

## Near East Power

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The largest hydroelectric project in the world has been proposed by an Egyptian scientist studying at the University of California's Scripps Institution of Oceanography.

Mohammed Hassan, oceanographer, suggests that the nations of the Near East band together to construct two great dams at the north and south ends of the Red Sea.

Since there is no rain in the area, and no rivers enter into the Sea, evaporation would rapidly lower the level of the Red Sea. Water flowing in from the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea would then produce electric power in tremendous quantities--two-thirds as much as is produced in all the United States today, Hassan calculates.

The dam at the southern end of the Sea would be 12 miles wide and 300 feet high. At the north end a canal paralleling the Suez Canal would need to be dug and a dam constructed to produce electric power. Hassan tentatively sets the cost of the project at two billion dollars, about twice the amount estimated for the Aswan Dam in Egypt.

A series of locks would leave the Sea free for shipping, Hassan says.

If no water were coming into the Sea, its level would sink about 12 feet a year. Hassan envisages a day when the water level would be 300 to 600 feet below that of today and the great dams would produce as much as 200 million kilowatts of power.

Hassan has approached the Egyptian government with his suggestion.

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