

A nation-building economic program in the spirit of the Nasser years

by Ramtanu Maitra

Within the next 25 years, the nation of Egypt could become the Japan of the Middle East—the source and supplier of modern technologies and even skilled scientific labor to its neighbors through the region. This transformation of Egypt through industrial and technological development is in fact the only alternative to continued economic stagnation, political weakening, and probable destruction of the Egyptian nation.

The economic development path charted by India in the decades following Independence provides a good model for today's Egyptian leadership. India's first and second Five Year Plans, developed by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, concentrated on the upgrading of India's huge manpower resources, and laid the foundations of the country's heavy industrial base. Under President Nasser, Egypt followed a similar course, later abandoned. It is to the tradition of Nehru and Nasser which Egypt must return today.

Egypt's industrial history goes back to the days of the dynamic ruler Muhammad Ali in the 1830s. Under Ali's leadership, Egypt's textile industry was automated with state-of-the-art technology. This industrial development, however, was cut short when Muhammad Ali was destabilized by the corrupt Ottoman Empire with the help of the British, whose textile industry was not ready to face a challenge from Egypt. After Ali, industrial development in Egypt continued only in spurts.

Gamal Abdel Nasser's rise to Egypt's leadership in the 1950s soon after the Egyptian monarchy was overthrown, marked the beginning of Egypt's 20th-century efforts to pursue its goals of industrialization. Due to Nasser's efforts, Egypt today boasts a cadre of engineers, scientists, technicians, and skilled industrial workers larger than any nation in the Middle East. Since Egypt is not bestowed with nature's mineral bounties, its major strength lies in this available educated and technologically developed manpower without the help of which no development can succeed.

The economy's major weakness

Two major weaknesses presently plague the Egyptian economy. These are lack of irrigated cultivable land and the

nation's weak infrastructure.

Most of Egypt's present-day population is concentrated in the Nile Delta region in north Egypt near the Mediterranean. The Nile flows south to north, and splits Egypt into eastern and western segments. Both sides of the river lie barren and practically uninhabited.

At the northwest corner, about 50 miles south of the Mediterranean Sea, the massive Qattara Depression lies dry and fallow. The bottom of this depression, composed of pleistocene marl, limestone, and other sedimentary rocks, is 450 feet below the Mediterranean Sea level. Construction of a canal or multiple canals by using high-powered and well-tested small nuclear explosives could connect the depression to the Mediterranean quickly and at about half the expense of conventional canal-excavation methods. Connecting this 4,250-square-mile depression area to the Mediterranean will create resources which Egypt lacks today. Instantly the rushing water will start filling up this depression, a flow which can be used for generating electricity for industrial and domestic use. With proper engineering, peak-load hydropower development of up to 10,000 MW capacity can be achieved within the next decade.

Greater benefits from filling the depression will follow soon. Over a period of about four decades, a dramatic metamorphosis will occur in the region. The dry brown sand which surrounds the great depression will become fertile and a large part of the barren Western Desert will be transformed into an agriculturally productive region. Industry will begin processing the salt and other mineral matters entering the depression with the seawater. These raw materials can serve as the basic products for petrochemical and fertilizer factories. The creation of a man-made lake will also make it possible to tap underlying formations of crude oil and natural gas. After the filling, a fishing industry will be created in the 200-mile-long and 60-mile-wide lake.

The canal, which will stretch from the Mediterranean coast to the intake structure, will serve as a construction harbor and then possibly as part of transshipment point for ocean-going ships. In another 40 years, the region surrounding Qattara Depression will bustle with life and vitality that

one associated with the densely populated region around the Nile River Delta.

A number of preliminary studies have been made and the Egyptian government has formed the Qattara Development Authority to oversee an upcoming feasibility study to be undertaken by a technical team. There are indications that the government has decided to give top priority to the project.

New power resources

Cheap and abundant electrical power will be essential for building up modern Egypt. 10,000 MW of electrical power generated by the Qattara Hydroelectric Power Station will help build up areas around the Qattara Depression with new industrial townships and reclaim land for agricultural use. However, to set up an adequate industrial base across the nation much larger amounts of electrical power are needed. This must be done by installing nuclear-based agro-industrial complexes along the coast of the Red Sea and around the Delta area. These complexes, known as nuplexes, will enable Egypt to desalinate the Red Sea water cheaply.

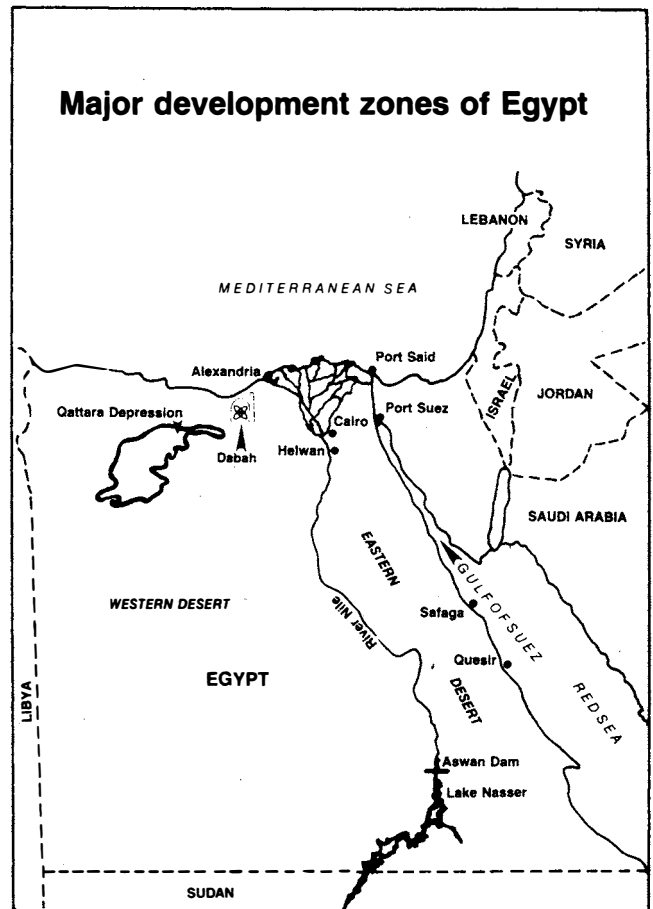
In 1964, the U.S. Oak Ridge National Laboratory worked up the details of the nuplex concept for the Middle East. The mid-1950s Strauss-Eisenhower plan, named after the first chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission and the U.S. President, called for the construction of a nuplex on the southeastern Mediterranean coast, to be jointly owned and managed by Israel and Egypt. Although this plan was not implemented, Egypt is presently planning to move ahead with the construction of its first nuclear power plant.

The first generation of nuclear-power reactors planned for Egypt are pressurized water reactors. But since Egypt is not known to have large reserves of fissionable uranium, its nuclear program must move quickly to the second-generation breeder reactor. France, which has commercial breeder reactors now in operation, can provide the necessary technology.

Also critical for Egypt's industrial progress is to introduce High Temperature Reactors which are capable of generating the much higher temperatures essential for industrial processes which require high-temperature steam. High Temperature Reactors can also be suitably used to gasify coal and superheat the resultant gas to pass through a magnetohydrodynamic (MHD) generator to produce electricity. First-generation MHD generators, which are now being considered for commercial use in the Soviet Union, could enhance Egypt's power-generating capability by about 55 percent.

Needed: more developed land

Besides opening up the Qattara region, more land must be developed and ports constructed. An economically viable and farsighted program is to develop Egypt's Eastern Desert. Clusters of nuclear power reactors should be installed along the Red Sea coastal area which will serve as the center for such development. These nuplexes, besides providing ener-



gy to the agro-industrial complexes and for domestic needs, will enable a vast amount of the Red Sea water to be desalinated daily. Wide canals cutting across the Eastern Desert will distribute the desalinated water to reclaim new land for agriculture and rehabilitation. The canals will green the desert and carry barges to transport machinery, food products, and raw materials all along the Nile.

In the Western Desert, a series of depressions punctuated by oases stretching from the Delta to Siwa must be linked by man-made canals to make about 3 million acres of land available for agriculture. At present, 15,000 acres of this land are under cultivation in this area, and the current plan calls for the reclamation of another 120,000 acres. There are estimates that this area will settle more than 3 million people.

Exploiting natural resources

Egypt has known recoverable reserves of 80 million tons of coal in Sinai and large gas reserves in the Western Desert. Petrochemicals, fertilizers, and chemicals are the basic industrial operations in which these reserves can be properly utilized. Egypt's oil wealth, which is now given away to earn foreign exchange, must be used in the future to fuel its petrochemical industry. Coal gas acquired through gasification of coal, along with natural gas, must also be used as feedstock

for the petrochemical industry.

Egypt's petrochemical industry is in a nascent stage, and the country must advance quickly in utilizing coal gas. Through hydrocracking, coal gas will produce feedstocks such as parafins, naphthenes, and aromatics. Similarly, liquefied natural gas on distillation will produce such high-value primary products as ethylene, polyethylene, polypropylene, and ammonia/urea. Further downstream, products such as glycol, polyvinylchloride, olefins, and propylene-based gasoline can also be obtained on successive distillations.

In the heavy industrial sector, Egypt must increase its steel-manufacturing capability. As Indian planners of the late 1950s realized prior to the drafting of the Second Five-Year Plan, special-alloy steel plays a pivotal role in building heavy machinery, pressure vessels, tubular products, and machine tools. Egypt must build up its indigenous capability to produce capital goods machinery over the next decade.

Egypt's trade capacity is today affected seriously by a lack of port facilities. Port traffic is increasing daily and in the near future Egypt will need new and larger ports, many of which should be constructed along the Red Sea coast. On the east coast, Port Said on the Mediterranean and Port Suez on the Red Sea will not be able to handle the increased volume of cargo. Two existing small ports, Safaga and Quesir on the Red Sea, must be expanded to specialize in bulk traffic items such as raw materials, heavy machinery, and semi-finished goods.

Egypt must aggressively pursue a program to achieve self-sufficiency in cereal and cattlefeed production. Today, out of Egypt's total land area of 250 million acres, only 8 million acres of land are farmed. Egypt's wheat crop output is substantially less than internal consumption needs. Egypt's wheat imports represent a massive drain on the nation's economy; close to a billion dollars in foreign exchange are used to buy wheat from abroad.

A larger land area should be allocated to wheat production, and output may be increased substantially by improving the factor productivity of the land. Introduction of dwarf wheat and subsequent development of high-yielding varieties (HYVs) has noticeably increased wheat yield per acre worldwide. Semi-irrigated land in the Western Desert can be tilled to grow alfalfa and other high-protein cattlefeed.

Opening up 6-8 million acres of new land, cutting down land area for cash crops such as cotton, and vigorously pursuing development of new varieties of crop seeds and a mechanized farming system will make Egypt a nation with surplus food.

Over the millennia, Egypt has survived in spite of worldwide upheavals because of its strong sense of destiny. Once again the Middle East is engulfed in turmoil and violence. It is through building of the nation that Egypt will be able to guide and influence the warring factions and bring peace to the region. It is imperative that the Egyptian leaders take up this challenge today so that future generations can live in peace and prosperity.

Mubarak's war against the Mafia

by Thierry Lalevee

The recent arrest of Esmat Sadat, brother of the late Egyptian president, provided a clue as to the nature of the war being waged by President Mubarak and his allies against the Mafia in Egypt and in the region. *EIR* investigations over the past few weeks have revealed the following:

1) In Egypt, the old Farouk Mafia which ruled the country under the monarchy, and the so-called Alexandrian *Nouveaux Riches* represented by Esmat Sadat, are one and the same organization, which maintains headquarters in Paris and London.

2) This Mafia is not Egyptian, but merely the local branch of a Mediterranean-based Mafia operating in the Lebanon/Syria region, Israel, Turkey, Egypt, and Italy.

3) As the dismantlement of the Italian Freemasonic P-2 Lodge showed, this Mediterranean Mafia is itself controlled by higher political circles, located in the British Freemasonry of the "Grand Mother Lodge of England" of the York and Scottish rites. These circles can be adequately described as the "magicians," as President Kyprianou of Cyprus declared in 1979 following an aborted coup in the islands. Indeed the same routes used nowadays by that Mafia to smuggle drugs and arms were in ancient times the routes used to spread black magic and witchcraft cults into Europe. The fact that in Egypt the center of the Mafia is the city of Alexandria only underscores the relationship between the Mafia and cults, Alexandria being the mother par excellence of all gnostic cults.

4) As shown by the recent crackdown in Italy and Turkey, it is these higher circles of the Mafia and of the Freemasonry which are actually controlling the lower species of professional assassins and terrorists, such as the Muslim Brotherhood. These are these circles which, through the Arab Masonic Movement in Amman, ran the assassination of Bashir Gemayel and the subsequent massacres in Beirut and are now plotting against both Presidents Mubarak and Amin Gemayel.

In modern times, the development of the Mafia in Egypt can be located both in relation to the British occupation of the country as well as the establishment in 1867 of British Freemasonic Lodges, especially the Kawkab al Sharq (Star of the East) whose grand master was none other than British intelligence agent Jamal ed Din al Afghani, the first international terrorist.

It was for these reasons that President Nasser decided in