

## The Kra Canal: PNE Case Study

In 1983 and 1984, the Fusion Energy Foundation (FEF) and *Executive Intelligence Review*, together with the Thai Ministry of Communication, held two conferences on the Kra Canal Project. The FEF updated an earlier feasibility study, and further developed the project's economic and industrial benefits.

The 1984 conference included a presentation by EIR/FEF researchers on the use of peaceful nuclear explosions (PNEs), as the fastest, most efficient, and most cost-effective method of construction. It was during this same period that Lyndon LaRouche and the FEF were involved in another program calling for the peaceful use of nuclear technology: the Strategic Defense Initiative.

Milo Nordyke of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, and Harry Ekizian of TAMS Engineering, both of which groups were involved in the 1973 feasibility study for the canal, presented the physical parameters for building the 30-mile-long canal, using both nuclear and conventional methods, with the nuclear methods roughly halving both the cost and the construction time.

Samak Sundaravej, then Minister of Communications, and later, Prime Minister, addressed the 1984 conference, stating, "The question is can we do it, how, and which way? ... If we use TNT, it will take 10 years, but if we use atomic energy for peace, it will shorten the excavation time by 5 years." A



spokesman from Lawrence Livermore suggested that a major nuclear isotope separation plant could be constructed as part of the Kra Canal complex of industrial centers constructed at both ends of the canal.

A later Japanese plan also advocated for the use of nuclear technology in the construction of the canal in a 1985 report. This plan would have used over 20 nuclear devices, each roughly 30 kilotons—fulfilling Isaiah's wish, by turning the former weapons of war into a tool for the betterment of all mankind.<sup>1</sup>

1. See "Kra Canal: Gateway to Asia's Development," in *Fusion*, July-August 1984, and "International Conference Puts Kra Canal Back on the Agenda in Thailand," in *Fusion Asia*, January 1985.