

Soviet Union plans to tamper with mother nature

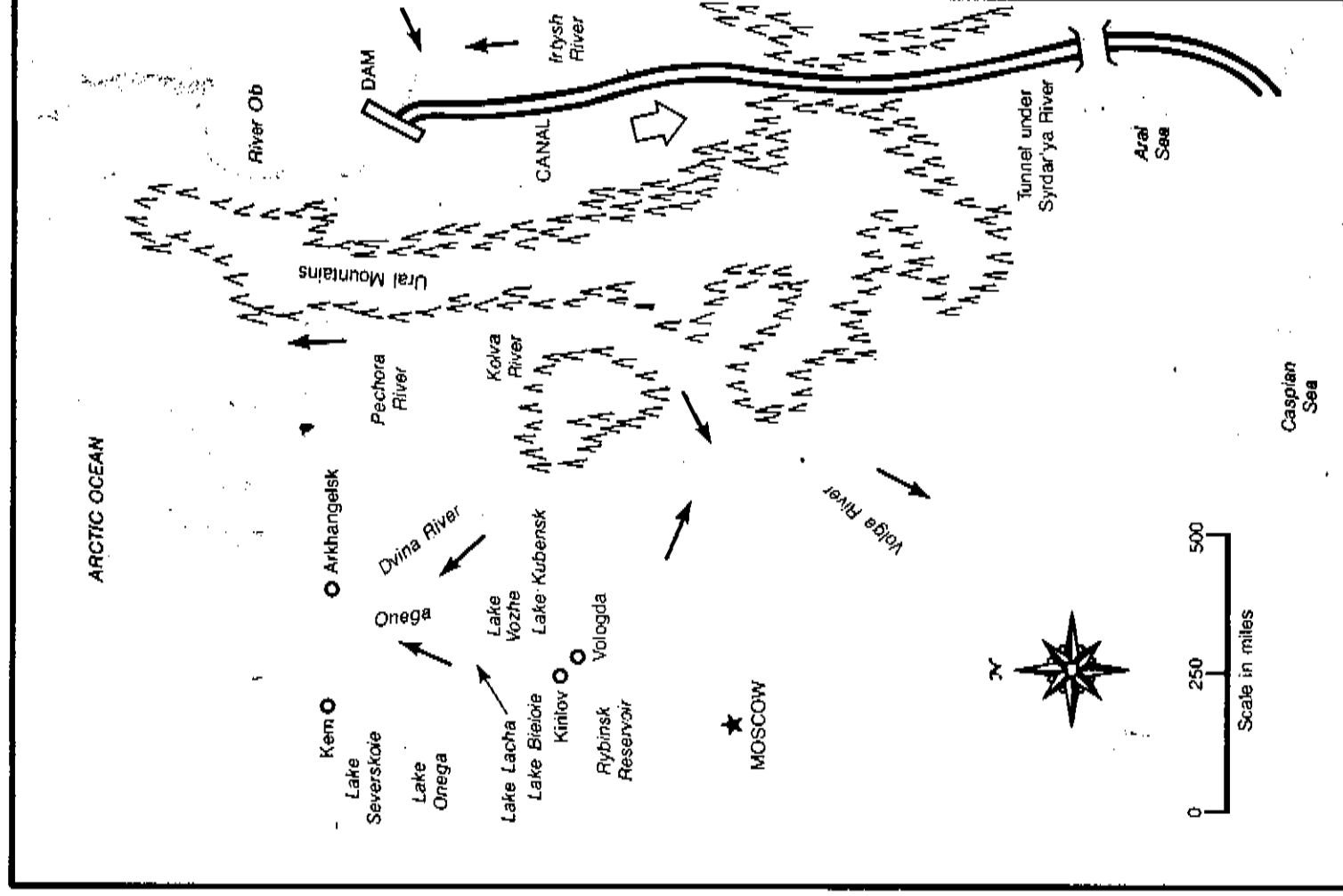
Soviet engineers have begun a plan to reverse the flow of several rivers which now empty into the Arctic Ocean. If the plan is ever completed the effect will be to reverse the flow of several rivers from northward to southward, boost the volume of the Volga River and its tributaries and ultimately pour an unimaginable mass of water into the inland Caspian Sea.

The environmental and ecological consequences of this landscape-changing project according to a recent article in the *London Times* are: a complete restructuring of the north Russian and Siberian river systems which will "own millions of acres of land, bmerge hundreds of historic monuments, drive hundreds of thousands of people from their homes and probably inflict irrevocable disruption on the weather patterns of the whole northern hemisphere, possibly even the U.S. and Canada.

Entire cities and tracts of game forests are expected to be covered by water. Thicker ice on the reservoirs is expected to retard the spring thaw and shorten the already brief northern growing season by two weeks. Spring rain will decrease, heavy autumn rains will smash the harvests and winds will accelerate. No one knows how the proposed changes will impact Europe's air since most of Europe's oxygen is manufactured by northern Soviet Union's plant and forest life.

The idea of increasing the Soviet Union's fresh water resources as back to 1830 when a government surveyor, Alexander Shrenk, first suggested linking the Pechora River to the Volga. Today's technological advances, including the possibility of nuclear blasting, make the plan seem remotely feasible. Recently, repeated Soviet agricultural failures have forced Soviet leaders to seriously consider this grandiose scheme.

The 50-year plan calls for 25 enormous dams to divide the Onega, Pechora and northern Dvina into segments. As each dam and segment is completed the water level within it will be raised by 25 to 32 feet. Lake Onega will also rise by a similar amount. Later, possibly in the early nineties, the north end of Lake Onega will be blocked causing a southward overflow which will drown five smaller lakes, and flow through an expanded canal



The waters south of the cities of Kirov and Arkhangelsk will be diverted south, eventually to the Caspian sea. Europe's weather is expected to change as a result of this enormous landscape-changing project. As an aid to understanding the scale of the project, the area west of the Ural is larger than western Europe.

complex into the Rybinsk reservoir. Water will be released from the reservoir into the Volga. Sanctioned by Brezhnev, this portion of the plan is scheduled to begin next year.

A dike will be built across the mouth of Onega Bay, from Karelia, over the Solovetsky archipelago to the Onega peninsula, effectively sealing the northern out-

flows. Sealed off from the White Sea, the Onega basin is expected to become fresh within a decade. Later the Dvina and Pechora bays will be similarly dammed.

Similar efforts, which have already stirred some controversy in the West, are planned for reversing the flow of the Ob and Yenisei rivers in Siberia.

The 140 volumes of project