

Editorial

The iron is hot

The agreement signed on Sept. 13 between PLO chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, providing for Palestinian self-rule over Gaza and the region around Jericho, has the potential “for overcoming the bitter harvest of bloodshed, anger, and rage which has been built up over the decades so far,” imprisoned statesman Lyndon LaRouche analyzed on Sept. 8. But whether this potential will be realized depends on whether the *economic* development proposals advocated by the plan are implemented. It is only through the kind of “economic development which transforms the region and brings such strength of joy that it overwhelms the accumulated bitterness,” LaRouche said, that Arabs and Israelis can discover a common self-interest.

LaRouche, who has fought for almost two decades for just such an economic solution, is now “pulling rank,” and he has every right to do so. In statements to his associates made on Sept. 12, he emphasized that the following measures must be taken immediately:

- Begin the construction of a Mediterranean-Dead Sea or Red-Dead Sea Canal by the end of September, suitably initiated by representatives of both the Israeli government and the PLO. LaRouche stresses that beginning such projects over the coming weeks will keep the momentum going in a positive direction. Either canal would provide for multi-purpose uses, including an inland corridor of seawater for desalination, and for raising and maintaining the level of the Dead Sea.

- Begin building a new port city in Gaza, currently a vast oppressed ghetto, as a modern port for the new “Med-Dead” Canal.

- Immediately unveil plans for the large-scale desalination of seawater through nuclear reactors exported to the region for that purpose. Fresh water is desperately needed, and only nuclear power can provide the safe, efficient, and cheap energy needed.

- Call for the return of a large number of skilled Palestinian workers and engineers from exile, to participate in these projects.

The Israelis, the PLO, the Jordanians, and others have had detailed plans for these and other projects on

the books for years, and Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin is familiar with what could be done. The Jordanian government has developed detailed plans for a “Dead-Red” Canal.

The point is that such projects must be started *now*; delays, plans for conferences in the future, and the like, will lead to squandering current opportunities. As LaRouche emphasizes, it is on the success of those economic features that the viability of the political promises depends absolutely.

The urgency has also been stressed by leading figures in the region. PLO Information Department head Yasser Abd-Rabbuh strongly warned of the need for immediate economic development in comments to the Berlin paper *Neue Zeit* on Sept. 14. “The improvement of the economic situation is a precondition of the agreement turning into a success,” he said, adding, “the people must see that the Palestinian administration has power, that it is not just the pawn of Israel.” The lack of such improvements would allow Hamas—the Palestinian affiliate of the Muslim Brotherhood—and other Arab foes of the plan to sabotage it. Hamas has close overt ties to Iran, and covert ties to Israeli intelligence, especially the faction which would seek to drown the accord in blood, and which also manipulates the fanatics among Jewish settlers in the Occupied Territories.

The danger is, as LaRouche warned on Sept. 15, that “Washington and Europe seem to be insisting, that at this time, all economic development in this region be limited in practice to penny-ante housing, sewage, and *maquiladora*-type employment projects. If that penny-ante approach is taken, then this grand opportunity for durable peace—and it’s much more than that—will be shot. Without immediate action on the kinds of large-scale, infrastructural projects which the prime minister’s office in Israel has ready to go on its side . . . this plan would fail.”

So do not be fooled by those who are expressing their best wishes for the plan, while they attempt to ensure that not a finger is lifted to implement it. Such people are the enemies of Mideast peace.