

## Saudi-Iranian Relations Are Not Strained

According to the *Journal of Commerce*, Saudi Arabia's Oil Minister Sheikh Zaki Yamani has affirmed healthy relations with Iran: "we have very strong relations with this country (Iran) and we value its prosperity which for example is more important to us than that of Italy...but at the moment we are more concerned about Italy because unlike Iran, it is in a bad economic condition." Yamani added that the additional 5 per cent rise in the price of OPEC oil set for July will probably not occur.

## Arab Oil Producers Should Beware of Nicholas Sarkis

In conjunction with the recent meeting of oil-producing states in Qatar, a gaggle of Atlanticist French press sources have been pushing reduction of energy consumption, Project Independence-style energy slave labor boondoggles, and the necessity of higher oil prices to implement these Rockefeller shemes. To convince the gullible, these sources have offered extensive coverage to the views of one Nicholas Sarkis, a Syrian graduate of the University of Paris and allegedly an official energy advisor to the governments of Algeria, Libya, Iraq, and

Syria, and to OPEC itself. Sarkis is actually an enthusiastic advocate of the very "resource nationalism" invented by the Washington-based Brookings Institution and made notorious by the discredited International Resources Bank (IRB) looting scheme of outgoing U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.

In an interview with the French *Le Point* magazine Dec. 13, Sarkis called for the doubling of oil prices as soon as possible, to "compensate" for the rate of inflation of goods from the industrialized West. This is hardly a subtle call for implementation of Brookings' plans to index oil and raw material prices to inflation to insure the repayment of Third World debt. Sarkis justifies his policy with a reiteration of Rockefeller's zero-growth energy scare propaganda:

"All the predictions recently made by experts of the industrialized countries converge: the world risks coming face to face with a grave scarcity of energy, foremost because of the growth of demand, also because of the using up of world oil reserves. Finally, because of the delay made in searching for alternative sources of energy...No country, no industrial enterprise will consent to take the financial risk involved in developing substitute energy sources, while the price of the dominant source of energy — oil — stays at its current level. That is why it is necessary to double the price of a barrel of oil."

Similar Sarkis statements have been covered in the French newspapers, *L'Aurore*, *Le Figaro*, and *Le Nouvel Observateur*.

# Sabotage of European Fusion Program Backfires

Dec. 24 — The world press this week was filled with reports that the Joint European Torus, a prototype tokamak reactor project scheduled for operation in 1980, was dead, and that this would lead to the demise of Europe's overall fusion research effort. JET's death, the press reports said, would mean that European fusion researchers would have to emigrate to the United States to find continued employment.

Like Mark Twain's celebrated comment, "Reports of my recent death are grossly exaggerated," it turns out that JET is not only alive and well but that the program's would-be murderers sabotaged their own plot. Instead of throwing Europe's fusion effort into chaos and confusion as they intended, the Rockefeller-allied forces found that their episode of gross exaggeration sparked a fusion offensive. The press propaganda on JET gave Europe's pro-development and pro-scientific progress faction a unique opportunity to launch a full-scale campaign for high-technology using thermonuclear energy development as the cutting edge against the Rockefeller monetarists and their dollar empire.

Not accidentally, this was precisely the strategy discussed at the U.S. Labor Party Constitutional convention held in New York Dec. 18-20.

### *How JET's Death Was Born*

JET's epitaphs began to appear in the press after a press conference early last week by Guido Brunner, head

of the European Economic Community (EEC) Commission for Research, in which he stated that JET was on its "death bed," because of the failure of EEC members to agree on a location for the \$200 million project. All reports indicated that the Giscard government in France was responsible, since France would not permit a majority vote of the EEC members to decide the location.

By midweek Europe's pro-development forces began their counter-offensive. *The London Times* reported Dec. 22 that in what would have been a normally low-keyed parliamentary debate on the future of nuclear power in Britain, there was an explosion on the JET question. The *Times* reported that Tom King, the Opposition spokesman on energy, questioned the government on the status of JET, and Mr. Eadie, Under Secretary for Energy, replied that Brunner's statement at the EEC press conference was an exaggeration.

Prime Minister Callaghan added that "These proposals go through a number of phases and I do not regard that project as dead. I go further and say I believe Britain in the form of its facilities at Culham, the team that is assembled there and the industrial and scientific backup that could be found for it, undoubtedly provides a suitable venue for the development of what could be a valuable scientific innovation in nuclear fusion as distinct from fission." According to the *Times'* report, Callaghan's speech at the mundane parliamentary

session was followed by boisterous cheering from the entire gathering.

Next day the *Times* carried an editorial called "the Torus controversy" that pointed out that the whole future of European Civilization "depended on the development of this source of energy." The government and Britain must rise to its "historic responsibility" in developing fusion power, the *Times* said.

Others joined the cry that JET was not only alive but necessarily had to grow. In the Italian Parliament, Minister of Scientific Research Pedini pointed out the necessity of fusion power development in a discussion of JET.

Lord Sherfield located the political aspects of the JET in a speech made in the House of Lords and reported by the *London Times* yesterday: "Nuclear energy had become a whipping boy for those in revolt against the consequences of high technology in general and those who wished to or set limits to growth...The government should make Britain's commitment to nuclear power unequivocal...So that expertise built up could be retained, planning and development could proceed and Britain's lead in this field, which it was in grave danger of losing, could once more be regained."

In a subsequent *Financial Times* dispatch on the JET, that newspaper reported that bilateral agreements to advance fusion research would emerge even if the JET program was sabotaged. Reliable sources have indicated that the British and Italians are already cooperating behind-the-scenes to maximize the pace of European fusion development.

Europe as yet lacks the means to fund such fusion projects. But the more successful the Rockefeller crowd is in sabotaging the present fusion program, the more Europeans will be compelled to consider their only alternate source of funds — the USSR.

### *London Times:*

#### "Unlimited Power Without Danger"

*Following is the text of an editorial in the Dec. 23 London Times, titled "The Torus Controversy."*

France will be taking on a heavy burden of historical guilt if she sinks the European thermonuclear fusion project. The project offers a fair hope of harnessing nuclear fusion to the commercial generation of electricity within forty years or so, thereby giving Europe the capacity to generate practically unlimited power without danger. Fusion would use heavy hydrogen from seawater as its basic raw material and would produce no radioactive waste for disposal. It has the additional advantage that, unlike nuclear fission, which is used by the present generation of nuclear power stations, its application to the generation of electricity is of no help towards making nuclear bombs.

Because of the very high temperatures involved new technology is required, so nobody can be sure how many years will be needed to achieve commercial application

or even that fusion can be made to work, but the Soviet Union and the United States are working hard towards it (indeed the main line of research is based on a Soviet idea) so Europe has to decide now whether to stay in the running.

In principle it has already decided. The money, the men and the facilities are all available and a European team has been working for some time at Culham, near Oxford. Fears that the whole programme could collapse have arisen only for the absurd reason that France refuses to agree to a majority vote on where to locate the vast new machine required for the next stage, the Joint European Torus. (JET)

A majority vote would almost certainly bring the project to Culham, or possibly to Garching, near Munich, which would anyway participate. The French lobbied for Cadarache, and then suggested extending the CERN facilities at Geneva. Neither location would make any sense, and in any case CERN does not want the project. Moreover the French are so heavily committed to an enormous investment in current nuclear power stations that the sincerity of their interest in the JET can be questioned. In fact, about the only rational explanation of the French position is that it is a tactical one adopted in order to put pressure on Britain to cease blocking Community plans to raise about £300m to promote the development of nuclear energy. This in turn is related to the French refusal to agree to a minimum import price of \$7 a barrel for oil.

If this is in fact the background to the French position, which is very far from clear, the absurdity of the situation is only slightly diminished. The JET is far too important to be allowed to die because of squabbles over other issues. Of course it would still be possible to leave the whole risk and expense of nuclear fusion to the United States and the Soviet Union and then to buy any power stations which eventually emerge, but although this approach can be right in other areas of technology it would be wrong in a field as energy, on which the whole future of European civilization could depend. For Europe to be wholly dependent on outside suppliers for what could be the main source of electricity in the next century is simply too risky.

The enormous capital cost involved puts nuclear fusion out of reach of individual European countries. In theory eight could get together and go ahead without France but they could not do so under the auspices of the Community or with Community funds, so a new body would have to be set up, which would take more time than is available. But if a decision is not reached reasonably soon the existing expert teams at Culham and Garching could begin to drift off to America. Dr. Guido Brunner, the commissioner responsible for research, was deliberately dramatizing the situation when he said on Monday that the JET was on its death-bed but his warnings deserve to be heeded. If Europe drops out of this area of research reentry will be extremely difficult. The men now faced with the decisions will be dead before anyone consumes the first unit of commercial electricity from a fusion station, but they ought to be capable of rising to their historical responsibility.

## Europe's Press Defends JET

*Following is a selection of European press reaction to reports that the JET European fusion project is dead. London Times, Dec. 22, "JET project not on its death bed":*

*Mr. Alexander Eadie, Under-Secretary for Energy, said he did not think that the EEC's thermonuclear fusion project JET was on its death bed. He was speaking in a Consolidated Fund Bill debate on the future of nuclear power in the United Kingdom.*

*Mr. Tom King, Opposition spokesman on energy (Bridgwater, C), said that it would be tragic if European cooperation on the project had collapsed. Dr. Guido Brunner, Commissioner for research policy, had said that the JET fusion programme was on its death bed. If Europe's commitment to fund that research programme collapsed so utterly there would be a grievous problem...*

*Mr. Callaghan, the Prime Minister said: These proposals go through a number of phases and I do not regard that project as dead. I go further and say I believe Britain in the form of its facilities at Culham, the team that is assembled there and the industrial and scientific*

*back-up that could be found for it, undoubtedly provides suitable venue for the development of what could be a valuable scientific innovation in nuclear fusion as distinct from fission.*

*"...in any case, Europe is the loser. The researching and mastering of controlled nuclear fusion is one of humanity's great dreams. If it succeeded, the world would be freed from its concern over energy needs. Especially with regards to the risks involved in the present energy generating process of nuclear fission, the much more environmentally safe nuclear fusion process would offer a hopeful alternative, at least in the long run."*

*Die Welt, Dec. 22, "A Piece of the Future Played Out?: Nuclear fusion is a new method of energy extraction. Nuclear fusion is the fusing together of hydrogen nuclei into helium; in short, it is the taming of the hydrogen bomb or the replication of the same thermonuclear processes the sun uses for its energy. The only thing is, no country in the world has yet been successful with it, and Europe will not succeed if JET dies... Is Bonn now about to save JET from agony only for the sake of an unrelated concession? (this refers to a radiotelescope project — ed.) Perhaps the saving of JET is just as acceptable in the interests of future-oriented energy research.*

## Sabotage of Northeast Energy Supply Uncovered

Congressional sources informed NSIPS this week that the Federal Energy Agency is responsible for the energy shortage which is now affecting the Northeast region of the United States. At the same time, Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass) and Rep. Gary Studds (Rep.-Mass) are preparing legislation which will effectively shut off the Northeast from foreign shipments of oil using as the reason the highly suspicious spate of oil spills in the last week to ten days.

The energy shortage in the USA — at a point when the shortage caused by expected OPEC price hikes or an OPEC oil embargo has not materialized — is the implementation phase of the plans for deindustrialization laid out at the November Conference of the Coalition of Northeast Governors. That conference's plans for the transformation of the Northeast into a low-energy, labor intensive region were praised by President-elect Jimmy Carter in a letter to New York Governor Carey as "particular attractive."

The origins of the current Northeast energy shortage and the events leading up to the Argo Merchant "disaster" in the North Atlantic last week date back to last April. The Amerada Hess Corporation, the largest supplier of Number 6 (residual) fuel oil in the region, was then preparing to lower its price, undercutting the predominantly Rockefeller-controlled oil multinationals who were themselves set to raise prices. Informed sources also report that two independent oil companies, Massachusetts-based Northeast Petroleum and Ingram, were preparing to double refinery production of residual oil.

The multinationals led by Exxon and Texaco demanded,

sources report, that the FEA stop the independents' attempt to bring oil prices down. The FEA responded: a low 5000 barrel per day limit was placed on all domestic residual oil refiners; for any delivery in excess of that amount a penalty of \$1.40 per barrel was slapped on.

The domestic refiners — with plants geared to operate at 200,000 barrels per day — could not absorb the penalties and were forced to cut production. Northeast was forced to unload a new refinery to a larger company.

The Caribbean-based multinationals promptly jacked up their prices 80 percent. One independent oil company official reported that the price increase since Oct. 1 is an astounding \$2 per barrel — or some \$1 million per day for the East Coast as a whole. The official expects the price to rise another \$1 per barrel by Feb. 1. The multinationals have thus effectively kept the flow of the much-needed oil to a trickle.

Before the November elections, industrial forces in the Northeast drafted a proposal for the construction of a superport and refinery capacity near Boston, placed it on the Massachusetts ballot and rallied the population behind it. The referendum passed by a 2-1 margin — but it was only advisory and did not bind the legislature. According to a source in the pro-growth Massachusetts Department of Commerce and Development, "an informal grouping of interested parties" was dispatched to Venezuela to negotiate with the state-owned Venezuelan oil company concerning the financing of the superport and the refinery as well as guaranteeing shipment of crude oil.

These moves were countered last week with the