

political support?

**Siniscalco:** I believe that the political support required for this is much greater than what a single nation could give. It's not Italy that can push. It is a political agreement that derives from the peace process which is emerging in this region, and I believe that it is in the spirit of these multilateral conferences that we have to think. Any single country, even the United States of America, is too small to deal with something this big. Italy can follow, and support, but it's the general political conditions of the region which count more.

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## Interview: Luigi Meanti and Giacomo Luciani

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# ENI's program for a gas pipeline project

*Luigi Meanti is the chairman of the Italian firm ENI SPA, and Giacomo Luciani is deputy director for International New Ventures and Cooperation of the same company. They were interviewed by Muriel Mirak-Weissbach at the Amman summit.*

**EIR:** I must say, I am enthusiastic about your project, which is one of the most beautiful things presented at this conference. What is the feasibility of the project? How has this conference helped the project progress?

**Meanti:** This project has just been presented now, and these are plans that produce reactions after some time, after people have had the chance to see them, because we presented it only yesterday. The project is absolutely feasible. Its advantage is that it starts from actual availability, from real conditions, and it has great potential for the future. We are dealing with a very straightforward situation today: There is the availability of gas in Egypt and the desire on the part of Egypt to export gas toward the east; there is a large country, which is Turkey, which is a big gas importer. At the moment, the only supplier of Turkey is Russia. They are also starting to import from Algeria (it hasn't started yet), liquefied natural gas (LNG). Since it is a large country with a rather advanced degree of industrialization, it could constitute the basis for using large quantities of gas. Then there are the countries along the route, countries that have no gas, like Lebanon, Israel, the [Palestinian autonomous] territories, Jordan (which has gas, but very little). There's a country, Syria, which has a certain amount of gas which it consumes, but which has not developed gas consumption very much. Therefore, there exists the possibility of building a common infrastructure. It is not gigantic; it is a matter of 550 kilometers of pipeline. If there are sufficient quantities of gas, putting together the gas coming from differ-

ent countries, then it is certainly a feasible project.

If you consider that Holland imported gas from Italy, there is a greater distance between those two countries than between the Suez Canal, where the reserves are, and the Turkish border. So it is a feasible project which does not require anything extraordinary. I think it will be a [successful] project, if the quantities of gas are found, and if we have the financial commitment, of the sort we have used to finance importing gas to Italy.

**Luciani:** We are convinced that there are sufficient quantities of gas in Egypt. Furthermore we are sure that it is possible to transport additional quantities of gas from the Gulf, that is, from Saudi Arabia and Qatar, when it becomes necessary. So the problem is political: It is necessary to sign a peace treaty with all the countries of the region. If this is done, this project is certainly very attractive on the economic plane.

**EIR:** How can this project realize the vision of Enrico Mattei? Not only to develop infrastructure, in the partner countries of the Middle East, but also to develop the productive capacity of labor in these countries? How will the pipeline do this, for example?

**Meanti:** Gas is the most suitable fuel for today's needs. It can improve the quality of manufactured goods; it can reduce the investment costs of new activities. Therefore, it is a catalyst. We saw this in Italy in the 1950s. Italy was in a state of destruction after the war, in a state of poverty. We were fortunate enough to have significant quantities of gas available, we had the opportunity to produce networks to make it available to industry. Industry gained tremendous advantages from this. There were industrial localities which were born because there was gas available. Gas is a great catalyst, to create industries. And this is what is important. It is especially appropriate for small and medium-size industries, because a single fuel can be used for all applications. It is very important for generating new electrical energy. If there is a big increase here in the region in the need for electrical energy, as there will be, the simplest route, the one that involves lower investments, and gives higher yields, is to use gas in the plants. They can be small plants, they don't have to be gigantic, they can be built along the route of the gas pipelines, so it's a huge opportunity for industry.

**EIR:** As you know, *EIR* has campaigned for years, for the introduction of nuclear energy in this region, not only for electrical energy but also to provide power for desalination plants. How do you view the perspectives for nuclear energy?

**Meanti:** Apart from questions that people are very sensitive to, like risk and contamination, for me there are two basic questions about nuclear: One is that it has not yet been demonstrated, also because it is a remote problem, and industry tries to concentrate on immediate problems, and doesn't consider real problems, like the problem of disposal of waste. If the nuclear industry had invested more money, to demonstrate how one can take care of waste, fine; this is an area in

which the nuclear industry perhaps made some mistakes. There's another more important aspect. As long as there is energy available at today's prices, nuclear—not only super-safe nuclear, which is self-regulating and so on—but even traditional nuclear is more expensive than fossil fuels. This is one point. In fact, you see that in the U.S., where there was no vast anti-nuclear campaign, they stopped producing nuclear plants, because business is business, and they saw that nuclear energy ran the risk of making investments at enormous losses. Nuclear energy from the industrial point of view was cheap, when you had oil at \$35, in 1980, but with oil at \$16 in 1995, nuclear energy is expensive; furthermore, if you build a nuclear plant, you need 10 years for construction and 25 years to operate it.

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## Interview: Franco Reviglio

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# The Mideast must use nuclear energy

*Professor Reviglio is the former chairman of the Italian firm ENI, and is now professor of economics at the University of Turin, Italy. Muriel Mirak-Weissbach spoke with him on Nov. 1 in Amman.*

**EIR:** You expressed concern in your speech, that energy production is not being adequately addressed here. Why?

**Reviglio:** As far as oil and gas deposits are concerned, and transportation, there is no problem; the private sector will invest. The problem lies in the production of electrical energy for the growing needs of families and industries. I did a study of the Middle East and North Africa, and showed that an increase in primary and secondary energy, that is, a 7% increase in consumption, will require \$20 billion per year, which means \$300 billion over 15 years; \$120 billion of this would be for power generation and transmission. Here lies the problem: The private sector will not invest if prices remain low, essentially "political prices." Raising prices in areas where people are accustomed to cheap fuel, will be a shock. People are not discussing this here, because Jordan, for example, is used to getting cheap oil from Iraq.

**EIR:** But the Palestinians do not get this cheap oil, although a proposal has been made in this direction.

**Reviglio:** The finance minister of the Palestine National Authority has just stressed this point: "We need electricity."

**EIR:** What is your view of nuclear energy for the region?

**Reviglio:** Because of the cost of the safety guarantees, nuclear has become very expensive. I am for nuclear energy,

because 90% of the pollution in the world comes from fossil fuels, something the "greenies" don't realize. And the poor regions are burning the most polluting fuels. Therefore, development of safe nuclear energy is a must, and I believe there will be a revival of nuclear.

**EIR:** What is your view of the Middle East Development Bank?

**Reviglio:** The Italians wanted to begin with a forum like the OECD [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development], because there was opposition to a bank not only in Europe, but also in the Gulf. They decided to go ahead with a bank, which is smaller, and will serve only the region—whereas there were 14 or so countries, including in North Africa, in the original conception. The Europeans, who, as [German Economics Minister Günter] Rexrodt said, will not invest in it, will be in the Secretariat in Amman [of the Regional Economic Development Working Group, REDWG], but will have only observer status in the forum, which will be inside the bank, in Cairo.

**EIR:** Why is Italy for the Middle East Development Bank, and Germany and France, not?

**Reviglio:** They prefer bilateral relations, whereas we are closer to the region, and have a direct, objective interest in the development of the region. I think we are more "noble" than the others, and desire cooperation more.



## LaRouche Campaign Is On the Internet!

Lyndon LaRouche's Democratic presidential primary campaign has established a World Wide Web site on the Internet. The "home page" brings you recent policy statements by the candidate as well as a brief biographical resumé.

**TO REACH** the LaRouche page on the Internet:

<http://www.clark.net/larouche/welcome.html>

**TO REACH** the campaign by electronic mail:

[larouche@clark.net](mailto:larouche@clark.net)

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