

A 40-year plan to develop the Arab world

by Judith Wyer

The decade of the 1980s will most likely offer the Arab world the last opportunity to overcome persistent backwardness and poverty which is at the root of the turmoil in the region. *EIR* has just published a lengthy study by Democratic presidential candidate Lyndon H. LaRouche entitled *Saudi Arabia in the Year 2023*, which provides a methodological framework for Arab development, which LaRouche's economics staff will apply to writing a detailed economic program for the region. LaRouche applies his groundbreaking LaRouche-Riemann economic model to formulating a plan "for an Arab world so interdependent, that no economist can consider competently the sovereign interests of any one Arab state without studying the political and economic interdependence of that world as a whole," to quote LaRouche's introduction.

A thousand years have passed since the great Renaissance of the Middle East and North Africa. Since then a stultifying poverty has been imposed by British, Venetian, and Dutch colonialists, and the Ottoman Empire. Today, oil wealth offers a chance to reclaim the greatness of the Arabic-speaking world's Renaissance heritage. But that wealth is already diminishing. Therefore, LaRouche urges that the Arab states unify into a common market as the only efficient means to achieve integrated agricultural and industrial growth in the 1980s.

Recently returned from a tour of Southeast Asia and Japan, Mr. LaRouche proposed a bold development approach to the Pacific Basin, based on selected great infrastructural projects—an approach publicly endorsed by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak earlier this year. In this context, LaRouche locates the role of the Arab world both as investors in Asian development, and moreover as the economic bridge to Africa.

"Excepting Lebanon and Syria, the entire region east of the Libyan desert orbits around the massively populated Asian subcontinent. The stability, growing prosperity, and peace, of the region of Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh, is the most vital strategic economic interest of this entire, combined region, of Arab and black African states east of the Libyan desert. It is therefore also the vital strategic interest of the Arab world as a whole," writes LaRouche.

Among the mega-projects he mandates, is a canal connecting the Nile to the Red Sea, to hasten trade between Africa and the East. The construction of the west-east lines

of trade and communication within the Arab world, including a railway system across Africa, is long overdue. LaRouche foresees the development of Africa south of the Sahel as linked to increased South Atlantic trade with Brazil and the Rio de la Plata complex, thereby establishing the basis for commerce between all of the nations of the South—from Asia through Africa, to Latin America.

This west-east railway "spine" is to traverse the Sahel as part of an integrated plan for greening the Sahara. For the entire expanse from the Maghreb to the Persian Gulf, LaRouche outlines a series of projects of land reclamation coupled with large-scale desalination projects. Here he calls for research and development of nuclear and directed-energy technologies to cheapen the costs of mass-applied desalination.

For the Arab there is no greater development priority than overcoming the historic problem of lack of arable land, not only because it constrains agriculture, but more critically because the predominance of desert lands restricts the growth of the population. Nowhere is this more visible today than in Egypt, which is undergoing a frantic race to reclaim land as its population grows.

Developing capital of mind

LaRouche provides a thorough historical overview of the genesis of his economic method, locating it in the tradition of political economy associated with the Fathers of the American Revolution—traceable from Plato to the court of Caliph Haroun Al-Rashid and the 15th century European Renaissance.

This tradition of statecraft and science views the development of the mind—labor power—as fundamental to economic growth. LaRouche emphasizes that although Saudi Arabia and other Arab states are blessed with vast oil resources, their ultimate wealth will be measured by the levels of culture and education of future generations.

In the final section of his study, *The Social Composition of Development*, LaRouche presents his most detailed elaboration to date of how to use the LaRouche-Reimann model to measure the increase in "relative population density." This provides a means for determining the rate of growth of a population's mastery over technology—the very foundation of economic development, since it is new technologies which constantly redefine natural resources.

LaRouche concludes by calling for the creation of a "science city" in Saudi Arabia to become the center of scientific education for the entire Arab world, to create the scientists and technicians needed to shift national wealth away from oil and other raw materials to the innovation of new technologies and unlimited national wealth.

Saudi Arabia in the Year 2023 is available from EIR for \$100. Contact William Engdahl, 304 W. 58th Street fifth floor, New York, New York 10019, (212) 247-8820 or (800) 223-5594 x818.