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## ON ARAB SOCIALISM

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### *Introduction*

The nature of *socialism* is not immutable. Although it is a positive and definite concept in the field of social science, its character may be modified or revised in the light of world events. For example, the "Russo-Chinese dispute," which arose as a result of the growing diversity of the enlarging socialist camp, posed new problems concerned with the concept of socialism, while in those developing countries which attained their independence since World War II, socialism has been adopted as the socio-political goal. The distinction between these two varieties of socialism is as follows: the first type of socialism is firmly based on the doctrine of Marx-Engels-Leninism, which regards the present stage of socialist countries as a transitional and inevitable step towards the coming Communist society. But the second type of socialism is not founded on the political philosophy of Marxism, though it has a mutual hostility towards colonialism and imperialism. In other words, the concept of socialism of the second order emerged from the historico-cultural background of each individual nation. This can best be seen where the name of a nation is followed by the term "socialism"; for example, Indonesian socialism, Burmese (Buddhist) socialism, Indian socialism, Arab socialism, Zionist socialism, etc. At the same time, this kind of socialism does not aim at world revolution as the primary object of its strategy as it is more concerned with the liberalization of their own nations. With the exception of Indonesia, it has the similarity of being anti-communistic, and is supported by the newly emerged middle classes and intellectuals and not by the labourers and peasants.

Attention must be given to the fact that various kinds of socialism exist outside Europe which is the birthplace of modern socialism, and that the socialistic Afro-Asian countries now predominate in the forum of international politics. For this reason, socialism is the most complicated, colourful, and significant issue of our times and, unless consideration is given to this question of socialism, a misunderstanding of the world today will result, even though one may not be in sympathy with this ideology and terminology. This new type of socialism merits a close study. However, the lack of well-documented first-hand material and sources, and the scarcity of preceding academic works make it difficult to decide on the objectives of leading personalities, principal works, and the merits of activities. These are reasons which make this paper at the best remain in the range of problematics.

This essay cannot attempt, nor will try to describe every branch of socialistic activity in the Arab world today, nor can it detail their programmes, memberships, organizations, main social groups of supporters (*Träger*), or

spheres of activities; nor pursue the common legacy of social thinking or philosophy animating the Arabs.<sup>1</sup> The subject of this essay is confined to "Arab Socialism" (*al-Ishtirakiyyat al-arabiyyat*) as described by the UAR President Gamal Abd al-Nasser in July 1961 as the grand principle of national development. This title was coined in order to emphasize the distinction between Arab socialism and socialism as it is generally understood in the academic world as a social institution and political philosophy. Arab socialism is not a simple variation or deviation of the so-called "socialism" but a genuine "Arab" institution and a modern form of Arab nationalism. To explore the meaning and the reasoning for it is the main task of this short essay.

### I. Theory of "Revolution" and Concept of "Social Justice"

#### (a) Theory of Revolution

President Nasser described in his work "Philosophy of Revolution" the two types of revolution—political and social—which inevitably occur in the course of a nation's history.<sup>2</sup> For every nation has in its stages of historical development a period of revolutionary change. In some advanced nations, social revolution resulted from political revolution which took place several centuries before. By nature, however, the two revolutions have "peculiar circumstances which are strangely conflicting and highly contradictive";<sup>3</sup> the political revolution helps the building of a nation-state which is divorced from the influence of outside powers, the social revolution on the contrary seeks the solution of inner contradictions, *e.g.* class-conflicts. According to Nasser's proposition, the Egyptian destiny is for these two revolutions to occur concurrently.<sup>4</sup> These remarks will make clear some important characteristics of the theory of revolution: modern socialism is based upon proletarian internationalism in opposition to chauvinistic nationalism, but Arab socialism glorifies the nation and opposes single-class domination harmful to the national unity. The theory of social revolution, of course, arises from the recognition of a class structure in society, but such social problems are placed aside and subjugated to national liberation which seeks national unity at the cost of all other matters. This clearly shows the nature of Arab socialism to be a concept firmly based on nationalism.

And by what means can the Arab overcome the hardships of the mutually contradictive revolutions happening simultaneously? Why is it the fate of the Arab only to pass through such a gruelling ordeal? Answers to these questions are provided by the history of the Arabs, writes Nasser. History formed the national character of the Arab, whose lands "have been the invader's passageway and the adventurer's target. So numerous have been the circumstances through which we have lived that it would indeed be

<sup>1</sup> The socialistic elements in Islam have been discussed since the 19th century. The pioneer work on this question was H. Grimme's *Mohammed*, 2 Bde., Münster, 1892-95.

<sup>2</sup> Gamal Abd al-Nasser, *Philosophy of Revolution*, Cairo, Information Dept., 1954, p. 26.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, p. 26.

impossible to explain the factors latent in Arabs' souls unless these circumstances are taken into account."<sup>1</sup> "People have, almost, lost their balance, but have not fallen down" and "have wrought a veritable miracle. Any other society objected to the same severe trials as Arab's might have possibly succumbed. It would have been swept by the powerful currents that had overtaken them."<sup>2</sup> This is the deep conviction of the people and provides them with the vital power to overcome their difficulties. President Nasser has an almost mystic belief in nationalism. For this reason, it is impractical to analyse the belief and creed theoretically. It can only be sensed and felt by experience. It will be recalled that at an earlier stage of the régime, the leaders of the July Revolution refused to explain their concept of nationalism in terms of Western politics when so asked. But it can be seen that it was achieved with the help of the people's historically-formed social and national character, with the direct object of political independence and recovery of national sovereignty; denying the intervention of foreign powers and establishing national self-determination. Accordingly, the political revolution is identified with anti-imperialism and the designs for building a nation-state. Thus the social revolution affords an opportunity for the common people to participate in national politics. By means of this participation the whole nation can join in raising their living-standards.<sup>3</sup> Feudal landlordism is held responsible for confining the nation in a condition of slavery by supporting a tyrannical monarchy and restraining politically-awakened social groups. The Egyptian ruling class isolated themselves from all but the feudal aristocrats. Instead of relying on the support of the people, the *ancien régime* could only survive with the backstage help of the British who garrisoned troops in the country and repressed the movements which threatened British vested interests. For this reason, "resistance and democracy became synonymous in the eyes of patriots, each conditioning the other."<sup>4</sup> By the same token, anti-imperialism movements became inseparably associated with patriotism.

In contrast with the series of *coups d'état* staged by military officers in other Arab countries, the revolution of 22nd July, 1952 was considered to be a true *thawrat* (revolution): in Syria the action was regarded as an *inqilâb* (coup). And the principles of socio-politics were upset revolutionally. Before the actual day of revolution, the Free Officers changed the scheduled date, and plans were revised several times in anticipation of receiving the support of world opinion.<sup>5</sup> By this revolt, the strength of the *ancien régime* was broken without great violence and King Farouk was exiled from the country. The British Army did not resist the revolutionaries, but remained guarding the Suez Canal under the new régime.

Nasser spoke of the completion of the political revolution not at the time

<sup>1</sup> G.A. al-Nasser, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>3</sup> Anwar al-Sadat, *Revolution sur le Nil*, Paris, 1957, pp. 23-29.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 14, 16-17.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 181, 187, also G.A. al-Nasser, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

of the successful coup but on the occasion of the withdrawal of the British Army from the Suez Zone on 13th July, 1956. In this sense, the years lying between 1952 and 1956 were the most painful, since during this period the country was subjected to the contradictory pressures arising from the processes of the two revolutions. In 1954, at Bandung, leaders of the Egyptian revolution were encouraged to talk with the leaders of the Afro-Asian countries who were struggling against the same conditions. In addition to domestic difficulties the revolution was compelled to meet another terrible crisis, for shortly after the peaceful withdrawal from Suez, the British took up arms openly when Egypt declared her intentions towards the Suez Canal, as if in retaliation for the World Bank's rejection of Egypt's request for the financing of the project of the Aswan High Dam. Thus, Suez was invaded. The Israeli, British, and French forces attacked and bombed Egypt. These anachronic actions and use of violence were condemned before the bar of world opinion.

(b) Concept of Social Justice

National unity is imperative if the two revolutions are to succeed at the same time. Nevertheless, by what means can the leaders of a revolution unify the people into one single unit, a people who are divided into many social classes, many of which are mutually antagonistic and mostly concerned with their own individual interests,<sup>1</sup> lacking in communication with one another and differing in degrees of nationalistic feeling?<sup>2</sup> The leaders drew some lessons from the immediately preceding mass-movement of the Moslem Brethren (*Ikhwan al-Muslimin*),<sup>3</sup> which began as a popular movement of moral reconstruction in Egypt under the initiative of the charismatic personality of Hassen al-Banna. This ex-teacher captured and moved the people on a

<sup>1</sup> cf. A. al-Sadat, *op. cit.*, pp. 20-21.

<sup>2</sup> On the point, G.A. al-Nasser believed that conditions for the revolution already existed among the masses and that the people's organized support would be given to the revolutionaries. On his terrible experience on the day of July 23rd, he says "But the facts I faced after July 23 took me by surprise. The leaders had accomplished their mission. The masses did come. But how different is fiction from facts! The masses did come. But they came in scattered groups. The Holy March to the Great Goal was halted, and the picture in those days looked dark, dastardly and ill-foreboding." (*op. cit.*, pp. 21-22.) On the one hand, this explains his skilled ability as an operational leader who as a cool head with warm heart was shown in the planning of the action schedule; on the other hand, however, talks his little experience on the political consciousness of the masses'. But, in striking contrast to the old generation like General Nagib the younger officers realized that "the vanguard's mission did not end at that hour, but just began!" (*ibid.*, p. 22)

<sup>3</sup> cf. Ishak Musa Husaini, *The Moslem Brethren—The Greatest of Modern Islamic Movement—*, Beirut, Khayyat, 1956. The Brethren was banned after the revolution in Egypt and moved their centre to Damascus. On the eve of the Ba'thists' coup, the conservatives asked the Brethren's help to form a cabinet. There is evidence that the Brethren still exerts some influence on politics.

scale unmatched in modern Egyptian history. The success of this movement was due to the founder's passionate eloquence which appealed to the people's desire for social justice.<sup>1</sup> The utopia was expected to be achieved solely by establishing the original, righteous beliefs of Islam in social life. In the decline of mutualism in the present civilization, the Egyptian people were placed in poverty, injustice, and insecurity. Living in luxury and self-indulgence, the rich had ignored the poor's pitiful state and were insensible to the accumulation of vast wealth by shameless exploitation, disregarding the holy principles of Islam. This was the cause of the Arab's misery, Banna explained. He demanded, therefore, a perfect reorganization of society in the spirit of Islam. Demands for social reconstruction encouraged by moral sentiment resulted in political consciousness, which in turn accused the selfishness of rich men and then turned into the most radical core of anti-British, and anti-imperialism resistance.

However, the revolutionaries criticized following aspects of movement: isolated individuals participated in the movement of their own will, and the final goal is therefore identified with the individual's sincerity and for practical purposes carries no over-all blueprint of reconstruction. This resulted in the glorification of individual and personal aspirations and hatreds, and disregarded the relationship between aims and ways. Consequently, anarchy took over the whole body of the Brethren and ecstasy took over the members' burning zeal and religious enthusiasm. Finally uncontrolled emotion resulted in chaos. When spiritual idealism came to the fore, with it came the anti-secularism and anti-modernism, and its essence was neither nationalism nor patriotism. The sacred unity of the Brethren was not of a national but of a religious cosmopolitan and supernational origin. The Brotherhood was not strong enough to protest the feudal framework of Egyptian society: their attitude was neither republican nor democratic. In this respect they were amorphous, ranging from ultra-conservative to radical anarchism.

Despite these weaknesses, fatal for a revolutionary-social movement, the Brethren mobilized behind them the massive energy of the people on a vast scale for over a decade. The Brethren's great success was achieved by the excellent symbol-manipulation revealing the folk ethos on social justice. At a time of crisis, this ethos always rallied the Arab, a latent legacy of Islam: their great and glorious historical legacy appealing to the people's innate

1 On concept of social justice of a traditionalist is described in Sayyid Qutb, *al-'adālat al-ijtimā'yyat fī al-islām* (Eng. trans. John B. Hardie, *Social Justice*, Washington D.C., 1956). cf. also Zafar Ishaq Ansari, "Contemporary Islam and Nationalism—A Case Study of Egypt—," *Die Welt des Islam*. N.S., Vol. VII, Nr. 1-4. G.A. al-Nasser's view on social justice as a symbol, in term of sociology cf. *op. cit.*, p. 27 and his preface contributed to A. al-Sadat's work, *op. cit.*, p. 8, and the most important one is *al-Mithāq al-waṭāni*, Cairo. (Eng. trans. *The National Charter, Draft*.) The following are suggestive on the subject: E.I.J. Rosenthal, *Political Thought in Medieval Islam*, London, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1958. D.M. Donaldson, *Studies in Muslim Ethics*, S.P.C.K., London, 1953. Louis Gardet, *La cité musulmane—la vie sociale et politique—*, Paris, 1954.

sense of social justice.

Although the appeal of the Brethren's platform mounted a great campaign against imperialism in the field of politics, their views did not go beyond the demanding equality in the division of wealth and they paid little attention to the causes of inequality and differences in income. Furthermore, social justice is a fair principle in consumption and not in labour or the enlargement of production. At this stage of social revolution, the headquarters of revolution adopted the motto "work" adding to "discipline and unity." In the period of Arab socialism, social justice is much more emphasized in the field of economics: in the policy of redistribution of income, so as to introduce incentives to enlarge the size of the national economy and to establish economic independence as a basis for political independence such as was taught in the history of modern Egypt.<sup>1</sup>

"Social justice" in the social revolution consists of two phases: (a) internationally, as a protest against differences in wealth and injustice in the distribution of the products of labour, *e. g.* economic nationalism against the colonialistic exploitation, and (b) domestically, positive economic planning to raise living standards, a necessity to improve the infrastructure, including a reform of landownership. Executive planning is required in the sectors of land reform, progressive taxation, minimum wage of landworkers, and the dismissal of the head of the Misr combine.

## II. Arab Socialism

### (a) Prior History

From the viewpoint of the philosophy of "social justice," nationalization of the Suez Canal Co. was not the strange, disjointed result of fanatic nationalism, but the natural consequence of their political thinking which was legally carried through as a result of painstaking preparations started in 1954 so as to be realized in 1960.<sup>2</sup> Of course, this plan was nothing new since it may be seen in its nascent form in the writings of Tala't Halb in 1910.

Next are the Egyptian Decrees of January 1957. All British and French companies were nationalized, including more than 50 banks and insurance companies and industries. An economic organization was established to supervise and to manage all these nationalized bodies. This period was marked by a series of codes regulating nationalization in both the fields of national and international business in Egypt; these codes conformed to the philosophy of social justice. On the other hand, the course of nationalization and enlargement of the public sector were motivated by practical reasons to stem the outflow of foreign capital invested in Egypt, which threatened economic activities and led to governmental control of foreign exchange and popular animosity towards rich foreigners. The Egyptian Decrees (Law No. 22 ff) ordered all foreign companies to reconstitute to Egyptian

<sup>1</sup> G.A. al-Nasser's speech. *cf.* *The Egyptian Gazette*, 27 July, 1956.

<sup>2</sup> Moustafa Hefnaoui, *Les problèmes juridiques posés par le Canal de Suez*, Paris, 1951 set up a theoretical basis of the nationalization of Suez.

ownership within 5 years, and to be managed by Egyptian directors with majority share holdings owned by Egyptian citizens. The national interests and sentiment also could not be satisfied any more in the face of the foreigners' hegemony in management as well as in capital holdings which was introduced to the country by Muhammed Ali in the last century under his policy of state monopoly. It was terminated under his son's régime after foreigners had consolidated their position in the Egyptian economy and society. The Egyptian share in capital investments was only 39% in 1948 and the percentage of Egyptian directors 35% in 1951.<sup>1</sup> Unless Egypt could escape from the burden of its preceding status, the generative development of national economy would be hopeless. In this context, employment of Egyptians as managers and also as labourers was promoted, and the use of Arabic was mandatory in business. Much more important than these was the creation of a single public body to co-ordinate the investment between the public and private sectors. The Economic Development Organization (E.D.O.), a stock-holding body, took over the properties of foreign companies, and as the Government owns more than 25% of the total shares, the President of UAR nominates the chairman of the board of directors. By these means the state is beginning to intervene in the private sector.

After these Egyptian decrees came the nationalization of the Bank Misr, which led to the dissolution of the Misr combine, a pseudo-modern business monarchy in Egypt. In 1961, the Bank of Egypt was also taken over by E.D.O. This series of nationalizations had two ends: democratizing the economy through the abolition of gigantic monopolies, and softening up the investment-plan for industrialization and the encouragement of savings. Up to July 1961, E.D.O. controlled 5 main banks and 33 business companies. It was invested with only 10 of the 57 companies in direct control. Its total capital was £ E 1.7 million as at January 1957, at its inception. By 1960 it had a capital of 80 million, and net profit of 3.3 million at the end of 1960. The capital was invested in the following manner<sup>2</sup> :

finance & insurance	15%
mining	10%
industries	67%
commerce & transportation	8%

It is clear that E.D.O. placed emphasis upon industry with its vital position in the grand plan of industrialization. E.D.O. incidentally was in charge of 83 projects and financed £ E218 million in its first five-year plan. All these preliminary actions of Arab nationalism imply that the available amount of capital is not sufficient for its forthcoming plans through these preliminary measures, because Arab socialists called for every financial body to be nationalized and Egyptianized, beginning with the leading ones. Statistics reveal Egypt's financial difficulties as follows: public finance to agriculture surpassed the original estimates, and currency in circulation increased 9.3% in 1960-1961,

<sup>1</sup> C. Issawi, *Egypt at Mid-Century*, London, Oxford Univ. Press, 1954, p. 63.

<sup>2</sup> cf. "The Egyptian Economic and Political Review," July 1961.

and deficits in foreign exchange amounted to £ E7,480 million, and the Government placed a moratorium on public debts. Some sources report inflationary tendencies, as the Government is subsidizing the price of agricultural products. These matters suggest the importance and necessity of the nationalization of the banks.

Another not unimportant event is the nationalization of newspapers. State control of mass-media is often regarded by liberal intellectuals as the portent of a totalitarian régime. Without commenting on the preciousness of the freedom of opinion, however, there is little room for a free press, frankly speaking, in the developing countries, and such non-governmental communicators are in many cases controlled by foreign or powerful personalities and function not as conveyers of news but as channels of unrestrained propaganda. But still people respond to opinion and news is passed from mouth to mouth with the speed of lightning.

(b) General Character

Immediately after the July Revolution, one of the Free Officers remarked that their goal was the establishment of socialism. By that time, the word "socialism" had not yet obtained its present accepted meaning, but was synonymous with "social justice." In the course of time it was re-emphasized many times that the régime was not based upon any sophisticated, systematized theory, and frequently revealed its pragmatic, amateurish character despite the enthusiastic nationalism and patriotism. Several years before the socialist declaration, the term "co-operation" began to be used frequently, and at the time of the declaration it was combined with the concept of social justice. It was openly expressed that social justice could not be realized except through democratic and co-operative socialism.<sup>1</sup> The way of thinking of Arab socialism differs from the Marxian creed. The Egyptian revolutionaries approved things in the light of their own experience only, because they had hatred of dogma and abstract theory. The zigzag course which they took after seizing power taught them the inevitability of the reorganization of economic infrastructure. In the name of socialism, the leadership intend to complete structural changes. Some comments on the slogan "democratic, co-operative socialism" are appropriate here. "Democratic," here, is the antithesis of "despotic," "monopolistic."<sup>2</sup> In this sense the word implies an intention of a social levelling and the principles of equal opportunity; socialization of economic activities as opposed to the business society vested in a few big families or politicians. "Co-operative" proclaims mutual aid and is an antithesis to the selfish, exclusive, sectional individualism of a closed society. The main contents and programmes of Arab socialism may be perfectly expressed in the two words of this slogan. The feelings of antagonism of the common people towards the big bourgeoisie was not easy to express, since

<sup>1</sup> cf. al-Mithâq al-waṭani, p. 11, p. 70 *et passim*.

<sup>2</sup> cf. *ibid.*, p. 11, p. 70. G. A. al-Nasser's speech at Alexandria, July 26-27, 1961; *al-Ahrâm*, July 23, 1962.

many Egyptian industries enjoying various forms of State aid and protection since 1920's under the initiative of Misr and other combines were justified only by the sentiments of nationalism, but not on economic grounds.<sup>1</sup> Under the new régime, economic reason ran ahead of sentiment, which has strengthened some populist elements. The condition of the big bourgeoisie after the July Revolution might be the most pleasant that they had experienced, since they were exempt from the competition of foreign products, and in addition they were given State encouragement for the purpose of industrialization. Sentimental justification is no more valid provokes the ethos of social justification in the face of economic hardships. Attacks from the viewpoint of social justice turned to the aristocratic national bourgeoisie after the abolition of the foreign, colonial capitalists. These circumstances tell us something about the important, drastic changes to the framework on which coming economic plans are going to be established. The main policies of Arab socialism can be summarized thus: 1) enlargement of the public sector, 2) a new system of progressive taxation, and 3) a second land reform.

(c) Contents of the "Decree"

1. All enterprises engaging in banking, insurance and foreign trade are to be nationalized.
2. An individual may not hold stock in excess of £ E10,000 face value.
3. Salaries and remunerations are limited annually to £ E5,000 per capita.
4. Tax is to be levied at 90% on income exceeding £ E10,000.
5. Board of directors are to be composed of seven members including two representatives of the employees.
6. Land-holdings are to be restricted to 100 feddans.
7. 25% of the annual profits of all companies are to be allotted to workers' welfare.
8. No man is to occupy more than one job: and working hours to be reduced in accordance with the present framework of wages.

(d) Some Comments

Arab socialism demonstrates the stability of revolutionary power. The revolutionaries renounced the union with big business and preferred to be regarded as its open enemy. Despite the hereditary aristocrats of business, the new emerging strata of the middle class performed the duties of management in the big organizations together with army officers, the younger staff of the universities, and other public servants. The reaction to these proposals can be well imagined. Big business is effectively muzzled by these regulations, and workers' representatives, sitting on the board of directors, can detect financial sabotage in economic activities and the secret hiding of assets. Some improvements are expected of this kind of rationalization of business-management, which have previously been based upon nepotism and men of acquiescent disposition rather than capable men.<sup>2</sup> Under the direction of professional

<sup>1</sup> C. Issawi, *op. cit.*, p. 225

managers improvements in the treatment of labourers should come about, which will lead to some degree of improvement in labour productivity.

The second remarkable point is the socio-political meaning of the second land reform. The backbone of feudal landlordism was broken by the events of 1952, but it survived along with some other unprogressive groups, exercising an influence as a residual social force. The land reform of 1952 was not as drastic as the bills introduced by Wafdists to the parliaments of 1945 and of 1950 that "provided for the break-up, with compensation, of all holdings over 50 feddans."<sup>1</sup>

Incentives can improve agrarian productivity rather than terms of tenancy, and land reform must therefore form a part of a general scheme for economic and social development, as has been pointed out many times. In this respect, the Egyptian land reform of 1952 paralleled the Mexican experiences of the 1920's, in that ex-landlordism could remain holding 300 feddans disregarding the limitation of 100.

Generally speaking, the conservative groups who occupy the leading positions in society used to advocate industrialization programmes in order to escape the violent demands of the lower classes for agrarian land reforms, and to escape losing their grand estates. Industrialization increases the burden on the shoulders of the peasant and lower classes, and leads to social unrest. As the result of the increasing amount of capital goods required to promote industry, deficits in foreign exchange are inevitable and inflation affects the whole nation. In this case, the ruling class is made stronger than before and seeks economic aid and foreign capital in various forms. Then, disputes arise within the nation confronted with the choice of political independence or economic neo-colonialism as alternatives. Many experiences in the growing countries prove the mutual indissolubility of land reform and industrialization properly set up in the grand framework of social reorganization. Only through successful agrarian reforms and industrialization can economic development be achieved free from the heavy burdens of a colonial-subjugated structure in the national economy. In Egypt, the peasant's co-operatives went hand in hand with land reform, and foreign exchange was controlled by the Government. Cotton trading, however, was in the hands of Greek merchants of Alexandria, and the compensation paid to the ex-landlords did not flow into the industrial sector but was invested in urban real estate, contrary to the expectations of the economic planners. Recent reports indicate shortages of finance in agriculture causing the reappearance of usury. In these circumstances, the new industrial plan put forward in the name of Arab socialism suggests that there are to be some changes in the infrastructure of the national economy; the industrialization is in gear with a much more advanced standard of agriculture.

Hereupon, a question must be answered: Arab socialism's relationship

<sup>2</sup> On Egyptian business élite and manager class, see F. Harbison and I.A.K. Ibrahim, *Human Resources for Egyptian Enterprise*, New York, McGraw Hill, 1958.

<sup>1</sup> C. Issawi, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

with orthodox socialism. Nasser asserted that his socialism is quite different to that of the "West," and that "19th century" socialism is unsuitable in dealing with the difficulties and the tasks of the present-day Arab. As historical situations surrounding nations are not similar, it is nonsense to import or imitate the experiences of other nations. This is a theory of the impotency of imported revolution and also of nationalistic self-determinism which leads to naturalism or non-alliance. There is a unique "socialist" international policy of Arabism here, seeking Pan-Arabism and rejecting internationalism. Being proud of Arab socialism, Muhammad Husanayn Haykal, the editor of *al-Ahrâm*, reviews communism in the following terms:<sup>1</sup>

1. Communism tries to eliminate class contradictions through proletarian dictatorship, but Arab socialism aims at the termination of class-conflict itself.
2. Communism allows exploitive dictatorship, but Arab socialism aims at workers' rule without exploitation.
3. Communism confiscates private property, but Arab socialism provides compensation.
4. Communism nationalizes everything, but Arab socialism places them under public supervision.
5. Communism talks with enthusiasm on the bright utopia of the future, but Arab socialism places great importance on the present, too.
6. Communism develops through demoralizing the senses and feelings of the human individual, but Arab socialism functions through unprejudiced thinking.
7. Communism perpetuates itself by the activities of a single party, but Arab socialism mobilizes the activities of the whole nation.

In the above-cited justification of Arab socialism, it is not the theoretical questions but the way of thinking and philosophy which is meeting the very practical and urgent need of the nation, even if such an attitude might leave some problems unsolved. For the Egyptian leader, *Arab socialism* is a necessary, natural development of *Arab nationalism* and it cannot be described except as an ideal of social justice embodied in political institutions.

(e) Development after the Declaration

The most remarkable event since the declaration is the beginning of so-called "self-guarding" socialism of November 1961 evoked by the split of UAR. The partition of Syria from UAR indicates dissatisfaction on the part of the national bourgeoisie with the progress of socialism and State participation in economic activities. Fearing similar reactions from Egyptian business, the Government openly attacked the "enemies of the people." More than 200 persons were thrown into prison and had their possessions confiscated.

In 1963, the Ba'thists' *coup d'état* succeeded in Iraq and in Syria, and

<sup>1</sup> cf. *al-Ahrâm*, Aug. 6, 1961. See also a series of articles in the paper beginning July 14, 1961 and also see an anonymous article of the Beirut daily *al-Hayyat* under the title of "Ishtirakiyyat fi Muttahidat" (Socialism in UAR), Aug. 16, 1961.

talks on the unification of three Arab countries began but came to nothing, the new UAR failing to get a consensus for the conditions for union. Since then disputes between Nasser and the Ba'thists became more serious. But they are unanimous regarding the enemy within the Arab world; the Jordan Hashimite and the Saudi Arabian Kingdoms are boycotted in the long-term programme of Arab unity. This is a most important change in the inter-Arab policies, for the existence of Israel has been the only motive which intensified the call for Arab unity however, the Arab League, with severe contradictions within themselves regarding their political systems and their relations with foreign countries, proved its inability during the Middle Eastern political events of 1962. But now, the unity of the Arab world is sought for in the line of *republicanism*.

The other important change in 1963 was the release of leftists, radicalists and Communists who had been imprisoned accused of anti-Nasserism. This action does not suggest a conversion in principle towards communism, but implies that some uncomfortable movements are expanding, looking for the opportunity in a bad season of inflationary symptoms and of hardships caused by the Yemeni war. These conditions lead to an alliance with the leftists in preference to others; one of such is traditionalists who have become active in the course of public debate on the schemes of social reform offered by the president to the parliament. On birth control and woman's citizenship, the modernists' and reformists' proposals were opposed by the conservatives; the anti-secularism movement came out among the al-Azhar's scholars and, except for the intellectuals, won the support of the masses. In the contradiction between the political and social revolution, Nasser is in a dilemma between Islam and al-Azhar: on the one hand some nationalists justify their behaviour in the name of Islam in the same way as revolutionaries legitimized their new goals by ideals of social justice, on the other hand the authoritarian character of al-Azhar persists in the legacy of the old Qur'ân interpretation and Hadith of the Prophet, and unfortunately al-Azhar is a world centre of Moslem traditional schooling. The problem of the national religion is also a pressing question. It has caused a split between the Nasserists and the traditionalists within Egypt, and between the Nasserists and the Ba'thists without. After the conference of three countries held in March 1963, UAR decided upon Islam as her State religion.

An old-established and legendary religion such as Islam permits of a wide range of interpretations and practices in accordance with the various aspirations or anxieties held by different social strata and groups.<sup>1</sup> In reality, although vast common people respect their hero, the President, as an excellent political leader, they need the *ulemas* (priests) and the *qadis* (judges) in civil cases; for example, marriage, inheritance, support, contract, etc. So there is a wide sector left in control of the traditionalists. The present commentator

<sup>1</sup> On the theoretical problems of this remark, cf. Max Weber, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie*, Bd. I, Tübingen, 1. Aufl., 1920, pp. 237-75; and on his practical presentation see *ibid.*, Bd. III, 1921.

accounts for this as a reason for radicalists' emancipation. The rapid growth of population is always a headache when it surpasses the economic growth and disturbs the realization of social justice and the expansion of a nation's wealth; especially when birth control has been outlawed by parliament.

The next problem is a scarcity of professionals and specialists. In the rigid application of the one-man-one-job principle, demands for a professional services will increase, and this tendency will incline to build a new stratum of aristocrats and promote their bureaucratization. Between 1921-1929, in the period of N.E.P., Russia found her way out of the same trouble by means of nationalization and syndication. The future of Arab socialism, in this sense, depends on the Government's handling of E.D.O. This involves the problem of higher national education; however, as an urgent issue, the role of the military is important since it is the only institution which provides adult education for the purpose of the co-operative and organized works.

Thus it can be said that the main problems of Arab socialism is the co-ordination between industrialization and agrarian reform, and the grouping of rural workers into a more efficient co-operative system for the purpose of structural change and development of the national economy.

Especially, in the country areas, the division of land into small holdings does not promote a higher standard of agricultural productivity and economic profitability. Yet, in an age of industrialization, it is necessary for agriculture to keep in step with industry and become more efficient. For the plough must support the machines, and the machines the plough. This is the practical side of Arab socialism, and whatever theories there are of Arab socialism, the Arabs' future must depend on their performance. Arab socialism claims to be unique in the history of socialism, but whatever label is attached to its ideology, its practice falls within the range of so-called State capitalism.

(Sept. 30, 1963)