

NO TIME TO LOSE

To Solve Cape Town's Water Crisis, Bring in Russia, China, And U.S.A. To Help

by Ramasimong Phillip Tsokolibane

Feb. 10—The City of Cape Town, with a population of more than 4 million, and several surrounding provinces, are facing a hundred-year drought and an unprecedented water crisis. Water use restrictions have become increasingly severe over the past weeks and months. The City now says it will “turn off the taps” on May 11. On Feb. 6, R.P. Tsokolibane, leader of La-Rouche South Africa, published the following statement on the necessary international response to the crisis. His statement was promptly acknowledged by the City, which noted that it “will be sent to the relevant Task Team for consideration.” The national government announced on Feb. 8 that a cabinet task team has been formed in Pretoria, and that the necessary steps are being taken to declare, within days, that the drought is a national disaster. This crisis follows years of obstruction by the British imperial interest that is hostile to population growth, including environmentalist operations—operations that are continuing even now.

Sometimes it is necessary to state clearly some very simple things. Such is the case with the fresh water crisis that threatens the citizens of our second greatest city, Cape Town.

As the South African leader of the international movement of the American physical economist and statesman, Lyndon LaRouche, let me say it loud and clear:

No matter the circumstance which has brought us to this point, it is totally unacceptable to let the crisis go on to the point that Cape Town's water pipes are depressurised by turning off the taps, or by running dry—on May 11 or on any date.

Turn off the taps and the waterborne sewage system will back up. You can't flush! In a city, that means cholera. Depressurising the freshwater pipes permits in-leaking of waterborne, disease-causing organisms, and again, people will die, mainly from diarrheal diseases. Depressurising and repressurising the pipes also causes main breaks, especially in older pipes. For water engineers and public health experts, this is standard, textbook stuff.

Forget all the finger pointing and blame shaming; there are many, who through their fantasies, inaction,



Graph of the total water stored in the Western Cape's largest six dams from June 30, 2013 to Jan. 15, 2018. The graph illustrates the declining water storage levels over the course of the Cape Town water crisis. Data obtained from the Climate Systems Analysis Group.

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or outright stupidity, would need to be held accountable for letting the crisis get to this extreme moment. But assessing blame and holding people accountable, will not get fresh water to the people of Cape Town, either now or in the future.

In determining what to do, we start with the obvious: In an area prone to drought with cyclical certainty, we cannot rely on Mother Nature alone to provide the needed fresh water, especially if we want that area to grow and prosper. Until now, some may have thought it cheaper in the short term to get by with erratic rainfall, but we are now finding out that such an approach may have seemed pennywise, but is most assuredly pound foolish.

Therefore, we must provide the necessary credit to move freshwater from where it is plentiful, to Cape Town and its environs, and at the same time develop new, human-created sources of fresh water such as offshore nuclear-powered desalination plants, which also hold prospect of providing additional electrical power. Through the vision of our present national government and its leadership, we now have the potential to fund such systems through credits issued by the African branch of the BRICS' New Development Bank in Johannesburg, so that the systems are put in place and functioning as rapidly as possible.

Simultaneously, we should also develop large-scale water recycling and waste management systems, using available advanced technologies, to make grey water reusable for human and industrial consumption.

But we must also come up with an emergency plan to bring new fresh water to Cape Town, to bridge the gap until these new systems come on line, and when, also, the region might once again happily receive sufficient rain to replenish dry reservoirs.

I would strongly urge that, having admitted the seriousness of the problem, we bring not only our own forces and cadre to bear, but also international reinforcements. I would call on our BRICS friends in both Russia and China, who have extensive experience in these matters, as I would also call on U.S. President Trump to send qualified people to help, as



U.S. Navy photo/Photographer's Mate 2nd Class Prince A. Hughes III

Potential emergency water source: The Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson, capable of desalinating 400,000 gallons of potable water daily, is shown in San Diego, Calif.

well as the Israelis, who are experts in such water management matters. Let us do this quickly, so that we can bring to bear all the forces needed. Let us do this immediately!

For example, the modern aircraft carriers of the major powers have the capability of desalinating large amounts of water beyond the requirements of their crews.

Some of these programmes are already being implemented as part of the City of Cape Town's Emergency Water Augmentation Scheme, including the construction of temporary desalination plants and the bringing up of ground water by means of bore holes, but it is generally acknowledged that none of these measures, including the restrictions which have already reduced Cape Town's consumption by one half, will be sufficient or be delivered in time to avoid Day Zero. Additional measures should be taken.

We need a thorough evaluation of the state of all of our national infrastructure, with a view to its improvement. The people of Cape Town are the victims of short-term, wishful thinking, when what has been needed all along is to work from a long-term plan based on science and human creativity, to solve eminently solvable problems. Let us learn, now, this important lesson.

I, and the international movement I represent in South Africa, stand ready to help in this process.