

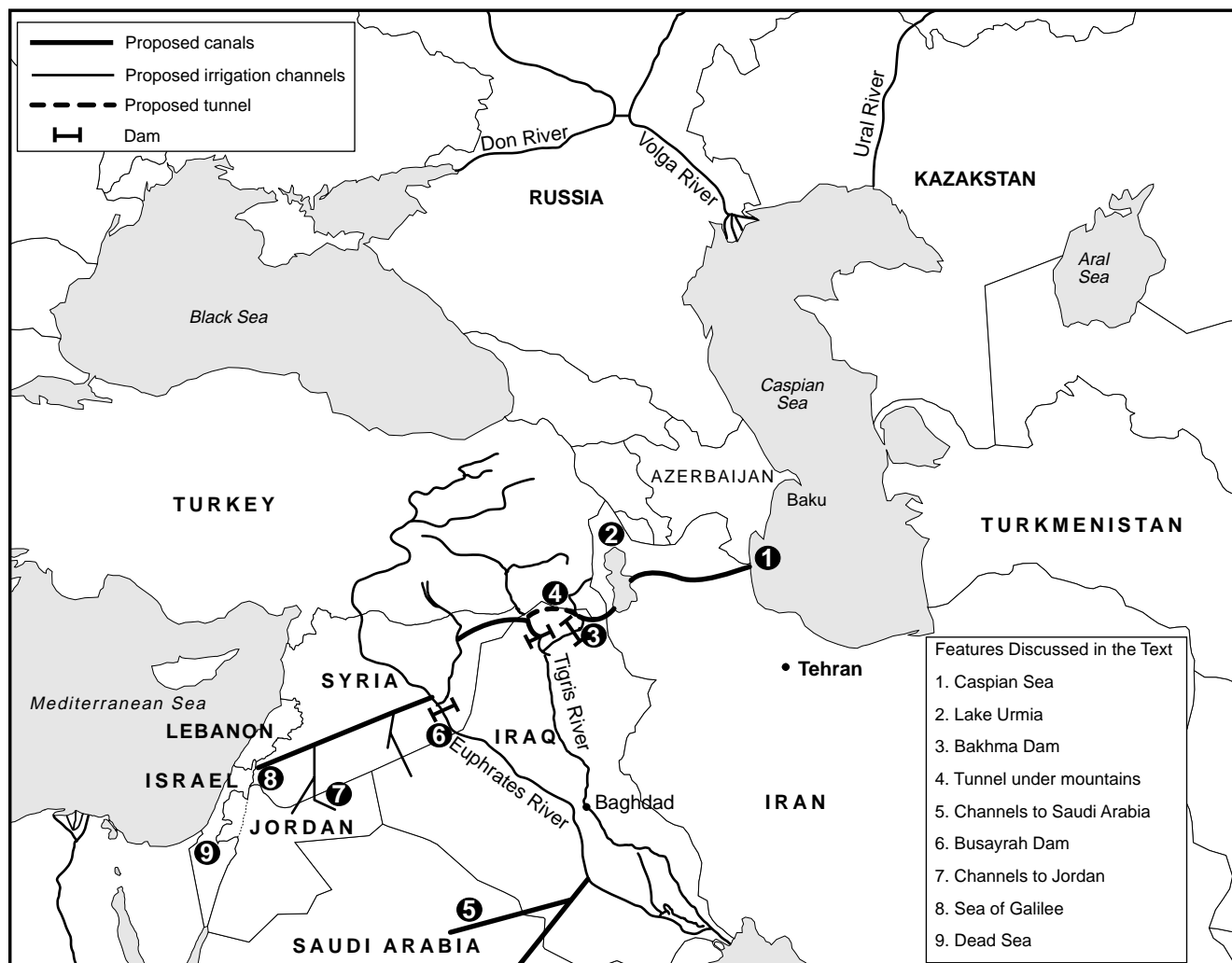
Mexican Initiative for ‘Creating’ New Water Resources for Mideast Peace

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. Frís’ 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