

Social Equity

The Core of Nasser's Thinking

"The first objective of the Free Officers was establishing social equity .. The objective of the Revolution was not only to dethrone the King, it was essentially to change the social system"

(Gamal Abdel Nasser, A speech to Public Transport Workers, 3/4/1954)

Introduction

Any attempt to summarize President Nasser's thinking in just one phrase would lead undoubtedly to social equity as the one. Some may differ, and may suggest one or the other from among the notions that received his attention, and I would not quarrel with them. In fact from wherever one looks at the Leader one finds that he is top in any of those qualities expected by nations in their leaders; and this is the secret of his eminence. But the marvel of his thinking lies in the fact that it had been so consistent it would form a well-integrated structure, none of its components is unaligned with the rest. A consequence of this, which will become clear in the following pages, is that from whichever point one approaches that structure, say social equity, the rest of the structure will fall in order, in a logical sequence, indicating that the man was quite honest in his speeches and deeds. This led him to maintain the solid foundations of his thinking, irrespective of conditions or circumstances.

It was, therefore, deemed necessary to start this study with a basic question: why did Nasser believe in social equity as a principle, and why did he select it as an indisputable objective ? This has to be followed by another query as to the meaning he attributed to the concept. This is an important point in a time in which the concept is being used in a manner that is practically discharging it from its essence. We shall find that he had been frequently speaking of two revolutions: one political and the other social; but the clasp binding the two was social equity. An investigation of social equity leads to investigation of the antonym, namely social injustice, which leads to the discrimination between two sides of the social revolution: one negative and the other positive. This helps to indicate the extent of his belief in the positive side and preoccupation with it, thus leading to the realization of the constructive attribute in his thinking which led him to worship work, and propagate notions of unity and cooperation. Hence follows his movement towards construction in all dimensions: construction of human beings, construction of the economy, construction of the society, so as to end with a complete structure that covers all aspects of human life in a unique manner. This led to the breakdown of our study into three parts: the concept - the economic structure - the construction of individual and society.

This sequence of thoughts and deeds indicates that when Nasser started from social equity he eventually reached what one can actually call "social efficiency". This nullified the argument that assigns efficiency to the economy and equity to the social field, thus ranking it second within rational thinking, and limiting its role to that of the remedy to a malady. We believe that the treatment by Nasser of social equity has undoubtedly disproved that argument, and that was through his putting social equity at the very base, which led to the realization of all its prerequisites, whether political, societal or economic. In that he proved to be quite right; recent studies attempting at advancing the thinking about development have proved that the core of development is the societal organization in such a way that realizes social efficiency.

It would be impossible to end this introduction without a long delayed word or thanks to the organizers of this historical gathering, not only for assigning me the honour of dealing with one side of the personality that was the most eminent in the modern Arab world, but also because they thus helped me to resume a series of studies in which I had been recently involved for dealing with the

basic concepts of development that remained absent, which caused it to lose its way, and to come nearer to the answer of a question that kept nagging for some time: Is there such a thing as social efficiency, and is there a way by which it can be realized? I hope that you would agree with me that the answer with there all the time, and that we lost sight of it with the absence of the leader who squarely faced the pains of his people and faithfully dealt with the hopes of his nation. We have to follow suit in order to stand against the wicked attack which had the Arab nation as a target, and which has practically succeeded in destroying the fruits of its struggle, and depriving it from its material wealth, cultural structures, and the foundations of its civilization. It may be that the best way to commemorate the Leader is to follow his track and to strengthen the march by building up the theoretical basis of his original approach. This is direfully needed in an epoch that witnesses the decay of many alternative approaches to development, and in which there remains for countries of the third world countries only a narrow opening which is offered to them by capitalism in a well-calculated manner, so as to herd them to the pen prepared for them, denying them the right to choose.

Part One - The Location and the Concept

The Origin

The principles in which a person believes and the rules that govern his actions are in fact based upon the system of values in which he has faith, and the ideals to which he refers. When the correspondent of *Regiment 13 Magazine* asked him, on the second anniversary of the 23rd July Revolution about his ideal, Nasser's answer was: "I think the best ideal that I always keep in mind is that one should feel what others feel; feels the feelings of the weak and those of the strong, feels the feelings of the poor and those of the rich, trying to assess the grounds of those feelings. This way one can *realize full justice*". This simple, deep and true statement, that reflects a high sense of the feelings of the others, has led him to accept justice as an undeniable and unique final goal. He did not state that his ideal is this or that of those heroes of whom he frequently spoke in admiration; he did not consider as an ideal the desire to lead his nation to the realm of dignity, status or other values which he often promised; he did not say that his ideal was a decent type of life he would love to achieve, and hence he hopes that his citizens would share .. None of these; he simply put himself in the place of others in order to sense their feelings, in order to realize the goal for which he worked: "to realize full justice".

We often admired his bias for the poor and the labourers, which is a bias we attributed to him believing that this is a virtue that explains many of his actions, and that accounts for his permanent concern with the landless farmer, and with the cousin toiling in the country side deprived of all means of life enjoyed by the resident in the city. This latter statement he kept reminding the educated of, in order to stir the sentiments of solidarity with those who were bereft of enjoying the fruits of what they produced which leaked away into the hands of others. If it were true that he was biased to the poor only and to the feeble only, then it would have been natural that he would have been biased against those who are not. But this was not the case, otherwise he could not have selected justice to all as his objective. His bias to the vulnerable was not by way of supporting them against certain other groups, but against the behaviour contradicting justice followed by those who are domineering because of their might or riches.

Accordingly Nasser refused to be hostile to landlords when he was fighting feudalism, or to exterminate capitalists when he was combating exploitation. In fact he was trying to extend ownership to all, but avoiding exploitation that would conscript internal and external forces conflicting with peoples' aspirations. When the Revolution took place and he declared war upon feudalism and exploitation by capitalists, he concentrated the struggle within the phenomena rather than persons. The Revolution could boast, therefore, of being bloodless. When he tried to rectify the structure of the society, he did not call for the eradication of certain classes or exclusion of certain groups; his main concern was to dissolve the differences between classes. In all this, he put himself in the place of all others at the one and same time, the suffering people and the groups which had the opportunity to procure the elements of a decent life. He tried to understand the motives of those who were favoured by authority and wealth through the distorted societal organization, but they put it in the service of imperialism. The man remained committed to this ideal until the end, even when the reactionists

became active against him, as will be indicated later. Within it he readjusted the rules of action according to the nature of the stage achieved by the society along the path he defined to it.

The Objective

When the 23rd July 1952 Revolution broke out, it announced six principles, three of which called for change:

- Eradication of imperialism and its supporters of traitorous Egyptians. •
 - Eradication of feudalism •
 - Eradication of monopoly and the domination of capital upon the rule of the country. •
- However, the Revolution did not remain satisfied with the elimination activities; there was need for laying down the foundations for the new society, hence the other three principles of the Revolution:
- To establish social equity. •
 - To build up a strong national army. •
 - To construct a sound democratic life. •

Thus the Revolution combined two things: getting rid of social injustice, and the establishment of social equity. As Nasser said: "Social injustice had been manifested in the hateful nightmare of feudalism. We have inherited a class of rulers and nobles who snobbed the people, and who spent the time enjoying their authority and wealth. The country was subdivided into two classes each hating the other though both belong to the same species: the camp of the serfs and the sect of the masters". It was only natural that the masters took over the government. Since the rule was in the hands of the Palace under the domination of imperialism, that social subdivision was politically translated into a similar political subdivision: the class of the rulers and the class of the ruled. The former got together under the auspices of Farouk, and tried to protect itself from the people by all means, including the subjection of the army to its service. Political change required that the rule should be given back to its true owners, the people. Thus political change was in essence a process of redressing social injustice.

In fact if the regime that the Revolution tried to overthrow realized social equity, the Revolution would have never taken place. If the Free Officers tried then to convince people to look for an alternative regime, they would have not gained the attention of the masses that actually stood solidly behind them. Social injustice is a motive for revolution, and the feeling of it is its activator, since it makes the risks involved in revolutionary movements quite light in the minds of people. That feeling comprises a vision of an alternative system within which social equity is extended among all groups, and an estimate of the amount of benefits foregone because of the current intimidating system. A comparison of the size of sacrifices and losses, and the volume of returns and benefits, would be in favour of the latter.

The issue was not, therefore, a change in government and the replacement of one ruling group by another. The issue was that the prevailing system bereaved the intimate relationship of the majority to their country, thus depossessing them from the sense of belonging because it denied them the simplest rights of human beings. This was summarized by Nasser in a quite denotative story: "During the Palestine war I was in the front line .. I saw a soldier trying to run away, so I called him and he came back. I asked him why are you running away ? He answered: I do not possess any inch in Egypt ! That was the truth, but Egypt has changed and it belongs today to all of us." This incident drew his attention to the fact that feudalism did not only command the sources of wealth, but it also deprived the landless people from the requirements of a decent life, hence severing their relationship with their homeland, leaving them straying.

It was because of this that when Nasser tried to summarize the objectives of the Revolution in one phrase, he stated the one which we quoted at the beginning: "The first objective of the Free Officers was establishing social equity .. The objective of the Revolution was not only to dethrone the King, it was essentially to change the social system". The Revolution found the people subdivided into two: oppressors and oppressed. It faced two choices: either to get along with those who die because of overeating or those who die of hunger. The choice was in favour of eradication of unfairness and the establishment of social equity; this was the fundamental objective of the Revolution. When the Revolution took place there was a minority which decides the fate of the country, and which upheld inequity and degradation, preventing the whole nation from occupying its natural and right place. Any call for equity was suppressed by this tyrant minority, which maintained farmers as slaves to the

feudalists, and kept workers under the command of capitalists. That destructive power standing in the face of the greatness of the people was targeted by the Revolution for elimination in order to give back to the people their rights.

After eliminating feudalism, Nasser looked into the composition of the society and found that it still suffers from a disparity that leads to differentiation in rights and responsibilities. In his early speeches he frequently said that we should not be distracted by the few numbers of the educated from paying attention to the rest of the nation. If we try to assess the nation of 22 millions we should not do that on the basis of the minority of three millions of the educated and those who enjoy a comfortable life. Our judgment should be based upon an outlook to the majority. The majority of 19 millions in rural areas were the victims of the group that monopolized governance, and they were neglected by the intellectuals. Hence he kept reminding of the cousin who works in field hardly earning subsistence. Past regimes dictated that the majority would not find what they eat, they dress or a home to house them. Any nation can never be strong on supplying the means of life to a limited number of educated persons; there is need for all citizens to get what they eat, they dress and what is necessary for their health. It is impossible to improve the conditions of the whole nation, unless these facts are kept into consideration, and unless it is realized that the majority was poor ignorant and sick. This imposed on those who are capable to assist their compatriots and get rid of selfishness.

What does this mean ? It means that the man was not moving against feudalism and exploitive capital out of class hatred. What really bothered him was the wide disparity in the share of life resulting from mere class association. That was injustice, and he hated injustice, therefore he was not ready to see any unjust person within his grater Arab nation. His way to do this was not to kill the unjust, but to eradicate injustice from its very roots. When he drew attention to the injustice prevailing in the society, he did not limit his remarks to the injustice by the rulers only, but to the injustice within the nation itself. The nation had enabled the prevalence of injustice by its weakness and indifference. Therefore he asked people. after removing injustice by rulers, to get rid of the injustice they are doing to themselves. "We got rid of political injustice; but did we get rid of social inequity ? I tell you that we did not get rid of social inequity; the traces of the past are still with us, and we have always to try get rid of them. We started by eradicating feudalism in order to ensure farmers of their rights. We are trying to increase production in order to enable our sons to live in the future a better life than ours. We are on way to eradicate social injustice, and I would say that this social injustice which lived with us so long is not easy to overcome. We have all of us to work in order to achieve a dignified life".

That was the signal for a new policy which is a policy for construction rather than destruction. The Revolution occurred in order to realize complete equality between all classes of the nation, but this would require a series of consecutive steps. Each person has rights and bears responsibilities, and this cannot be realized except through social equality, which is the goal of the Revolution. Such an equality is the way to *spiritual development*, which he defined as "that you feel that you own this country, a free citizen in it, and are not simply a subject of a tyrant ruler. This way you feel strength and dignity, and you feel also that you have in this country the same as Gamal Abdel Nasser or Salah Salem has". Thus the ultimate goal was to create the feeling that the country is for all and not for a few that subject it and its people to their oppression.

Hence the two revolutions

Whenever a revolution gains power, a number of questions arise: Does it suffice to change the political system in order to realize equity that had been missing ? Would it be enough to rectify those conditions that had remained for a long time, then leaving matters go their own way without being threatened of falling into disparities, maybe of another sort ? Would there be a separation from the nature of the prevailing economic system, some of whose features may change, but which remains essentially the same ? Had social injustice been simply the outcome of economic underdevelopment accepted by a sinister political system; hence is expected to disappear if the revolutionary regime takes steps to redress the national economy, and to let it catch up with the achievements of mankind, especially those realized by the developed countries, and by which these have accomplished their development ?

In spite of his realization of the close ties between the political and social systems, Nasser distinguished actions in both domains. In his *Philosophy of the Revolution* he said:

"And I can say that we are now living two revolutions rather than one:

"Each nation in this world has two revolutions:

"a political revolution by which it regains its right for self-rule from a tyrant imposed upon it,
or from a hostile army that occupies its land against its will,

"and a social revolution in which its classes struggle until they settle on the basis of what
realizes *justice* [emphasis ours] to all citizens of the same nation.

"Several nations have preceded us in going through the two revolutions, but they did not live
them simultaneously. They were separated one from the other by hundreds of years. But we
face the formidable experience to which our nation is exposed, namely living the two
revolutions at the same time."

"We have to pass through the two revolutions together. When we went through the political
revolution and dethroned Farouk, we implemented a corresponding step towards the social
revolution by delimiting land ownership.

"I still believe up till now that the 23rd July Revolution should keep its capability of quick
action and initiative in order to be able of realizing the miracle of implementing the two
revolutions simultaneously, even if this leads in some cases to contradictions in our actions."

The issue that preoccupied him was the contradiction between the political revolution and the social revolution. The political revolution is destruction, while the social revolution is construction, amicability and cooperation. He considered that for true justice to be realized in this country, the political revolution should succeed. In order for us to build this country in a strong and healthy manner, this revolution should not relapse. Therefore he persistently directed the Revolution towards bringing all citizens together, so that when it was felt that the route had been paved, a march towards the social objectives starts. The primary objective of the Revolution was to establish social equity, and the creation of self-respect, dignity and freedom for the nation, so as to prevent any one from having control upon the fortunes or the freedom of individuals.

To sum up, as soon as the foundations of the new regime were established, the constructive actions required by the social revolution were initiated. At this point a fact became clear, viz., that moving along the path of social equity was a movement along a long and tedious path of several stages. This called for setting up controls on the movement in order to avoid the creation of another machinery for creating new types of social injustice, and the generation of room for the growth of conflicts that would carry the society into new whirlpools of detriment. This called at the beginning to explore the dimensions of the process of social change that accompanies a social revolution having social equity as a goal, and ascertaining the characteristics of a society capable of shouldering the burdens of the process and maximizing its returns. In other words, as soon as the process of construction started there was need for drawing its full design in order to let the steps take place in a coordinated manner.

The problem which he perceived was that the simultaneity between the occurrence of the political and social revolutions is a rare case among the experiences of nations, and that this has important consequences. Each of the two revolutions has its own specific conditions which contradict together and collide in a dreadful manner. The political revolution unifies the actions of the whole nation and consolidates all its members pushing them to be devoted to its service. If any obstacle faces the nation, then that obstacle has to go for ever. But the trouble with the social revolution is that it persuades each group to defend itself and adhere to its own interests versus those of others. This makes the first of its traits the shaking of values, the disturbance of beliefs, the strife among citizens as individuals and as groups, and the spread of corruption, doubt, hatred and selfishness. This is because that the success of the revolution by itself is not sufficient to eradicate social injustice, which may lead to political degradation and political coercion, hence to the scattering of the society and the diffusion of malice and spite, and the disintegration of nations. This, he believed, was the ailment that plagued the 1919 Revolution, since the lines of people which stood together to face tyranny soon became engaged in conflicts among individuals and classes. Instead of the unification of the nation's endeavour in one line facing the intruding imperialist, the fellow citizens became engaged in struggles for affluence and status. This called for a new revolution in which the two revolutions, the political and the social, accompany, each supporting the other.

Accordingly the 23rd July Revolution, in its attempt to build up a strong country whose subjects feel dignity, equality and honour, had to face the two revolutions together: the political revolution in

order to get rid of the imperialist and its sponsors, and of political oppression and its effects; and the social revolution in order to eradicate at the same time social injustice, and establish a sound social and just life, in which all citizens have an equal opportunity. Each of the two revolutions had its own characteristics, which raised fears of conflict or contradiction between the two revolutions, thus threatening the realization of the political revolution, and threatening the realization of the social revolution. However, the Revolution could go through both without any clash or contradiction between the two. At the time the Revolution was struggling to evacuate the British from Egypt, it eradicated feudalism, and at the same time applied agrarian reform. At the time it was ending political oppression, industrialization was going on at full speed, development of the economy was going ahead and economic independence was being established.

Simultaneity of the two revolutions lead to mutual fortification of both, and to a great extent. The eradication of feudalism and of exploitation by capital served both revolutions. This led him to assert that political democracy was useless unless there is social democracy, because if political democracy was established in the absence of social democracy it would turn against the people, and would attempt to exploit people, becoming a stronghold for the minority, and exploitation by the minority of the majority. Hence political democracy had to go side by side with social democracy. Democracy according to him means equity, equality and narrowness of differences between classes; no masters, no slaves, but all living in freedom and enjoying the dignity of their home country.

Two Sides for the Social Revolution

When the Revolution took place, there was no definite program or detailed schedule for the social revolution; only general objectives that enabled the definition of the nature of the society to be built. But the revolution does not deserve its name unless it accommodates the scientific thinking in its formulation and actions. It is not merely an expression of anger at the old conditions that suppressed the society, tied up its movement and obstructed its takeoff. Revolution to him meant the science of comprehensive and deep *social change* aiming at building up a new life that satisfies the requisites and hopes of the rebels.

The Interim Constitution which was issued at the beginning of 1956 indicated in its second part the foundations of the democratic, socialist and cooperative society, which aims at establishing social justice that provides welfare, equity and equality among people. Socialism meant to him negative as well as positive actions. The negative included the eradication of the traces of the hateful past, while the positive covered the construction of the future desirable to all. Socialism in its negative part meant the processes of change which constituted the first part of the Revolution's objectives, and the Revolution succeeded from the outset in covering a lot of ground in that. It was possible to eradicate feudalism and monopoly, and to end the domination of capital upon government, and in abolishing, to some extent, exploitation.

Socialism in its positive sense is the construction of a national economy, developing that economy and making it capable of meeting the needs of the society and establishing social equity. Soon it became clear that there is no limit to action; the positive process has to go on so long as life goes on, and construction continues for ever. During the early years of the Revolution a number of good results were achieved. But Nasser said once and again that the route is endless since the needs of the society are boundless, and whenever we realize something, there emerges something new to be done. The early years were overcrowded with struggle against the plans and plots of the imperialist, even with a traitorous tripartite aggression. They were also full of debate about the foundations of the new society and the choices concerning the political system and the economic system. In spite of that, good results could be achieved in increasing production, in industry and industrial development, in economic development, in agriculture and in all fields related to the needs of the society. What attracted his admiration was the fact that all those achievements were the outcome of the work of every one in the society.

The Revolution changed the defective system for the benefit of the people and for their good. It got rid of the heavy heritage left over by that system, straightened out matters and restored rights to their owners. This was not inspired by envy against any body, or induced by ill-will against anyone, but out of a desire for social equity without which citizens cannot feel their dignity or existence in their country. Distribution of land. eradication of feudalism, abolishing the domination of capital upon

government, and the elimination of monopoly, meant to him but one step, one step only, towards establishing social equity, social democracy, and the building up of socialist democratic society.

The second step towards social democracy, social equity, and the establishment of a democratic, socialist and cooperative society is *work*. Work is an honour for every body, and it is the only way to build up the country, raise income and wealth and providing a job for each unemployed, food for every hungry, knowledge for each ignorant, and furnishing every one with his rights. The social revolution required that every one should work in order to build up the country: the farmer in his field and the worker in his factory, for themselves and for their children, in order to enjoy a better future full of happiness for everybody. This positive outlook for social equity led to movement along two branches. The first is to construct a society capable of providing the requirements of maintaining the achievements of the Revolution and directing it towards its ultimate goal, namely the establishment of social equity. The second was to build up the economic structure capable of providing of the needs of citizens whom the aimed at equity furnished with rights of which they had been deprived over several decades. This drew up the outlines of a *society of sufficiency and equity*.

A Constructive Concept of Social Equity

It would be useful to pause a while to consider the concept of social equity, or rather the alternative concepts attributed to that notion. Briefly one may say that social equity is one of three:

- Injustice to be removed. Here eradication of feudalism and exploitation by capital were major objectives. •
- A drawback to be corrected. This is the common meaning which considers equity as a remedy rather than an objective. •
- Justice to be realized. This is the principle which inspired the Revolution to build up the society of sufficiency and equity. •

Let us begin with the second which was not essential for the Revolution, being simply a remedy for a possible defect, whereas it considered social equity to be an objectives in its own right. We need not remind the reader that the general rule guiding capitalist societies is to leave the economy functioning according to economic freedom in order to achieve what is considered “economic efficiency”. This latter, in the minds of theoreticians of those societies, ensures the optimum utilization of resources, hence maximizing their returns, which furnishes the society with the best outcome that can be achieved on the basis of available resources. However, this need not necessarily represent the best share for everybody in the society, since shares would be determined according to conditions of supply and demand, which means that those with smaller size or weight gain more, and *vice versa*. Hence a new round starts during which the (maximized) output that could be obtained is being redistributed, and the criterion applied in redistribution is social equity.

It does not require a lot of effort to discover the vulgarity of this way of thinking. Any utilization of resources that are humble leads by definition to a humble output. Being greatest in reference to the prevailing structure of resources does not mean that it would be the greatest if the resources were developed much further. It may be that the output of ignorant farmers earning wages too low to cover mere subsistence, is the maximum that the society can get out of them. But what if those farmers were given an amount of education which they could apply to their production activity, and gained a higher income that enables them to spend on a larger size of production? The association of underdevelopment with the mediocrity of resources. smallness of income and excessiveness of inequality of the limited income, are clear evidence that the so-called optimum utilization of resources is in fact an “optimum underdevelopment”, and that development cannot take place unless resources are developed and not merely optimally allocated in their current conditions.

Therefore, development approaches that are based on absolute freedom of economic forces are likely to deepen underdevelopment rather than getting rid of it. Economic programs currently advocated by world capitalism may succeed in dealing with certain shortcomings (such as fiscal deficits or inflation) which befell actual development experiences for a variety of reasons, among which the external may have more weight than inherent defects; but they leave quite serious effects on both the economy and the society. Promoters of such programs would then put forward proposals of measures of social equity that remove some aspects of acute injustice, considering them as flaws in distribution which may be treated in a secondary stage, but also within the framework of economic

freedom. Those measures involve the deployment of market tools and free economy policies in a manner that straightens the outcomes of the unconditional application of those tools and policies.

This is the meaning that is being propagated at present, that makes social equity a tool for justifying social injustice which has to be approved by the society as a price for obtaining a stake that is claimed to be larger, while in fact it is not. If this were true it should be accomplished through an agreement on a **social contract** according to which the groups suffering from unjustness surrender to it in exchange for a compensation to be provided by means of tools selected for social equity, such as the Social Fund which is being used as a persuasion to Egyptians to accept the privatization deal. In fact such a contract if concluded between parties unequal in powers of self-expression, whether with respect to economic power, political power or social status, is untruthful by definition. In order for any contract, not to say one that determines the fate of people, to be true freedom of will should be availed to all its parties. This is nullified by the fact that the contract is being promulgated by an autocratic ruling system that protects the injustices that favoured a limited exploiting group with the monopoly of governing, and threw away the overwhelming majority to the lowest levels. More dangerous still is that such an autocratic system attempts to counterfeit a democratic façade that seems to give each citizen one vote, whereas the economic power concentrated in the hands of a few hushes down any say, and closes the possibilities of free thought in front of minds calcified by ignorance that they cannot get rid of because it was imposed upon them, depriving them from any means by which they could buy a portion of knowledge that removes shades away from eyes that had been severely blinded as a result of poverty and distress.

Thus a social equity that is a part of a social contract in which all parties participate at an equal footing without any exception, requires that we start from where we should start, by eradicating social injustice that deprives the majority from the means to participate, not simply by votes that go to closed boxes, whether tampered with or not, but by the formulation of a thinking coming out from the inner conscious. The essential condition is equality of opportunities, where the equality covers both thinking and expression. In a speech in the middle of 1954, Nasser said: "This Revolution was aiming at a political revolution and a social revolution, and we strongly felt that the full political objectives and the full social objectives cannot be realized unless **everybody got full opportunities**. We believe in the individual and we deeply believe that the country will not be strong unless the individual is strong. We believe at the same time that we should strengthen the individual in all aspects in order to be capable of strengthening the country in all dimensions. The first foundation is education". This way he expressed the basic condition for participation which is the basis for democracy, and he took a shortcut to the essence of the issue which is education from which the majority were deprived, becoming thus more disabled.

To him social justice was not a mere corrective measure to be forwarded as a bribe to gain acceptance of a system incapable of continuity or tranquillity. It was neither a means to throw away a ruling class that was responsible for social unjustness, and replacing it by another, but to construct a new society whose members are all strong. When things settled down for the realization of the fundamental political objectives, and it was possible to evacuate the imperialist, get rid of the palace and its sponsors and eradicate feudalism, it was found necessary also to put an end to the exploitation by capital, which was the outcome of the mal-distribution of wealth and which in turn made distribution much worse. Here the struggle was much longer. Whereas the agrarian reform gradually reduced the upper ceiling of ownership at widely separated intervals, the treatment of exploitation took the shape of a long debate of several sections. At the beginning there was the determination of a minimum way to correct the blunder of a labour market that treated workers and farmers as commodities whose prices were reduced because their supply exceeded a demand that remained modest because of the exploitation itself. Another start was made in the housing market in which demand cumulated while supply fell back, which turned housing from a service fitting the prevailing level of income into speculations that were directed towards building up quick riches. Rents were accordingly determined at levels that remove exaggerations that resulted from market distortions, and at the same time popular housing projects started to reduce the supply gaps, while correcting the situation with respect to low-income groups which were incapable of entering a market that was closed upon the haves. As to industrial capital, it was offered advantages that the IMF would not dream of, on one condition: not to exploit. It was necessary to close all inlets to exploitation wherever they appeared.

Removal of oppression from its very sources and not mere correction of recurrent malfunctioning was the base. This does not contradict the pretext upon which the reformative claim was based, namely “increasing the size of the cake” which is to be distributed. It simply restated that alleged reason in a manner that was tied up to the reasoning of efficiency and effectiveness more than to the motives of charity and comradeship. To him social equity was not a donation to be granted, but an action in which everybody participates, and for which all groups of the society should be mobilized, which a fair ruling system ensures the requirements of freedom, equality and equity for all. Equality of opportunities was the base, since if opportunities were equal everybody can work for the benefit of the whole, which gives him back a benefit as a member of that whole. His description of the 23rd July Revolution as unique was quite accurate. It always faced difficulties, and it always tried all possible means to achieve its objectives, and at the same time it aimed at eradicating social injustice and availing equal opportunities to everyone.. The social revolutions required the benevolence of the rich to the poor and the kindness of the powerful to the weak. The political revolution required fighting in many fronts. After gaining victory in the national revolution by realizing the evacuation, and in the political revolution by getting rid of political oppression that was exerted by old politicians and their sponsors, wider steps could be taken towards social equity. Here Nasser asserted that the Revolution needs from all citizens unity, will and power, and requires the assistance of everyone in building up the country in order to achieve the aims of the Revolution in making the country strong, through making all of its members strong. This was why he believed that opportunities should be equal for all, without discrimination among the members of the same nation. He did not promise his fellow citizens welfare and well-being; he asked them to be one line in order to achieve objectives and direct their activities towards construction, and to work hard and toil: the farmer in his land, and the worker in his factory, since this will strengthen the social revolution that will improve the conditions of them all.

That to him was the real revolution.

To sum up, social equity was not either for Nasser or for the 23rd July Revolution maintaining of one class at the expense of another, or relaxation by a nation while its government supports it. “People were born free to live free and with equal rights, without discrimination. None has any advantage to his fellow countryman except with respect to what he presents to the country and the community”. The base was *doing* and not granting or receiving. That was a response to what almighty God said about those who do the Zakat (tithes). This enabled him to say in one of his early speeches: “Let each family from among you be an honourable society, governed by strong moralities and sagacious wisdom; let our youngsters respect our elders; let our rich be good to our poor; let our powerful help our weak; and let us all turn our faces towards Allah, from him we get the power to support our rights”.

Part Two - Building Up the National Economy

Introduction

The building up of a strong national economy occupied a priority in Nasser’s thinking, and in his attempts to advance the country, whether in Egypt or the state of unity, the United Arab Republic (UAR). More important was the fact that this was closely tied to his conception of social equity as given in Part One, and was strongly interconnected to his vision of the societal organization for which we devote Part Three. This dimension was one of the most important foundations of the social revolution, and that is why it intersected so distinctly with the political dimension or the political revolution. Without pretending to give a complete coverage of the economic side - this undoubtedly will be the subject matter of other studies presented to our meeting - we shall raise some points which concentrate on his vision of social equity. These points are:

- Social equity in relation to the economic structure ♦
- The need for sustainability of economic development ♦
- The relationship between the social and political revolutions from the economic viewpoint. ♦
- The agricultural sector as an example of the two sides of the social revolution. ♦
- Liberation of production forces as a foundation for securing equity. ♦
- Developing Industry as social necessity ♦
- The development with distribution approach; a forerunner of theories emerging in the seventies. ♦

Social Equity in Relation to the Economic Structure

Nasser was always reminding of the fourth objective declared by the Revolution when it occurred, viz., **establishing of social justice**: “We have been always struggling to achieve social justice, equality and equal opportunities; and we were trying to reach this objective for which we should put together all our forces in order to realize it. We cannot achieve social equity within our country unless we **work continuously** .. Unless we work hard and sweat in order to **increase the wealth of this country**, we can never realize social equity unless we all joined in order to carry out continuous, tedious and tiring work for the sake of the whole nation .. and for the majority rather than for a few people or one individual; we have to combine in order to realize social equity. This equity can never be realized except by continuous work, hard work, seriousness, strife and endeavour, and continuous construction. We have to increase the income of this country, and the wealth of this country; **we should increase national income**, which is the only way to realize that objective. Therefore, we have to join together all of us in order to establish social equity; no feudalism, no monopolization, no servitude .. there will be no monopoly, there will be no feudalism, no domination of capital on government, no exploiting class, no oppressive class, and there will be no servitude nor slavery .. but there will be **individual freedom**. The worker has to be sure of his remuneration, and the farmer should feel that his income is ensured. Each individual in this country should feel real freedom .. Hence I believe, and I am convinced, that we all shall work, and that Egypt will never neglect any of its citizens. Egypt, dear compatriots, is in need of all its citizens. Let us forget the past and look forward for the future. Let us forget the past and its hardships, retaining only the guidance and the advice so as to be on the watch. We can thus achieve for this country true social equity, in which there prevails dignity, and in which we can realize welfare for the society. This is an objective of the Revolution we could not achieve up till now (he was speaking in the fourth anniversary of the Revolution) since it needs time and continuous uninterrupted work. This work, fellow citizens, is the work of **each individual** among you, and is the duty of each of you. Whenever we achieve an objective we find new ones, because the **realization of social equity is a continuous and endless task**, that needs the endeavour of the people, the forces of the people and the capabilities of the people, and with the permission of God we shall turn to the future with resolution, faith and determination in order to establish within this country true social equity”.

His perception of the association between the different aspects of human life becomes clear from his saying in the second anniversary of the revolution: “The objectives of this Revolution are composed of realizing a free political life, a just social life, and the raising of the standard of living”. We have seen above how firm he was in establishing the relationship between the political and social revolutions, always reminding the masses of feudalism and how was it affecting the political life, then adding: “Our main demand was not economic, but to liberate the farmer from the command of the master”. But this liberation was not meant simply for moral restitution to a coerced group, but to enable this group to work in order to improve its living conditions. Thus the **economic dimension intervened with his conception of social equity from three angles**:

- Raising the standard of living for all citizens, so that the country belongs to all and stops being a monopoly for an exploiting minority.
- To release the innovative capabilities of the majority which had been subject to constraints forced by feudalism and monopoly that reduced its productivity and lowered its income, and to enable it to participate in building up a sustainably developing economy.
- Abundance of production being a necessity for creating the product that reaches all; the just society is the productive society.

Thus equity to him meant justice and efficiency at the same time: justice in the participation in building; justice in distribution of output; efficiency in the maximization of income, hence efficiency in both processes of production and distribution. That was the basis of the motto later adopted by the National Charter, namely “**Sufficiency and Equity**”

Success in the battle of social freedom was the insurance for confirmation of the gains from the political revolution, and movement towards that freedom required advancing on the power of the two wings: Sufficiency and Equity. *Sufficiency* meant increasing production in all fields: expanding

agricultural land and increasing the yield from it; adding new factories according to the needs of the society and enhancing the productive efficiency of existing ones as well as the new; it means directing national capital and transforming it into a creative energy, and moving it fast in order to widen the base of national wealth; it also means the expansion of means of communication, energy, and services that enable the countries manpower to give to production all what they possess of power to think and to work, without any obstacles or impediments. But the “Law of *Justice*, Law of Allah” did not, in his view, dictate that agricultural land, which is the foundation of national wealth, be owned by a small minority that forces the rest of the nation to work for it as slaves; neither did it presume that factories should be subject to the exploitation that punches the masses. It did not permit opulence to be inherited and poverty to be inherited; nor health to be inherited and illness to be inherited; nor knowledge to be inherited and ignorance to be inherited; not that human dignity to be inherited and humiliation to be inherited. Justice meant the distribution of the national income among all compatriots free of exploitation and deprivation. Accordingly he considered the ***simple definition of socialism*** to be that national income be a partnership among fellow countrymen, which can only be realized by means of justice in distribution, so that each gets in proportion to his actual effort in realizing that income. Hence social freedom in its simplest meaning is that each countryman has a right in the wealth of his nation according to his own effort. Opportunity should be equal, and the right should be equal for all. Social equity means taking from the rich and giving the poor, redistribution of wealth, which shakes the society strongly. This calls for safeguarding the gains, which requires enlightening the broad masses and their education of their capabilities and their potentials to protect those gains in order to avoid falling within the grip of reactionism

This precise understanding of the essence of the process of development led him to say: “This revolution aims at equity and equality and enabling all citizens to have equal opportunities for earning their worth. This can only be realized by doubling our wealth”. This was not possible except through what he consider the “major target” that everyone will have equal rights, and feels that this is his country, no masters, no slaves, so that everyone will feel free in his thinking, free in his labour, not coerced by others who buy him and enforce his future. Only then would be realized what he dreamt of, that a huge building is constructed in the country. This would not be done by clamour and applause, but by work, fruitful work which requires association, since “the lack of association anywhere, even within private capital, would blow the increase of production, and hinder the impetus of that increase. Everybody should deny himself, and everybody should know that no body would protect anybody else in the country”. Anyone listening to these words, which are over 40 years old, would think that he is attending a session if the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen early this year, in which the three major themes were: poverty eradication, productive employment and social integration.

The need for sustainability of efforts for economic development

For the economy to move towards the targets selected for it, long- and short-term programs were set in the beginning in order to reduce the burdens of life on citizens, through limiting the rise in prices which spread since the beginning of World War II, combating inflation whose rates flared up during the years immediately preceding the outbreak of the Revolution, raising the standard of living of the farmer and encouraging industry and trade and the investment of capital in manufacturing local raw materials. These were all activities necessary for enabling the people to participate in building up an economy that was monopolized by a few exploiting it for their own benefit. We have seen that he estimated the segment that was living decently by no more than three millions, while the remaining 19 millions of farmers were undressed, barefooted and poor. Therefore his first concern was to implement large reconstruction projects that improved the living of the people, especially the farmers.

When he was introducing the first national development plan when it was about to be launched, he spoke of the necessity of creating job opportunities for workers who are going to join the labour market during the first quinquennium of the sixties, reminding the audience that the government machinery was already full of employees, and cannot be asked to take more. He requested all, particularly those who had a share of education, to combine firmly in order to raise the level of living, and improve the conditions of the dispossessed groups, and to appreciate the honour of labour. He realized that education raised a social barrier against certain types of employment, and persuades many people to avoid serving in the village even the villagers themselves. Therefore he did not

consider the plan as a list of projects and investments to be executed, but essentially as a means of social direction towards appreciating labour in all its facets, taking into consideration that the priority in returns should go to coworkers in the village who did not achieve the type of life enjoyed by the educated who bear a special responsibility towards them.

While the national plan was responsible to double national income at the national level, it was not supposed to shoulder single-handed all the tasks required. There was a role for the organization which was constructed at that time, namely the National Union, in finding solutions for the problems which individuals could not solve on their own. He gave many examples for that, such as building healthy houses for the farmers, combating bilharzia, eradicating illiteracy and guidance. He mentioned also the construction of country roads in the village since the government is unable to construct roads everywhere. Further, the National Union in the village was responsible for innovating means to raise the level of income in the village after it had exhausted all its agricultural potentials, by searching for other sources such as rural industries. Thus national planning was not a means to let the State engross all the activities required for development and turning the people into dependents upon it; it was a motivator for popular action and a stimulator of the society's dynamism. Justice called for the participation of people to express their views of the standard of living they would like to attain, and in organizing the work needed to realize it.

When he looked around and found out that at the Revolution's outbreak the per capita income was LE 30 per annum, i.e., LE 2.5 per month per person, whereas it was LE 300 in Europe and LE 700 in the USA per annum, he became eager to double income twice, thrice and four times, which made him feel the huge size of the work required and the length of time needed. Therefore he was frank to his countrymen: "The leaders of the Revolution cannot realize overnight all that they wish for the happiness, advancement and raising its standard of living. I am not going to throw promises, since the future is long and tedious; we are doing our best to find a job for everybody, and establish an honourable life for every citizen that befits his humanity".

It was imperative that national income be raised to meet the increase in population and to raise the standard of living. But he requested everyone, rich or poor, to remember that whenever a worker works he would be serving his country, serving the business owner and providing himself with an opportunity to raise his standard and that of his children. This work cannot be provided by the government alone, but there is need for the association of all its citizens, and everybody has to work for this purpose in order to realize the objective of the Revolution which is to build up a country all whose citizens enjoy well-being. Thus everyone had an opportunity to work continuously for building up a country in which everyone enjoys welfare and feels that his condition improves years after another. He also asked to compensate for what had been lost during the preceding years, through the propagation of a sense of the dignity of the country, and the creation within the mind of every one the feeling that he is respectable and honourable. Work is not a disgrace, and working for the homeland and for the fellow citizens needs time. So long there occurs progress, one should remain optimistic, look at the future and plan for it. The government would be formulating five year plans to face these problems, but the people have a larger duty.

Since the world observes shrinkage in distances as a result of large scientific progress, especially in communications, the rightful and legitimate needs of man have increased but without an effective an appreciable increase in his capabilities to supply him with these rightful and legitimate needs. It is not possible to come closer to fully cope with the wide hopes of mankind without organized labour that calls for a national mobilization based on the free democratic will of nations, which imposes upon them through assent and awareness, indispensable sacrifices before the takeoff stage. In this there is a fundamental role for social equity.

The relationship between the political and social revolutions from the economic viewpoint

Political oppression was an impediment to equity in distribution, and it was also an obstacle to increasing production. Hence there was need for simultaneity of the political and social revolutions. The Revolution is economic and social, and it is at the same time a liberation revolution, which was meant to fight economic degeneration and reactionism, and to liberate the country from all types of servitude. Hence there was a need for the revolution of building and construction to go side by side

with the revolution for independence and liberation. But he always had in mind that imperialism will try by every means to interfere in the social revolution in order to frustrate its desirable outcomes. His anticipation was right, since imperialism seized the opportunity of the dispute on the Suez Canal and the High Dam to impose economic censor and economic pressure trying to create a gap between the people and the government. It froze Egypt's assets and foreign exchange reserves, cut off the supply of her needs from abroad, and attempted by all means to prevent her from selling the cotton crop. The Revolution, assisted by firm will and the belief of the people in it, could face the siege and penetrate it, and this was accomplished with the least sacrifices whose burdens were distributed among all segments of the population in an equitable manner. Not only did the economic censor fail, so also did the psychological war that aimed at raising doubt and confusion and initiating war between classes and unrest among people. Nasser went ahead with the social revolution against internal exploitation, both social and economic exploitation, and he did so, as in the political revolution, step by step, warning all the time that if imperialism could frustrate the social revolution it would be achieving political victories. The concern about social equity was the safeguard for the Revolution and the rock against which all attempts by imperialism, and its military, economic and psychological wars were defeated.

The plenitude of production required the provision of the necessary conditions for the better exploitation of Egypt's economic capabilities, whereas her production remained founded upon its old base, unable to provide a comfortable living except for a few, leaving the majority as poor farmers. A full exploitation of available resources could supply the masses with a higher and more dignified living. Therefore, besides the projects designed to improve the conditions of specific groups, there was need for increasing production as fast as possible, and as much as possible. In the inaugural speech of the office of the Liberation Agency in Dakahlia, early 1953, he declared that he inaugurates it for the sake of the homeland and its unity, for the sake of Egypt's present and future, for the sake of the sovereignty and freedom of the country, "not in the name of a higher authority, but in the name of the sufferings of a past that we will not allow to recur, and in the name of the social equity that we have to cooperate all of us to lay down, so that equality of production and distribution is realized, and we are able to avoid hunger and to rescue our society from disorder and humiliation". He thus delivered another lesson in the proper approach to development, that makes its foundation not the mere reparation of the economic structure and weaving people around it, producers and consumers, but by creating a societal building that is healthy and capable of going through the battles of development against its enemies at home and abroad. The way to do this was to go ahead with production, while realizing more full equity in the distribution of the national wealth in order that every Egyptian gets a fair share that befitting his humanity.

Therefore the "Permanent Council for the Development of National Production" together with a Services Council after a few months of the outbreak of the Revolution. The Council did not lose time in research and studies; it gathered all the promises that were previously made, and started to implement them. At the same time comprehensive planning of the social revolution and the economic revolution began. Article Seven of the Interim Constitution of January 16, 1956, stated that: *'The national economy should be organized according to plans drawn so as to conform with the principles of social equity, and aim at developing production and raising the standard of living'*. Thus, while the political revolution was going ahead to end the British occupation and eliminate political oppression so that the country becomes the property of its countrymen and their children to make them feel dignity and feel equality, the social revolution was at the time trying to build up a healthy economic and social base. Success in the political revolution was necessary in order to concentrate the combat into one front, that of building and construction, in order to achieve the objectives of the Revolution, and to let all citizens in the village and the city feel real happiness, real dignity and real welfare. He did realize that the land and facilities given to the farmer were below expectations; still he was quite happy to see that the farmer could, for the first time in his life, buy his family new clothes, and buy cattle and seeds and own a piece of land which he cultivates.

This caused him to assert the unity of the nation and its alertness as weapons that could enable the realization of the building up of the country in all fields, and close the wide gaps between classes inherited from the older times, which disassociated the fellow countrymen. This was important for peace, since "peace is not threatened only because of an external aggression, but peace relates to internal stability. If a few small countries lack internal stability, they would shake world peace". But

this required continuous work and increase in income so as to provide resources sufficient to enable raising the standard of all classes. That was the duty of all, and that was the path to be adopted. "With work and with unity we can build our homeland, so that we can boast with our country, by continuous work. Work needs planning and needs time and effort until its results mature".

The agricultural sector as an example of the two sides of social revolution

We have seen in Part One that the contrast between the removal of social injustice and the building of social equity led to a continuous movement between the two sides of the social revolution. Perhaps the clearest example of this movement is the treatment of ownership of agricultural land. At the beginning of the Revolution the main concern was the removal of the traces of the past and the elimination of feudalism. At the same a start was made to realize social equity, so the land regained from the feudalists was distributed among the farmers, and it thus it went back to its original owners. But those steps were considered by Nasser as the preliminary steps towards the society he desires and the society he wishes, and were by no means sufficient. It is true that "If we could not distribute land to all farmers, we still were able to liberate the mind and soul of the farmer, and he started to feel that this is his own homeland, that he should work for it and defend himself and this country". But the distribution of land taken from the feudalists was not sufficient to turn all wage-earners into owners. The elimination of feudalism was necessary to correct the errors suffered by the society in the past, and give back land to its true owners. But the transformation all labourers into owners remained a fixed target.

Therefore he announced that there should be an attempt at the same time to create new land to enable to provide other farmers with the land that makes them owners. The society he wished to see was one based upon equity, liberty and equality, a society free of exploitation and the domination of feudalism and of capital, in which everyone feels free under the flag of the Republic, and is provided an opportunity he can get. Therefore, he adopted projects for land reclamation, the New Valley, and over and above he went through fierce battles in order to build the High Dam that furnished water for lands which he could distribute to the landless. The Dam was to enable reclaiming 1.3 million feddans of new land, besides shifting 700 thousand feddans from basin to perennial irrigation. "Thus we can distribute these lands to farmers who had been deprived from ownership all their lives, and who inherited this deprivation from their fathers as a result of domination and exploitation, and we can construct the society, *society of owners* who base their ownership upon cooperation, amicability and fraternity, not upon exploitation, mastery and domination. This way we can turn a large number of families that are now working as labourers into owners, feeling that the land is their own and that their right in life has become a fact, and that they are no more serfs on land but its owners, and feel that their *sons have an opportunity equal to others*', that the future of their sons is a happy one, and that the Revolution that outbroke in order to realize political freedom could by no means survive unless by its side there were social equity. There is no freedom for the slave who works in the land, because he would be losing his will, and will be subject to the control of the feudalism or the landlord who commands him social then politically. The farmers' revolution had taken place in our country in order to feel masters in their land. They fought and struggled, but the rule at that time was representing the exploitation and oppression and mastery, feudalism was commanding the rule, and exploitation was commanding the rule. We eliminated feudalism, feudalists and exploiters. Having reached this stage of our dreams, we feel that we have a big duty of developing this society, a duty needed for the future of our sons. Therefore we have declared our society to be the democratic, socialist and cooperative society. Then it is for every one to look into the future and find out the wish he looks for".

This outlook required a harmony between the economic and social sides, that excludes the pure economic reasoning that makes the social dimension comes second. Pure economic reasoning would have called for selling all land reclaimed by the government to whoever pays the price in order to get back the cost of reclamation. But that would have bereft the process its social grounds, since offering the land for sale would mean that those who will buy it are those who are capable of paying the price, and these are not landless, but most likely owners of old land. Equity dictated that labourers should be turned into landlords, but not landlords into feudalists.

Liberation of production forces as a foundation for securing equity

Equity dictated that citizens should not maximize their wealth and incomes at the expense of the community. Further it was not acceptable to raise the level of one segment of the society in one shot and leave the rest where they stand, since this would lead to a contradiction among fellow citizens. Likewise it was erroneous to confine the economic activity of the country to limited areas that would not enable utilization of the country's capabilities. Nasser repeated once and again that what we had been taught in school that Egypt is an agrarian country and cannot become industrial was unacceptable, and that in order to get rid from social unjustness there is need for raising production, raising the level of living, and increasing investment in all sectors; hence there was need for ***liberating all productive resources*** in the country. The beginning was the liberation of land from the domination of feudalism, and liberation of capital from the domination of wicked capitalism which aimed at commanding the rule, and these were also requisites for social equity. After liberating all productive resources work should take place at a wide scale, since this is the only way to raise the standard of living, to raise the level of the population materially and culturally, and to eliminate social injustice. These forces were to be directed towards the construction of a modern agriculture, highly productive, to a strong modern industry, to new communications, and to a modern armed forces in order to protect this work. "If we have to see a country living in happiness and welfare, we should work not exploit .. there is a difference between work and exploitation. Work means increasing the income of this country, the income of Egypt; exploitation means taking advantage of fellow citizens, Egyptians. We have to work in order to realize within this country true social equity .. and this work is my obligation and that of everybody in Egypt".

Developing industry as a social necessity

Industrialization has a special importance with respect to social equity from four points:

- provision of basic needs, ♦
- creation of employment opportunities for those who have no chance in agriculture, ♦
- enabling the State to build up the socialist sector owned by the people, and ♦
- encouraging small savers to go for industrial investment rather than real estate. ♦

The role of the State in the industrial field, whether through the projects planned by the Permanent Council, or Egyptianized foreign interests which were run by the Economic Institution, or the projects implemented by the Military Industries Institution, or industrial programs and the General Authority for the Execution of the Five Years Program, was to ensure that the production activities, especially in large scale industries, would not be left to monopolies not to the domination of capital.

The smallness of arable areas was an obstacle to the rapid growth in national income, which made industry an urgent priority. But the State could not go single-handed into that, hence there was need for the combination, association and integration of all efforts, and their deployment for the purpose of increasing production and preserving the country's reserves. Otherwise distribution will not realize social equity, but a lower standard of living for all. National industry, which is free from exploitation is the activity capable of creating employment opportunities, or "running homes" according to the popular expression he frequently used, and raising wages. Its encouragement would save the country's reserves, so that they would not be spent unwisely on products that could be provided domestically. "Whenever we run new homes and paid wages, industry will grow; this is the circular relationship. Expanded wages makes it possible to have new production and new jobs".

The development with distribution approach

In order to realize the Revolution's objective of social equity, Nasser considered that, besides trying to increase production, there is need for a social plan for distribution, because if the increase in income to a small number, then it would be as if it did not take place. We should ensure that while income is increasing, the increase in income is distributed among all the population, and this obviously needs large efforts. To him there was no economic plan without an economic objective, otherwise the plan may lead to the adverse of what it is meant for, if attention is concentrated upon its economic side devoid of any social conception. It may then only increase the riches of the rich and the poverty of the poor, hence widen the gap between those who inherited wealth, and those who could

not inherit except poverty. This would do away with the only foundation of national stability which is social equity. Hence the first national plan was an economic and social plan, it was even sometimes called a socio/ economic plan. It had to be a tool of production and at the same time an instrument of justice: a tool of constructing new factories and an instrument of expanding people's participation in their ownership; a tool of reclaiming virgin land, and an instrument for creating new land owners; a tool for encouraging private capital, and an instrument in directing it away from exploitation and monopoly. It was clear in his mind that the country could not realize equity at the prevailing level of national income, and that it was necessary to raise that income several times. If the social revolution was to be strengthened then we should not stop at justice in distribution only, but we have to work and produce. At the same time we should eliminate all means of monopoly and opportunities of exploitation in order to ensure equity in distribution.

The problem he faced was that the systems applied in other societies were based on theories that do not fit development requirements in countries at the early stages of independence and development, and they held an unacceptable position as regards social equity. In his attempt to build up a model that fits the conditions in Arab countries he was actually building up a theoretical framework and at the same time testing its applicability, thus being ahead of scientific research that followed after over two decades. He considered that: "If we could organize our production so as to raise the standard of living and at the same time regulate distribution, avoiding monopolies and exploitation of certain classes, we would be approaching a welfare society .. If we annihilate the exploitation of the individual and realize social equity for everybody, we would have taken another step .. Each stage we reconsider what we achieved and the flaws we discover and start another stage. Of course the route would not be obvious; and I do not believe that somebody can bring a piece of paper and a pencil and start drawing, unless he is copying from another country; ***we are not copying*** .. We have no objection to observing what other countries did. But we have to be inspired by our society, ***inspired by our conditions, values and rising*** and our system should be consistent with these factors. We do not take a system from another country and copy it to the letter .. we have to have our clear objective .. to build up a democratic and cooperative society, free from political, economic and social exploitation, and work for that objective non-stop. Whenever an obstacles meets us we overcome it, and develop ourselves and our society according to circumstances .. These battles will continue, these revolutions will continue".

When the foreign enterprises were nationalized during the Canal battle, and the Economic Organization took over its management, he asserted that "we have to observe the society together with industry", so that industry moves together with society, and its output is distributed over the largest number of people. Equity of distribution is not confined to commodities or money incomes, it covers also all aspects of life. When he was speaking to the youth in the camp held by the popular yards and scouts in Alexandria he mentioned that summertime tourism was still confined to the able, therefore he asked the Supreme Council of Youth Care to provide a chance for all youth and children for having a possibility for rest, sport and recreation. This rule was the reason for the admittance at the early days of the Revolution of plain people to social clubs that were exclusive possession of the imperialists and the aristocrats. In other words, equity led him to an approach that combined production and distribution in a unique manner. The traditional approach starts, as mentioned before, by the principle of maximizing production, accepting the corresponding distribution. Then equity comes in to redistribute within the existing output, which is assumed to be the largest possible. His point of departure was equitable distribution; if the result was modest, then an attempt is made towards raising production while maintaining equity would be required and justified. In other words, ***equity for him did not come last as in the prevailing approach, it was equity of distribution first in order for equity in production and distribution be always realized.***

The issue of financial resources and the role of the State

The implication of that way of thinking is that the construction of a strong economy presumes two things: redirecting resources towards development, and active participation by people in investment. This called for adjusting the relationship between the government and the people, and the determination of the suitable role for each, as a sequence to social equity and as a basis for it. The government had to undertake the construction of infrastructure, both the physical and the social, necessary for accelerating economic development in a manner that is beneficial for all, without

forgoing the political revolution. While the Revolution was involved in a fierce struggle to achieve liberation in all facets of life, the social revolution was going ahead, and it was necessary to speed the building of the economic superstructure. Factories were being constructed, schools built and industrial development projects were being implemented. Although the proper measure for sound democratic life was the care provided for the individual and its accomplishment of services to him and supplying him with his various needs, he considered that "We have to move *step by step towards realization of social equity* among the members of the population. The nature of things requires each of us to take account of one another, and that we cooperate in advancing our country so that we increase the national income to the level that enables us to enjoy a decent life." This defined an accurate statement of the relationship between the role of the State and the role of the individual, based on mutual responsibility, not mutual exclusion or letting either transcend the other.

The efficiency of the approach adopted becomes evident from the fact that the tools he utilized to unfold the intricacies among political and economic dimensions, helped to solve issues in the other dimension of work, namely the provision of resources needed for a development that was imperative for the fulfillment of social equity. The objective of Law No 178 for Agrarian Reform in September 1952, that stipulated the transfer of land - over a certain limit - to small farmers and landless villagers, was not only to strengthen their ties with land and develop their sense of responsibility, and let the small holdings be a means to the establishment of a cooperative system that helps to raise the material and cultural of agriculturalists. In a statement to the Egyptian News Agency on August 31, 1954, he referred to a phenomenon which raised the concern of eminent world economists, which is the preoccupation of Egyptians with the procurement of agricultural land, which diverted savings away from its essential function, namely productive investment, and said: "Moreover, we see that it is better for the large amounts of money that were directed - for no good economic reason - toward the possession of the limited agricultural land, to be directed towards investment in other channels, which would be more useful for the country".

This meant that the people were not used to participate in industrial projects, but were inclined to buy land. Therefore, the government studied a number of projects and started to implement them hoping that people would follow suit. Thus the government studied 32 projects in 1957 on the basis that she will be financing them, since it was felt that people would hesitate to participate in them. The surprise was that the people furnished 100 % of the capital of all projects. That was actually a shift from land to industry. However the real estate mentality persisted, and savers shifted from the ownership of agricultural land to building houses rather than production, which hampered the process of development, especially as the greater part went to luxurious housing. Those who have got the means built deluxe houses and rented them for high rates, and did not care for ordinary houses that can be rented by middles and poor classes and workers. This represented a social exploitation and an economic exploitation, and called for redirecting the housing activity towards the housing needs of the population. There was an objective, and that was not to counter national capital, but to direct it towards the general service of the people and the society, and prevent the exploitation by capital of the society and the individuals. "This was a continuous and a permanent issue". To deal with that shift a law was issued to prohibit building without a special permit, with the purpose of encouraging people to invest in industrial projects, while the State undertook participation in the provision of housing suitable to the general income.

Social equity led him, hence, to make sure that gaps did not widen between groups, even at the modest income levels for which we have "to be grateful to God". Accordingly *saving* was considered as a virtue that should be adhered to not only in consumption, but also in investment itself: "Each pound we save in building a factory, whether with public or private capital, saves a pound to national wealth, to which we may add another pound and establish another factory, establish a new factory in which a hundred workers are employed, and we run a hundred homes .. Our objective today is to establish the largest number of factories, run the largest number of machines, and spare the largest amount of money to be spent in investment. Because when investment increases the standard of living should rise. There is a difference between establishing two factories, and have in them luxury, extravagance and squander, and building three factories with the same cost as the two".

The rise of production in general, and industry in particular, required finance in excess of the government's capabilities, especially as the government shouldered other responsibilities that could not be taken by the private sector. Therefore it was necessary that anybody who wanted to invest his

money should be encourages in order that the country would benefit as well as the workers. “You should know that the government does not possess enough resources to realize that industrial revival. Therefore, we have to encourage whoever wants to invest his money for the benefit of the country and for the benefit of the workers.” Hence the Constitution stated that private capital is free beside the public capital. But the entry of private capital in production activities could shift the economic power to it, and enable it to take over the authority within a decade or two, to use the people once more for its own interests, and bring back the possibilities of domination, monopoly and exploitation, and the absence of social equity. That is why he deemed it necessary that the govern should intervene and participate in order to prevent the recurrence of capitalist control, because the socialist sector is the one that keeps away the domination by the capitalist or private sector, thus avoiding the possibilities of degeneration in the future. He, therefore, called for applying what the Constitution stipulated with respect to encouraging savers to save, and gave n opportunity for the savers to participate through the Production Lawn.

Accordingly he denied that the State was attempting by intervening in industry to become the sole capitalist, since he considered nationalistic capitalism to be a necessity for the robustness of the economy, development and achievement of economic independence. The State interferes because it has a jurisdiction, and is responsible for the protection of the majority of the people from social exploitation and from the domination of a few capitalists as was the case in the past. He denied the desire to annihilate individualism, asserting faith in the individual, in his freedom, in his personality, and of his right to work and his right to act, so long as that was in line with the Constitution and peoples’ interests. What was refused was the opportunistic individualism and the exploitative individualism, which called for the adoption of the democratic, socialist and cooperative society, which aims at establishing a society free of political exploitation, and the encouragement of the nationalistic individualism which cooperates for the benefit of the people and the benefit of the society. That was clear in respect to the abolishment of feudalism, since the objective was not to transform the landowners into wage-earners, but rather the other way round, which added land reclamation to land reform. Those who own the money have an economic chance to exploit those who do not the way they like. Such a system had to be changed and had to be replaced by a society in which the nationalistic capitalism cooperates with the government and with the people, and in which all types of ownership cooperate for the common interest and not for exploitation.

He believed that in a democratic, socialist and cooperative society the State has jurisdiction over everything: over private ownership and public ownership, and the State was responsible for protecting the individual against anyone trying to exploit; it liberates from economic exploitation and from social exploitation. If the private capital has the freedom to participate in development, the public capital had to come in to balance the private capital and prevent it from taking over the rule at the same time. The State has the jurisdiction and responsibility to protect industry and to limit the importation of foreign manufactures. It is at the same time responsible for the protection of the consumer from the exploiting capitalist, and assure for the capitalist and the distributing trader a suitable margin of profit. It did not follow that he considered public sector to be absolutely flawless, but he expected the occurrence of deviations, since it was impossible to overcome personal impulses that may persuade those working in the public sector to realize quick gains or to increase his income and salary. Since about 70 % or more of the investments in the first development plan were public investments, there was a high likelihood that unavoidable deviations may take place. The only way was supervision, and that called him to widen the scope of the functions of the Audit Agency from pure fiscal supervision of government expenditure to a follow-up of the implementation of the plan and evaluation of the performance of public productive units. This turned it into a Central Audit Agency, whose function is to supervise implementation in the name of people who are the true beneficiaries. However the problem which was still required solving was precisising the relationship between the public and private sectors, and their relationship as the two wings of the business sector to the rest of the government agencies engaged in planning for them and in executing policies relating to them. The solution forwarded by the National Charter was that the public sector would lead in all sectors and bear the main responsibility in the national plan, with the private sector participating without exploitation.

Developing small units

It was evident that the economy is not solely composed of big units owned by feudalists and monopolies, since any economy in the world involves besides the big dominating units a large number of small units so fragile that they cannot evade the dominance of the large ones. The small farmer felt that he was subject to the control of the usurers and the control of the big landlords; he was unable to finance his activity since this would put him under the power of the usurers who supply him with credit at prohibitive interest; and he was unable to market his crop; he felt weak lost in the society, since the society worshipped individualism. It is well known that the economy of the small farmer is by definition a weak economy, unable to provide its owner with bread, nor to safeguard him from indebtedness. After eradication of feudalism and distribution of land among farmers, there was a need for searching for the means of transforming the economy of the small farmer, known for its weakness, into a strong economy.

This called for several measures to ensure the small farmer in the area of marketing, in the area of production and in the area of inputs. The way to do that was the construction of agricultural cooperatives all over the country. In addition to the cooperatives constructed for the beneficiaries from agrarian reform, other cooperatives were constructed to cover the rest of farmers who were small farmers unable to face the competition from the big, and who still deal with some usurers, or who were selling cotton at a price lower than that at which the large landowner sells. Those societies made of the small owners a big force with its own capita, which could obtain through the agricultural cooperative bank fertilizers and seeds, and market their crops for them, getting them a fair price. Members of those cooperatives maintain their ownership of their land and crops, but they have their productive activity organized, whether in ploughing, seeds, combating pests and other operations. This puts the small farmer at equal footing with big one with respect to productive capabilities, and allows him to participate in establishing a modern agriculture. The cooperatives were even a school in which the farmer received, for the first time in his life, lessons in how to participate in decision-making, having always been forced to receive orders and forbiddances. Therefore care was given to the rotation of boards of directors among members, so as to turn the wage-earners into owners and managers at the same time.

It was possible to apply similar rules to craftsmen industries, which remained important in the fields of production and the provision of employment opportunities. But the problem remained with respect to the limits that had to be drawn between the small and the exploitative units in the sectors of industry and services. The first year of the first plan indicated that the acceleration of the public sector activity leads to the expansion of the profits of units working in the contracting business and the construction sector and its inputs, and that the large size of capital and thence profits had led to the transformation of the public investments owned by the people into private profits which were not ploughed back into investment, but leaked outside the national economy. Therefore, the issue that initiated the series of nationalizations during the sixties, was where to stop the private capital at bounds beyond which it turns into an embezzlement of the national economy's capacities and weakening development.

Part Three - Building Up the Individual and Society

Introduction

The lesson which Nasser drew out of the experience of the 1919 Revolution was that the unity of the people during it, turned into party disparities, which became a liability that diverted the Revolution away from its true objectives. He believed accordingly that whatever had been achieved by the 23rd July Revolution could fade away unless there was a sound society that protected those achievements and defend, and which does not look at them as a spectator but participate in them and adds to them. Therefore, he was keen about many things, in particular the liberation of the individual, hence enabling him to effectively participate in the construction of a proper society based upon the alliance among its members, and the avoidance of class struggle, and was to be achieved through social equity. This equity was what led him, as mentioned above, to improve the societal organization, thus hitting straight into the heart of the development process. Besides the foundations and principles

he considered necessary in order to raise the conditions of the individual and society, he also gave attention to the building up of the relevant institutional frameworks, We shall consider the activities he attended to as follows:

- Building up of the individual. ♦
- The issue of education. ♦
- Rectification of the social infrastructure. ♦
- Cooperation. ♦
- Insurance. ♦
- Redressing social relationships. ♦
- Building up of the society. ♦
- Arab nationalism. ♦

It may be observed that we did not stop at moving gradually from the building up of the individual up to the building up of the society; we found it necessary to consider his position as regards Arab nationalism since it had its implications for the movement of Arab Unity.

Building up of the individual

Early in 1953, just a few months after the outbreak of the 23rd July Revolution, Nasser said: “*We do not only want a construction advancement or an industrial or military one, we want a human advancement*”. This statement was about 40 years ahead of the recent attention paid by the UNDP to human development ! He used to repeat that the building up of factories is easy, the building up of bridges is easy, the building up of dams is easy; but the building up of human beings is quite difficult, however it is at the same time a must: “When we claim that this Revolution had been initiated to save us from political oppression, we mean that it was meant also to realize all over the country social equity. This Revolution should be one of construction. By that I do not mean the building of factories only, but I also mean the building up of the individuals and the moral spirit so that we can go forward. If the Revolution moves in the route of construction, then this means that it had matured and is going its way assisted by the moral spirit of the people”. Thus the nation is a group of people; and as much as these feel, respond and hold in their hearts and souls, the nation can realize strength, dignity, firmness or status, and ability to proceed towards construction, magnificent construction. The major objective is that everyone should be free in order to be able to enjoy his freedom in building up the desirable society. This freedom includes liberation from class discrimination and from all kinds of aristocracy inherited from the past. Freedom is worthless unless the individual is liberated and is ensured about his future and income, so that he can express his opinion freely. On the other hand, the individual, whatever his status, can affect the whole society and the whole country. If he does good, his impact on the country will be good. The important thing is that he be confident of himself and confident of his country, and has a pleasure in serving the community, being sure that the society will pay him back fairly, thus taking us back to social equity. That is why he called for having everywhere, in every village and every district, the leaders who develop the society.

In order for the foundations of political democracy to be realized, there was need for social democracy that provide three guarantees for the individual: to be free from all forms of exploitation; to have an equal opportunity of getting a fair share of national wealth; and to get rid of all worries that threatens his sense of peace in the future. All these can never materialize under a class dictatorship, whatever the class is, hence the need for a society that ensures social equality, composed of the working forces of the people which are, the farmers, the workers, the soldiers, the intellectuals and the nationalistic capitalism. To ensure the liberation of the individual, a number of projects had to be executed to repair the conditions of those who suffer so many hardships that may lead them to lose confidence in their homeland, even though one may think that they are rich because they act with self-respect. Those received special attention to supply them with basic needs, not out of pity and charity and benevolence, but according to fraternity among countrymen, and through decreasing class differentials, and providing assistance to the vulnerable among them. The projects ranged from the provision of living requirements, such as housing and clothing, to supporting them by means of insurance systems which will be considered later.

The issue of education

We have shown in the section dealing with the concept of social equity that Nasser realized that the full political objectives and full social objectives could not be achieved unless the individual secured all opportunities, owing to his belief in the individual and that the country cannot be strong unless the individual had been strong. The basis of the strength of the homeland and its welfare lies in supplying education to all its citizens. He was preoccupied with education from two angles, both relate to social equity. The first relates to the content of education, and the second is how far the masses were denied access to it. He always reminded of how education was fought, and efforts made to deny access to it by the people, and how education was shifted from benefiting the country to the opposite direction that raised confusion. One of his worries was that since the days of General Allenby, education was formulated so as to emphasize making Egypt a farmland for Britain, while at the same time ignoring the requisites of developing the countryside and the conditions of its inhabitants, and to preach the surrender to imperial powers and to autocracy, asserting class discrimination and deepening the gap between the intellectuals and the rest of their countrymen through propagating decayed social values.

The phrases he used in this connection were quite expressive. He said once: "I used to see these schools during my trips, and to feel that there was in each village an awakening, and in each town a force discharged. These schools are not for education only, they are also a source of power. There will be no power unless education has been defused everywhere in the country. Education is an objective of the Revolution in order to insure the future of the homeland". Hence one of the early achievements he was proud of was what he labeled "*the education revolution*". In spite of the efforts and costs involved he did not hesitate to build up the Organization of School Buildings, which he jumped with the building of schools from less than four a year to 370 in the second year of the Revolution. Perhaps one of the most symbolic descriptions which he forwarded to express the yield of education is the one he presented during the inauguration of one of those schools: "We used in the past to ask for bonuses and special salary scales for particular groups of people, that were satisfied whenever conditions permitted. But these schools are nothing but social services which benefit everybody. If we transform them into material values, we should find out that these schools are a bonus to every individual, to every worker and every farmer, equal for all".

His sense of the nature of changes that the world was witnessing led him to draw attention to the fact the nations that clashed with the armies of the invaders and colonialists in their struggle for freedom in the past, shall face a challenge more serious to their freedom from army invasion, namely monopoly of knowledge. *Knowledge is the route to true freedom*, and ignorance is the darkest form of servitude, its constraints and chains are the heaviest constraints and chains. "World was subdivided in the past into two: conquering nations, and conquered and defeated nations. Today we observe a new kind of subdivision: nations that know and nations that do not. Power will be the share of those who know, while freedom for those who do not will be a void word, implying no value and no depth. It is thus my conviction that the freedom necessary for the formation of a democratic society should be based upon the basis of knowledge; in fact the nature of the present era cannot allow it to exist otherwise". Those words were an early warning of the recognition of the significance of the change that befell the world, and an introduction to what we consider in our present language as international variables.

Education in the last analysis is a right and a duty for every citizen, and it is a right for the homeland vis-à-vis the individuals and a duty it has fulfill for them. Accordingly he started by defining a preliminary target of the educational policy to provide equal opportunities for all countrymen to have a share of free primary education, by means of a program which was expected to take around eight years, while asserting that this stage represents the level of subsistence with regard to the spiritual life of any nation. The second objective of that program was to give an equal opportunity to the clever from among those who finished the primary stage to complete the preparatory and secondary stages free of charge, within the limits defined by the needs of the country and the ability of the State to cover the cost, taking into consideration the weight that should be given to the technical education according to the production policy. The objective of higher education was defined as the graduation of efficient leaders through the upgrading of its level; its fees, already low, were further reduced to one-third, thus not covering one-tenth of its actual cost. Still a free-of-charge opportunity was given to the clever students whose social conditions called for that. At the same time

awards were given to bright students. Those were the early steps of the Revolution towards realizing equality of opportunities in all stages of education, while taking into consideration the limited resources available to the State.

After ten years from the outbreak of the Revolution he could announce free education in all schools, universities and higher institutes, after a series of reductions in fees, with the purpose of providing an opportunity for education for everybody, without giving anyone an advantage on the basis of capability to pay fees, the only advantage was the effort and its results. He thus wanted the whole new generation to benefit from the socialist society which is free from political and social exploitation. Education is an essential right according to the principle of equality of opportunity. Further it is a new capacity which provides the country with huge human capabilities which conditions prevented from being educated, hence denied them the possibilities of strengthening the national working forces. There are millions of the sons and daughters of farmers and workers, and these are human elements full of rich human and cultural potentials, but their conditions prevented them from receiving education, and those bottlenecks are being removed so that they could now advance. This opinion of his was in line with the sound development thinking which went beyond the prevailing belief that the returns on education go to the individual who gets it, and which considered it as basis for the advancement of the society. Thus the responsibility for getting education shifted from the individual as the single beneficiary to the society as the true beneficiary.

Rectification of the social infrastructure

Nasser considered that the true measure of sound democratic life is that the State pays attention to the individual and forward to him with the services he wants and satisfy his various needs. This may be considered as an early statement of the objective which the ILO started to advocate in the late sixties, which was adopted by the Latin American schools of development, and which was accepted by many others concerned with development, including the IBRD (under the leadership of McNamara), namely the “*fulfillment of basic needs*” of the masses. When underdevelopment is acute and income is quite low, the problem that faces the society would not only be the weakness of the productive basis; the more serious problem is the narrowness and distortion of the social infrastructure, since the privileged classes capture the few services that the society can produce, being the only ones capable of paying the price for those services. Any talk of development would become useless so long as there did not occur a rise in public services to avail them to all citizens irrespective of their position on the income ladder, and irrespective of the population and social groups to which they belong. In other words development cannot be right unless there is equity in the provision of public services, and making them available to all population groups whatever the level of their income.

Accordingly a *Supreme Council for Services* was constructed on October 17, 1953m and the second article of the Law establishing it stipulated that its functions would include: “the study of general policy and drawing the basic outlines for education, health, construction and social affairs, observing their coordination and tying them together in a manner that realizes social advancement, and conforms with the country’s high policy”. This way the first stones were laid for process of national planning and drafting long-range programs, as the Council moved towards social planning by drawing a ten-year comprehensive plan. In doing that the requirements for efficiency in the social services became evident. This called for a comprehensive survey of the state of services, their distribution over the various locations in the republic, which led to the preparation of what was known is the “*Services Atlas*”, in order to be able to determine targets that would remove geographical disparities in which the rural areas were victimized. Accordingly the function of the State changed from submitting to the loud-voiced and those who acquired distinguished economic and political powers, to directing the activity according to a set of objectives that realize equity among the citizens of the same country.

This led to realizing a phenomenon which was so far out of sight, namely that the size of work which this comprehensive outlook depicted proved to be quite costly according to cost rates used previously in estimating costs within the limited sizes that used to be included in the budget. Thus called for reconsideration of two aspects: the first was the manner by which services institutions were built, which were constructed separately according to the sphere of activity; the second was the possibility of revising the design of structures in a way that reduces costs, thus raising the efficiency

of utilizing the limited resources available, which were exposed to exhaustion when subjected to the powers of a market controlled by exploitative capitalism. The solution that helped to precipitate the advancement of services was twofold: Its first component was the construction of *collective units* that combined each institutions of several services, and every unit served about 15 thousand inhabitants, which helped to conduct services to all villages and districts whose names were absent from the maps of public services so far. The second was developing a design of the structures that would reduce the cost of construction to about one third or less in some cases; this meant that the allocations could multiply the results more than three times.

The outcome was not confined to raising the efficiency of investments and the improvement of the design of constructions to make them fit the local environments of the locations where the units were established. The existence of an agency concerned with conveying services to all parts of the country led to organized action aiming at raising performance. Besides training the operators in the collective units, the Council managed to conclude agreements with the parties concerned with the supply requirements, both local and external, to secure their delivery in ample quantities and suitable specifications, at the appropriate prices and timing. However one of the major gains that were achieved was inviting the people to participate in the institutions supervising those units, thus turning them into an instrument of educating the people in democratic practices, and laid the seeds of a system which could later develop into a full-fledged system of local administration. That was the route Nasser considered as leading to a democratic society, that mobilizes people starting from down the social ladder in order to build a country to which they belong, and not simply giving votes to parties that fight for authority and rule.

Justice called also for directing the properties confiscated from the exploitative groups, whether the members of Mohamed Ali family or by verdict of the Revolution Court for the benefit of people who suffered for long from exploitation. The proceeds were included in the budget for service programs formulated by the Council, which was symbolic of returning rights back to their owners, which was the same logic that governed agrarian reform. The concept of equity was extended to specific groups, in addition to arrangements made for them which be indicated later. Thus it was found that the individual labour contract did not enforce the business owner to cover medical expenses unless the size of the enterprise was 50 workers or over, which deprived the majority of workers and their families from the right to health care. The Services Council decided to construct hospitals for the treatment of workers, starting by Cairo and Alexandria; it also subsidized the Society of Hospitals and Treatment of Government Employees, constructed in 1947, and constructed a hospital in Cairo for the treatment of the employees and their families.

Action was not limited to the construction of services institutions and conveying them to all parts of the country and to all groups, especially the deprived and the limited-income groups, it was also extended to projects which were required for providing a proper life. Thus speaking to the league of the fellows of Abnoub (from Upper Egypt) on may 17, 1954, at a time when political battles, both domestic and external were flaring, he said: "Let it be known that we are trying to build in this country a social revolution in order to realize equity among citizens. We try to exterminate feudalism and monopoly, and implement reform projects all over the country. The government allocated 17 million pounds for the provision of drinking water to all regions on a revolutionary basis; we do not work for one city and not for the other as was the case. We also prepare a project in three years to electrify the whole of Upper Egypt on the basis of electricity generated from the Aswan Dam". Thus the concept of equity and equality did not leave him for a moment, whether in choosing projects or in directing them towards the welfare of the whole country.

Cooperation

Cooperation represented a very important value to Nasser, either in its general meaning of combining efforts, or in the precise meaning of the term. The Revolution started by the cooperation of individuals for the sake of the country; they cooperated to do good and to help their country and for her interest. "I know that cooperation is big word .. a word that has magnificent meaning". The first application of cooperation in its precise meaning was related to the distribution of agrarian reform land. Therefore he requested the cooperative societies that were constructed for that purpose to prove their success in order to show the whole world that we have succeeded and that the farmer is not inferior to any other citizen; he simply needs to cooperate with his fellow farmer. At the same time he

asked every one to acquire the spirit of cooperation by feeling that whatever he owns will not yield good to him only, but will benefit the community; and when the community benefits then the benefit will go back to the individual: "this is the new spirit that should govern us".

When he realized the weakness of the economy of the small farmer, he choose cooperation in order to support his capabilities in the manner previously indicated. But the functions of the cooperatives were not limited, in his view, to production matters; he called for their extension to social insurances to face catastrophe or to deal with crises to which members may be exposed. He did not remain satisfied with leaving matters to the traditions of the countryside which were not set by law but called for association among people. He wanted to organize the matter since the society was advancing towards modernization, and it was probable that when the new civil life prevails the society would gradually give up old traditions. Therefore it was necessary to set new traditions and new systems that combine the farmers in all villages into cooperative societies. These societies should undertake the development of the village and raise the income of the village. That reflected a clear understanding of the societal nature of the process of development. The societies had also an important role in the settlement of families which were to be moved from the overcrowded areas to the new reclaimed land which will be distributed to those families, as a part of a program to face the increase in population and the reduction of crowdedness in the old valley. Cooperatives could assist the farmer in feeling that he is a member of the new society to which he moves.

Cooperation was the effective instrument of facing exploitation and that was not confined to agriculture; it was also required for rural industries, and to all craftsmen, so that they could be combined in a strong system that rescues them from exploitation by middlemen, and assist crafts that were about to vanish, and that lack finance because they are not capable of resisting competition from big industry. Thus the cooperative system spread in many areas: household cooperatives, school cooperatives, fishermen cooperatives, and so on. And when he observed the rush for cooperatives for house construction he called for giving priority to consumers cooperatives being the means for annihilating exploitation, and stopping the command from which everybody was suffering. The organization of trade on a cooperative basis not exploitative was necessary in order to prevent the emergence of big monopolies, and for the trader not to exploit and monopolize in order to realize his own interest and neglect the interest of the community. Therefore he called for a *cooperative society* in which everybody cooperates to get rid of exploitation, from authority and from command, especially the vulnerable who do not have enough means to ensure themselves. Cooperation in general would purify the society from evils and corruption from which people suffered. It is apt to safeguard the society from being exposed to dangers of exploitation once more, hence it is the guarantee for a continuous social equity.

Insurance

His firm commitment to social equity was due to his eagerness that anybody, however small in status, would be threatened in his living, or exploited by a fellow human being. Therefore he was keen about ensuring every member of the society about his day and morrow. When insurance was extended to workers besides government employees, he asserted his determination that insurance would cover all the working class in the country. He went on saying: "If we want to have social insurance for all Or if we want social equity, we should declare that the basis for this is work, and continuous and uninterrupted work. I hope that we expand this sector to cover farmers also through cooperative societies. The farmers work, and we know that they work continuously, but they had been always deprived from all benefits."

This interconnection between insurance and social equity led him to regard the country as a single entity, and to treat its people as brothers. He started insurance against complete disability, old-age and death in the mid-fifties for a segment of workers in industry and trade, on the assumption that all of them would be covered at the beginning of the sixties, so that they would be further insured against work accidents and profession diseases, and that to be followed by health insurance for workers and their families. He further requested that the scope be extended to cover all workers, farmers and employees in the country. Everybody should be sure that there will an insurance for his future, for his children and for his family, since this will be a stimulation to work. If one feels that there will be insurance to his future in old age, disability, disease, ..etc., he would work harder remaining assured about his future and free of worries. He added that he would wish everybody in the country to be a

worker so that he gets insurance, and at the same time contribute to the doubling of national income in ten years or less, so that they compensate the days and years that were lost, and counterweigh the dark ages that reigned for a long time. The issue was not a simple economic target he aimed at, but was a society that furnished its members with security coupled with high income.

While insurance is a right for everyone, it is also a duty in which everybody has to contribute however small his status is, since nobody should feel small, but is valuable, and everybody can affect the society to which he belongs. Insurance does not mean encouragement to waste or negligence, since every one who saves a part of his earnings would be contributing to the building of the country, and any one who is extravagant in his money or even in his health, would be a stumbling factor in the building up of the country, and would be an element of retardation of what members of the society should enjoy. While the responsible agencies are formulating laws for social insurance for individuals, every individual should for himself lay down rules of social insurance for health, expenditure and living, and safeguard himself against any circumstance he might be exposed to, since this will affect all and the future of all.

“We have today, in order to realize the socialist, democratic and cooperative society, to realize also social services and social insurance. Of course we cannot realize these social services and social insurance at once. Of course we increase; every time we work and produce we can work to increase our income, thus be able to provide services. I wish to *give a pension to everyone* in this country and to each family which loses its bread-earner. We have started that in the labour law, but this requires that we be much richer than at present .. Our income is about 40 pounds, we want this after ten years to be 80, after another five years, i.e., fifteen years this 80 would be, if God permits, 160, and we can catch up with those who preceded us and make good the years that passed”.

Redressing social relationships

In his introduction to the book ‘*Between Two Revolutions*’ (March 31, 1955) Nasser said: “And the spirit of the Egyptian Revolution - 23rd July Revolution - is illustrated in the creation of a new Egyptian awareness that believes in democratic socialism as a style and as a meaning, so that social equity prevails and the foundations of the society are erected on a sound basis, hence there will be no struggle between classes, no group gets rich at the expense of another, no minority outweighs the majority, and no body soaks up the blood of somebody else. The country will be actively directed in a unified manner towards raising the standard of living of the population and the provision of a decent life for every citizen”. For this to take place there is a necessity for liberating the individual, and redressing the relationships among all groups. Thus the relationship between the feudalism and the farmer was not proper, since the farmer who works for the feudalism feels that he is under his mercy, since he can dismiss him and his children whenever he wishes, therefore he does not feel secure. The freedom of the farmer cannot materialize so long he remained threatened in his living; hence the need for the implementation of agrarian reform to realize dignity and self-respect for the majority, who are the farmers.

He felt quite happy to see the country being owned by everyone, with no discrimination between the big and the small, or difference between the strong and the weak; all have a country in common, the same land, drinking from the same Nile, sheltered by the same sky. All are brothers in their homeland, have similar opportunities, so that they feel equality and dignity. Therefore it was necessary to abolish the attempts of imperialism to create a class of intellectuals and another who are not. He found in the unifying system, through the National Union, and later the Socialist Union a means to this end since it can make everybody sense the honour of work, and it can convince everybody that work is an honour. Building up the country cannot be achieved by aristocracy or by detachment; it has to be built by means of the “bag and the container”. Therefore when the socialist laws were issued he was anxious to indicate that they were not meant as a step against private capital or a specific class, but was meant to eradicate exploitation.

But the issue was not the nationalization acts; it included the change between capital and labour, since both were social functions. It was natural that the individual labour contract should be reviewed in order to ensure the future of the workers and raise their level to an honourable level befitting the dignity of the Egyptian human being. But the solitary control by capital of management was considered as a social injustice, since it equated the worker to the machine. The solution of this social

contradiction was the sharing between labour and capital of management, and two seats were allotted to workers out of seven in the boards of directors, and later four out of nine. There was another social injustice arising from the fact that labour which participated with capital in production obtained a small share in the returns that mostly go as profits to the owner of capital.. Out of industrial income, 32 % went to labour and 68 % to business owners, and the worker's income hardly provided subsistence needs. At this juncture he recalls a visit to a factory in Kom Ombo where he saw the workers having as lunch a loaf of "sun bread" and onions, and states that he wishes the day comes where none of his countrymen were obliged to have such a meal. He also recalls the villages in Syria where he saw people drinking soiled water from the drains. The first national plan was bound to worsen the distribution due to the intensification of reliance on modern machines, which would have brought down wages to 28 %. Social equity requested that production be considered as a process in which the worker participates by a labour for which he gets a wage, and the capital contributes a capital for which he deserves interest; what is in excess of these has to be considered as a right to be shared by both. Therefore it was decided that one-fourth of the profits should go to workers. Then comes public ownership to retrieve the profits earned by public capital for the benefit of the workers. But in spite of the rapid rates growth selected as targets, it was not possible to absorb all the labour force. Therefore it was decided that daily working hours be reduced from eight to seven hours without reducing wages. This was considered to lead to employ a larger number of workers, and to increase production. Thus workers would be advancing towards the objectives which had been realized by labour movements everywhere in the world, and this he considered to be an invaluable moral gain.

His care for workers led him to yield to their requests, but also prevented him for submitting to them in one shot while ignoring business owners. For this would discourage business men from investment which leads to smaller job opportunities. The State is concerned with the farmer and worker, the landowner and the capitalist, and it acts for the good of all, without backing a group against another, or favouring anybody. It acts as arbiter among all, being fair to each and tries to establish strong cooperation among all those groups: "freedom for all, equality for all, and equity for all". All freedoms should be in harmony, and no class gets a higher weight over the others. Accordingly he differentiated between freedom and disorder: The freedom of the business owner begins at the limit of the worker's freedom, and the latter starts at the end of the former. For the first time a government is in power that protects the worker within the boundaries of the care for the worker's right, having as a guiding principle the coordination between the worker and the business owner. Any one of them exceeding his limits would be destroying the alliance that is the basis of glory of Egypt. Accordingly his happiness was real when he saw the hopes of the Revolution beginning to materialize in that the worker and the business owner sit together, since both believed in each other. This way they both have the same thinking and work for the same objective which is serving Egypt, and Egypt only. It was not admissible to give prominence to the requests of one class over those of another, or empowering one class over another, otherwise its social level exceeds that of others. The important thing is to solve the general problem not the specific. This was the approach that led to the principle of coexistence between classes, and the need for dissolving the differences between them, asserting what we observed before that he was not biased for a given class at the expense of the other.

Social equity asserted that the working class should get the various services according to the nature of every sector. Thus in agriculture the target was to increase production while distributing it among the largest number of persons, and the spread of cooperative in all the rural areas of the UAR, so that they would provide all sorts of services, including insurance against catastrophes. In industry priority was given to the production of basic consumption needs of the people, then moving to the basic and engineering industries in order to economize in production costs so as to secure resources for increasing production and creating new job opportunities. At the same time it was necessary to control prices, which called for ending monopoly in trade, the intervention of the government, and defining reasonable profit margins for domestic and imported products, while encouraging consumers cooperatives. That was how he called for considering each sector separately and innovating methods that ensure the distribution of its output among all citizens at a cost that could be born by all. The system based on coalition was to transplant brotherhood, assemble all and eradicate any seeds sown by the imperialist in the Arab land and among citizens. When the nation chose freedom, it was certain that it would lead to social equity.

At the outset, the Revolution suffered from a drop in resources as a result of the flight of some LE 125 million following the incidents of January, 26, 1952. No class was made to bear the burden of compensating those resources alone, but equality was observed, without discrimination between the rich and the poor. The progressive taxes were raised for the upper strata, the inheritance tax was raised, so did the customs duties on luxuries consumed by the rich; whereas the government employees shared through restricting the increase in their salaries. When the gap between classes was narrowed by means limiting the size of ownership, the objective was not only to eradicate social injustices, but there was also the desire to generate the capital needed for the implementation of projects that would invoke prosperity, boom and the rise in the standard of living. As mentioned before one of the objectives was to shift savings to industry, so that the owner of capital should shift from an exploiting feudalism to a saver and industrial investor. Thus the regime which prevailed during the fifties was a capitalist system regulated by the State by means of laws aiming at catering for a better life for all. Hence there was need for reorganizing the society in a manner that prevents the deterioration of social relationships back to the corruption that prevailed before the Revolution. At the same time, the commitment of the State to accelerating development while observing social equity and avoiding drifting back to exploitation, required the adoption of social controls through choosing a suitable formula for the society. The socialist (democratic and cooperative) formula was considered to remove differences among classes. But that did not mean removing differences among individuals, so wage had to be determined according to efficiency, experience and productivity, but progressive taxes took care of the excessiveness in levels of income; all of this within the framework of preventing the exploitation of one class by another, while the State remains the property of all.

Building up the society

In answer to a question by the correspondent of the *Christian Science Monitor*, on February 2, 1952, about the important actions of which the Revolution could be proud of realizing for Modern Egypt, Nasser answered: "It is easy to build up dams, erect reservoirs or construct factories, but the real difficulty is the building up of individuals and families, hence the nation. I believe that the best thing we realized is the confidence our people feel in their souls, which they feel in his appreciation of their country, and in the appreciation of the future. I realized that we have realized this great object in 1956 during the aggression on Egypt. Our people proved to be greater than the events, and their confidence in themselves everywhere and confidence in the future were beyond any doubt". This belief led him to say: "All actions by the Revolution may not survive, unless there is a sound society that protects those actions, is anxious about them, and defends them, not watching them as spectator, but participates in them and adds to them". The Revolution did not belong to a class in particular, but belonged to the whole nation with all its classes. Accordingly there was need for the formation of a society that abolishes opportunism, and in which the worker cooperates with the business owner, the farmer cooperates with his colleague in his land, in order to build up the country politically, economically and socially.

The desired society is one in which differences between classes disappear, thus is capable of realizing democracy, meaning by that social and political democracy, the democracy of work and non-dependence in which every individual feels his freedom and his ability to express his opinion. Thus the democracy he conceived of was to find a job for everyone, and the rule to the majority not as in the past to a minority which manage dictatorially the majority to collect money and wealth and hold control and authority. The formula he selected for the society that maintains social relationships in that manner was the one that helps to put together the people's efforts and leads the nation towards the realization of the objectives of the Revolution and avoiding the disasters of antagonism. This led to the selection of the system based on a national front as a basis for reconstructing the socio/economic system in a manner that prevents semi-legal organizations for the proponents of imperialism that hinder the performance of work required for the fulfillment of the great objectives of the Revolution.. That was the motive for constructing the National Union in which all the good elements are represented. i.e., all the working elements and all the constructive forces in the country. The cooperative formula was emphasized as against the exploitative one, the difference between the two being quite big. "In the exploitative society, if you want to raise your income from LE 50 to one hundred you do not revert to work, you revert to deceit; but in the cooperative society if you want to raise your income you revert to work, not to deceit; you raise the volume of your work, hence your income increases. This is the society I wish for our country".

It was not sufficient to reconstruct the society; there was need for emphasizing the values in which its members, i.e., the citizens, believe., according to the ideals he personally believed in. In the ceremony held for the handing over ownership deeds for popular houses to the inhabitants of Zeitoun district in Cairo, during the second anniversary of the Revolution he said: "I was hoping to possess a piece of land upon which I construct a house; this is why I feel today how happy you are .. I feel the happiness you and your children feel when they enjoy this healthy land and clean air .. There are fellows to us who have got families but do not enjoy having houses or electricity, nor do they enjoy potable water; they are still live in houses built by mud, and drink water with mud. Hence we have to put our hands together in order let them feel the happiness you feel. Each of us has to compare between himself and his brother who did not get a similar share of happiness, and who could not obtain any means of joy. Our objective is to realize happiness and satisfaction and decent life for the 22 million members of our nation. We want to construct schools that take all children in the country. I want to build houses for everyone in this country, but this objective cannot be attained overnight. Therefore we have to join together, work hard and have patience. We have to proceed forward having faith in our country, wishing to our colleagues what we wish for ourselves, and hoping for our nation what we hope for ourselves. This way endearment prevails and happiness predominates. If the spirit of endearment prevails between the individual and the community, happiness will predominate all members of the country, and we could then say that we have realized for our homeland the big hope that our country becomes strong and living in happiness and prosperity". There was need for shaping the society and to guarantee for the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants the needs they were deprived from. The minority was always enjoying life, while the majority were working as hired labour in land without getting the value of their labour, since there was the minority taking over their output. Therefore there was need for a system to replace the exploitative and monopolistic economic system, in which everyone thinks of himself only; a democratic, socialist and cooperative economic system for the benefit of the majority of people, not for the benefit of a small group that exploits, that monopolizes and that gains huge profits at the expense of the people. No class or section of the society should be dominated by another class or section, and we should get rid of the exploitation of human beings, of exploitation of one part of the society to another, and the exploitation of minority to the majority in the society. Differences between classes should be reduced, and the national economy should be organized according to a plan drawn for the interests of the people not a few persons.

if the rules of social justice were observed, it would be possible to coordinate the public social activity undertaken by the State, and the private activity carried out by individuals in a manner that does not damage the interests of the society, through ensuring that capital is utilized for the sake of the national economy, being the people's economy, and not for the benefit of persons at the expense of the people. Cooperation should be encouraged so that cooperation supplants individualism which had taken hold of the country and of the citizens. Social insurance would be expanded and solidarity would be the base of the society. The objective is to eradicate exploitation, and exterminate individualism and opportunism, and not the establishment of a state capitalism. The State participates with people, and at the same time has sovereignty. This sovereignty presumes the protection of small capitalists and small savers. She would not leave small savers to become victims of the exploiters, to be exploited or be utilized for realizing the personal interests of a given minority or of a few persons. Private capital remains free as long as it acts for the benefit of the people and for the general interest of the people. At the same time the State intervenes, not for annihilation or liquidation of capitalism, but to supervise it. Nationalistic capital is a necessity at this pint of time for the sake of development of the national economy, provided it does not interfere in the rule, and does not overtake the rule to exploit the majority of the people.

He realized that the attempt to build a society is similar to an attempt to change nature. There was need for removal of high mountains of cumulations acrimonious mountains of centuries of oppression, imperialism and corruption, and bypassing the barriers of the time lost up till now and that made us far behind the epoch of renaissance, and is about to deprive us of the capability of the new era, that of the atom and of the space.

His belief was that social equity was the basis of the society, and that its realization will not permit the appearance of reactionary from among the people, or anyone who works for imperialism and for the interests of imperialism. This, in his view, was sufficient for laying the foundations of the modern society, the new society, the strong society that will not permit the past to come back again.

The society will get rid of that small group of people who dominated it and dictated its fate and the lives of its people, that group of reactionists, the exploiters, the opportunists and the proponents of imperialism, who would not hesitate in selling Egypt and its nation in order to realize a personal ambition or a special interest. All would work in association with each other for the whole, for the sake of the community. An objective was determined, namely the democratic, socialist and cooperative society for the realization of which all should work together, so that they can get rid of economic exploitation, political exploitation and social exploitation. It is a society in which class differences get small, and in which each individual perceives his rights and accomplishes his duties, a society free of exploitation and reactionism that does not serve a foreign country, but for Egypt, nobody in it works for a foreign country, but all work for the sake of Egypt.

But when the experience was reviewed during the preparation of the Charter two things were observed:

- ◆ The peaceful treatment of reactionism led to its infiltration then becoming fierce with the assistance of foreign forces. This became clear in two occasions: The first was seizing the opportunity of the desire to expedite the rates of growth at the beginning of the first national plan, as it tried to become rich at the expense of the public sector which was under construction, then transferred the profits outside. This led to the first nationalization laws that concentrated on the companies working in the construction sector in particular. The second was the alliance between the reactionists in Syria with the anti Arab Nationalism forces in order to force disunity and turn down the socialization transformations that took place on 23rd July 1961.
- ◆ Cooperation did not realize the objectives required from it, and was limited to the financing side, where the most important achievement therein was to change it into an interest-free financing with the guarantee of the crop rather than the land owned, thus terminating the formula of the usurer who accompanied feudalism in

That review led to reconsidering the thought that the groups against the Revolution and its objectives in realizing social equity were historical classes, that emerged under the auspices of imperialism and political oppression and got into alliance with them, and conceiving them as inherent in any societal structure, that looks amiable and congenial with it, or even overstate over it in order to leap upon it at the first opportunity it gets, practicing its long-lasting habit of association with external reactionism. The way out imposed by experience was threefold:

- ◇ Stressing the socialist nature of the society.
 - ◇ Segregating the forces hostile to the Revolution from those who have interest in it.
 - ◇ Emphasizing the expansion of the area of popular participation in the decision-making processes.
- In other words, the way out was the continuation of strengthening both the political and social freedoms, while ensuring them against deviations into class interests hostile to the Revolution and its objectives. Socialism required socialists, i.e., people far from reactionism, feudalism and capital exploitation.

The figures he quoted in assessment of those who had been affected by the different social laws were an indication of the severe concentration of wealth before the Revolution. Those who were affected by the first agrarian reform law of 1952, that stated an upper limit of ownership 200 feddans (plus 100 for children) was 342, out of whom half a million feddan were seized, whose value ranges between 150 and 200 pounds. To these about 150 to 170 thousand feddans in 1961 when the upper limit was brought down to 100 feddans. This applied to another 1550 persons, in addition to the former. The full nationalization laws of 1961 affected 1772 persons, besides 3850 who were affected partially. Thus the total assets regained for the people amounted to about 500 million pounds belonging to not more than seven thousand persons out of a total population of LE 27 millions.

Arab Nationalism

In the opening session of the general conference of the National Union of the UAR (9/6/1960) he declared that in that Union three revolutions meet together:

- ◆ A national revolution in each Arab country that inspires it to stand against imperialism and fight it until it puts down its intruding flags so that their dark shadows do not throw darkness over its lands.

A social revolution in each Arab country that makes it search for life for each of its citizens so as to realize equity, being convinced that social equity is the sole base upon which the entity of any nation could rest upon. ◇

An Arab revolution in each country that drives it to go beyond walls and break down the material barriers that take the form of frontiers devised by the intruding coercer, and the spiritual obstacles represented in the doubts sown by the same intruding coercer. ◇

These three revolutions were the ones that made "**freedom - socialism - unity**" a motto for the UAR. Their combination gave another force to social equity in unifying the objective in order to unify the line. Each defeat of imperialism by the national revolution for independence is a victory for the Arab revolution for unity, and a victory for the social revolution for equity; each defeat of proponents of dispersal is a victory for the social revolution for realization of equity, each defeat of feudalism, exploitation and domination of capital is a victory for the national revolution and Arab revolution. Thus the national revolution crystallized and was resolved into the doctrine of **positive neutralism and non-alignment** as a means to world peace; the Arab revolution crystallized and was resolved into the doctrine of **Arab nationalism** as a means to Arab unity; and the social revolution crystallized and was resolved into the doctrine of **socialism, democracy and cooperation** as a means to social equity through increasing production and the establishment of the society of sufficiency and equity all over the Arab world. The great value of those doctrines was that they were an self-expression of the Arab society and Arab life, and not derived from theories and experiences alien to the Arab society.

Therefore the process of reshaping the society was not confined to the Egyptian nation, the owner of the Revolution and the beneficiary from the objectives it realized for it, but was extended to the whole Arab homeland. Nasser did not regard Arab nationalism as a mere political movement, but it was also a social philosophy. It may be a sentimental call, it may be a common interest; and it may be a strategic necessity; but above all it is a social philosophy. Besides the slogans there should be also social planning; besides being masses and crowds, it should be also a comprehensive economic mobilization; besides being a source of enthusiasm, it should be also effort and sweat; and besides being a dream it should be translated into an estimable standard of living for all Arabs. These are the real safeguards of the Arab nationalism, since there is dignity for a famished, no strength for a sick person, no assurance for the homeless, and no resistance or clamp for any one not assured of his morrow, or for any one who does not feel that there is a society around him that pays attention care for him, not robbing his rights nor exploiting him, hence not threatening his freedom.

Therefore he considered that the start towards the erection of the State of unity was sufficient only if Arab nationalism was a political movement. But being a social philosophy, then all that had been merely raising the flag of struggle at the frontier of hopes. The more important are the steps taken from those frontiers. Agrarian reform in the Syrian Region was a step along the path of the social revolution implied by the Arab nationalism. The five-years industrialization program the Syrian Region that had been declared and was under execution, was still another step for realizing equity and equality was the abolition of the clans law and letting equality be the flag around which citizens would gather. Those were steps in eradication of feudalism, in industrialization, in social structure; a movement for the concurrence of the political side of Arab nationalism with the social side of Arab nationalism. But he did not consider them as the full tasks embodied in the social revolution; in his view they were only steps along the borders and across them with respect to the social philosophy and the social conception which he holds for Arab nationalism.

Thus the Syrian Region like the Egyptian Region in that both lost a lot of opportunities in the past, and it should double its efforts. Everyone should work and sweat so that he would appreciate the joy of victory and the sweetness of work and the sweetness of production. The fundamental objective for Arab nationalism is to execute the social revolution and the creation of a democratic socialist society. Therefore it was imperative to protect independence and to protect Arab nationalism in order to execute the social revolution. This way it would be possible to build a free independent economy, then build a society that enjoys welfare, free of political exploitation and social exploitation, that experiences no differences between classes, and in which equity prevails. This is considered to be the route to real democracy, since there is no democracy without equality and no democracy without equity. It is impossible to have political democracy without having social democracy. Political democracy that denies the existence of social democracy so as to let equity and equality be the sound foundation that prevails among of the members of the same nation, cannot by any means be a

democracy. It abuses the name of democracy in order to exploit politically, to exploit socially and to exploit economically. True democracy is the political democracy that goes side by side with the social democracy. Political democracy as conceived by the Revolution was the means to realize social democracy. Therefore it is necessary to protect independence which had been realized by means of strife and fight, securing it and maintaining it. It is also necessary to protect Arab nationalism in which we all believed and which we all adopted, and raise its flags, from all attempts made against it by its enemies to disjoint it and to place alien nationalities within it in order to destroy it, and to face all the attempts that are continuing secretly and openly against it.

Imperialism found in the call for establishing social equity, realizing equality, eradicating feudalism, abrogating the domination of capital on rule and abolishing monopoly, a danger that threatens its interests which are based upon exploiting the Arab nation and misappropriating its rights and wealth. Direction of the struggle against imperialism from the very beginning of the Revolution was a necessity in order to strengthen the call for Arab nationalism. Success in eradicating exploitation practiced by it meant strengthening the capacity of the society to establish social equity that attracts millions of Arabs who were eager for equality and equality of opportunities and getting rid of foreign exploitation. Thus the objective of the United Arab Republic was to liberate every Arab individual and each Arab country politically, economically and socially. That raised the antagonism of imperialism and the forces sponsoring it against the UAR.

Unity was the sharpest weapon that the nationals used when they fought the occupying armies which they managed to expel out of their countries; unity was also the weapon that enabled Egyptians to come together with their comrades in Syria, thus establishing the UAR as an expression of the conscious of the nation, its hopes, its nature and its strength. Thus the compatriots of the two regions were combined in one Social Union, which does not bend towards the right or towards the left, without any dispersion or repulsion, but unifying the will for the sake of the greatness of the one Arab nation, and unifying the will to raise high the flag of Arab nationalism which suffered quite long. He hoped that unity will realize big hopes. But this insistence on social democracy and having social equity as an objective that changes the social map all over the whole Arab homeland, was the flash that hit the backs of the Arab regimes that were based on oppression and exploitation. The coalition between reactionary forces led to the disintegration of the UAR, and to take Syria back to a whirlpool of changes in which the people lost a lot of the gains that had been realized; it was even threatened in its unity as a result of the differences which had been encouraged by the reactionism that refused the logic of social equity. Perhaps this experience indicates that the issue with respect to Arab unity had been, and will always remain a case that looks for faith in social equity by regimes whose nations are eager to procure it.

Summary and conclusions

We have started with social equity as an objective strongly held by the Leader, and ended by covering practically all aspects of life and all actions he performed in fulfillment of the aspirations of his nation. This proves our preliminary remark that his thoughts constituted a coherent structure, that wherever we approach it we immediately cover the whole ground.