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## Interview: Lyndon LaRouche

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# Mideast development hinges on nuclear power

*Mel Klenetsky interviewed LaRouche on the weekly radio program "EIR Talks" on Sept. 15. Excerpts follow.*

**EIR:** You have called for agro-industrial complexes for the Middle East, and you have placed a special importance on the use of nuclear power. Why is nuclear power so important? Isn't there a great deal of fear of using it by some of the participants in the area, and how would you overcome that fear?

**LaRouche:** The fear is largely political, and the fear comes chiefly from the Palestinian side. Some of the Palestinians, of course, have had support or expressed sympathy for years from leftist channels in Europe and the United States, and as we know, leftists usually (not all of them, but most of them) are fairly ignorant of the ABCs of economy, and also are very ignorant of science, as we see by the spread of these environmental crazes or fads or cults among the ranks of these leftists especially. . . .

So the Palestinians — and some of them, remember, are highly professional people, engineers and doctors — are afraid that if they advocate nuclear power for the Middle East, they will offend some of their leftist sympathizers in Europe and the United States.

The unfortunate fact on that count is, that *without nuclear power, you cannot develop the Middle East at all*. Therefore, if you say no nuclear power for the Middle East, you are saying to the Palestinians and many other poor Arabs: "Die."

There are, admittedly, petroleum products, but if you want to talk about environmental dirt, what is more polluting than burning hydrocarbons? It's the filthiest thing you can do! We can do it more cleanly, but that's high-tech. The cleanest and safest energy we have, and the most economical, is nuclear power. We don't have fusion yet, but we will.

We have also perfectly safe and perfectly weapons-free nuclear power in the form of a thorium-cycle, high-temperature gas-cooled reactor of German design and its offshoots. And that's what I've advocated be used. It involves no particular problems. There are engineers in the area capable of running a nuclear establishment of that type. India is a major source of thorium, which is the fuel for that cycle. And this gives us the economic efficiency of power. That is, the higher the temperature at which power is produced, the more efficient it is, and the more suitable it is for chemical applications

such as desalination.

We have a mass desalination need in that region, using our power which is not used for industrial or agricultural applications. That desalination requirement demands nuclear power. We have a desert to tame, specifically the Negev, which is one of Israel's greatest opportunities and greatest challenges: to make the Negev habitable. That means they require nuclear power and desalination to create agricultural and industrial centers of habitation (which obviously will require some air conditioning, among other things).

So one of the pillars of peace is the overcoming of the land and water crises in the Middle East. Also, in the case that the world continues to develop and does not go into a Dark Age, the Suez Canal will be a real bottleneck, not only as an undersized canal for world purposes as it is right now, but there are simply too many kinds of traffic for it to handle. The development of a system of water-bearing canals from the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aqaba, and the Mediterranean into the Dead Sea, which is a nice downhill run from the ocean, will also create canals for transportation — barge traffic. And that will be a great asset, since these barge traffic operations from inside that region in the Middle East will go into Egyptian, Israeli, Palestinian, and Jordanian seaports, where the barge traffic, by the roll-on/roll-off methods, will easily go into ocean traffic. That will be a great boon to developing the Middle East as an economically profitable crossroads for much of Eurasia. That's the kind of thing which we're looking forward to, and nuclear power is one of the essential foundations of building that.

**EIR:** Why do the kinds of projects you're talking about, the canals, let's say, put the economic development on an entirely different basis?

**LaRouche:** The problem, in part, in the American citizen — for example today's college graduate in economics or business management — is that he knows nothing about economics. And so some of these people, out of pure ignorance, could view the penny-ante projects as being somehow beneficial, just because they provide a little temporary band-aid type of help. . . .

You *cannot* create a modern economy without a very large preparatory investment in transportation, water management, and power. That is, to maintain any level of technology requires a certain amount of kilowatt-hours, and so many ton-mile hours for freight capacity, per person, per capita, and per square kilometer. It requires so much water per capita and per square kilometer.

Without these prerequisites, including sanitation, and also including social measures such as schools and medical care, you cannot maintain a productive modern economy. And if you put an industry down in the middle of the desert or in a slum without this infrastructural support, it will fail to benefit the community, because it does not have the *foundation* to make it work.