfare of the nations which are the partners of his country.”

Today, we are called upon to decide whether we will commit the same error for which humanity has paid so dearly, so many times, of plunging the world into a new Dark Age of interminable conflicts; or, if we will bring the world into a safe port, a Renaissance such as that which rescued Europe from starvation, war, and the Black Death of the 15th Century.

President Fox, if you do not rise to the level which this decisive moment in history demands of you, be certain that Iraq, and Mexico and the world, will face perpetual war, and even the end of civilization as we know it.