

THE CHARTER FOR NATIONAL ACTION OF THE UAR
A Résumé of the Complete Document

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Cairo
July 1962

It has become increasingly clear that the new Charter for National Action of the United Arab Republic is meant to be an historic document comparable to great Western documents that marked major turning points of political and social development. A recent article in Ahram, for example, speaks of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen and the bourgeois revolution, The Communist Manifesto and the Communist revolution, and the Charter for National Action and the new national revolution—for which the Arab revolution is the vanguard.¹ Copies of the Charter proposal have been widely distributed in many languages. Each session of the National Congress of Popular Powers, the representative body given the responsibility of considering and approving the proposal, received full newspaper and television coverage. At most of the sessions President Nasser himself discussed and interpreted the proposal at considerable length. And there have been serious suggestions that May 21, the date of the opening session at which the proposal was read by the President, and June 30, the date of approval of the Charter by acclamation, should be national holidays.

It is difficult to assess public reaction to the Charter. It is only a guess that the peasantry, except for those younger men who live in villages within easy reach of urban centers, is apathetic. The urban poor and not-so-poor are certainly less apathetic: the writer has the impression of a general urban feeling that, despite a long tradition of words without action, the regime may well mean what the Charter says. Some have said that "something new" has entered their lives.

The present significance of the Charter is that it constitutes the first serious defense of Arab socialism by a regime in power. It is not

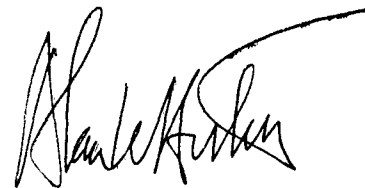
¹ Lutfy El-Kholy in Ahram, June 12, 1962.

an academically respectable defense—this is yet to be written—but it does contain what a stable government, after ten experimental years, believes about the past and intends for the future. As such it is of most immediate importance to all Egyptians and to many other Arabs.

But whether or not the Charter does, in fact, mark a turning point in Arab history is clearly a question that only history can decide. A measure of the first step toward historical importance will be the degree to which the regime is able to apply the Charter ideal to the less appealing actuality and to demonstrate success to other Arabs. As the Charter itself recognizes, a long period of hard work lies ahead.

The Charter was written for Egyptians and not for the approval of Western literary critics. Though its vocabulary can be understood by those of simple education, its style is flowery and old-fashioned. Most Arabs consider it to be "good Arabic," but only occasionally is it poetically moving—schoolchildren will probably not be memorizing passages for literary recitals. Its chief literary fault is its repetitiveness: the author, whoever he is, rarely misses an opportunity for tangential comments, many of which are solid echoes of statements made elsewhere in the document.

This Report is devoted to a résumé of the Charter. The approximately 140 double-spaced quarto-sized pages of the document have been reduced to about one-seventh of the original length. What follows, then, is not for the detailed analysis of scholars but is intended to convey the thinking and feeling of the most influential men in the Arab world today. My occasional comments appear in footnotes only.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Paul H. H. H.", with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Chapter I — A General View

On July 23, 1952, the Egyptian people first realized their potential for revolutionary change. Prior to that date foreign invaders were in occupation, an alien royal family ruled by whim, feudalists owned the land, and capitalists exploited the country's wealth and dominated its government. Political leaders who attempted to organize the people's struggle were lured by class privileges into co-operation with the forces dominating Egypt. Similarly, the army was weakened and diverted from supporting the national struggle—and the dominating forces were even on the verge of using the army to suppress the struggle.

On July 23, 1952, the Egyptian people raised their heads with faith and pride. Their revolutionary march began with no political organization and with an incomplete blueprint for revolutionary change. They had only six principles:

- 1) Destruction of imperialism and its traitorous Egyptian stooges—in the face of British occupation of the Canal Zone.
- 2) Ending of feudalism—in the face of feudalism's domination of the land and those on the land.
- 3) Ending of monopoly and the domination of capital over the government—in the face of the exploitation of resources to serve the interests of capitalists.
- 4) Establishment of social justice—in the face of the exploitation and despotism arising from the existing situation.
- 5) Building of a powerful national army—in the face of conspiracies to weaken it and use it against the revolutionary front.
- 6) Establishment of a sound democratic system—in the face of the political forgery that tried to veil the landmarks of true nationalism.²

These six principles were passed by the popular struggle to the revolutionary vanguard (mobilized from within the army to serve the struggle and immediately supported from without by revolutionary fore-

² The reference here is to the pre-Revolutionary manipulations of political parties, especially the Wafd, that kept the "establishment" in power by intentionally misleading appeals to popular nationalist sentiment.

runners).³ Thus the principles were a guide to action.

The people, in the light of history and the existing situation, began the job of working out the six principles; they also taught the revolutionary vanguard the wider and deeper meanings of hope for the future. They supported the vanguard against conspiracies. In defiance of conventional logic, which might have vitiated the Revolution with compromising reforms, they demonstrated an unshakable revolutionary will for creative and pioneering action.

What began on July 23, 1952, shows that oppressed peoples everywhere can stage genuine revolutions. The Egyptian people were able to break the power of certain old-regime classes, classes which falsely pretended to join them in the fight against imperialism and which have been, because of that falsity, isolated from the struggle.⁴ They were able also to break the power of local capitalists (whose monopolies threatened to reap great profits from the pressures of the requirements of economic development) by gaining control of the machinery of production. They refused, however, the dictatorship of one class and decided that the dissolution of differences between classes was the best means to achieve genuine democracy for the total work force. They looked forward to a new society based on new values to be given expression by a new national culture.

The Egyptian people have achieved a complete revolution without resort to the classical stages of the history of other revolutions. They were able to do so because of:

- 1) A will for unrestricted revolutionary change that considers the rights and needs of the masses.
- 2) A revolutionary vanguard that was able to seize power.
- 3) A deep consciousness of history, its effects on contemporary man, and the ability of man to change its course.

³ The talk of civilian "forerunners" probably constitutes a bow to the present "bright men of government." See The Central Social and Political Problem of the UAR, Part III: The Search for Popular Support (AWH-4-'62), an AUFS publication.

⁴ After the defection of Syria, many of the rich were "isolated" from public office, social clubs, and so on, and their wealth was sequestered so that, according to the reason given, it could not be used against the nation.

- 4) An openmindedness to all human experience—without fanaticism or psychological complex.
- 5) An unshakable faith in God, His prophets, and His sacred messages passed on to man as guides to justice and righteousness.⁵

The revolutionary experiment of the Egyptian people has gone far beyond the borders of Egypt. The entire Arab world has felt its strong repercussions, a reaction that confirms the unity of the Arab peoples. Elsewhere the experiment has had far-reaching effects on liberation movements in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The Battle of Suez, a major landmark of Egypt's revolutionary history, demonstrated that all oppressed peoples can discover in themselves the latent power for successful revolt and revolution.

Chapter II — On the Necessity of the Revolution

Experience has shown that revolution is the only means to a better Arab future, free of the elements of suppression and exploitation that have long dominated the Arab nation and that will never surrender their power except by nationalist force. Revolution is the only way to deal with underdevelopment—conventional methods are no longer adequate to cope with the gap between the Arab nation and the advanced countries. The nation's material and spiritual potentialities must be mobilized—including a mobilization of scientific talent.

The Arab Revolution needs to equip itself with three powers:

- 1) A mentality based on scientific conviction arising from enlightened thought and free discussion—unaffected by forces of fanaticism and terrorism.
- 2) A freedom of movement for rapid adaptation to the changing circumstances of the Arab struggle—providing such movement observes the objectives and moral ideals of the struggle.
- 3) A clarity of perception of revolutionary objectives—eliminating the possibility of emotional and energy-wasting diversions.

⁵ At the reading by the President, this statement was accorded the first truly enthusiastic, genuinely sustained applause of the evening.

The objectives of the struggle are a true expression of the Arab national conscience: freedom, socialism, and unity. Freedom has come to mean freedom of the nation and freedom of the citizen. Socialism has become both a means and an end, namely, sufficiency and justice. Unity has come to be the popular call for the restoration of the Arab nation that has been torn apart by its enemies.

But the Arab Revolution must find new paths to the achievement of these objectives—not because of a desire for innovation or for national dignity but because of new world-wide circumstances that have occurred since World War II. These changes are as follows:

- 1) Nationalist forces in Asia, Africa, and Latin America have become an internationally effective force.
- 2) The Communist bloc has emerged as an increasingly effective material and moral counterweight to the capitalist bloc.
- 3) Scientific and technological advances in methods of production have opened up unlimited horizons for development. New means of transport are breaking physical and intellectual barriers between countries.
- 4) The increasing weight of moral forces in international relations (such as the United Nations, the nonaligned states, and world opinion) is accompanied by the resort of imperialists to indirect methods: conquest and domination from within, formation of economic blocs and monopolies, waging of cold wars that include among their methods the attempt to undermine the confidence of smaller nations in their ability to develop themselves.

As a result of these changing circumstances, new means of achievement of the goals of freedom, socialism, and unity have come to light. It is no longer believed that freedom can be attained by placating imperialists or bargaining with them. It is no longer believed that socialism must observe laws formulated in the 19th century—a new situation for socialist experiments exists today. It is no longer believed that the achievement of unity must be after the 19th century patterns of Germany and Italy—the peaceful appeal and the demand for popular unanimity among the Arabs is in great contrast. The Arab Revolution is new and different; it draws on the experiences of other peoples but does not blindly copy them. In this experimental Revolution, natural and historical factors have laid on the UAR and its popular revolutionary leadership the responsibility of being the pioneers.

Chapter III — The Roots of the Egyptian Struggle

The Egyptian people have never lived in isolation. The French campaign in the early 19th century found Al-Azhar alive with new ideas that were affecting Egypt; though the French did not "awaken" Egypt, they did provide added revolutionary energy in glimpses of modern science and professors of Egyptology who revealed the ancient past. Muhammad Aly profited from the popular awakening and used the new energies as a springboard for his ambitions. His adventurousness, and that of his successors, opened the way for the interference of developing colonialism; soon international monopolies (the Canal, the cotton system) dominated Egypt and drained off its resources.

But much revolutionary energy was created by the European educations of Egyptian youths. Egypt became the intellectual and revolutionary leader of the Arab world. The Orabi Revolt marked the peak of the revolutionary reaction against colonialist interference. The British occupation of 1882 was an expression of colonialist determination to maintain suppression and exploitation, to guarantee the interests of foreign monopolies, and to support the Khedive against the people.

Though Orabi's voice was stilled, that of Moustafa Kamel was heard. Then there followed Muhammad 'Abdu, Lutfi El-Sayyid, and Qasem Amin. In 1919 a new revolutionary wave was led by Saad Zaghloul; the three factors that led to its failure were the very factors that motivated the 1952 Revolution.

- 1) The leadership of the 1919 revolution overlooked the need for social change. The explanation is obvious: by the nature of the times the landowning class provided the leadership of the political parties responsible for the revolutionary surge, which did not go beyond the political façade reflected in the demand for independence and did not tackle social and economic problems.
- 2) The leadership failed to extend its vision beyond Sinai and was incapable of learning from history that there is no conflict whatsoever between Egyptian patriotism and Arab nationalism. Thus the colonialists were able to divide the Arab nation and rule: the leaders of 1919 did not feel that the concerns of other Arab states were in any way related to Egypt.
- 3) The leadership failed to adapt to the imperialist methods of the times. The imperialist sword had been replaced by

deceit—formal and superficial concessions, the slogan of freedom without the reality, independence in form but not in content, and frenetic and purposeless party conflict that kept the people busy and frittered away revolutionary energy.

Thus, the 1936 treaty, signed by a national front comprising all parties active at the time, was a document of surrender to the great bluff by which the leadership of the 1919 revolution was taken in. The preamble stipulated independence, but every clause deprived that independence of every value and significance.

Chapter IV — The Lesson of the Setback

The most critical period in the struggle was that period, full of deceit, from the setback of 1919 until the moment when Egypt's popular powers became aware of the dangerous futility of bargaining, compromise, and surrender. This period of great crisis was characterized by the following:

- 1) The leadership of 1919 was still in the forefront but had lost all its revolutionary energy. The big landlords had become the main supports of the party organizations—and were joined by various opportunists and parasites. Groups of intellectuals were attracted to the corrupt party atmosphere; groups of capitalists took over the roles of the foreign monopolists. The parties were thus under the control of the palace or of imperialist forces—both of which opposed the people's interests.
- 2) Democracy was a farce; people were the tools, or victims, of the authorities, who dominated the means of livelihood of both working class and peasantry. Cabinets could be bought and sold by payments to the palace.
- 3) The forces of imperialism not only intimidated all the peoples of the Arab nation but also belittled their national struggle. The imperialists went back on pledges of independence and unity made during World War I and coined words such as "mandate" and "trusteeship" to disguise their territorial ambitions. Part of Palestine was handed to an aggressive racial movement that was intended to divide the Arab East from the Arab West—and when Arab armies entered Palestine to safeguard Arab rights, the

supreme command was given to an imperialist hireling. The Arab peoples learned that imperialism is not merely an exploitation of resources but also an assault on dignity and pride.

- 4) The Egyptian people gave expression to their pre-Revolutionary anger. They refused to take sides in the strife over colonies and markets that characterized the tragically death-dealing war between Nazi racialism and Anglo-French imperialism. The burning of Cairo, irrespective of how far it had been engineered by intriguers, could have been stopped if it had not been for the outburst of anger among the people. The period of anger, which is a passive phase, paved the way for the Revolution, the active phase that aims at the establishment of new systems.

The armed forces who staged the Revolution of July 23, 1952, were not the makers of the Revolution but the tools of a popular will. The army, by siding with the people and their struggle, achieved two great things:

- 1) It deprived the exploiters of Egypt of the military tool with which they could threaten a people's revolution.
- 2) It provided the people with the arms necessary to repel both foreign occupation forces and internal treachery.

On July 23, 1952, the Revolution itself did not occur but the door was finally open. A mere change of cabinet, a change of the system of government, or a military dictatorship might have occurred, but the genuineness and strength of the revolutionary consciousness made the event a first step on the path to total revolution rather than mere reform. It was in any case too late for mere reform: the structure of the old regime was ready only for demolition. It was the Egyptian people who made this plain to the revolutionary vanguard and who developed the famous six principles into a technique for revolutionary action and a methodology for radical change.

Chapter V — True Democracy

True revolutionary action is impossible without popularity and progressiveness. Democracy shows that a revolution is popular; socialism shows that a revolution is progressive. Socialism means the construction of a society based on sufficiency and justice, on work and equal opportunity for all, and on production and services—thus both

democracy and socialism are extensions of revolutionary action. Democracy is political freedom, and socialism is social freedom; both are indispensable to true freedom.

After the victory at Suez over the imperialists, political freedom was achieved. This was a critical moment, but the revolutionary consciousness of the Egyptian people was able to carry through and continue the struggle for social freedom as well.

Before the Revolution the country was dominated by an alliance of feudalism and exploiting capitalism and was a sham democracy that was really a reactionary dictatorship. The lack of social freedom led to the loss of political freedom. Without the freedom to earn a living, the freedom to vote lost all value:

- 1) In the villages, the peasant had to vote as the landowner instructed—or face expulsion from his land.
- 2) In the villages and cities, votes were easily purchased by exploiting capitalists.
- 3) In the villages and towns, election results could be easily forged.
- 4) Everywhere, the imposition of ignorance on the masses made manipulation easy.

Nor was there, before the Revolution, freedom to organize. With the loss of freedom of the press there was no longer the freedom to criticize—the press became a matter of capital investment in machinery and paper and was converted from an opportunity for expression of opinion to an instrument of the ruling group. Nor was there freedom of education: successive generations were taught that their country was incapable of industrialization, educational institutions turned out nothing more than civil servants, and intellectuals were faced with the choice of soul-destroying class privileges or obscurity.

True democracy can be outlined as follows:

- 1) Political democracy cannot be separated from social democracy. Nobody can be regarded as free to vote without three guarantees: freedom from exploitation in all its forms; equal opportunity for a fair share of the national wealth; and freedom from all anxiety concerning future security.
- 2) Political democracy cannot exist under the domination of

any one class. Class strife always exists in some measure, but peaceful solutions are possible within the framework of national unity. Democratic interaction between the various working forces (namely, peasants, workers, soldiers, intellectuals, and national capital⁶) is alone capable of replacing reactionary democracy by true democracy.

3) Co-operation between the representative working forces creates a national unity that makes possible the Arab Socialist Union⁷—which will constitute the ultimate authority, the driving force, and the guardian of the Revolution. The new constitution must guarantee that popular forces find expression in the following ways:

- a) Popular and political organizations based on free and direct elections must truly represent the popular forces. Peasants and workers must fill half the seats in political and popular organizations at all levels—including the Representative Assembly.⁸
- b) The authority of elected popular councils must always be raised above the authority of the executive machinery of the state—at all levels.⁹
- c) A new political organization, within the framework of the Arab Socialist Union, must recruit leaders and organize their efforts, clarify the revolutionary

⁶ In the Egyptian context, intellectuals might be defined as persons of culture and advanced education. National capital, or national capitalists, are those who invest and take only a reasonable, nonexploiting profit.

⁷ This constituted the first public mention of the Arab Socialist Union. Prior to this, it had been assumed that the National Union, perhaps revamped and invigorated, would continue to function.

⁸ This was the first assurance of a Representative Assembly and the first mention of the idea of 50% representation of peasants and workers. The statement received the best and longest applause of the evening.

⁹ This is a truly revolutionary intention, a direct challenge to the entrenched bureaucracies that traditionally have been arrogant and inefficient.

aspirations of the masses, and endeavor to satisfy the needs of the masses.

- d) Collective leadership must guard against the possible excesses of the individual and ensure the reign of true democracy.¹⁰
- 4) Popular organizations, especially co-operatives and trade unions, can play an effective and influential role in promoting true democracy. These organizations are now free to form a vanguard of national democratic action. And it is now time that agricultural labor unions were established.
- 5) Criticism and self-criticism are important guarantees of freedom. The greatest obstacle to effective criticism is the infiltration of reactionary elements into political organizations.¹¹ By eliminating reactionary influences, the people ensure not only effective political action but also a free press (which now belongs to the people).
- 6) Revolutionary conceptions of true democracy must contribute decisively to the formation of citizens—especially with respect to education and to administrative regulations. Educational curricula should enable the individual to reshape his life; laws should be re-drafted to fit a new situation, and justice should cease to be an expensive commodity.

Chapter VI — The Inevitability of the Socialist Solution

Socialism is the way to social freedom; social freedom means equal opportunity to every citizen to obtain a fair share of the national wealth. The national wealth must be not only redistributed but also, and equally importantly, expanded.

¹⁰ At later meetings of the NCPP, President Nasser applied this principal to himself in forceful terms. This was in response to slogans shouted from the floor that he should be President for life. The President said among other things that over recent years he had had to make decisions that no one man should be allowed to make in the Egyptian future.

¹¹ This is a major explanation given for the failure of the National Union, the predecessor of the Arab Socialist Union.

The socialist solution to the problems of social and economic underdevelopment is an historical inevitability. Attempts at capitalist solutions have failed to achieve progress. Because of the development of capitalist monopolies in the advanced countries, local capitalism cannot compete without customs protection paid for by the masses and without making itself an appendage to world capitalism. The widening gap between the underdeveloped and the advanced states no longer permits that progress should be left to desultory individual efforts sustained only by the profit motive. Individual efforts cannot meet the three requirements of progress:

- 1) Assembling of the national savings.
- 2) Use of all experiences of modern science for the efficient exploitation of national savings.
- 3) Drafting of an over-all plan for production.

Expansion and redistribution of the natural wealth cannot be left to private, voluntary efforts—hence the necessity of people's control over all the tools of production and over the disposition of surplus in accordance with scientific planning.

But control over all the tools of production does not mean the nationalization of all the means of production, the abolition of private ownership, or interference with the rights of inheritance. Control can be achieved in two ways:

- 1) Creation of an efficient public sector that can provide leadership for economic progress and bear the main responsibility for planned development.
- 2) Existence of a private sector that without unfair exploitation can contribute its share to national development within the planned framework for economic progress.

Efficient socialist planning guarantees the just and proper use of all national resources—material, natural, and human. Efficient socialist planning permits increased production, increased consumption of goods and services, and increase of savings for new investment. With reference to effective socialist control, the lessons of history indicate the following:

- 1) In the field of production in general—the backbone of the production effort should be within the framework of public ownership (railways, roads, ports, airports, dams, transport, and other public services).
- 2) In the field of industry—most heavy and medium industry,

including mining, should be publicly owned. Although some private ownership can be allowed here, and more in light industry, the public sector must always be able to guide the private sector to serve the public interest.

- 3) In the field of trade—foreign trade must be under the control of the people. The public sector should manage three-fourths of the country's export-import trade; the private sector should be encouraged to manage the balance. In the coming eight years the public sector should take over one-fourth of internal trade—it being understood that internal trade constitutes services and distribution against reasonable, nonexploiting profit.
- 4) In the field of finance—banks and insurance companies should be publicly owned.
- 5) In the domain of land—a distinction should be made between exploiting ownership and nonexploiting ownership; the latter serves the national economy while serving the interests of the owners themselves. The present agrarian reform laws limit individual ownership to 100 feddans; the spirit of these laws implies that the limitation should apply to an entire family (father, mother, minor children) in order to avoid clusters of family ownership. Hence, the families affected should within the coming eight years sell their excess land for cash to agricultural co-operative societies or to others. With reference to ownership of buildings,¹² present laws effectively prevent exploitation by owners.

Many of the above have been successfully carried out or launched by the glorious laws of July 1961. But constant vigilance against the forces of reaction (many of them elsewhere in the Arab world) is necessary.

The great importance of the public sector cannot, however, eliminate the private sector. The latter must now renovate itself and make a new and creative effort based on service rather than parasitic exploitation.

¹² Here the NCPP began to applaud heavily. The applause soon quieted to normal when it was realized that limitations on building ownership were not forthcoming.

Chapter VII — Concerning Production and Society

Production is the true test of dynamic Arab power. By production we can end our underdevelopment, move rapidly toward progress, face and overcome difficulties and intrigues, and finally achieve victory over all enemies.

The battle of production, the battle to double the national income every ten years, is threatened chiefly by the increase in population. Family planning on scientific lines is necessary.¹³ Also necessary is a tremendous will to work and to produce—within the framework of a new society based on new values.

In the agricultural sector, Arab socialism does not believe in the nationalization of land but in individual ownership within limits that prevent feudalism. It believes also in agricultural co-operation in terms of credit, use of modern machinery, and marketing. The production battle in the rural areas has a threefold focus:

- 1) The horizontal extension of agriculture—the reclamation of desert and wasteland and the use of every drop of Nile water for irrigation.
- 2) The vertical extension of agriculture—the increase in productivity of land already under cultivation by means of increased application of scientific methods.
- 3) The industrialization and mechanization of agriculture.

Simultaneously, village life and mentality must be changed in a revolutionary and decisive way.

In the industrial sector, the latest scientific achievements and the newest equipment must compensate for present underdevelopment. Our natural and mineral wealth must be further explored. Raw materials must be processed in Egypt. Consumer industries must be further developed not only to save foreign currency but also to earn foreign currency by export. For social reasons heavy industry must be kept in balance with consumer industries. The workman now has a minimum wage and a seven-hour working day; he must respond to these new rights and privileges by a corresponding increase in his duties—particularly his responsibility to produce. Labor unions can now take on increased responsibilities as well.

¹³ This is the first government endorsement of birth control in Egyptian history.

The basis of the drive toward increased production in both agriculture and industry is an increase in motivation and the establishment of the fundamental structure basic to production. Revolutionary motivation supplies the spark for improvement in all spheres. Efficient communications networks can perform miracles in terms of the unity and organization of production.

One role of the private sector (i.e., of nonexploiting national capital) is to render public ownership more effective by providing an invigorating competitive element. The socialist laws of July 1961 did not seek to destroy the private sector but sought to:

- 1) Create greater economic equality among citizens and contribute to the dissolution of class distinctions.
- 2) Increase the efficiency of the public sector, consolidate its capacity to shoulder the responsibility of planning, and enable it to play its leading role in socialist industrial development.

The private sector is limited only by the socialist laws now in force (or by those deemed necessary by popular authorities elected in the future) and is free, within the socialist framework, to promote economic development and to make reasonable nonexploiting profits.

Foreign aid, regardless of source, is accepted in order of priority as follows: (1) unconditional aid; (2) unconditional loans; and (3) foreign investment for limited periods and unavoidable circumstances requiring international experience. Foreign aid may be viewed as an optional tax on those states with a colonial past, a compensation to the peoples who were exploited for so long.

The object of production is to provide services to society. As production and national investment increase, greater equality of opportunity is offered to the citizen. The citizen's basic rights are:

- 1) The right to good medical care. Health insurance must be held by each citizen.
- 2) The right to education that suits abilities and talents.
- 3) The right to secure the job that suits educational background, abilities, and interests. There should be both a minimum wage and a maximum income.
- 4) The right to security and rest in the event of old age or sickness.

Women must be regarded as equal to men. The family unit is basic to society and must be fostered.

The freedom of religious belief must be regarded as sacred in our new national culture with its new values. The only danger arises from reactionary attempts to exploit religion, but all religions contain a message of progress and bestow on the individual unlimited capacity for serving truth, goodness, and love.

For the individual, freedom is the greatest stimulus to all good exertion and is the basis of faith—which without freedom would become fanaticism. The individual must be free to shape his destiny, determine his position in society, express his opinion, and take an active part in his society's evolution. Law must be subservient to freedom. But no individual can be free unless he is saved from exploitation—hence, social freedom is the only way to political freedom.

Freedom of speech is the foundation of democracy; the prevalence of law is its final guarantee.

The new society, which is now being built on the basis of sufficiency and justice, needs the armed forces as a shield to defend the reconstruction of Egyptian society against external dangers. A strong army is a necessity, but the needs of defense should never have precedence over the needs of development—because without economic and social development no army can withstand the strain of long campaigns.

Chapter VIII — Concerning the Application of Socialism and Its Problems

Creative human labor is the only means for our society to achieve its aims. Labor is an honor, a right, and a duty. The time has passed when a country could achieve its goals by other means such as colonialist exploitation or slavery. The dignity of labor must never be threatened. Organized national labor, or action, based on scientific planning, is the way to the desired future.

National action based on planning seeks quantity and quality in a production process that stresses the importance of time and costs. All must play their roles in the national scheme based on our own and other experience. In this respect the importance of the written word cannot be overstressed—it provides the link between thought and experience and the link to our modern future.¹⁴

Periods of great change are inherently full of dangers. The greatest insurance against such dangers lies in the exercise of freedom—particularly through elected popular councils which should have authority over all production centers and over the machinery of local and central administrations.

The exercise of criticism and self-criticism gives all national action an opportunity to correct its positions and to adjust to its final objectives. If popular leaders allow truth to be hidden or ignored, they fail in their duty toward those who placed leadership in their hands and they isolate themselves from the problems of the masses. The exercise of freedom not only puts an end to passivity and encourages work and sacrifice for national objectives; it also requires that popular leadership refer continually to the popular base whose willingness to work for national objectives constitutes the source of power.

The future demands hard work and holds many difficulties. The masses should not be deceived by short-term hopes; they must rally themselves to national action for the sake of a distant future.

Intellectual adolescence constitutes a danger to progress, which cannot be achieved by way of high-sounding slogans or by way of those who minimize the strength of Egyptian society in proportion to their own weakness and incapacity for creative thought.

The country's leadership must be assisted by the people but on certain occasions must be protected against itself. Leaders may wrongly assume that the great problems of national development can be solved by the complicated procedures of bureaucracy and administration. This could lead to a class of leaders isolated from public service, interested in special privileges, and convinced that the machinery of the state is an end in itself. If leaders struggle for power among themselves, moreover, power goes into fewer hands and is less responsive to the aspirations of the people.

Science is the true weapon of the revolutionary will.¹⁵ Without science the revolution would be little more than a nervous outburst enabling the nation to let off steam but leaving basic problems untouched.

¹⁴ This is the only reference to the necessity of battle against illiteracy.

¹⁵ The term science includes the social sciences, of which the science of economics is now the most respectable.

The responsibility of the universities and scientific research centers in shaping the future is not less important than the responsibility of popularly elected authorities. Science must be at the service of society and provide the methods of overcoming our slow economic start.

Chapter IX — Arab Unity

A rallying of the popular and progressive elements on the one hand and of the reactionary and opportunistic elements on the other has taken place in every corner of the Arab world. This means that the same social currents are sweeping the area and indicates unity rather than dissension. The concept of Arab unity no longer needs bolstering by meetings of heads of state; despite the old-fashioned objectives of some Arab rulers, a popular base in each Arab country is progressive and demonstrates a unity of objective that foretells a social revolution throughout the Arab world. Imperialist forces, now unable to show their designs publicly, control matters through the reactionary palaces of some Arab nations; it is incumbent upon the Arab people to revolt against this alliance of imperialism and reaction and to consolidate the Arab right to a better social life.

Arab unity cannot be imposed. Unity must be based on the popular will and on governments representing that will. An Arab government that expresses the popular will sees no contradiction between itself and Arab unity—but the stages of development of the popular will are several, and the speeding up of those stages in some Arab states would, as experience has shown, create economic and social loopholes that could be exploited by those opposed to unity. And practical steps must be taken to fill the economic and social gaps occurring between various Arab states as a result of imperialist-inspired differences in stages of development.

The UAR must propagate her call for Arab unity and the principles it embodies—without any hesitation by reason of the outworn argument that this would be an interference in the affairs of others. Though the UAR must be careful not to involve itself in the local party disputes of any Arab state and must place the call for unity at the highest level, the UAR has a duty, nevertheless, to support and co-operate with all popular progressive movements—leaving the maneuvers of the struggle to local elements, who can act in conformity with local processes of development and change.

The Arab League, which is a league of governments, cannot go

beyond the possible. It can lead Arab unity only a few steps forward and can co-ordinate certain aspects of Arab activity at the present stage. It deserves every support. But it should never become a means of freezing the status quo and thereby undermining the unity of the future.

Chapter X — Foreign Policy

The foreign policy of the people of the UAR is a true reflection of national principles.

- 1) War on imperialism and domination—whatever the methods they may use. The determination to end the Israeli aggression on the land of Palestine is a determination to eliminate a dangerous pocket of imperialist resistance to the Arab struggle. The stand against racial discrimination represents a stand against a method of imperialist exploitation.
- 2) Consolidation of peace—peace offering the best protection for national progress. Nonalignment and positive neutrality offer the greatest hope for peace.
- 3) International co-operation for prosperity—since the prosperity of all peoples affects the prosperity of each. Peace must ultimately be based on comparable prosperity and on the narrowing of those economic gaps that sow the seeds of hatred.

International co-operation means (1) an end to the harboring of scientific secrets; (2) the peaceful use of atomic energy; (3) the transfer of funds now used for armaments to a budget for service to humanity; and (4) a call to international economic blocs not to obstruct the attempts at economic progress of less advanced nations. It means also that the UAR adheres not only to the concept of Arab unity but also to Pan-Africanism, Afro-Asian solidarity, the spiritual bonds of the Islamic world, and the Charter of the United Nations.