

STUDIES IN CONTEMPORARY ARAB NATIONALIST LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

Pan-Arab nationalism seeks a closer form of political union between the Arab states. Arab nationalist writers consider that such a union will enable the Arabs to achieve complete freedom and allow them to enjoy rapid social and economic progress. They consider that a nation can be proved to exist if a group of people have a common language, culture, history, territory and economic interests; they seek to prove, employing vague arguments, that all the Arabic-speaking peoples do form such a nation.

Few Arab nationalist writers attempt to suggest in detail what form the pan-Arab union should take; they show little unanimity and their conclusions are seen to conflict with the form of government in force in the United Arab Republic.

The relationship between Arab nationalism and religion is seen to be very complicated; there seems widespread disaccord among Arab nationalist writers concerning, in particular, the place of Islam in the proposed Arab union;

The attitude shown by Arab nationalist writers towards the Western Powers and Israel show clearly their complete

dislike and distrust of their intentions and their policies. Only a minority see a need to give credit to any benefits the influence of the West may have brought to the Arab world. In contrast to this, Arab nationalists, although they criticise communist ideology, are seen to be extremely grateful towards the Communist Bloc for the help it has given them in their struggle with their "imperialist enemies."

Many supporters of pan-Arab nationalism see in Jamāl 'Abd al-Nāsir the personification of the Arabs' struggle for unity and progress; an examination of his speeches, however, shows that until the Suez War at least, he frequently expressed himself as an Egyptian first and an Arab only secondly.

Opposition to Arab nationalism is examined superficially in some works in support of pan-Arab unity.

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PREFACE

I should like to acknowledge my debt of gratitude to all those who have helped me in any way in the preparation of this study. It was begun in the Autumn of 1958, after a Summer in which Arab nationalism had been the subject of widespread international concern and comment.

I should like to thank Miss Elizabeth Monroe, of St. Anthony's College, Oxford, for her help in making me decide that a study of this nature would be of interest and some value. My thanks are particularly due to Prof. R.B. Serjeant, Professor of Modern Arabic at the University of London, for the confidence he has shown in me and the invaluable advice he has given in supervising my studies.

I have been particularly fortunate in having had the opportunity, with the help of a grant for travelling expenses from the Central Research Fund of the University of London, to carry out the major part of the research for this study from April to December, 1959, at the American University of Beirut, Lebanon, under the general supervision of Dr. Constantine Zurayq, Distinguished Professor of History and Vice-President of that university. I sincerely hope that

both he and my other Arab nationalist friends will accept that this study was undertaken with a genuine desire to understand and not merely to find fault with the movement they support. I should like to stress that what criticism of the ideology of pan-Arab nationalism is implied in this study is based on my purely personal assessment.

I should like also to thank Miss J.C. Quass for her detailed criticism of the first drafts.

T. J. Le Gassick.

INTRODUCTION

The Pan-Arab nationalist movement of the present day has as its basic stated aims the complete liberation of the Arab world from foreign and Zionist influence, the dissolution of the present boundaries dividing the Arab countries from one another and the subsequent formation of a United Arab State. Arab nationalist writers look back to the days of the Arab Empire as an historical precedent for this proposed united state. Whether the Arab Empire of the Umayyads and the Caliphate of the 'Abbāsids did in fact constitute an effective Arab union is largely a matter of opinion;¹ it is clear, however, that since the destruction of Baghdad and the 'Abbāsīd Caliphate in 1258 by the Mongol invaders the Arab world has remained politically and economically divided. The Ottoman Turks, their occupation effectively stemming from the conquest of Egypt in 1517, ruled the

1. Hāzīm Nūsāibah concludes a short discussion of early Arab history and the rise and fall of the 'Umayyad and 'Abbāsīd Caliphates with the pertinent comment: "The foregoing digest of Arab political fortunes reveals a somewhat tenuous and short-lived period of national hegemony. It appears rather incongruous, therefore, that modern Arab nationalism should look back complacently to that period and to the movement which, when fully developed and implemented, thwarted and eventually crushed the nationalist Arab state." "The Ideas of Arab Nationalism." Cornell, 1956, p. 27.

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Arabs politically, militarily and economically. As the Turkish grip over the Arab world diminished and grew weaker, Arab revivalist movements, some with religious and some with purely secular bases grew more active and vocal throughout the Arab world.

In the 18th. century the Wahhābī movement, inspired by the leadership of Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, a reformative yet conservative Islamic revivalist, arose in the Nejd. This movement is seen by some Arab writers to have been an early expression of Arab nationalism. Similarly, the achievements of Muḥammad 'Alī, the ruler of Egypt who attempted to unify the Arab world by Egyptian military conquest in the early 19th century, are considered by some writers to have been an expression of Arab nationalism.¹ Again in the 19th century, Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, a Persian-speaking Afghan of probable Arab descent who actively propagated the idea of the need for a modernist, reformist and pan-Islāmic Arab movement, is also considered to have been a forerunner of the present day movement seeking Arab unity. 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Kawākabī (1849-1903), a native of Aleppo and contemporary and disciple of al-Afghānī, advocated, too,

1. c.f. U.A.R. "Yearbook for 1959", p. 15: "Muḥamed 'Alī, however, did not stick to the path he had chosen at first, the path of Arab nationalism and soon got busy building a kingdom for himself and his offspring, benefiting from the labour of the Arabs who had made him what he was."

a pan-Islamic revival to meet the challenge of the European encroachments in the Arab world, while at the same time he emphasised the superior position of the Arabs in Islam and suggested the formation of an Arab caliphate centred at Mecca.¹

Growing European power and influence in the Arab world and the failure of the Ottoman central government to deal effectively with this danger helped to add to the growing dissatisfaction with Turkish rule among Arab intellectuals influenced by Western political and nationalist philosophies. From the year 1875, when a club with basically Arab nationalist aims and principles was formed by Christian Arab students at the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut, until the outbreak of the First World War, secret societies actively conspired in Syria and Istanbul itself against Ottoman rule of the Arab world.²

At the first Arab Congress, held in Paris in 1913, delegates from throughout the Arab world had the opportunity to express their desires for greater Arab freedom from Ottoman control. They argued that a common historical and

1. See Nusaibah, *Op. cit.*, Chapter Three. In considering all these movements expressions of Arab nationalism, it seems clear that contemporary Arab nationalist theorists do not agree with Elie Kedourie who wrote "Nationalism is a doctrine invented in Europe at the beginning of the 19th century." "Nationalism", London, 1960, p. 113.

2. See George Antonius: "The Arab Awakening." London, 1938, p. 79 et. seq.

cultural heritage and common racial and language unity did bind together all Arabs, and that therefore the Arab nation did in fact exist.¹ It was at this conference that the basic ideology of contemporary Arab nationalism seems to have been formulated. The delegates insisted on the need for religious equality in state affairs and stressed the contributions of Christians in the history of the Arabs. Ahmed Tabara, a delegate from Beirut, stressed that: "By Arab we mean all Arabic speaking peoples without distinction between Muslim and non-Muslim."²

During the First World War, the obvious mutual interests of both the Allies and the Arabs in destroying the power of Turkey in the Arab world led to official contacts and exchanges between the family of the Ruler of Mecca, the Sharīf Hussain, and the British authorities. The Sharīf had, through the contacts made by his son Faisal in 1915 with the secret Arab nationalist societies "al-'ahd" and "al-fatāt" in Damascus, gained their formal recognition as the "spokesman of the Arab race"³ in the negotiations with the Allies. The British, too, were content to negotiate with the Hāshimite

1. See Nusaibah, Op. cit., p. 51-3.

2. Ibid., p. 51.

3. Antonius, Op. cit., p. 158.

family, the traditional rulers of Mecca and the only Arab family qualified to found a ruling monarchy.¹ The details concerning the tortuous and vaguely worded correspondence which followed from July, 1915 to January 1916, between Sir Henry Macmahon, the British High Commissioner in Egypt and the Sherif Hussain and the signing, some months later by Britain, France and Russia of the secret Sykes-Picot Agreement which contradicted the British promises to the Arabs, are well known. Suffice it to say that the Arabs, aware that there were still unresolved difficulties over the details concerning the precise boundaries of the proposed "Arab kingdom", which both sides had agreed should be eventually created, considered that it was in their interests to proclaim a formal revolt against the Turks. This revolt, proclaimed officially on the 5th. of June, 1916, is considered by many contemporary Arab nationalist writers to have been a concrete expression of Arab nationalism.²

1. c.f. Charles Didier: "Les Chérifs constituent la seule aristocratie du sang qui existe dans les pays musulmans." "Séjour chez le grandchérif de la Mecque." Paris, 1857. Quoted in "The Rulers of Mecca," by Gerald de Gaury, London, 1951, p.17.

2. There was, of course, at this time no question of the inclusion of Egypt, Sudan and North Africa into the proposed independent Arab state. The deposition of Hussain's son Ali from the Kingdom of the Hedjaz by King Saud in 1925, the assassinations of his grandson 'Abd al-Ilah and great-grandson Faisal, King of Iraq in July 1958 and the break up of the short-lived "Arab Federation" of Jordan and Iraq, are all events which seem to prove the existence of strong elements of various kinds throughout the Arab world which would have been most unlikely to agree to the establishment of a permanent Arab Kingdom under the Hashimites.

son 'Abdallah, King of Trans-Jordan in 1951 and his

After the defeat of the Turks and the conclusion of the World War, Arab demands for the fulfilment of the promised creation of an Arab independent state were not met. British and French imperial and strategic interests and Zionist claims for a "national home" in Palestine, agreed in principle by the British government in November, 1917, required the establishment of separate mandated states in Syria, Lebanon, Trans-Jordan, Palestine and Iraq. As Bernard Lewis has recorded: "Arab disappointment, rendered more vocal by the rapid economic and cultural development of the inter-War years, found expression in a series of vigorous nationalist movements, still religiously coloured, still conditioned in their leadership and many of their policies by the old social order."¹

One has, I think, to agree with the Palestinian writer Fā'iz Sāyigh who considers that it is at this stage that one has to seek the more specific origins of the present-day pan-Arab nationalist movement. The religious revivalist movements of 18th and 19th centuries in the Arab world sought primarily for the creation of a pan-Islamic state based on the institution of the caliphate and the precepts of the classical Islamic codes of law. In contrast to them, the majority of contemporary pan-Arab nationalists insist on the need to build a United Arab state in which the government should be completely

1. "The Arabs in History", London, 1950, p. 176.

divorced from the influence of any particular religion. Sayigh maintains that the Ottoman rule had, in fact, ensured a political and administrative unity embracing the major part of the Arab world and that the decisions taken at the San Remo conference of 1920 and the consequent creation of the separate Arab countries from the Fertile Crescent destroyed this unity.¹ The Arab uprisings at the time were, however, without success and: "from then on, the desire to preserve an existing unity was transformed into the desire to restore and reestablish a recently destroyed unity. Unity became a principal goal of the Arab nationalist movement. The idea of Arab unity was born."²

In the period between the World wars, the movement seeking pan-Arab unity had little chance of achieving success. Palestine, Syria and Lebanon, Iraq as well as Egypt, Sudan and North Africa all remained under varying degrees of European control. The rise to power of Sa'ūd as King of the Nejd and

1. See also C.A. Hourani: "The Ottoman regime, with all its defects, had preserved many of the externals of unity. If the Arab lands were dominated from without, it was from one centre; and the compensation of the inclusion in a large empire did something to offset the fragmentation of Arab society." Reprinted from M.E.J., Vol. II, No. 2. April 1947 and issued as a pamphlet by the Arab Office, Washington D.C. p. 3. (No date).

2. "Arab Unity", New York, 1958, p. 61.

the Hedjāz and his continuous rivalry with the Nāshemites established under British protection in Trans-Jordan and Iraq, brought obvious new problems to the theorists of pan-Arab nationalism. The activities of the nationalists in most parts of the Arab world were directed primarily towards winning the individual freedom of each separate political entity. Pan-Arab nationalist movements which did manage to establish themselves in this period, as for example the "League of National Action"¹ ('uṣbah al-'amal al-qaumī) in Syria and Lebanon did not achieve any great degree of support. It must have seemed obvious that, until the occupying powers could be persuaded to remove themselves, a greater Arab union was a dream which could not possibly be fulfilled. It is not surprising, therefore, that as Nusaibah has remarked: "the bitter disillusionment which followed World War One and the failure of the Allies to honour their pledges to the Arabs impressed a stamp of pessimism, negativism and cynicism on the movement. The literature of Arab nationalism from this time is a bitter monotony, distinguished more by what it opposes than what it proposes."² The conferences held by the Arab government and other influential Arab organisations³ in the late thirties and early

1. See biographical notes concerning 'Alī Nāṣir al-Dīn, p. 33 above.

2. Op. cit., p. 55-6.

3. e.f. the Bludān Conference of 1937 called by the Arab Committee for the Defence of Palestine.

forties were primarily intended to achieve a common Arab position in face of the dangers posed by the Jews in Palestine. The Arab League too, formed eventually in 1945, was largely motivated by the common desire of the Arab countries to achieve the formation of a bloc which would be able to unite its efforts against the Zionist danger.¹ The Arab defeat in the Arab-Israeli War of 1948 and the establishment of the state of Israel after the withdrawal of the British mandate over Palestine came as a bitter shock to the Arabs, the effects of which are deeply reflected in Arab nationalist works of the period. The nationalist movements in each part of the Arab world had, with the exception of North Africa and Aden, gradually won complete independence for their countries; the Arab world remained, nevertheless, still far from unified and Israel grew in numbers and strength from day to day. Although a deep and widespread realisation that further Zionist expansion was a possibility which could only be defeated by joint Arab effort, coupled with a desire for revenge, did give added impetus to the pan-Arab nationalist movement the difficulties in the way of Arab union seemed so great that the pessimism reflected in Arab nationalist works of this period is not surprising.

The pessimism and negativism which pervade Arabic political

1. See Chapter Four, pp. ^{et seq.} 36/above.

literature from the mid-thirties to the mid-fifties of this century contrast remarkably with the optimism which is seen to be an essential feature of the most recent works in support of pan-Arab nationalism. The adoption by the Egyptian government, after the Army coup d'etat of 1952, of a policy of official support for pan-Arab unity, the emergence of the Egyptian leader, Jamāl (Abd al-Nāṣir as a personality commanding enough to be the figurehead of Arab nationalism to which all the Arab masses could show allegiance, as well as the spectacular Arab "defeats" of "imperialist" policies in recent years have all had profound influence in giving many Arab nationalists greater confidence and hope in the future. This confidence, raised to even greater heights by the formation of the United Arab Republic from Egypt and Syria in February, 1958, is vividly reflected in the great number of books and articles written by Arabs in support of Arab nationalism in the last three years.¹ It will be extremely interesting in the future to observe whether the continued rivalry between the U.A.R. and the post-revolutionary government of Iraq, coupled with the dissatisfaction with Egyptian

1. It is a fact that as many works in direct support of pan-Arab nationalism were published in the three years from 1957 to 1959 as in the whole previous period of twenty years.

policies reliably reported to be growing in Arab nationalist and particularly Ba'thist circles in the Syrian Region, Lebanon and Jordan will cause a diminution of this optimism and a reversion to the pessimism of the previous years. In the absence of further spectacular positive steps towards Arab unity, a reaction of this nature seems highly probable.

One important fact must constantly be borne in mind when one attempts to consider Arab nationalism in general terms. This is simply that there is no sharply defined Arab nationalist movement to which all Arabs who support the formation of a united Arab state belong. The vast majority of politically conscious Arabs today say that they support Arab nationalism but they differ greatly among themselves on ways and means of attaining the desired union and what they expect to gain from it. The words 'Arab nationalism' (al-qaumīyah al-'Arabīyah) and 'Arabism' (al-'urūbah) have today an extraordinarily strong emotional appeal throughout the Arab world and few Arabs indeed dare to use these words in a way which implies criticism of what they stand for. Each Arab sees in Arab nationalism what he most desires. The pan-Islamic extremist uses the words as synonymous with Islam; the member of the Christian or other religious minorities who support Arab nationalism in the Arab world sees in it a guarantee of equality of opportunity independent of religious beliefs.

There are, in fact, almost as many Arab nationalist "movements" as there are politically conscious Arabs. This work gives evidence of the diversity of opinion concerning the questions of religion and state, the form of the union and the differing attitudes which Arab nationalist writers stress should be adopted towards both the Eastern communist and Western democratic worlds.

This study would be far from satisfactory without some special emphasis being placed on two organisations which have had and will have great influence in shaping and developing the ideology of contemporary pan-Arab nationalism. The first of these is the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party (ba'th-renaissance), which was largely influential in constructing the close union between Syria and Egypt in 1958. The Ba'th party was formed in 1940 in Syria by Michel 'Aflaq, a Christian schoolteacher. The party is Arab nationalist by definition; its charter proclaims, in the first article, a belief in the existence of the Arab nation and the need to give this nation political form. The party, which is left-wing socialist, revolutionary and firmly secular in its ideology, grew increasingly active and successful in the period from the end of the Second World War until the formation of the U.A.R. In recent years it was attaining minority but important representation in the Syrian parliament. In 1952 the Ba'th party amalgamated with

the Socialist party of Akram al-Hourani, and is responsible to a large extent for the strong socialist element in present-day Arab nationalism. As a progressive and revolutionary party it had great attraction for young Arab intellectuals in Syria, Jordan and Lebanon. The party's insistence on the need for complete equality of opportunity for members of the religious minorities in the affairs of state has been particularly effective in attracting the support of the members of these communities.

The influence of the Ba'th party in the formation of the United Arab Republic, which 'Aflaq had advocated since 1956 is clearly shown by the fact that both deputy leaders of the party, Akram al-Hourani and Salah al-Din al-Bitar were, until very recently, members of the Central Cabinet of the new state, despite the fact that in the last Syrian elections held before the union the Ba'th were a minority party. The recent resignation of both these Ministers from the government of the U.A.R. must be taken, presumably, to show their dissatisfaction with the conduct of the policies of the state which they helped to create. It seems likely that their resignation will be considered a matter of great importance by those Arabs who have supported the form of Arab nationalism long propagated by the Ba'th party.

The dissolution of the political parties in Syria after the formation of the United Arab Republic and the acceptance by some Ba'thist leaders of important posts in the government of the new state were apparently considered by some Arab nationalist intellectuals to leave a void which could only be filled by the formation of a new and independent pan-Arab nationalist organisation. In the last years, therefore, an Arab nationalist organisation originally formed some ten years ago, calling itself the "Movement of Arab Nationalists" (ḥarakah al-qaumīn al-'arab) has gained increasing support in Lebanon, Jordan and, more secretly in the Syrian Region. The Movement is organised strictly as a secret society;¹ membership is closely restricted to individuals of proved ability, acceptable character and unquestioned loyalty to the cause of Arab nationalism. Its two founder members are Christian and the Christian element in it is strong. The Movement is based on principles very similar to those of the Ba'th party; it is revolutionary socialist and demands a secular basis for the formation of the proposed United Arab State. The Movement has a small but influential and active membership and is organised into small, secret cells in the major towns of the Levant.

1. The existence of the Movement and the general details which I give here concerning its organisation are, of course, fairly widely known in Beirut.

The Movement neither approves nor disapproves officially of the conduct of the policies of the United Arab Republic, from which, I am told, it refuses to accept financial aid. It has the determined intention to remain independent of parties participating in practical government of the Arab states; it desires to influence the policies of these governments from the outside in order to bring about the sort of Arab nationalist union it considers most suitable. The finances of the Movement are maintained on the basis of voluntary contribution from members. Its funds have also been used to set up businesses in various Arab towns which are run by party members and the profits from which are returned to the movement's central treasury. The Movement has so far published only one short series of pamphlets for general release and these add nothing to the ideology of Arab nationalism. It has recently started publication of an Arabic periodical newspaper in Beirut called "al-Hurriyah". The Movement apparently believes that the party system in Yugoslavia might prove a suitable model both for its own internal organisation and that of the desired United Arab state. The members are similarly, I am told, engaged in formulating an economic policy applicable to the Arab union based on the Yugoslav economic system.

TREATMENT OF THE SUBJECT AND THE SOURCES CONSULTED

This study is an attempt to examine the contemporary ideology of Pan-Arab nationalism, the supporters of which seeking some form of effective union between the Arab states at present divided. The sources I have consulted in detail begin with the conference called in Blūdān in Syria by the Arab Committee for the Defence of Palestine in 1937 until the year 1959. The Arabic sources examined are the work of authors who have stated that they believe in the existence of the Arab nation and who appear to favour the creation of an united Arab state.¹ In this study I have assumed that the words "al-'urūbah" (Arabism) and "al-qaumīyah al-'arabīyah" (Arab nationalism) are so nearly synonymous as to make little difference. It might, however, be argued that the former implies a feeling of pride in the Arab culture and civilisation and not necessarily any belief in the need to form a pan-Arab state, with which belief the words "al-qaumīyah al-'arabīyah" seem today inseparably connected. The difference is, nevertheless, very slight, if it exists in practice at all.

1. Under no circumstances should this work be assumed to represent the ideas of even a majority of Arab intellectuals who interest themselves in the contemporary problems of the Arab world, of which the problem of unity is only one.

We find, for example, that Sāṭi' al-Ḥuṣarī, Muḥammad Wahbī, Nicola Ziadeh and 'Abd al-Latīf Sharārah have each written books, directly concerned with the problem of pan-Arab political unity, in the titles of which the word "al-'urūbah" appears. Wherever the word "al-'urūbah" has occurred in the Arabic text of the sources consulted for this study I have, for the sake of any reader who may consider that the words do differ significantly in connotation, used the word "Arabism" in English. Wherever the words "Arab nationalism" occur in the quotations cited, it may be understood that the words "al-qaumīyah al-'arabīyah" were employed in the original Arabic.

I have not examined Arab nationalist sources in a strictly chronological order; in the last decades there does not seem to have been any great overall development in Arab nationalist ideology. The Second World War, the creation of the Jewish state of Israel in Palestine, the growing influence of communism in the Middle East and the adoption by Egypt in recent years of an official policy in support of Arab nationalism have all led to great changes in emphasis in the most recent Arab nationalist works. The basic arguments for the existence of the Arab nation and the discussions of religious, social and economic factors and the form of the proposed union, have, however, remained in principle the same.

I have avoided in this study giving preeminent consideration to the attitudes and ideas of any particular group or groups

of Arab nationalist theorists. I have tried to give some idea of majority or minority opinions where I have thought justified but, with the exception of the Ba'thists and the sponsors of the policies of the United Arab Republic, each work I have examined expresses the particular opinions of its author. Individual quotations from the work of any one Arab nationalist writer cannot, of course, be understood to represent the opinions of all those Arabs who support the formation of an united Arab state.

I have restricted my study in general to an examination of Arab nationalist works published in the last two decades in book form; although I have quoted from some Arabic magazines an exhaustive study of them and of even a section of the Arabic press would have been too great a task to be undertaken. I have been restricted in my reading for this study only by the limitations^{im} posed by what was known and accessible to me; any omissions there may be are unconscious and unintentional.

Since I have consciously examined the works I have read from the point of view of the interest, typicality or originality of the ideas expressed in them, rather than from the popularity or importance of the author concerned, it is clearly necessary to indicate those sources which are most important and to say something of the position and reputation of their authors within Arab nationalism. I have not,

unfortunately, been able to meet more than a minority of Arab nationalist writers personally and information concerning some of the others has been difficult to obtain. I understand, moreover, that some of the writers from whose works I have quoted have, in recent years, lost their belief in and enthusiasm for pan-Arab nationalism.

An obvious observation must be made concerning the sources of this study. It will be seen that the vast majority of these sources are the work of Syrian, Lebanese, Jordanian and Palestinian writers. This is particularly true of those works published before the end of 1956, by which time the Egyptian government had adopted a distinct policy of support for the idea of Arab union. Pan-Arab nationalism seeks for the establishment of a state uniting effectively all the Arabic-speaking peoples who live in the land area between the Persian Gulf and the Atlantic Ocean. Where, one might justifiably ask, are the books written in support of pan-Arab nationalism by Iraqis, Sa'udis, Yemenis, Sudanese and the inhabitants of the Arab North African States? While 'Alāī al-Fāsi, for example, the Moroccan writer and member of the Istiqlāl party, refers to the "prolonged affinity" of North Africa to the Arab world and frequently mentions Arab solidarity and "arabism", he significantly stresses that "The Maghrib, however, despite its acceptance of Islam ^{as} and its

religion and Arabic as its language, has always felt pride in its own entity, seeking a proper place within the Arab world and refusing to be relegated to a position in the rear of the Arab convoy or far away from the centre of leadership."¹.

The reasons for the apparent lack of works in direct support of close pan-Arab unity by writers from these regions must, no doubt, be sought in a combination of factors of which the difficult political situation of the last decades in the Arab world, the lack of printing presses, the high cost of book publication and the widespread illiteracy are several. The lack of Arab nationalist publications from these areas is, however, striking and it is abundantly clear that until very recently it has been the Arabs of Greater Syria who have been the most enthusiastic proponents of Arab unity. There is little evidence so far of anything like comparable enthusiasm for the achievement of a close Arab union in the minds of the inhabitants of the other Arab countries.

Brief details concerning some contemporary Arab writers who have written books concerned with Arab nationalism are

1. "Independence Movements", Michigan, 1954, p. 7. This work, published by the American Council of Learned Studies, is a translation of the author's work: "al-harakāt al-istiqlāliyah fī al-maghrīb al-'arabī," Cairo, 1948.

given below in alphabetical order of precedence.¹.

'Abd al-Dāim, Dr. 'Abd Allah; obtained his PhD. in Europe. A Syrian by origin, he is at present on the staff of the Syrian University in Damascus. He has contributed to Arabic magazines for some years on social and political subjects. He is gaining considerable respect in the Arab world as a leading writer on Arab nationalist affairs.

'Abd al-Nāsir, Jamāl; the first president of the United Arab Republic and formerly president of Egypt. Led the Army group of 'Free Officers' which successfully carried out the Egyptian Revolution of 1952. A Muslim from Upper Egypt, he appears to have worked originally more for a specifically Egyptian rather than Arab nationalist revival until the early months of 1956. Since this time he has actively worked to spread the ideology of Arab nationalism.².

'Aflaq, Michel, the leader and founder of the Arab Ba'th party, which has been actively propagating Arab nationalism since its foundation in 1940. A Christian writer, trained as a school teacher and educated largely in France, he has

1. The following biographical remarks are based on what I have been able to discover mainly by personal interview and enquiry. I apologise very sincerely for any misapprehension or omissions on my part.

2. See Chapter Nine, above.

personally been largely responsible for giving the Arab nationalist movement its present strong revolutionary-socialist motif. He has long supported the idea of an effective Syrian-Egyptian union as a prelude to a complete Arab union. His published works consist mainly of speeches he has delivered at party meetings throughout his career.

al-'Alāyilī, 'Abd Allah; an early supporter of the ideology of Arab nationalism. He is a member of a well-known and respected Lebanese family; he is a devout Muslim and bears the title of 'sheikh'. He appears to favour some form of Arab federation rather than complete union and has strong leftist beliefs. His work quoted, which was published in Beirut in 1941, is one of the earliest exposés of the aims and theories of Arab nationalism and is clearly and well expressed.

al-'Ayādī, 'Ayādī al-'Abd; an Egyptian Coptic writer who claims to have supported and been persecuted for his Arab nationalist beliefs for many years. A lawyer by profession, he is not well known in Arab nationalist circles, at least outside Egypt. His work is an interesting plea for complete religious equality between followers of all religions and sects within Arab nationalism.

al-Bāqūrī, Ahmed Hassan; an Egyptian member of the Muslim Brothers before their dissolution, he was, for several years before his recent dismissal, Minister of Pious Foundations in

post-revolutionary Egypt. He was the leader of several important Egyptian missions to Communist China and to North Africa in 1954-5. His work from which I have quoted, entitled 'Arabism and Religion' is mainly interesting in showing his own lack of distinction between the two. It is in general a merely emotional attack on Western imperialism and on French North African policy in particular.

Darwazah, Muhammad 'Izzah; a highly respected Palestinian Muslim author of a number of religious and historical works. He has actively supported the idea of Arab unity since before the First World War. His work from which I have quoted was published in 1957 under the auspices of the Arab League. It is an historical exposé of imperialist policies in the Arab world and stresses the need for unity to gain complete and lasting freedom. He shows clearly that he sees a special place for Islam in the proposed Arab union.¹ He is one of the few Arab writers who have attempted to solve the difficult problem of formulating a suitable constitution for the pan-Arab state.²

Fāris, Nabīh Amīn; a Professor on the staff of the American University of Beirut, he is a Muslim of Lebanese origin who now enjoys American nationality. He has written several

1. See Chapter Five, above, pp. 196

2. See Chapter Four, above, pp. 147 et seq.

books on Arab unity but is not now considered to support the idea of a completely unified Arab state.

Haikal, Dr. Yūsuf; qualified for the degree of Ph.D. at the Sorbonne. He was Mayor of Jaffa for a period during the British mandate and was the first representative of Palestine in the Arab League; he has held important posts in the government of Jordan. His short book "nahwa al-wahdah al-'arabīyah" ("Towards Arab Unity"), published in 1943, stressed Egypt's place in the Arab world and proposed an Arab federation as a first step to complete union.

al-Hājj, 'Azīz; a little-known Iraqi left-wing supporter of communism. He is not considered by some Arab nationalists I have met to be a true supporter of Arab nationalism, although he claims to be one in his book.

al-Hājj, Kamāl Yūsuf; Obtained the degree of M.A. at the American University of Beirut and his Ph.D. at the Sorbonne. He is a Lebanese Maronite Christian who is not considered to favour a complete Arab union.

Hannah, Dr. George; a Lebanese Greek Orthodox Christian by birth, but an agnostic and Marxist by belief, he was educated at the American University of Beirut and the Sorbonne and is a practising Doctor of Medicine. He suffers from insomnia and spends the night writing on a variety of subjects. He has written some thirty books on medicine, fiction and politics and has travelled widely in both West and East Europe. He does not

at present consider that an Arab union will be formed in the foreseeable future and has recently openly condemned the policies of the United Arab Republic. His works are stimulating and controversial but are not, in my opinion, written with very great care for accuracy and reasoned judgement.

Husain, Muhammad Tawfiq; a Muslim Iraqi who worked for some time on the teaching staff of the American University in Beirut. An extreme left-wing socialist he may perhaps have been largely responsible for the book he published, entitled the "Crescent in Crisis", under joint authorship with Nabih Amin Faris. It is a very badly oversimplified examination of the aims of Arab unity and obstacles presumably imposed from outside which stand in its way. It consists, in the large part, of a series of emotional attacks on Western policies in the Arab world.

al-Husaini, Musa; was an early propagandist of Arab nationalism and was secretary to a conference of Arab students in Europe held in Brussels in 1938. He was accused of complicity in the assassination of King 'Abd Allah of Jordan and was executed. The book he edited is an interesting exposé of the generally accepted aims and principles of Arab nationalism.

al-Husari, Abu Khaldun Sati; was born in 1880 in San'aw in Yemen. His father was an Ottoman Empire government official originally from Aleppo. Al-Husari was educated in Constantinople, learned French and Greek and decided on a teaching

career. He spent some ten years as a science teacher in the Balkan countries, where he was very impressed by the anti-Ottoman nationalist feeling of the local population. He took part in the Arab Revolt of 1916 and was made Minister of Education in the provisional Arab government set up in Damascus under Faisal in 1919. He held important posts in the Ministry of Education in Iraq from 1921 to 1941 until his banishment for complicity in the revolt of Rashīd 'Alī. He was responsible for the complete reorganisation of the educational system in Syria from 1944-47. He has since held many important posts in the fields of culture and learning in both Egypt and Syria; from 1953 to 1957 he was director of the Cultural Department of the Arab League. He is the author of a wide collection of books; his works on Arab nationalism are considered classics. He has conducted lengthy word-battles against the Syrian Nationalist party of Antūn Sa'ādah and against other opponents of Arab nationalism and is considered to have played a great part in gaining acceptance for the movement's philosophy. He is firmly convinced that a close form of Arab union is inevitable and that Israel will eventually cease to exist as a separate Jewish state.

Jumblāt, Kémāl; the hereditary leader of the Druze community of the Lebanon, his forces were the main military opposition to the Lebanese Armed Forces in the disturbances

of the summer of 1958. He appears to favour close Lebanese cooperation with the United Arab Republic but not close union with it. His work I have quoted is remarkable for the strength of the anti-Western feeling it expresses and for the violence with which he attacks both the character and political policies of ex-President Sham'un.

Jum'ah, Dr. Ibrāhīm; A little known Egyptian teacher who supports the Arab nationalist policies of the U.A.R. His book from which I have quoted is superficial and unoriginal and displays an extreme anti-Western bias.

al-Ma'lūf, Rafīq; a Christian Lebanese writer, he was educated in the French section of the American University of Beirut. He is the assistant editor of the moderate and respected newspaper "al-Jarīdah" of Beirut. He is considered to support the idea of a union of the Fertile Crescent rather than a full Arab union. His work quoted is an orderly examination of communist aims and policies in the Arab world.

Majdhūb, Dr. Muḥammad; obtained his Ph.D. in France. A Muslim Lebanese, he lives in Saïda. He is a full supporter of the revolutionary socialist ideology of Arab nationalism and apparently fully approves of the policies of the United Arab Republic. His work from which I have quoted, which is clearly intended to have a 'popular' rather than intellectual

appeal, well exemplifies the strong emotional basis of Arab nationalism.

Maqsūd, Dr. Clovis; a controversial and individualistic Lebanese Christian writer. He obtained his Ph.D. at Oxford and has travelled extensively in the Western world. He writes mainly on social and economic problems; a determined supporter of revolutionary socialism, he apparently considers the policies of the United Arab Republic appropriate to the circumstances.

Nāsir al-Dīn, 'Alī; a Lebanese Druze and lifelong supporter of Arab nationalism. He has worked for Arab unity since before the First World War and took part in the original congress held in a Lebanese village which led to the formation of the "usbah al-'amal al-qaumi" (League of Nationalist Action) in Damascus in 1933. Nāsir al-Dīn was the founder and leader of the League's section formed in Beirut in 1936. He was imprisoned frequently and for long periods under the French Mandate and occupation. His work, first published in 1946, is a reasoned and balanced exposé of the basic ideology of Arab nationalism. A sincere and idealistic person, he apparently now considers that Lebanon is likely to remain outside any close Arab union in the foreseeable future.

Nusaibah, Hāzīm Zakī; a Muslim Jordanian writer who enjoys a responsible position in the present government of

Jordan. His work quoted, published in English, was successfully presented for the degree of Ph.D. at the University of Princeton; it is an historical and ideological analysis of Arab nationalism before its complete adoption by Egypt as official policy.

Qamhāwī, Dr. Walīd; a young Muslim Jordanian Arab nationalist writer. His work from which I have quoted, which was first published in 1956 is, in my opinion, one of the best in support of Arab unity which has so far been written. He seems to have a sound appreciation of the forces which led to the creation of Israel and is not content to merely blame the 'imperialists' for the present situation. He shows a good understanding of the difficulties in the way of Arab union and, unlike many Arab nationalist writers adopts a realistic attitude towards these problems. He is one of the few writers who have attempted to suggest a detailed plan for the form of an Arab union.

Sa'ab, Dr. Hassan; a Muslim Lebanese who works with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beirut. He obtained his doctorate in political science at Georgetown. He is chairman of the Political Science Association in Lebanon. He supports a form of Arab nationalism which seeks a form of Arab cooperation short of complete political union. His book which I have read is a reasoned and conscious collection of studies

which attempt to deal with many problems of the contemporary Arab world.

Sa'id, Ahmed; a young Egyptian Muslim qualified as a lawyer. He is mainly responsible for the successful development of the Egyptian 'Voice of the Arabs' radio programme as a vehicle for Arab nationalist propaganda. His book is an interesting example of the Egyptian attitude towards Arab unity, expressed on a deliberately 'popular' level.

Sā'igh, Dr. Fā'iz; a Palestinian Christian supporter of Arab nationalism. He has worked strenuously and with some effect in countering Zionist propaganda in the United States. His book from which I have quoted, one of several he has written on Arab nationalism, is an historical analysis of the movement towards Arab unity. His work lays particular emphasis on the assumed inevitability of complete Arab union and is remarkable for its optimistic tone.

Sharārah, 'Abd al-Latīf; a Lebanese Muslim civil servant. An apparently pro-Egyptian supporter of Arab nationalism his works are not, in my opinion, marked by any depth or originality of thought.

Ziyādah, Nicola; a Professor at the American University of Beirut, he is Christian and came originally from Palestine. He does not now, apparently, consider a full Arab nationalist

union either likely or desirable.

Zurayq, Dr. Constantine; is a Distinguished Professor of History at the American University of Beirut and also its Vice-President. He has enjoyed an extremely active and successful career. He obtained his M.A. at Chicago and his Ph.D. at Princeton. He has held important Syrian diplomatic posts abroad and at the United Nations. From 1949 to 1952 he held the position of Rector of the Syrian University. He is the author of many articles and several works in book form on the history of the Arabs and the contemporary problems of the Arab world. His work "al-wa'y al-qaumī", ("National Consciousness") which was first published in 1939, has had great influence in stimulating Arab pride and determination to bring about a national revival. Both his work and his personality command the unanimous respect of the Western academic and Arab nationalist worlds alike. A Syrian Christian, Zurayq is representative today of a minority group of 'moderate' Arab nationalist writers. His recent work seems to stress the need for speedy yet gradual rather than revolutionary progress towards the development of the Arab world and the achievement of Arab unity.

CHAPTER ONE:

TOWARDS A DEFINITION OF ARAB NATIONALISM

The words "Arab nationalism" are generally used in the English language to translate the force denoted in Arabic by the words "al-qaumīyah al-'arabīyah". A study of the nature of this force and of the ideology on which it is based and through which it finds expression must clearly begin with an examination of what is conveyed in English by the words "nationalism" and "Arab".

The concept of nationalism seems to be too complex to permit its definition to be made in a few concise words. The Shorter Oxford dictionary, for example, merely defines it as "devotion to one's nation; a policy of national independence."¹ This definition clearly takes no account of the important fact that the nation-state to which the individual feels devotion need not be an officially or widely accepted reality, but something to which the nationalist aspires and for the realisation of which he feels he must strive. A number of

1. The Oxford Dictionary of 1908 refers to nationalism under the heading "Theology" as "The doctrine that certain nations (as contrasted with individuals) are the object of divine election." The same work quotes Fraser's magazine as saying: "Nationalism is another word for egotism."

recent studies have been made by Western observers interested in gaining a true appreciation of the elements and factors which constitute nationalism and their findings are very pertinent to the present study. Boyd C. Shafer,¹ for example, discusses the difficulty of reaching a good definition of nationalism and concludes that "by nationalism today may be meant:

1). The love of a common soil, race, language or historical culture.

2). A desire for political independence, security and prestige of the nation.

3). A mystical devotion to a vague, sometimes even supernatural social organism, which, known as the nation or Volk, is more than the sum of its parts.

4). The dogma that the individual lives exclusively for the nation with the corollary that the nation is an end in itself or:

5). The dogma that the nation (the nationalist's own) is or should be dominant if not supreme among other nations and should take aggressive action to this end."²

The same author suggests, hypothetically and making no

1. See also the works of Hans Kohn, of which the most recent is "Nationalism", New York, 1955.

2. "Nationalism, Myth and Reality". New York, 1955, p. 6.

claim for "infallibility or finality" the following factors and conditions usually present in nationalism: a certain defined (often vaguely) unit of territory (whether possessed or coveted); some common cultural characteristics such as language (or widely understood languages) customs, manners; some common dominant social (as Christian) and economic (as capitalist or recently communist) institutions; a common independent or sovereign government (the type does not matter) or the desire for one; a belief in a common history, invented or real, and in common origin; a love and esteem for fellow nationals; a devotion to the entity called the nation; a common pride in the achievements of this nation and a sorrow at its tragedies; a disregard for or hostility to other groups "especially if these prevent or seem to threaten the separate nation's existence"; a hope that the nation will have a great and glorious future.¹ He concludes his analysis stating that "at present by the word may be denoted that sentiment unifying a group of people who have a real or imagined common historical experience and a common aspiration to live together as a separate group in the future."²

In the most recently published examination of the theories of nationalism, the study by Elie Kedourie, we find that similar

1. Ibid., p. 7/8.

2. Ibid., p. 10.

elements are stressed. His work opens with the words: "Nationalism is a doctrine invented in Europe at the beginning of the 19th century. It pretends to supply a criterion for the determination of the unity of the population proper to enjoy a government exclusively its own, for the legitimate use of power in the state and for the right organisation of a society of states."¹ It will, I think, be clear from my study of Arab nationalist literature that the majority of elements and factors these writers have mentioned are, to a greater or lesser degree, present in Arab nationalism.

There have been comparatively few attempts by non-Arab writers to arrive at a definition of nationalism applied to the Arab movement seeking greater measure of Arab unity and cooperation. One of these is that of R.H. Davison, who is of the opinion: "For want of a better term, we describe as modern nationalism an exaggerated consciousness of organic unity and uniqueness based on common cultural traits and the concept of a territorially delimitable state."² Arab nationalists themselves

1. "Nationalism", London, 1960. p. 9. Kedourie, it will be observed, stresses the purely political aspects of nationalism. The study is an examination of nationalist philosophies since the early 19th century, explained with reference to the philosophical and political development which took place throughout the period.

2. "Middle East Nationalism". Article in M.E.J., 1953, p. 327.

would, no doubt, question the word 'exaggerated' and might justifiably ask for an explanation of the meaning of the last three words. Walter Z. Laqueur, too, has an openly critical approach to nationalism in the Middle East. He comments: "The Middle East received nationalism in isolation, without liberalism, democracy and the humanitarian aims; this has been the main reason why nationalism there, to this very day has taken so much more frequently the form of chauvinism, of emotional aggression and of opposition to everything foreign rather than that of genuine patriotism."¹ He goes on, indeed, to make even more outspoken criticism: "This nationalism is distinguished by the over-estimation of one's own nation and the denigration of others, an ambivalent appraisal of the destiny of one's nation based on a feeling of inferiority, and a general tendency to attribute anything wrong with one's own nation to the evil-doing of others."²

A number of Western observers have stressed the obvious need to make a distinction between "moderate" Arab nationalism and extremist pan-Arab nationalism. The former seeks for gradual development, if necessary within the present internal boundaries of the Arab states as they now exist; the latter,

1. "Communism and Nationalism in the Middle East". London, 1957, 2nd edition, p. 7.

2. Ibid., p. 8.

described by Gibb as "an ignorant, intolerant, explosive force" seeks revolutionary progress within a pan-Arab state which should be formed as soon as possible, disregarding the present internal political boundaries of the Arab world.¹ Quincy Wright, an American writer makes this distinction clearly: "Pan-Arabism is a more extremist, radical effort to unite all the Arab world into a single state, as in the time of the Ummayyad and 'Abbāsid Caliphates, whereas Arab nationalism merely seeks to develop the Arab personality in the states which exist. We would associate Pan-Arabism with Nāsir and his movement, but Arab nationalism exists in all the states from Morocco to the borders of Iran. It is a more moderate type, recognising the independence of the various Arab states, some of which are actively opposed to Pan-Arabism as a political movement."² The distinction is a very important one; the Arab writers whose works are examined in this study do not all, by any means, favour the revolutionary and extremist Pan-Arabism.³

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1. H.A.R. Gibb, "The Future for Arab Unity", in "The Near East: Problems and Prospects". P.W. Ireland, ed. Chicago, 1942, p. 93.
 2. Article in "Middle East Report, 1959, ed. W. Sands. Middle East Institute, Washington, 1959, p. 8.
 3. See remarks concerning the sources for this study, Introduction pp. 21² above.

Some Arab nationalist theorists have themselves attempted to define the general concept of nationalism; they reach conclusions similar to those of the Western writers I have quoted, although the tone of their remarks has not, of course, in it that underlying element of disapproval and criticism which I think one can detect in the works of the latter.¹ As the Arab writers are writing in support of an idea they wish to see fulfilled, the difference in attitude is not surprising.

Dr. George Hannah, a Lebanese Marxist of Christian origin, considers simply, but perhaps vaguely, that nationalism: "consists of those firm, mutually shared qualities in a specific human family to which is given the name 'umma'," ². He goes on to amplify his understanding of nationalism: "Nationalism is a social contract in a people (sha'b) which has a common language, territory, history, destiny, material economic interests and spiritual culture. In this contract there must exist

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1. See, for example, A.J. Toynbee's discussion of the struggle for power between Liberalism and Communism and their relationship with nationalism: "In becoming a nationalist the Liberal had, in fact, inadvertently but irrevocable become a fellow traveller with his Communist adversary, since Nationalism, in unison with Communism and in contrast to Liberalism, was a worship of Collective Man and the only substantial difference between these two varieties of the cult of Leviathan was that Communism was a worship of the collective human heart in its oecumenical entirety, whereas Nationalism was a worship of it in fragments chipped off to constitute parochial states." "A Study of History," Oxford, 1954, Vol. IX p. 621.
 2. "ma'nāh al-qaumīyah al-'arabīyah" ("The Meaning of Arab Nationalism") Beirut, 1957, p. 21.

all these bases together."¹.

The strong emotional content of nationalism is stressed in the following attempted definition: "Nationalism is, fundamentally, those human feelings which draw the interest of the individual towards his nation (umma) and draws the interest of the nation towards its sons. These mutually shared feelings grow with time and get stronger with training."².

Another well respected Syrian nationalist theorist defines the force in obscure philosophical terminology: "The essence of nationalism is the binding link between the emotional longing in its bases and intellectual analysis and scientific study or, in other words, between dialectic and emotion."³. The same writer makes a distinction between what he considers false nationalisms and true nationalisms. Conscious, perhaps, of the criticisms made by Western writers of nationalist theory of the 19th century, he claims: "The 19th century was not, in fact, the age of nationalist freedoms; on the contrary, it was an age of exclusive, aggressive fanatical nationalist cliques. The time has passed when some nations desired supremacy and aggression and believed in their superiority and in

1. Ibid., p. 30.

2. "fī al-qaumīyah al-'arabīyah." ("About Arab Nationalism") 'Abd al-Latīf Sharārah. Beirut, 1957, p. 38.

3. "durūb al-qaumīyah al-'arabīyah." ("Paths of Arab Nationalism") Dr. 'Abdullah 'Abd al-Dāim. Beirut 1959, p. 56.

the purity of their racial origins and considered that this racial purity gave them the right to subject to it the peoples of the earth."¹ Dr. 'Abd al-Dā'im similarly strongly disagrees with the opinion that there are certain common factors to all nationalisms, without all of which no nationalism can be considered complete.² "Denigrators of nationalism," he writes, "seek to confuse the truth. They falsely claim that the elements which make up a particular nationalism are the same in every time and place and that quite theoretical discussion is permissible concerning the general bases to all nationalisms. They thus consider that it is justifiable to ask whether these bases are common land, language, religion, blood, history, desire or other than these. From this they found the way to expose the weakness in any one of these factors, for we always find that in some nationalisms some of these conditions are not fulfilled completely; if this is so, these factors do not exist as bases of that nationalism."³ He goes on to ask rhetorically whether Arab nationalism must necessarily follow French and German nationalisms; he points out that Russian communism is in fact a form of nationalism suitable to the

1. Ibid., p. 52/3.

2. c.f. Hannah's remark quoted this chapter above p. "In this contract there must exist all these bases together."

3. Idem, p. 57.

Russians. So, he maintains, is Arab nationalism the product of the special conditions of the Arabs: "Nationalist philosophy is a philosophy which rises up from the reality of the people and its living existence...Arab nationalism has no bases other than those of its own reality and it has merely to study well this reality and deduce its attributes and get to know its form so that it may lay down its bases and principles."¹.

Other writers are conscious of a fear and distrust which the word 'nationalism' brings to the mind of some people: "it excites panic sometimes in the hearts of the hesitant and the wavering, who are not aware - or do not wish to be aware - of the true meaning and what is really to be understood by nationalism."². Dr. Majdhūb goes on to deny any conflict between nationalism and humanity. He says that those responsible for this widespread misconception are Western critics who have made the mistake of forming opinions in their studies based on European events alone in a specific period of history, and that these opinions need not be valid for other countries and other times. He agrees that these writers were right to condemn Western nationalisms but wrong in applying this condemnation to all nationalisms. True nationalism, he says, has only good

1. Ibid., p. 57.

2. Dr. Muhammad Majdhūb, "al-jumhūrīyah al-'arabīyah al-muttaḥidāh." ("The United Arab Republic.") Beirut, 1958, p. 45.

qualities: "True nationalism is humanistic before all else; by it is meant giving freedom of action to the capabilities of the people, the discovery of their particular genius and the fulfilment of their desire for a free, dignified life in urging them forward to take part in building a worthy civilisation useful to the world."¹.

One Arab writer dislikes to use the accepted Arabic word for nationalism, "qaumīyah", on the grounds that it has particular connotations of geographic and racial sectarianism. He prefers to use the word "waṭanīyah" (from 'waṭan', roughly 'homeland') which is usually translated by "patriotism". "The reason for this," he writes, "is that the word nationalism has been spoilt by many blemishes in recent times, so that it has special meanings with different people...for example (it is confused) with the words 'racial superiority' - which means the belief in the existence of a 'pure race' within mankind and also with a conception that nationalism is an end in itself which must be maintained and glorified and sanctified...we do not believe in the existence of any racial superiority within the human race."².

The definition of the word 'Arab' has for long been the

1. Ibid., p. 45.

2. Dr. Walīd Qamhāwī: "al-nakbah wa al-binā li ba'th al-waṭan al-'arabī." ("Disaster and Reconstruction Towards the Renaissance of the Arab Homeland") Beirut, 1956, p. 376/7.

subject of much discussion and some disagreement. The basic meaning of the word has been variously explained; the general consensus of opinion reached seems to be that it originally had the meaning of 'nomad', from a root 'araba' to wander.¹ A present-day Coptic writer, however, maintains, on the authority of "scholars of the ancient Iraqi and Semitic languages" that the word had in Assyrian a connotation simply of direction and that it had a similar meaning to 'gharb' or West. The word originally was applied by the Assyrians to those people who lived to their West in the Arabian peninsula. The word 'arab' meant, he therefore considers, 'people of the west.'²

A completely satisfactory definition of the people of widely differing racial origins who today consider themselves to be Arab seems quite impossible. Arab nationalist writers are acutely aware of the need for a definition. Dr. Yūsuf Haikal, for example, wrote: "In my opinion anyone whose national language is Arabic and who thinks in it and expresses his thoughts by using it and who records by means of it his scientific or literary observations, this person is an Arab, even if his father and mother should be of a different people."³

1. See Bernard Lewis: "The Arabs in History." p. 13.

2. 'Ayādī al-'Abd al' Ayādī: "al-masīhīyah wa al-qaumīyah al-'arabīyah." ("Christianity and Arab Nationalism") Cairo, 1958, p. 42.

3. "nahwa al-wahdah al-'arabīyah." ("Towards Arab Unity") Cairo, 1943, p. 19.

The same writer goes on to specifically deny that Arab blood gives its possessor the right to call himself an Arab: "An Arab is not one whose blood is purely Arab; on the contrary, (he is an Arab) whose national language is Arabic, who enjoys its literature and appreciates its culture. We see many whose parents were purely Arab who have been born and educated in foreign countries and whose national language has become that of those countries and whose culture has become that of those countries; their knowledge of the Arabic language has ceased to exist or is merely that of a foreigner to it. They have become, in this case, citizens of the country in which they were brought up, and whose national language and culture they have adopted. These people are not Arabs, even if the blood flowing in their veins be pure Arab blood, although their return to the Arab fold is to be hoped if they strive to fulfil the necessary conditions to being an Arab."¹.

The Arab Socialist Ba'th party, an essentially and fundamentally nationalist party, includes its own definition of the meaning of Arab in the party's charter. Article 10 states: "An Arab is he whose language is Arabic, who lives or was born in Arab lands and who believes that he belongs to the

1. Ibid., p. 19.

Arab nation."¹ Similarly, in Article 11 it specifically excludes from the Arab nation: "anyone who supports or belongs to a group opposed to the Arabs and everyone who has migrated to the Arab homeland with a colonialist intention."²

Western orientalists, too, have failed to reach any wholly satisfactory definition of what are the attributes or qualifications necessary to being an Arab. The only commonly agreed factors seem to be an ability to speak Arabic and a desire to be considered as an Arab.³ The emphasis on the Arabic language in each of these definitions is very pronounced; Arab nationalist writers are almost unanimous in considering that the common classical Arabic language is the most important factor uniting Arabs into one nation. They disclaim the significance of the dialectical differences which exist in many regions of the Arab world.⁴

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1. Quoted in Sāti' al-Huṣrī's "al-'urūbah baina du'ātihū wa ma'aridihā." ("Arabism between its Opponents and Proponents") Beirut, 3rd. edition 1957, p. 156.
 2. Ibid.
 3. See Lewis, Op. cit., Introduction and Chapter One.
 4. T.E. Lawrence's criticism of the bases of Arab patriotism is not without interest in this respect: "Moslems whose mother tongue was Arabic looked upon themselves for that reason as a chosen people. Their heritage of the Qur'ān and classical literature held the Arabic-speaking peoples together. Patriotism, ordinarily of race or soil, was warped to a language." "The Seven Pillars of Wisdom", London, 1935 edition, p. 336. See also chapter entitled "National Self-Determination" in Kedourie, Op. cit., in which the author examines the importance given to unity and purity of language as a factor in European nationalisms.

Apart from these words 'Arabs' and 'nationalism', there are several other words used frequently in contemporary Arabic political literature, the meanings of which are not entirely and precisely delineated from one another. Consequently, and due also to a lack in English of words to express the exact significance of these Arabic words precisely, even when this significance has been discovered, these words are difficult if not impossible, to translate by one corresponding word in English. Of these words are the frequently used "ummah," "waṭan" and "sha'b".

That there is a lack of complete agreement among Arabs concerning the exact meaning of these words is shown by an examination of some of the definitions reached by the political theorists who use them. Dr. Haikal states, for example,:"The 'sha'b' ('people') differs from the 'ummah' ('nation'); the first is formed by the language and its culture. If to these two factors are added the factors of historical heritage, shared interests and the desire to form a political union, then from the 'sha'b' an 'ummah' is formed, which will be firmly bound together and will remain unaffected by those political disturbances which disrupt those nations ('umam') consisting of various peoples ('shu'ūb')."¹.

1. Op. cit., p. 20.

Sāṭi al-Ḥuṣarī states, again attempting to define the word 'ummah': "The ummah forms a free, united state ('dawlah') and the borders of the homeland ('waṭan') are denoted by the boundaries of the existing state which joins together the whole ummah in its entirety beneath one flag."¹.

A somewhat more precise and comprehensible definition of these words is given by 'Abd al-Laṭīf Sharārah in one of his works: "The 'watan' (homeland) is that land and climate in which a group of people live. The word 'sha'b' denotes that group of people who live in one land, who have common historical origins and who are subjected, generally, to one political system. The state (dawlah) is the political entity which a given sha'b establishes in a given homeland (watan) and it takes its name usually from the political system and from the name of the homeland in which it exists as, for example, the 'Lebanese Republic' and the 'Kingdom of Iraq' and the 'Emirate of Kuwait'. As for 'ummah', it has a

1. "difa' 'an al-'urūbah" ("Defence of Arabism.") Beirut, 2nd edition 1957, p. 5. The distinction today between the words 'sha'b' and 'ummah' is becoming increasingly fine. The two words are frequently used as synonymous. The essential idea inherent in the use of the word 'ummah' in the Qur'an does not seem present in its present usage: "The passages in the Qur'an which the word "ummah" occurs in are so varied that its meaning cannot be rigidly defined. This much, however, seems to be certain, that it always refers to ethnical, linguistic or religious bodies of people who are the objects of the divine plan of salvation." Encyclopaedia of Islam, 19th Edition, p. 1015.

broader meaning than state (dawlah) and a fuller meaning than 'shāb' (people) and is more comprehensive in its designation than 'waṭan' (homeland)."¹.

A very detailed and specific meaning is given to the word 'ummah' by Dr. Ibrāhīm Jum'ah. He states: "An 'ummah' is, in the modern definition of the word, a group of people inhabiting one piece of land, among whom, as time has passed, historical ties have been made complete. It has a shared spiritual existence from which its thoughts and feelings have emerged. A unity of struggle, of aims and of attitudes has bound together the individuals within it."². He goes on to say that from this definition it is clear that differences of religion, form of government and blood relationships are of no account in the existence of a nation. He maintains: "The government is not one of the pillars of the nation, since the state is a political entity and the nation is a natural one." It is interesting to see how these definitions of what constitutes an 'ummah' seem deliberately formulated to be appropriate to the assumed Arab nation. The interest of Arab nationalist theorists in defining these words, especially

1. Op. cit., p. 15.

2. "al-qaumīyah al-'arabīyah. ("Arab Nationalism".) Cairo 1959. 2nd. edition, p. 25.

the word 'ummah', stems, of course, primarily from a desire to establish the existence of an ummah which includes within itself all the Arab peoples. This premise once established, they can justifiably denigrate the present political boundaries between the Arab countries and argue for the need for a political entity the size and shape of which is relevant and appropriate to the land mass occupied by the people who make up this one 'ummah'.

From these definitions it is clear that the word 'waṭan' refers to that land formation which is occupied by that group of people referred to both as the 'sha'b' and the 'ummah'; for want of a more precise word, I will translate it whenever it occurs by the English word 'homeland'. The word 'sha'b, the meaning of which is, I think, close to that of the German word 'Volk', I shall arbitrarily translate by the simple English 'people'. The word 'ummah', in spite of its breadth of meaning and very strong emotional flavour which is quite absent from the English, I will translate by the word 'nation'.

Modern Arabic literature contains, of course, many examinations of the basic aims of the specifically Arab nationalist movement itself. These are interesting in the differing emphases which are placed on the various aspects both of the purpose of the movement and of its bases. One of the earliest indications of the definite aims of Arab nationalism is that

given by the Congress of Arab Students held in Brussels in 1938 and attended by 30 Arab students who were studying in Europe at the time. The majority of these students were Syrians, with a lesser number of Iraqis and only two Egyptians. The first resolution on which the congress reportedly agreed took the form of the following creed: "I am an Arab and believe that the Arab nation is one and that it is its sacred right that it should possess complete sovereignty in dealing with its own affairs. Its guardian nationalism will urge it forward to free the Arab homeland and unite it together in all its parts and to the formation of political, economic and social systems more just and suitable than the systems at present existing within it. It will aim at the raising of the standard of living and increasing the good, both material and spiritual, of the people. It desires to take part in work~~for~~ for the good of the human race and it will strive to fulfil this by continuous effort on the basis of national organisation. I swear to God that I will strive to the best of my ability in the path of this, putting the national interest above every other consideration."¹. This exposition of nationalist aims contains all the basic dogma of the movement even today. The same congress defined Arab nationalism as: "The feelings of the

1. "kitāb al-mu'tamat." ("Book of the Congress,") edited by Mūsā al-Huṣainī. Beirut, 1939, p. 1.

need for freedom and union found between the inhabitants of the Arab countries, based on unity of homeland, language, culture, history and the feelings of common interest."¹.

In the same work, the purpose of which was fundamentally propagandist, seeking the support of all Arabs for the movement, care is taken to make clear that Arab nationalism was not sectarian or partisan in nature, but was of appeal to all Arabs, on the broadest definition, and even to non-Arab minority groups: "Arab nationalist philosophy is a patriotic philosophy, and respects the freedom of separate racial and regional groups and honours the right of free worship. It similarly respects the rights of the individual as, for example, freedom of opinion, of work, and of assembly, so long as these do not conflict with the public interest. Arab nationalist philosophy cannot possibly be in conflict with the interests of racial or religious minorities; on the contrary it seeks to place all sincere citizens on a basis of equality in rights and obligations."².

Many Arab nationalist theorists are of the opinion that a unity of feeling is the most essential element in Arab nationalism and in nationalism in general. Nicola Z̄iyādeh, for example, states: "The basis of nationalism is the unity of feelings between the individuals in a nation."³. He goes on

1. Ibid., p. 13.

2. Ibid., p. 14.

3. "al-'urūbah fī mīzān al-qaumīyah." ("Arabism in the Scales of Nationalism.") Beirut, 1950., p. 62.

later: "Nationalism has feelings as its basis and root. The nation is the result of these feelings. It is the result of the feelings of the individuals and their belief in its existence."¹ Dr. Fā'iz Ṣā'igh expresses this same belief: "Arab nationalism, then, is the spontaneous expression of a natural longing for universally cherished values, within the peculiarities of a concrete national context and in response to specific historical experiences and challenges. Its substance is universally human; its specific form, the timing of its actions, and the pattern of its evolution are peculiar to the Arab situation and relative to the conditions of Arab existence."²

Aḥmed Sa'īd considers that this unity of feelings has indeed been reached completely: "The Arab peoples in all parts of the Arab homeland, from the furthest East where Iraq is, to the Far West, to the waters of the Atlantic, have joined together in their belief in it. (Arab nationalism) In the same way, the hopes of the Arab millions for freedom, unity, strength, security and prosperity are centred in it! These have joined together about it the means for agreement on their general bases for the first time in the history of the Arab peoples and their leaders."³

1. Ibid., p. 66.

2. "Arab Unity". New York, 1958, p. 7.

3. "al-qaumīyah al-'arabīyah -- thaurah wa binā." ("Arab Nationalism, Revolution and Reconstruction"). Cairo, 1959, p. 103.

Similarly, President Nāṣir, in his address in February 1958, announcing the formation of the United Arab Republic, said: "Today, Arab nationalism having been an appeal and emotional feelings has become an actual reality."¹ Dr. Jum'ah, too, expresses complete conviction and confidence in the existence of this Arab nation: "It has gained its new, living existence from the interaction of events and the mutuality of interests and the unity of history...it is a complete nation, having all those qualities and factors which exist in indigenous nations, both material and organic as well as spiritual. The truth (of the existence) of the Arab nation is something which will not accept argument."² Another writer echoes this sentiment, saying that since the days when imperialism was at its strongest, many people have examined this question of the existence of an Arab nation and have: "concluded in the affirmative, relying on the certainty of the existence of the necessary factors for this nationalism. These factors, the ties of the past, present and future, constitute by the firmness of their connection, a true unity in which no doubt is possible."³ Dr. 'Abdullah (Abd ul-Dā'im is also of the opinion that Arab nationalism does now exist as a fact; he

1. Quoted by Muhammad Majdhūb: "al-jumhūrīyah al'arabīyah al-muttahidah." ("The U.A.R.") Beirut, 1958, p. 5.

2. Op. cit., p. 25.

3. Muhammad Wahbī: "al-urūbah wa al-insanīyah" ("Arabism and Humanity.") Beirut, 1958, p. 51.

maintains strongly that it is a natural phenomenon and not something artificially inspired; "It is living reality which is the basis for Arab nationalism, the belief present in the mind of every Arab and the truth articulate in every one of the fields of Arab life. It is this living, ardent reality of which nationalist philosophy has made clear the various elements and bases. It would be quite false and extremely misleading to claim that the idea of Arab nationalism is a created thing and a construction, the parts of which were fabricated."¹.

Michel 'Aflaq, the leader of the Arab Socialist Ba'th party, considers that some of the ideas of Arab nationalism are now accepted as existent fact, but emphasises that these are not the whole factors in the ideology of the movement: "Some ideas which were new five years ago concerning the bases of Arab nationalism and Arab Unity, have become widely accepted and obvious and have entered into the consciousness of the people from one extreme of the Arab homeland to the other. These thoughts are merely, however, separate sides and aspects of modern Arab nationalist ideology; it is impossible to separate these from the whole unit by means of which these parts would become organically bound."².

1. Op. cit., p. 56.

2. "ma'rakah al-maṣīr al-wāḥid." ("The Battle of the One Destiny") Beirut, 1958, p. 98.

That the living unity of sentiment and feeling claimed to exist by these writers is not, however, so complete as to be entirely satisfactory is a thought with which they would all probably agree. Dr. Ḥasan Ṣa'b concludes, indeed, that the present-day Arab world is in greater disunity than ever before. He points to the great ideological battles progressing in all parts of the world, saying that Moscow, Pekin, Belgrade, Washington, London, Paris, Rome and New Delhi each claim to have found the answer to man's further development. He goes on: "and Cairo, Baghdad, Mecca, Beirut and Tunis are each of them claiming that, in the special field of Arab affairs, they have the answer to Arab needs, both for concept and destiny...The Arab capitals rival one another, on a different level, in the same way that the other capitals of the world struggle with one another. The general meets the special, the external meets the internal in the Arab ideological battle, ^{in such a way that this battle} raises itself to a human level, both intentional and unintentional. Thus it returns to the violence of the Arab ideological struggle of the Ummayyad, 'Abbāsīd, Fāṭimid and Muwahid periods. It reaches, in this way, a degree of violence and tension which modern Arab history has never before known."¹.

1. "al-wa'y al-'aḡā'idī." ("Ideological Consciousness") Beirut 1959, p. 14. Dr. Ṣa'b, it will be observed, refers to a violent Arab ideological struggle existing throughout the period of the Arab Caliphate and Empire. Arab nationalist writers more normally refer to this period, somewhat incongruously, as one of unity; they frequently state their desire to reconstruct a pan-Arab union which will achieve once more this assumed unity. (~~See Chapter Three above, pp.~~)

Connected with the belief that Arab nationalism is an existing feeling is the belief that its basic aim should be in bringing about a general renaissance of all aspects of Arab thought, literature and culture. We find Dr. Zurayq, for example, writing in 1939: "I mean by nationalism something greater and more comprehensive than politics. Politics is only a narrow one of its aspects and merely one of its many and varied colours. Nationalism embraces life in its broadest meanings and is directed towards all sections of the nation. It aims not merely at gaining the freedom of the nation and the extension of its political power, but also at encouraging the growth of its spiritual strength and the raising of its social and intellectual levels and carrying it as far as possible along the path towards the ideal life."¹.

Dr. Zurayq believed that this intellectual renaissance was a necessary prelude to a nationalism capable of achieving freedom: "No nationalist awakening, the aim of which was freedom, ever arose in the world unless an ideological renaissance preceded it or necessitated it, and which paved the way for it and clarified the factors and obstacles involved."². He goes on a little later: "There is no doubt that the first steps at least are the duty of the nation's thinkers and

1. "al-wa'y al-qaumī." ("National Consciousness.") Beirut, 1939, p. 62.

2. Ibid., p. 6.

leaders of opinion. It is from them and not from men in executive positions in the centre of the field of events, that this sort of thinking is to be sought."¹.

Arab nationalist writers express their conviction that the Arab nation has a part of great distinction and importance to play in the future development of the world. Definitions of nationalism show clearly that pride in the nation is one of its strongest elements; that Arab nationalist theorists should, therefore, encourage and seek to intensify this pride is understandable. They frequently stress and at times exaggerate Arab intellectual and other achievements in the past and imply that the creation of a unified Arab state will allow Arab genius to play once again a great part in the shaping of history. Dr. Zurayq expresses this hope and belief clearly in his work published in 1939. The Arabs' contribution will be one of interpretation and synthesis between the East and the West: "It would not, perhaps be untrue to say that the mission of the Arab nation will be in the future similar to what it was in the past. The Arabs in the centuries gone by were able to digest and assimilate with their active minds and thirsting spirits the civilisations of the Greeks, the Romans, the Persians and the Indians and pass them on to the world as a rich and splendid synthesised whole. This work will,

1. Ibid., p. 7.

too, be the Arabs' mission in the coming ages; they will assimilate the knowledge of the West and join to it all the reactions it has caused from various sources in both the West and the East, making of them all a new whole which will serve as a guide to life to come and which the Arabs can present to the world as they presented their glorious civilisation in the past."¹.

Some contemporary Arab nationalist writers do not hesitate to distort and deny the facts of history in their efforts to emphasise the achievements of the Arabs in the days of the Arab Empire. Thus we find, for example, with regard to the Muslim conquests of the 7th century A.D. :

"The truth is that the Arabs did much more harm to themselves than to the peoples whose countries they conquered, since their general policy was, and still is, based on spiritual values more than it depended on power and the law. Nobility, honour, security and obligation(dain) -- these are all-important basic elements in the life of the Arab and he could not support life if it were empty of these conceptions. On the other hand, we find that the policy of other nations is based on hypocrisy and money and espionage and force and armed weapons in supporting their position and bringing pressure to bear on others. The Arabs were the first to put humanistic tendencies into practice in politics. Similarly,

1. Ibid., pp. 40 - 41.

they were the first to nourish true democratic principles; they spread them abroad without falseness and deception. They were the first to personify their ethical principles in a living way in their heroes, leaders and politicians."¹.

The same author, in a later work, considers inevitable that, due to the geographical position of the Arabs in the centre of the world, they will have a great effect on the world as a whole. "The position of the Arab countries in North Africa and West Asia, that is, in the centre of the civilised world, makes them the lasting meeting point of world activity and so it is impossible to separate them from the world...This means that the Arabs, whether they like it or not, have a mission in their own life and the life of others which they must fulfill. Their geographic position dictates this to them; it means, too, that it is their mission ('*qadīyah*') to deliver the world from colonialism and to free its conscience from the crisis which (the creation of) Israel has caused it."².

This conception of the Arabs' 'freedom mission' as the protectors and champions of small and oppressed nations is reiterated frequently in recent Arab nationalist works. We

1. 'Abd ul-Laṭīf Sharārah "*rūh al-'urūbah*" ("Spirit of Arabism") Saida, Lebanon, 1947, p. 71.

2. "*fī al-qaumīyah al-'arabīyah*." p. 8.

find, for example, that the Egyptian Dr. Ibrāhīm Jum'ah states: "There is no doubt that it is Arab nationalism which is the strength which has forced the large nations to respect the rights of the small nations (shu'ūb) to life, freedom and self determination."¹.

It is, I think, clear that Arab nationalists believe, or at least maintain, that Arab nationalism is a vital, living force in the Arab countries at the present time. It is based, in general terms, on a claimed feeling of unity and oneness binding together all Arabs, no matter what their racial origins or their religious beliefs. This unity is explained by a supposed unity of language, geographic position, history and material interests. The positive aims of this force are the winning of freedom for the Arab territories subjected to foreign rule, the uniting of all Arab lands into some form of political and economic entity and the progression forward of this nation thus formed to occupy a position of importance in the world, and the raising of the living standard of the Arab peoples themselves.

Remarks made and definitions given by Western observers concerning nationalism reflect their distrust and dislike of it.

1. Op. cit., p. 268. This emphasis on the "freedom mission" of the Arabs is particularly remarkable in Arab nationalist literature since the publication in 1954 of Jamāl 'Abd al-Nāṣir's "Philosophy of the Revolution."

In remarkable and complete contrast, Arab writers see the hope for their continued freedom and future progress assured for them only if they can encourage nationalism and constitute an effective union between the various parts of the Arab nation, which they assume to exist. Arab nationalist theorists, by their denials of the criticisms usually levelled by Western observers against nationalism show that they are fully conscious of its inherent dangers. They assert, however, that Arab nationalism is devoid of elements which are open to the criticisms usually made. They stress the necessity to retain freedom of speech, of worship and of political liberty and claim that Arab nationalism will ensure all these. It will, however, appear clearly from this study that there is some discrepancy between definitions of Arab nationalism given by those Arabs who write in support of it and the Arab nationalism which appears from the political works they have themselves written.

CHAPTER TWO:

FREEDOM AND UNITY FOR PROGRESS.-

The aims of Arab nationalism.

It is of interest, having attempted to demonstrate that Arab Nationalist writers seek for the basic aims of freedom, unity and progress, to examine in greater detail what they write about each of these aims, their respective importance and how they can be achieved.

Since the roots of Arab nationalism took form at a time when the majority of the Arab countries were under forms of direct foreign rule, it is not surprising that the first aim of the movement should have been the achievement of freedom from this foreign rule. Dr. Fāyīz Sāyīgh points out this obvious fact in his recent work: "As it came into its own, the Arab national movement was animated by three kindred urges, for emancipation from foreign domination, for socio-economic development and for political unification. The corresponding ideas of independence, progress and unity became the principle components of the total concept of Arab nationalism."¹.

That 'freedom for freedom's sake' alone was not the only aim of Arab nationalism from its comparatively early days is seen from the exposition of nationalist aims quoted from the book of the Arab Students' Congress.² We find Dr. Constantine Zurayq, similarly writing in 1939, that: "The aim

1. Op. cit. p. 5.

2. See chapter one, page 56.

of the nationalist awakening is the raising of the living standards of Arab life in all its aspects. It does not confine itself to the attainment of external freedom and political independence; on the contrary, it aims at something much *than that, it aims at freeing the individuals within the nation* further from internal restrictions, at achieving for them all a greater share of happiness and enjoyment, towards the fulfilment of their lives both physically, intellectually and spiritually."¹.

Michel 'Aflaq, too, denies outright that Arab nationalism is simply and merely the result of the Arabs' struggle for independence, but rather a new philosophy: "Arab unity is a philosophy and a 'standard'. Arab unity is not the result or end product of the Arab peoples' struggle for freedom and socialism; on the contrary, it is a new philosophy which must associate itself with and must guide this struggle."².

Despite this emphasis on the wider progressive aims in the ideology of Arab nationalism, there is still to be found, even today, an attitude among some theorists of Arab nationalism that freedom is the main goal and the end in itself. Two very recent nationalist writers make this clear. We find, for example,

1. "al-wa'y/al-qaumī." p. 101.

2. "Ma'rakah al-maṣīr al-wāḥid." p. 21.

that the Egyptian Dr. Jum'ah writes: "The Arabs are today fighting with one will the colonialists both in the South of the Arabian peninsula and in North Africa. They are fighting the new forms of colonialism expressed in treaties, pacts and aid. They see no distinction between the English, the French or the Americans, nor between the Baghdad Pact and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. They gaze at all of these with aversion and hatred and see in all this one enemy which must be overcome and destroyed and that their countries must be purified from its evils and dangers. These are the Arabs' aims, both the short and the long term. Their slogan for achieving these aims is a single, powerful one: "Arab Nationalism!"¹. It is extremely interesting to see how N.A.T.O., as well as the Baghdad Pact, which did, it is true, have one Arab country as a member, is reviled as a major enemy which must be destroyed. In making these remarks, Dr. Jum'ah is not, as might be thought, criticising Arab nationalist writers for the blindness of their anti-Western feeling; on the contrary he is praising the Arabs for their singleness of purpose.

Similarly we find Dr. 'Abd ul-Dā'im visualising unity primarily as the only means of freeing the Arab world from

1. Op. cit. p. 74/5.

imperialist exploitation: "The Arabs have become aware of their destiny and have deduced from it the meaning of their struggle. They have realised that unity is their first path to freedom. They understand that imperialism can only be opposed by a united Arab struggle and that it is fancy for any one of the Arab regions to imagine that it is capable of achieving its complete unblemished independence encircled by imperialists plotting against it in the other regions."¹.

It is interesting to see that one Jordanian Arab nationalist writer condemns the attitude apparent in the last two passages; he criticizes strongly the anti-imperialist element in Arab nationalist writings. "We are, " he writes, "the nation which talks the most about its nationalism and thinks most about politics and yet we are, in fact, the poorest nation in both of them. This is because we consider nationalism to consist of hatred for the world and the people on it and we consider politics to be a term meaning to intrigue against foreigners and to hurl insults at them. Every one of us is sure that the criterion of nationalism is in (its) strength in fighting imperialism."². An examination of most contemporary Arab nationalist works forces one to consider that these

1. Op. cit. pp. 83.

2. Dr. Walīd Qamhāwī, op. cit. p. 492.

remarks are by no means unjustified.

The great majority of Arab nationalist writers consider the establishment of Israel in the Arab world to be an indisputable proof of the desire of the "imperialists" to prevent the growth and progress of the Arab nation.¹ There is great emphasis in contemporary Arabic political works on the need to form an effective union of the Arab states in order that the Arabs may find the strength to defeat the aims of Zionism. They consider that Zionism desires not merely the permanent establishment of Israel, but also its expansion beyond its present boundaries into the Arab world. The conviction of the need for unity to defeat Zionism, so clearly expressed in the Bludan conference of 1937,² is reiterated in the press, magazine articles and radio broadcasts throughout the entire Arab world today and not merely in those works which specifically propagate the ideas of Arab nationalism. In the introduction to the report of this Conference, Amīn al-Riḥānī, the well-known Syrian socialist writer, gave his opinion that the first problem of the Arab nation was to ensure "the salvation of Palestine from Zionism and the Zionists and its freedom from the clutch of the imperialists."³ The Conference

1. See Chapter Six, pp^{et seq.} 215₂ above.

2. See ~~(note in)~~ Introduction, p. 21 above.

3. "al-mu'tamar al-'arabī al-qaumī fi Blūdān." ("The Arab national Conference in Bludan") ed. Fu'ād Khalīl Mufarij, Damascus, 1937. Introduction, pp. "A" and "B".

reached general agreement on the principle that the fate of the Palestinians alone. As al-Rihānī points out: "Even if the Palestinians were to accept partition, the Arabs would not agree. Partition would destroy their historic, patriotic (waṭanī) and geographic rights and would break the Anglo-Arab agreements which were reached during the World War."¹.

The creation of Israel has indeed, in the eyes of contemporary Arab nationalist writers, led in fact to the complete denial of the rights of the Arabs. They consider that their cause is absolutely righteous and they insist on the need to unite to fight Zionism. Dr. Zurayq, writing in 1948, stressed that Zionism can only be defeated in the long run if an efficient pan-Arab government is set up: "What, then," he asks, "are the attributes of this Arab organisation which must be achieved? The first of these is federation or, in other words, the Arabs must organise themselves into a federal government in which their foreign, economic and defence policies should be unified."².

Apart, however, from an obvious agreement among themselves concerning the basic injustices of the present situation and frequent reiteration that the Arab refugees from Palestine

1. Ibid., p. "B".

2. "ma'nā al-nakbah". ("The Meaning of the Disaster.") Beirut, 1948, p. 47. This work was translated into English and re-published in Beirut in 1959.

must be permitted to return to their original homes if they wish, Arab nationalist writers do not offer detailed and practical plans which might lead to the solution of these problems. Similarly, they do not recommend directly military conquest of Israel and the complete expulsion of the Jews from Israel. They seem consciously to avoid the problems of how Zionism and Israel are to be defeated and merely affirm their belief that the Arabs must unite in order to do so. Michel 'Aflaq, the extremely influential Ba'thist leader, directly states, indeed, that the Arabs do not seek the effacement of Israel: "The Arabs do not today desire the liquidation of Israel; they will not, however, agree that the usurpation can be converted, by the peace which America desires, into a legal position."¹ While some Arab nationalist writers would, no doubt, dispute the first assertion in this sentence, they seem absolutely unanimous in agreeing that they must never acknowledge Israel's legal existence.²

Although the overriding emphasis in contemporary Arab nationalist literature is so strongly on the need to form a pan-Arab union for the purpose of fighting "imperialism" and

1. "ma'rakah al-maṣīr al-wāḥid", p. 128.

2. Sir John Glubb's remark concerning the Arab attitude before the Arab-Israeli war of 1948 seems to be equally applicable to their present attitude: "The Western Arabs-the Egyptians, Palestinians and Syrians - have that logical mentality which deals only in purely intellectual conceptions. Such people are incapable of compromise. To them it was unjust that the Jews should forcibly invade and conquer their country - and that was the end of it." "A Soldier with the Arabs," London 1957, p. 151.

Zionism effectively, unity is seen also as a positive means which will lead to greater prosperity and progress in the Arab world. As Dr. Ḥassan Ṣa'b, the Lebanese writer points out: "The Arab ideological awakening is today revealed in the movement for the return of unity to the Arab being expressed in the Arab nationalist movement. This movement was described on the 22nd. of Shubāt¹. as a social philosophy and that it aimed at the fulfilment of the three revolutions social, political and scientific in which the Arabs lag behind. The purpose of these revolutions is that there should rise up from them the "democratic, socialist and co-operative society" which will achieve for the Arabs justice, freedom and happiness.²."

Some Arab nationalist writers have at times stressed that these positive aims need far greater study before they can be fully attained in the Arab world. Michel 'Aflaq, for example, writing in an article published in 1947, stressed that, in his opinion, the early Arab nationalist movement had no positive elements in its philosophy and that these have developed later: "The nationalist movement, in its philosophy and in the minds of its leaders and in its obvious aims and visible methods,

1. In a speech delivered by President Nāsir.

2. Op. cit., p. 26.

contained only negative elements and no pre-occupation in the construction of a positive life. The people, however, who grew up with the movement and responded to its call did not restrict themselves within the bounds of its (stated) aims and were not restrained by the infertility and barrenness of its ideology. These people, on the contrary, in their struggle against the foreign imperialists strove to fulfil a positive thing: the creation of a renaissant, progressive Arab society, inspired by the idealist principles of justice, equality and freedom."¹. He goes on to say that it is the duty of the Ba'th party to point out the right from the wrong and to supply the positive content to Arab nationalism: "We are sure that the core of the people is sound and capable of positive, creative work, when we have pointed out the nonsense directed towards it. It is our duty to make this known and to address the people so that they may understand the right from the wrong. Those who have followed the progress of the Arab Ba'th Party, in its philosophy at least, and the publications issued by it, will have observed since the movement's beginning our great concern to make the Ba'th the forward, positive step which much come after the negative one."².

1. Quoted in op. cit. p. 12/13.

2. Op. cit. p. 14.

It is interesting to see that Dr. Zurayq pointed out both the lack of and the need for an ideological content to Arab nationalism ^{eight} ~~(twelve)~~ years before this in his book published in 1939. In his "National ^{Consciousness} (Awakening)" he complains that a recent special edition of the Egyptian magazine "Al-Hilāl" entitled "The Arabs and Islam"¹. which had the obvious aim of propaganding for Arab unity, showed a serious lack of ideology in the nationalist movement: "One notices immediately the confusion of the nationalist philosophy in which the leaders of thought amongst us dabble. There is no clear distinction made between the "Arab nation" and the "Arab countries" or between "arabism", "the East" and "Islam". There is within it no deep understanding of the nationalist awakening nor any organised programme concerning the means of encouraging and enlivening it."². He goes on to stress the need for a precise study of the factors involved in nationalism and that there should be not merely a play on the feelings: "I do not mean by that to denigrate the value of emotion and sentiment in the national struggle, but I do not consider them capable of reaching the end which we desire unless we achieve wide

1. "al-Hilāl" special edition of 1939: ("The Arabs and Islam in the New Age".)

2. Op. cit. p. 10.

comprehension and precise understanding (of nationalism)."¹.

Arab unity, as well as being seen as a necessity for the achievement of freedom and progress, is also seen as an economic and a military necessity; all these aims are, of course, mutually dependent on one another. Dr. Yūsuf Haikal, for instance, writing in 1943, points to the trade barriers between the Arab countries and maintains that if these were abolished, Egyptian cotton and sugar would find ready markets in the Middle East in the place of American sugar and Indian cotton. He concludes: "Arab unity would make a strong economic unit of the Arab countries, which would be able to stand firm in the face of economic instability and financial crises."² He goes on to point out the military necessity for unity; he points to the World War then in progress and its basis of territorial disputes expressed by military engagements over spheres of influence in the Arab states: "The Arab states were, and still are, the scene of foreign disputes and the field of battle of those desiring power over them. It is obvious that no area can stand up against them alone and that no region can achieve freedom or retain it."³ Muḥammad Darwazah too, writing more

1. Op. cit. p. 26. Arab nationalism is today criticised by some Arabs on the same grounds. See Chapter Nine pp 328^{ct} 329^{sup} above.

2. Op. cit. P. 42.

3. Op. cit. p. 42.

recently, stresses the military necessity for the Arabs to unite and gives much the same basic reason. He comments on the strategic and economic importance of the Middle East to the Western Powers, to the decline of British and French influence and to the stated desire of the United States of America to fill the 'power vacuum' so created to prevent it being filled by communist powers. He maintains that the Arabs must themselves fill the vacuum and show their ability to do this by effecting a real union politically.¹

That an immediate union or a union in the near future is not the best way of achieving an economic regeneration of the Arab world is, however, the opinion of one self-styled Arab nationalist writer. 'Āmir 'Abdullah,² an Iraqi, insists that the purpose of unity is to further the interests of each region of the Arab world and strengthen the whole entity by the individual strength of each part. The full union should only come, he considers, after this has been accomplished.³ He goes on to explain, with particular reference to Iraq: "If there should be any Arab country capable of playing an important part in the Arab freedom movement and which is capable of facilitating its movement towards emancipation, freedom

1. Muḥammad 'Izzah Darwazah, "al-waḥdah
al-arabiyyah." ("Arab Unity")
Cairo 1958. p. 101.

2. This writer must not be confused with the Amīr 'Abdullah, the late King of Jordan.

3. Op. cit. pp. 21-30.

and progress itself, then this country must be given full freedom of action (to bring this about). The form of its connection with any other Arab country must be shaped on the basis of consideration of this fact. In this, as we have explained, there is great and fundamental advantage not to the country alone, but to the Arab nation as a whole."¹.

Dr. Nicola Ziadeh, on the other hand, is more typical of Arab nationalist writers in assuming a geographical unity embracing all the Arab countries. He examines the economic potentialities of this unit as a whole, ignoring the political divisions: "This stretch of land has rich and important economic resources of some diversity. It has metals; iron and copper are found in the Atlas mountains; it has oil in Iraq and the Arabian peninsula; it has salts distributed in the Dead Sea and other places. Its plant resources include the principal cereals, cotton, olives and fruits - all these resources exist in their different varieties."².

Walid Qamhāwī, theorizing from the same basic premise, considers that the Arab countries should be united completely in an economic free trade area with no customs barriers between them and with the right of work for all Arabs anywhere within

1. Op. cit., p. 35.

2. Ibid., p. 73/4

the unit thus formed: "It is not possible that Lebanon or Bahrein or even Egypt be considered as regions with their own lockable doors to seal them from the other (Arab) countries. For this reason, every citizen must have the right to go and work and live in all regions of the homeland. Trade co-operation within the homeland must be absolutely free from restrictions; it must be considered as one economic unit."¹. The same writer goes on to carry this conception of the economies of the Arab countries to its logical conclusion: "As for fair distribution, this means first of all, the distribution of the resources of the Arab homeland between all its regions. Qatar shall not have its oil as its very own or Morocco its phosphates or Libya its poverty. On the contrary, everything that each region contains shall be shared between the other regions, each taking for its own use only what it needs... this is because the resources of the homeland belong to all the homeland, no matter what its original source or

1. Op. cit., p. 452.

owners."¹.

Arab nationalist writers express great concern at the comparative economic backwardness of the Arab countries. They seem, in the majority, to blame this backwardness on the 'imperialists' and they see the cure in greater industrialization within the United Arab State. Ahmad Sa'Id is typical of many Arab nationalist writers in considering the deplorable lack of industries in the Middle East to be the result of a deliberate plan on the part of the Western Powers to leave the area as a market for its industrial products. Industrialisation should, in his opinion, be brought about by the use of local capital. It is interesting to notice the emphasis he puts on the reasons for this industrialisation. It must be brought about in the first case for the sake of independence and only secondly for the sake of greater prosperity: "The creation of industry in the Arab homeland shall be achieved,

1. Ibid., p. 453. The very considerable difficulties which would have to be overcome in bringing about a complete economic reorganisation of the entire Arab world from the "Persian Gulf to the Atlantic" as Arab nationalist suggest are perhaps indicated by the fact that Egypt and Syria, combined officially in the United Arab Republic, still today employ different currencies. Syrian opposition to effective integration of the economies of the two regions is said to be very strong.

as a principal means of increasing production, by the use of local capital which the state holds or which private Arab investors lend; this new industry will prove of great help in the Arab struggle, a struggle first for the sake of independence and second to provide a more comfortable life for the people. The creation of local industry will break foreign monopolies or put an end to their excessive profits which come between the people and its prosperity!"¹.

Dr. Majdhūb, too, blames the imperialists for setting the present political boundaries between the Arab countries and encouraging them to develop their trade at the expense of one another: "Instead of the parts of the Arab homeland helping one another economically, and each of them offering to the other what it needs from its basic resources and manufactured goods, these regions, under imperialist pressure and serving the interests of the feudal classes, work in co-operation with the foreigners and deprive the rest of their Arab relatives of the fruits of their land."².

The obvious example that Arab nationalist theorists quote to substantiate this thesis is the Arab oil industry; Dr. Jum'ah's comment is typical. The countries of the free world consider, he says, that as the largest known deposits of oil

1. Op. cit., p. 294

2. Op. cit., p. 9.

are found in the Middle East, that their future is very closely connected with that of the area. This means then: "That the future of this 'free world' demands the necessity of destroying the economy of the Arab world to cause dissention within it. The race for Arab oil brings in its train a race for influence in the Arab homeland and the conversion of the strategic oil centres into strategic military bases for the use of the imperialists."¹.

That the Arab nationalist movement has now reached a stage in its development when some positive ideas are being formulated, even if in a vague form, is undeniable. There is considerable emphasis placed on the positive principle of social reform. There is a widespread conviction among Arab nationalist writers that there is a very serious lack of fairness and proportion in the distribution of wealth within the Arab countries and, of course, they base their call for reform on this conviction. Large landowners² and capitalists, usually referred to en groupe, are the chief target, apart from the imperialists, of Arab nationalist propaganda. Many

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1. Op. cit., p. 222. This quotation shows clearly a strange and widespread tendency apparent in Arab nationalist literature to mix up and confuse what seems to be nonsense with what has obvious truth in it. Many quotations which indicate this tendency will, no doubt, be noticed in this study.
 2. The land reform carried out by the Revolutionary government in Egypt and the restriction of private land-ownership to a maximum of approximately 200 acres is frequently referred to with praise in the most recent Arab nationalist works.

writers, indeed, see a close connection between these two enemies; it is considered that the 'reactionaries and the feudalists' are in league with the imperialists and that as soon as the latter is destroyed so must the former, too be destroyed. Whether, however, this conviction is completely genuine as it is expressed and is based on careful study of economics or whether Arab nationalists, in their desire to achieve greater support than the Communists, feel forced to use the same terminology, one cannot tell. The belief expressed in the unfairness of distribution of the wealth or the Arab world and the conviction that social and material equality can and will be achieved within the proposed political union form, nevertheless, one of the most important claims of Arab nationalist writers.

Dr. George Hannah, for example, states in this respect: "Arab society or Arab societies, if you wish, live in a setting which has nothing of social or economic justice in it. The national income of the Arab countries is not merely not distributed justly between its people, on the contrary it is true to say that it is a treasury in which the plundering hands of a small section of them play. This section is called the 'special upper class' and consists of Kings, princes, governons and merchant traders and those who live off them."¹

1. Op. cit., p. 63.

An outright condemnation of the 'reactionaries' as the instruments of the imperialists is found in Dr. Ibrāhīm Jum'a's work: "Reactionaries are the breach through which imperialists exert influence on the Arab ranks; reactionaries are, as is well known, the helpers of imperialism, their agents and the mounts on which they ride."¹. He goes on: "The reactionaries have demonstrated that they are the biggest support of the imperialists; it has become clear to the Arab that they are the first and foremost internal enemies of Arab nationalism. Their destruction and the removal of their power is a first aim in the Arab struggle against the external enemy."².

The leader of the Arab Socialist Ba'th party, in spite of the obvious use by these writers of the usual terminology of class warfare, denies any element of class struggle for its own sake within the ideology of Arab nationalism, although he himself seems to view the situation in the Arab countries as basically one of a conflict of classes. "The emphasis," he writes, "in the Ba'th movement on the struggle of the oppressed Arab masses does not stem from any philosophy based on a belief

1. Op. cit. p. 214.

2. Ibid., p. 215.

in 'classes'. On the contrary it means that we believe that this section represents, as a result of the oppression and persecution it has undergone, the pure essence of the nation as a whole, just as there is within it most of the strengths and capabilities of the nation. Our socialism is, in this sense, the means of reviving our nation and the door through which the Arab nation will once again enter into history."¹

Despite what he says here, however, the same writer goes on to simplify recent Arab history and the present situation specifically into the simple terms of a class conflict: "At the end of the Second World War, the Arabs emerged with the feudal classes holding firmly on to power in all their regions and being their representatives in their struggle and nationalist aims. Today this class stands in one rank and the whole Arab nation stands in one other rank. Ten years ago this class used to monopolise nationalism and to deny to those who used to criticise them that they had any connection at all with the homeland. Today, however, this class has no other option but to oppose the homeland and its freedom and its nationalism and stand with the foreign imperialists and Israel publicly and

1. Article written in 1955 and quoted in "Ma'rakah al-maṣīr al-wāḥid.", p. 29.

openly in one rank, desiring to maintain its special and wicked interests."¹.

The conviction that social and economic progress is one of the basic aims of the Arab nationalist movement is frequently expressed through a belief in and acceptance of what is called in Arabic "al-ishtirākīyah", a word usually translated by the English word 'socialism'. The vague connotation of the word socialism in English is that it refers to a system in which all citizens will enjoy social security and equality of opportunity which will enable them to achieve a standard of living appropriate to their ability and efforts within a planned economy with a large measure of state control. These are the general bases but not the full understanding of the word in Arabic to which it is applied as a translation. A minority of contemporary writers do not use the word at all in their expositions of the aims and means to bring about the progress they desire to

1. Article written in Nov. 1956 and quoted in Op. cit., p. 114. Comments of this type account for a considerable proportion of the content of some of the latest Arab nationalist works which are intended to have a "popular" appeal. This is particularly true of the works of some contemporary Egyptian Arab nationalists. See, for example, the works consulted in this study under the authorship of Aḥmad Sa'īd, Ibrāhīm Jam'ah and the speeches of Jamāl 'Abd al-Nāṣir.

see achieved by the movement; this is perhaps from a desire not to alienate those sections of Arab society who, like their counterparts in other societies, fear that their own interests would suffer by the acceptance of socialist dogmas. However, the word socialism has unquestionably now become connected with the movement as a whole, despite the fact that some writers deny this. The Coptic Arab nationalist writer 'Ayādī al-'Abd al-'Ayādī, for example, considers that the movement has no formalised political theory as its basis. "Arab nationalism", he writes, "does not bind itself to any social political or religious beliefs. It prefers neither socialism nor communism nor fascism nor democracy."¹ This rather remarkable statement would, I think, be strongly opposed by the apparent majority of Arab nationalist theorists, who do clearly see an "ideal" socialism as the desired solution for the internal problems of the proposed unified Arab state.

In spite of the generally accepted connotations of the word 'ishtirākīyah' in Arabic, corresponding approximately to the widely understood meaning of the word 'socialism' in English, there are some Arab nationalist writers who use the Arabic word where the English word 'communism' would be better understood. We find that Dr. George Hannah writes, for example: "The world finds itself before two competing currents: the

1. 'Ayādī al-'Abd al-'Ayādī: Op. cit., p. 22.

socialist and the capitalist. The socialist current is led and guided by the Soviet Union and the second by the United States of America. The first draws in its train a faith and a philosophy and the second a formidable stock of its treasured profits from the war."¹. This same author writes in general terms on the disadvantages of the capitalist and monopolist economic systems in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and concludes that the system which will give social justice and a good living standard to all, without the disadvantages of absolute governmental control over the sources of income of the people would be socialism. Such a system would, he writes, create no spirit of envy and hatred for other nationalisms; it would be, moreover, a system in which the people "would not live on the credit of other nations."². It seems clear however, from his remarks quoted above, that this author means communism when he uses the word usually translated by socialism.³

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1. Op. cit., p. 118. Such comments would be laughable if they did not reveal such a tragically ridiculous anti-Western bias. The author is a well-educated, widely-travelled practising Lebanese Doctor of Medicine of Christian origin.
 2. Ibid., p. 33 - 41.
 3. This lack of distinction between the words "socialism" and "communism" is, of course, also apparent in their use as synonyms in the Communist world. The initials U.S.S.R. in English stand for the equivalent in Russian of the "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics."

Some Arab nationalists have attempted definitions of the word socialism and its meaning for them. It is interesting to notice how their definitions are much broader and more comprehensive than one would expect from an examination of a term denoting basically a politico-economic system. Dr Muhammad Majdhūb, for instance, gives a definition of socialism which seems designed to include all aspects of contemporary Arab life. "Socialism," he writes, "is not, then, a mere economic philosophy. It is also an ethical, political, educational, scientific and historical philosophy. Socialism, like life itself, includes all shades of creeds and emotions and thoughts and feelings. Just as life comprises all that is material and all that is abstract so does socialism similarly comprise every element colour and form which affects, either directly or indirectly, the progress of society."¹.

Michel 'Aflaq, an Arab nationalist writer who has campaigned for socialism in the Arab world since the mid-thirties, poses the question of what is the connection between Arab unity and socialism and whether socialism is or is not an essential part of the Arab struggle. He replies: "The Arab problem must be considered as one indivisible whole and be solved on this basis...The philosophy of the Ba'th party with

1. Op. cit., p. 99/100.

regard to our national problem is that it is all one problem and that the only way to solve it is by achieving an Arab revolution, a revolution in the deep meaning, not restricted to the political, but including thought and spirit and social education and economic institutions. I say that, bearing in mind our comprehensive view of the Arab problem, we do not consider that we can possibly separate Arab unity from socialism."¹.

In a similar way Dr. Clovis Maqṣūd defines socialism in the context of the Arab world and concludes that socialism is an integral part of nationalism: "Socialism is, then, as we understand it, the conscious nationalist will active not only in the two movements seeking unity and freedom only, but determined to raise the level of the struggle and make it one in which the Arab masses take part...It is not possible for any stage of the battle to be achieved if these masses themselves are not conscious and do not understand all the aims which the movement seeks to achieve. Socialism is then, in the Arab nation, at the very heart of the nationalist movement. This is because nationalism in the Arab lands is the force seeking the return of rights which the imperialists negated and aiming to build a unity which will be the heralding of our human

1. From lecture delivered in 1956, quoted Op., cit., p. 34.

existence and the primary precondition for this existence."¹. The rather unusual connotation of the word socialism for Dr. Maqṣūd is shown clearly a little later in the same work. He apparently sees socialism as a means to gain freedom and unity, rather than the desired system to be achieved as a result of freedom and unity: "Arab socialism is...without doubt the biggest guarantee of the fulfilment of our desires for unity and complete freedom."².

The emphasis shown in this quotation on the part to be played by the masses in the nationalist movement makes it of interest, I think, to bear in mind what Michel 'Aflaq described as a tendency in nationalist philosophy to adopt policies merely to attract popular support: "In this there is a great danger for the future of our nationalist movement. The distinction is basic between considering socialism as a thing in which we deeply believe, because it deals with basic and primary needs in our nation and between our considering it as a means of withdrawing criticism and as something to be used to prevent our being called 'feudalists' or reactionaries, so that the communist movement should not succeed and take our supporters away from us."³. The same writer himself, however, stresses

1. "Naḥwa al-ishtirākīyah al-'arabīyah." ("Towards Arab Socialism.") Beirut, 1957. p. 54.

2. Ibid., p. 76.

3. Op. cit., p. 16.

the economic plight of the people not, apparently, so much out of compassion at their condition as in despair at their ability in such a condition to achieve unity: "It is not governments, nor foreign states, nor politicians, nor philosophers who will achieve unity, but the people alone. It is the masses of the people who can bring about this vital aim. How is it possible for the people to move themselves to bear this heavy burden whilst they are giving way under these political, social and economic conditions?"¹.

In one of his earliest speeches, indeed, Michel 'Aflaq expresses his attitude towards socialism even more clearly; he states that he is not motivated in his desire for Arab socialism by personal feelings of pity and distress at the deplorable poverty of some Arabs. He is conscious only of the wastage involved in what he considers to be the misuse or lack of development of the potentialities of Arab society. He stresses that living standards in the Arab world must be raised in order to help the Arab nation fulfil its role in the community of nations: "I have never at any time looked upon socialism as a means merely of satisfying the hungry and clothing the naked. I am not concerned with the lot of the starving man just because he is starving, but on account of

1. Op. cit., p. 37.

his innate capabilities which his starvation prevents from appearing. I do not consider food to be a desired end (to be sought for him) but a means by which he can free himself from his animal needs and then be able to perform his duties as a human being."¹.

Dr. Muḥammad Majdhūb sets out what he considers to be the basic aims of Arab socialist policy in his work in support of Arab nationalism: "1.) Fair distribution of Arab resources between all citizens and the consideration of the national income of the Arab nation as the property of the whole nation. 2.) Equality among all citizens and the abolition of the idea that the few can exploit the efforts of the many. 3.) Limitation of private fortunes in such a way as to guarantee correspondence between general economic activity and personal economic activity which will achieve the prosperity of the people and the principles of social equality. 4.) Participation of workers in the management of their factories, giving them fair wages and a share in profits as well as limited working hours. 5.) National insurance and the security of

1. From an article written in 1936 and quoted in "fī sabīl al-Ba'th" ("In the Path of the Ba'th") Beirut, 1959, p. 22. The concept held in the West that a belief in socialism should be motivated by basically humanistic rather than nationalist aims is apparently not accepted by 'Aflaq.

social services as a guarantee to all citizens against life's misfortunes. 6.) Maintenance of the right to own property and the right of inheritance within the limits of the public good. 7.) Government supervision of foreign trade and of the implementation of a programme of industrialisation. 8.) The implementation of a law allowing the source of any possessions to be questioned."¹. This statement of policy is more explicit than any other exposition of socialist aims that I have read in Arab nationalist literature. It is, however, notably vague and emotional in the phraseology in which it is presented, especially in the first three articles. Dr. Majdhūb does not venture to suggest any concrete ways in which this ideal socialist policy can be accomplished; no doubt he would himself agree that any such programme is impracticable on simple economic grounds for any Arab country, with the possible exception of the shiekdoms on the Persian Gulf, within the foreseeable future. It is particularly interesting to see that the writer proposes limitation of private fortunes, although he gives no idea at what level. This suggestion seems to be in conflict with Dr. Qamhāwī's appreciation of human character. The latter's remark that: "There is no limitation to man's

1. Op. cit., p. 150.

demands",¹ made while discussing the same aspect of policy, seems to deny the possibility of success of such a restriction.

From an examination of the attitudes of Arab nationalist theoreticians towards their basic aims of freedom, unity and progress, their relative importance in the ideology of the movement appears fairly clear. There is still a very great emphasis on the necessity to win freedom from domination and exploitation and that this can only be achieved through unity. This belief that freedom can only be won from the 'imperialists' and the Zionists and their assumed supporters the 'feudalists and reactionaries' by the strength which unity would presumably give seems at the very base of the call to unity, at least at the popular level. The masses of the people, rather than the Arab governments or the ruling classes are seen by the majority of Arab nationalists to be the force which will eventually achieve the union. There is, consequently, in Arab nationalist literature an awareness that the movement will only succeed with popular support; the strengthening of the masses and the winning of their support are, the theorists write, to be achieved through the adoption of 'socialist' policies.

The third basic aim of Arab nationalism, the raising of living standards and the achievement of economic progress are,

1. Op. cit., p. 458.

too, to be brought about by the adoption of some form of "socialism." Apart from a general, stated belief in the principles of justice and equality within socialism, Arab nationalist writings do not give the impression that the economic situation of the Arab countries has been given careful and deep study¹. and that the conviction that the socialist system is appropriate to these countries stems from this study. There is, similarly, no evidence of carefully formulated plans to bring about the desired socialist society. The lack of treatment of these complex subjects in what remains a purely theoretical all-Arab union is, of course, not surprising, but it is, I think, disappointing.

The insistence on the need for social reform and speedier economic development in the Arab world is rapidly gaining in strength both within the Arab nationalist movement and outside it. Up till now, however, the means of bringing about these desired aims has not been the subject of close analysis; Arab nationalist writings on the subject are, in my opinion, remarkable for a lack of depth, and for an astonishing optimism.

1. One of the few serious studies of the economy of the Arab world as a whole of recent years is that entitled: "al-iqtisad al-'arabī--al-sukān wa al-intāj" ("Arab Economy--Population and Resources") by Dr. Burhān al-Dīhānī, the director of the permanent office of the "federation of Chambers of Trade, Industry and Agriculture in the Arab Countries". This work, the first of a proposed series, was published by the Federation in Beirut in 1959.

One cannot but, I think, agree with Dr. Yūsuf Ṣāyigh in this respect who recently wrote: "If we were to ask the majority of Arab thinkers who attempt to deal with nationalist problems their opinion concerning the socio-economic content of Arab nationalism we would be met with a deep silence which would be broken only by an embarrassed mumbling, the source of which would be obvious."¹.

1. "al-thiqāfah al-'arabīyah," ("Arab Culture") 3rd Year, No. 2., Summer 1959, p. 45.

CHAPTER THREE:

THE UNIFYING FACTORS IN THE ARAB WORLD

Arab nationalist theoreticians argue that a nation exists if certain common factors bind together its members. They maintain that such factors do indeed link all the Arabic-speaking peoples and that therefore the Arab nation does in fact exist. From this assumption they argue that the present internal political boundaries of the Arab world are illogical and should be abolished. They consider that the factors which unite the members of the Arab nation are a common language and culture, territory, history and destiny as well as common economic interests. A minority are of the opinion that the factors of common race and religion are important in the formation of a nation and that they, too, exist in the Arab world. It is of interest to examine what the proponents of pan-Arab nationalism have written concerning these factors and their appropriateness as forces binding together all Arabs.

As we have seen from the first chapter in this study, Arab nationalist writers lay very great emphasis on the existence of a common language, Arabic, in all parts of the Arab world. They are, in the majority, agreed that this is the soundest and strongest factor in determining their nationalism. They consider, as is clear from the quotations I have given,¹ the

1. Chapter One above pp. 49 et seq.

ability to speak, read and write Arabic as a natural language the main qualification and prerequisite to being an Arab. Arabic is seen not merely as an existing factor of unity among Arabs, but as a living and moving force actively and continuously creating a feeling of oneness. 'Abdullah al-'Alāyilī, a comparatively early Arab nationalist writer, theorizing on the factors which are present in any nationalism, considered language of primary importance: "It has a great effect on the people's awareness of their unity. It is active at times of both troubles and hope. In the same way, by means of it the nation holds on to its past glories and through it, too, it constructs its social, political and cultural history, on which its future generations can gaze."¹. Dr. George Hannah makes the interesting observation that the Arabic language was the first of the factors active in the creation of Arab nationalism, although he does himself lay emphasis on geographical unity which must, presumably, have been in existence before the Arab conquests. He explains how these conquests brought the spread of the Arabic language throughout the Arab world and concludes: "It can be deduced from this that the language common to the Arab group of people was in existence before the formation of

1. 'Abdullah al-'Alāyilī: "dustūr al-'arab al-qaumī." ("The National Constitution of the Arabs.") Beirut, 1941, p 88.

the Arab national entity. It was, then, the first of the factors in and a special feature of Arab nationalism."¹ This apparently means that the Arab nation has been in existence only since the Arab conquests; other Arab nationalist writers, as, however, we shall see in the discussions of race and history as factors in the existence of the Arab nation, consider ethnic and historical ties to have been far earlier factors.

Despite this generally accepted idea that the Arabic language is the main focal point about which all Arabs gather, some writers do seem to consider it of less importance than the other factors constituting a nationalism. 'Azīz al-Hājj, for example, places the language factor third in importance after unity of history and territory: "This one nation possesses all the national characteristics of a single nation, for it consists of a distinct group of people formed historically, living on a common territory (despite artificial boundaries) and speaking a common language."² Similarly we find that Ahmed Sa'īd considers language of primary importance with what he calls unity "of origin and race" but on an equal basis with it. He clearly considers, however, that it is a more important factor than unity of history, customs, territory and feelings which he lists in this order of respective importance.³

1. Op. cit., p. 47/50. y

2. "al-qaumīyah al-'arabiya wa-l-dīmoqrāṭīyah". ("Arab Nationalism and Democracy.") Beirut, 1958, p. 6.

3. Op. cit., p. III

Nicola Ziadeh examines Arab nationalism after an analysis of West-European nationalisms. He finds that just as the 19th century was the time when nationalisms developed and grew strong so was it a time when philosophers began examining the factors constituting these phenomena. They discovered, he writes, that the various factors which are considered to be of importance in the existence of a nation are: "geographic unity, economic factors, the state (the form of government) racial origins, religion, history and language."¹ Ziadeh disagrees with this appraisal and makes his own analysis of the influence of these factors in the existing countries of Western Europe and finds that this influence is not strong. He concludes that the main factor in nationalism is "the unity of feeling among the individuals of a nation."² He carries this thought further a little later: "What is the nation? What is nationalism? Nationalism is basically and fundamentally feelings. The nation is the result of these feelings. It is the result of the feelings of the individuals and their belief in its existence."³ This does seem to be the very heart of the matter; it may well be significant that Arab nationalists do not give greater prominence to this ultimately important

1. Op. cit., p. 56.

2. Ibid., p. 62.

3. Op. cit., p. 66.

factor. Dr. Ibrāhīm Jum'ah too, stresses unity of feelings and leaves language completely out of consideration in his remarks on the factors which prove the present existence of the Arab nation. He writes: "This unified Arab nation which has achieved its new, living existence from the interaction of events and the exchange of interests, the unity of history and culture and unity of feelings and attitudes, this nation is complete in itself. It possesses those attributes and factors, both material and spiritual, which every indigenous nation possesses."¹.

The importance of the language factor in Arab nationalism, both as a primary basis of the movement and as a necessary vehicle for the exchange of feelings which can lead to even greater unity, is strongly appreciated by Walīd Qamhāwī. He is also keenly aware of the deficiencies in Arabic as a factor of unity among all Arabs. He points with great emphasis and emotion to the language differences between the various parts of the Arab world and the apparent disregard for the importance of these differences and the need for their removal. "One can scarcely contain oneself", he writes, "when one finds the Algerian Arab French in intellect, heart and tongue and that the Egyptian barely knows anything about the history and conditions of the rest of the homeland. One finds, too, that

1. Op. cit., p. 225.

the Iraqi has considered his Arabic language an empty vessel which he has had to fill with diverse Turkish, Kurdish, Persian and even English words."¹ He mentions Syria and Yemen too, and criticises various aspects of their differences with the Arab world and concludes: "Each of these regions has its own local dialect differing completely from the other dialects and from the Arabic language as it is taught and written."²

The denial of a language unity has been and is one of the main bases for opposition to Arab nationalism among those Arabs who support the continued existence of the sovereign Arab countries as separate entities. Sāṭi ' al-Ḥudārī examines this opposition in one of his works. He quotes the Lebanese newspaper "al-'Amal" (he gives no dates) as saying in broad terms that the boundaries of each dialect are the same as those of each Arab state. In particular, with regard to Iraq and Syria, the newspaper is quoted as claiming that: "the dialect is not a transitory, accidental happening, but a witness of a mentality and of racial origin and of a separate historical and geographical entity." The newspaper goes on to point out that the differences in dialect existed before the Sykes-Picot agreement and are not strictly bound by the territorial limits agreed therein. This shows, it continues, that differences in language point to the different

1. Op. cit., p. 463.

2. Ibid.

origins and history of the people speaking them and that as the present boundaries between the Arab countries correspond to dialectical language differences, these boundaries are just. Sāṭi ' al-Ḥuṣarī answers this criticism, in my opinion not with great effect, by pointing to the Kingdom of Jordan and asking rhetorically whether its boundaries correspond with those of a particular dialect.¹

Dr. Qamḥawī considers that a standardisation of teaching methods throughout the Arab world would be one of the best and surest ways to unify and solidify the Arab ranks. He suggests that the Arabic language itself is one of the most obvious fields for possible and necessary reform: "The Arabic language must be set free from all the restrictions encompassing it and weighing it down. There is nothing sacred about it, neither its grammar, its form, its spelling, its letters or its sounds. Reading and writing must be made easier so that everyone will be able to read and write without difficulty or distress; they will thus free themselves from the many, widespread colloquial dialects and will gather together around the unified classical Arabic language."² The writer's last remarks concerning the

1. "al-'urūbah baina du'ātihā wa ma'aridihā." ("Arabism Between Its Proponents and Opponents".) 3rd edition, Beirut, 1957 pp. 54-56. It is, of course, true that the dialectical differences between the inhabitants of Jordan and Syria are slight; the differences between the spoken languages of, for example, the peoples of Iraq, Egypt, Morocco and Jordan are, however, very considerable.

2. Op. cit., p. 475. It is interesting to observe that Qamḥawī refers to the existence of "many, widespread colloquial dialects" of Arabic; the majority of Arab nationalist writers do not, of course, mention them at all.

means of bringing reform seem to me somewhat unrealistic. In spite of his denial of the sacredness of any aspect of the Arabic language he says that it must be revised at the expense of the living dialects, although there are many words in everyday use common to all or most of the Arabic dialects. It would seem to be more practicable to adopt into the written language those words now used throughout the Arab world which do not occur in the classical Arabic.

The majority of Arab nationalist writers simply assert the importance of the common language as a main factor unifying all Arabs without giving any idea of the undeniable fact that Arabs uneducated in the classical language from different parts of the Arab world would be almost unable to communicate with one another. The degree of illiteracy is so high in the Arab countries, of course, that it is a small proportion indeed who are able to understand the serious items on the radio and to read the newspapers. Nevertheless, throughout history states have been formed although no common language bound together the inhabitants of their various parts. There is no doubt that the fact that a proportion of the Arabs, those who are literate, are able to communicate with one another through the classical language is a strong factor in the argument for the existence of an Arab nation. It is, too, a factor which will grow in strength and importance as standards of education improve and literacy becomes more widespread.

There has similarly, been considerable discussion among Arab nationalist theorists on the importance of geography as a factor unifying all Arabs and a basis on which the Arab nation can be built. Dr. Zurayq, as far as I am aware, has not considered unity of territory an important basis in the formation of a nationalism. Ahmed Sa'īd apparently considers that it ranks fourth in importance after the factors of race and language, history and customs. 'Azīz al-Hājj considers that geographical unity is second in importance after the factor of unity of historical connection. George Hannah considers that after the most important factor, common language, the second most important factor is life on a common territory for a long time: "A unified nation cannot be constructed unless a human family has coexisted on a stretch of land for a long period and unless, during this time, some of this family have interacted with others of it."¹.

Nicola Ziadeh seems to be arguing for the existence of a unified geographical entity in which the Arab peoples live, but he divides up the Arab world into two distinct parts: "The Eastern part of this area begins with the Persian mountains and ends with Egypt's Western desert. The Western part begins at Barqah and ends in Morocco. The Western desert is, then, the dividing area between the Eastern and Western parts. If we

1. Op. cit., p. 22.

take the Eastern portion, we find the similarity between its various parts very great and its geographical boundaries very clear. The Iraqi plain and the plains of Syria and the plain of the Nile valley are the result of similar geographic and geological factors."¹. He then examines the Western part of his division and finds that it is a unit formed by similar chains of mountain ranges with valleys between them, and that the soil in the valleys is of a uniform type. After making this deliberate division, he goes straight on in the next paragraph to assume a geographical unity including all the Arab world: "We see from this that the Arab world is a geographical unit with clearly delineated boundaries which are the mountains and the Mediterranean Sea, the great African deserts, the Arab ocean and the Persian Gulf. Its common factors are clear, its climate is uniform. Its climate is that of the Mediterranean, with the exception of some areas which branch off in one direction or another - as for example the Arabian deserts or the heights of Lebanon or the Atlas mountains."². Despite the apparent contradiction, the writer goes on to argue that, on the basis of this geographical unity, the Arab world as a whole has an economy which is self-complementary and self-sufficient.

1. Op. cit., p. 72.

2. Op. cit., p. 73. Dr. Ziadeh's argument seems unconvincing in the extreme.

Muhammad 'Izzah Darwazah, too, sees the lands where Arabic is spoken, in all their diversity as a geographic unit. Their individual differences are such, he considers, that they make up together a complete unit: "The regions of this great Arab homeland are varied, as we have explained, in climate and nature, just as they are varied in their potentialities. What is lacking in one region is found in the other. It may be said, then, that some parts complement the other and form a natural geographic and economic unit."¹. This argument, that the very diversity of the natural and economic factors of the Arab world is such that all together they make a unit, is frequently found in Arab nationalist works.²

Dr. Ibrāhīm Jum'ak seems alone among Arab nationalist philosophers in considering unity of territory a most important factor and base active towards the formation of the proposed

1. Op. cit., p. 13.

2. c.f. Arthur Mills' comment concerning the economic potential of the Middle East: "There are local idealists who foresee an economic development on the scale of that in Western Europe or North America; but, though it is true that little surveying and prospecting have been done, and that more mineral resources may exist than are now known, there is a significant paucity of natural resources." Page 231 of a special Chapter 8, contributed to "A Short History of the Middle East" by George Kirk, new revised edition of 1957, London.

Arab state. He writes: "The common natural geographical factor is one of the strongest and firmest of the bases in the creation of Arab unity and the clearest to understand. This is because it is the factor which has become firm with time, unaffected by the political changes which have taken place in the area."¹.

Sāṭi' al-Ḥuṣarī, in contrast to these writers, denies outright that geography and natural resources are of any great importance as bases in nationalism. In his criticism of the Syrian Nationalist Party's contention that there is a geographical and natural unity between Iraq and Greater Syria, he denies both the existence of this separate natural entity and the importance of geography in the formation of a state. He concludes: "I can thus say without hesitation that those who claim a nationalist unity between Iraq and Syria should not restrict themselves to consideration of the importance of territory in the formation of nationalisms, but must consider the factors of language and history, unless they wish to rebel against the demands of reason and logic and attempt to reconcile the irreconcilable."². Having committed himself to a stand denying the importance of geography and natural territory as a factor in nationalism, Al-Ḥuṣarī

1. Op. cit., p. 42.

2. "difa' 'an al-'urūbah". ("Defence of Arabism.") Beirut, 2nd. edition, 1957, p. 43.

goes on to attempt to prove his thesis from Western European history. He discusses at length the Dutch naval superiority over the British in the 16th century despite Holland's lack of ship-building resources and concludes: "I am sure that these truths suffice to show the great error which those writers fall into who exaggerate the effect of nature on mankind and claim that natural surroundings is one of the most important factors which guide the affairs of men."¹ It was perhaps unfortunate that Al-Ḥusarī restricted his historical examination to the 16th century; if he had examined the development of the situation which he considers in the 17th century, he would have observed that Britain overtook Holland in the mastery of the seas, perhaps as a result of Britain's better ship-building resources, combined, of course, with other factors. A little later in the same work, Sāti' al-Ḥusarī again turns his attention to British and French history to prove his same contention. He examines British history and the growth of British trade and influence and attributes this mainly to the existence of an effective centralised government. He contrasts with this France's comparative lack of power which he attributes to the lack of an effective centralised government, denying any influence of geographical factors.²

1. Op. cit., p. 60.

2. Ibid., p. 60/62.

It seems extraordinary that he does not agree that the fact of Britain's more effectively centralised government was due, in part at least, to obvious geographical factors.

Arab nationalist writers achieve their greatest degree of unanimity in their discussions concerning the existence and relative importance of the various factors which constitute a nationalism in their consideration that unity of history is of very great importance. They do not generally define exactly what they mean by this unity of history; it is referred to variously as a "unity of struggle" and as a "unity of destiny". Hazim Nussaibeh points out that unity of historical heritage is the second most important basis, after unity of language, of Arab nationalism. He observes, however, that the history of the Arabs contains within it periods of the bitterest strife among Arabs themselves. The question of the existence or non-existence of a common historical heritage all depends he writes, on the way the facts are presented: "The truth is that historical tradition is a factor contributing to integration provided it is presented in the right way. That is to say, it is not so much a question of creating the present in the image of the past, as it is the re-creation of the past in the image of the present."¹ He considers that what he calls "this mental debauchery"

1. "The Ideas of Arab Nationalism". New York, 1956, p. 79.

claiming to be history rather than political propaganda" is forgivable when one considers the sincerity of those who indulge in it and the enormous difficulties in presenting historical truth. "When the theorists of nationalism, therefore, place historical tradition as the second factor most important in nationalism, they envisage a selective presentation thoroughly cleansed of disruptive overtones."¹

Arab nationalist writings do indeed adopt this attitude, in the majority, towards the presentation of the history of the Arab world. They ignore the periods of obvious strife between contending political and religious groups and give the impression that there has existed a long historical unity among all Arabs. Dr Yūsuf Haikal, writing in 1943, makes the extremely doubtful claim, which he does not attempt to substantiate, that Iraq and Syria were Arab lands before the coming of Islam: "Iraq and Greater Syria - divided at the present time into Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Trans-Jordan - were nothing if not Arab countries before Islam."² Writing later on the same page concerning the Muslim invasions of these lands, he states: "Their armies went out from the heart of the Arabian peninsula and took back what the Romans and the Persians had occupied - they took back again Syria and Iraq."³

1. Op. cit., p. 80.

2. Op. cit., p. 16.

3. Ibid.

The Egyptian writer, Dr. Ibrāhīm Jum'ah stresses an age-long solidarity of the peoples of the Arab nation against foreign invaders, from the time of Alexander the Great up to the present day: "It would not have been possible for us to succeed against the base foreigners if it had not been for the unity of our struggle...This it was which enabled us to overcome the Macedonian danger, and to stand up against the Roman tyrant, to defeat the Mongol enemy and to stand firm in the face of the crusaders and the Turks and the modern Western peoples. Our strength was always in the strength of the unity of our fight. We overcame the enemy with one spirit which refused to submit to the opposing power."¹ He goes on in the next sentence to make a claim which, if it is understood literally, is incredibly extravagant: "The defensive army was at all times a common army under one unified command; similarly, the victory, in its turn was a shared victory." Even if one can appreciate Dr. Nusaibah's plea that one must bear in mind the sincerity of the nationalist writer and that historical truth is hard to tell and at times bad for the nationalist cause, it is difficult to see how such unforgivably false oversimplifications and misappreciations of history serve any useful purpose.²

1. Op. cit., p. 47.

2. See also the quotations from the official U.A.R. "Yearbook for 1959", Chapter Five, pp. 24/5 above.

There has been comparatively little discussion among Arab nationalist writers concerning the importance of race as a unifying factor in Arab nationalism. They, in the majority, consider that race is of little importance in comparison in particular with the unifying factors of language and historical heritage. To substantiate their arguments they point to the example of American nationalism especially, which is undoubtedly existent although the people forming the nation are from many separate national and racial origins. Arab nationalists are generally conscious of the difficulty in proving strong racial connections among all those who live in that area between the Persian Gulf and the Atlantic, the claimed boundaries of the Arab nation, and seem to prefer, therefore, to ignore the subject altogether. As their definitions of Arab show, they consider anyone who speaks Arabic and considers himself to be an Arab as an Arab in undisputed fact, no matter what his racial origins.¹

Despite this general avoidance of and deprecation of the

1. c.f. General Sir John Glubb, "A Soldier With the Arabs", London 1957, p. 37: "Arabia, in reality is not a country but a subcontinent. The Yemenis are as different from the Lebanese, or the Palestinians from the inhabitants of 'Oman as are the Scandinavians from the Greeks - perhaps more different." If one extends the field of enquiry to cover the whole area of the Arabic-speaking world, from the "Persian Gulf to the Atlantic," the differences between the inhabitants of each region are seen to be even greater.

racial factor in nationalism in general and in Arab nationalism in particular, some writers do attempt to argue the existence of a racial strain inherent in all the Arabic speaking peoples.

'Abdullah al-'Alāyilī⁶ considers that in those countries in which a recent nationalism has been fostered, he quotes America, Belgium and Great Britain as examples, the race factor has been found important. He maintains that in each of these cases the strongest racial factor prevalent has been encouraged and emphasised and that the particular nationalisms have been built around this factor. With regard to the Arabs he says in conclusion: "Racial connection was and still remains a factor which makes the nation aware of its unity. We in the Arab homeland join together a number of secondary strains in one race. Since the strongest strain in our society is the Arab strain, we must therefore make it a basis of nationalism and emphasise it alone."¹.

Sāṭi' al-Ḥuṣarī examines this question in defence of Arab nationalism against an attack made on it on racial grounds by the Lebanese newspaper "al-'Amal". The newspaper asks whether Arabs are merely all those people who speak Arabic, with nothing else taken into consideration; it points in successful contrast to the German Federation, which it considers is based solidly on common racial origins. Al-Ḥuṣarī answers this by denying the value of a distinction between the importance of the

1. Op. cit., p. 93.

racial and language factors and asserts that no national political entity is in fact founded on strictly racial grounds. He denies the racial unity of the Germans, French, Russians or Turks and accepts that Arabs similarly, have little unity of race. He demands that the Arabs be judged merely on the same grounds as other national groups and concludes: "Arab nationality is a great river to which tributary streams have joined from time to time",¹ but that the individual racial differences are lost in the flow of the river. In an earlier work Al-Huṣarī denies very strongly the necessity of unity of blood and race in a nationalism: "We can say with all assurance and conviction that unity of origin and blood in any nation is merely imaginary theory which has taken possession of people's minds and intellects and is quite unsubstantiated by any proof!"²

Muhammad Darwazah clearly considers unity of racial origin to be of some importance in the formation of a nation. He claims, and points as proof to the common Semitic basis to the languages of the area of the proposed Arab state, that the inhabitants of the present Arab world came from the Arabian peninsula in waves of emmigration. He considers in particular that the inhabitants of Ancient Egypt were of Arab origin:

1. "Al-'urūbah.." Op. cit., p. 58/9.

2. "muḥādarāt fī nushū' al-fikrah al-qaumīyah." ("Lectures on the Emergence of Nationalist Philosophy") Cairo, 1951, p. 20.

"Ancient history has not given us specific names for the great Arab waves of emigration which flowed over to the Nile valley before Islam in the way that history has given us names for the migrations to Iraq and Syria. For this reason a vacuum has been created in people's minds, since the earliest times concerning Egypt's connection with Arabism and the Arabian peninsula...The cause of this lack of knowledge is to be found in the nature of the recording of Egyptian history, which followed the course of enumerating the names of families or governments. This (lack of historical evidence) does not, by itself refute what we contend - namely, that the majority of the inhabitants of Ancient Egypt and especially those who created their kingdoms and famous civilisation are from the Arab race, just as much as are the inhabitants of Iraq and Syria."¹. He goes on to quote a number of archaeological and linguistic authorities who agree with this view. The thesis he suggests is that the Ancient Egyptians were either a) Semitic or b) a white Asian race (they may, he says, be one and the same) who landed in Ethiopia from the Arabian peninsula and worked their way up the Nile River valley. He quotes authorities who consider that the Ancient Egyptian language was basically Semitic in vocabulary. It is interesting to notice that by

1. Op. cit., p. 38.

his inclusion of the Ancient Egyptians and, by implication, the Assyrians and Sumerians within the Arab race this writer goes much further than do the majority of Arab nationalist theorists. This attitude is in marked contrast to the majority who consider that it was the Islamic conquests and the spread of the Arabic language that set the first bases of Arab nationalism.

I have read no Arab nationalist work which attempts to argue for the inclusion of the Sudanese and North African Berber peoples within Arab nationalism on racial grounds. Clearly to prove or to argue with any success that the proposed united Arab nation in all its extent, has a firm racial basis is impossible. The official attitude of the United Arab Republic to the question concerning whether race is a factor in nationalism is simply stated in the "U.A.R. Yearbook for 1959": "Race and religion by themselves do not constitute a nationality, though they are counted among the factors that strengthen one."¹ It will be very interesting to observe in the future whether Arab nationalist theorists lay greater stress on this claimed racial factor or whether it does disappear completely from the ideology of the movement. So far it is impossible and too early to observe a trend.

The apparent majority of Arab nationalist writers accept the necessity for the existence of common economic interests

1. Op. cit., p. 11.

between all parts of the Arab homeland in the creation of the united Arab state. Dr. Zurayq considers "present and future interests" to be the fourth factor after unity of language, customs and the "past struggle" necessary in the formation of a state uniting all the Arabs.¹ On the other hand 'Abdullah al-'Alāyilī considers common interest second in importance only to language.² Dr. George Hannah places economic interest in the same relative position of importance as does Dr. Zurayq. He maintains that even the greatest opponents of Arab nationalism would not deny this common material interest among all the Arab countries. He writes that Arab oil would not be at its present price if it did not pass by pipeline from Arab countries through Arab countries, that the Lebanese health resorts and transit trade would be of no importance if it were not for the rest of the Arab world. He concludes his extremely vague and superficial examination of the common material interests of the Arab countries by saying that the manufactured goods produced in them find their market in them too.³ The Egyptian Ahmad Sa'īd ignores the factor of common economic interest altogether in his formal listing of the factors on which the Arab nation will be built.

1. "al-wa'y al-qaumī." p. 23.

2. Op. cit., p. 91.

3. Op. cit., p. 54.

Arab nationalist writers are in general extremely unscientific and unconvincing in the exposition of their arguments for the existence of this very important factor of common economic interest. They have not as yet attempted to explain in precise terms how the Arab world fits together as an economic whole; they give the impression that they have not studied the subject to any depth at all.¹ It seems obvious that the question is not one of merely deciding in purely theoretical terms whether the proposed Arab nation would be a viable economic unit if it were formed. What is interesting and vitally important to examine is whether the individual Arab countries at present enjoying comparatively high standards of living consider that it would be within their interests to join in a union with their less fortunate Arab neighbours. I think that the most obvious example in this respect is the Persian Gulf sheikhdoms, where the per-capita income of the population is of the highest in the world. It seems clear that if their oil revenue were shared in a common Arab treasury the individual interests of the Arabs in these areas would suffer. Arab nationalists counter this argument by saying that these areas are exploited by the "feudal classes and reactionaries" and that the Arab masses who live in them are as poor as the inhabitants of any other region of the Arab

1. See Chapter Two, above, pp. 80 et seq.

world. The downfall of the "reactionaries" in Iraq as a result of the Army revolution of July, 1958, an event which was welcomed with jubilation by Arab nationalists at the time, does not seem to have brought that country any nearer to a full Arab union. One is tempted to think, therefore, that the economic as well as the emotional objections to Arab unity should not be disregarded or minimised.

Sāṭi' al-Husarī is more realistic than the majority of Arab nationalist writers in realising that the argument of conflicting economic interests between the separate parts of the Arab world is an important one. He considers, nevertheless, that this situation will probably change: "Economic interests are neither so obvious nor lasting as they appear at the first glance. There are both immediate and future interests which are frequently in clear conflict. This conflict necessitates the sacrifice of one in the path of the other or the sacrifice of part of both."¹.

A minority of Arab nationalist theorists consider that religion is a unifying factor in the Arab world and even a necessary one in the formation of any nation. The majority do not, however, consider religion in this light; I have attempted to examine the extremely difficult question of the relationship between religion and Arab nationalism in a later chapter.².

1. "ārā wa aḥādīth fī al-qaumīyah al-'arabīyah." ("Ideas and Opinions on Arab Nationalism,") 3rd. edition Beirut 1959, p.78.

2. See Chapter Five above. Some Arab Muslim theorists are seen to apparently consider Islam and Arab nationalism as different words referring to the same thing.

The factors active in the existence of and working for the creation of the Arab nation are, then, in the opinion of Arab nationalist writers the factors of unity of language and customs, history, geography, race and common interests. Clearly the most firmly established of these factors is that of the common Arabic language and customs which spread with the Muslim conquests. This factor is one which will be progressively effective and important as time goes on, and will provide the means of expressing whatever unity of feeling develops between all Arabs, just as it will form the means of expressing their dissensions. A common history embracing all the Arabs can only be accepted, in my opinion, after the most superficial of the history of the Middle East. That the Arabs will themselves, however, forget or ignore the periods of dissension in their history and will stress and overemphasise, as we have observed they have a tendency to do, a unity of "struggle" is something one can accept as probable. An appreciation of this claimed unity of history will therefore, no doubt, become more generally accepted and will serve as an important means of creating a feeling of unity. This is, of course, if one accepts as unlikely that parts of the Arab world will attempt to create their own nationalisms on tenuous and largely imaginary racial and historical grounds, claiming nothing more than a transitory connection with their Arab neighbours.

In that all the Arab countries are mutually connected by land or desert, the third factor of Arab nationalism that of a form of geographical unity, is obvious and undeniable. This is a completely static factor, however; there is a far more obvious geographical unity between Belgium, Luxemburg, Holland and Denmark, for example, than there is between the various parts of the Arab world, and yet there exists as yet no political union between them. The land area where the Arabic language is spoken is clearly not an area with common climate and similar natural terrain marked off from other areas by obvious and well-defined natural boundaries, but rather a connected mass of such geographic entities.

The factor of unity of race is, as we have seen, one which is generally deprecated as unimportant in contemporary Arab nationalist ideology.

The fifth factor usually considered important as a unifying force in Arab nationalism, that of unity of interests, is not, in my opinion, very strong at the present time. The comparatively recently exploited oil wealth of Iraq and the Arabian peninsula has made these areas economically strong in comparison in particular with Egypt which has a very large and growing population with a low standard of living. As long as this situation remains, that is, as long as oil from these areas lasts and finds a ready market, I think that one can

expect that they will not favour with enthusiasm becoming part of a fully united Arab state.

It is generally considered, then, that certain factors - common language and culture, history, territory and to a lesser extent the ties of common blood and religion are usually to be discerned joining together the members of any given nation. Arab nationalist writers consider that the existence of these factors in the Arab world proves the existence of the Arab nation; that some of these factors are indeed strong in the area is undeniable. It may, justifiably be said that these factors exist more strongly in the Arab world than do those which link together the inhabitants of some established political national entities which have been formed in the course of history. These links have, however, existed in the Arab world for many centuries and the present-day lack of political unity in the area may therefore be considered to prove, partly at least, that they are merely static factors.

Although one may, I think, dismiss as unlikely the possibility of direct military conquest by any one Arab state of all the others, a commonly experienced feeling of fear may perhaps in the future motivate the creation of a pan-Arab union. It is, of course, true that many Arabs are completely united in fearing Zionism as a common aggressive enemy and that great efforts are made from two directions to convince the Arabs that

the Western Powers are also such an enemy. To the inhabitants of certain Arab countries, however, far removed in distance from Israel and to others to which Western "imperialism" has not proved to have been without many benefits, such fears must seem particularly unreal and unjustified. Fear of communism is, on the other hand, widely and strongly experienced throughout the Arab world at the present time. Some observers, indeed, consider that the United Arab Republic was formed so hastily in 1958 as the result of Syrian fears of growing communist domination in the country. We see, for example, that R.L. Allen of the University of Virginia writes: "Responsible Syrian leaders, seeing their country drifting towards Soviet control as a result of economic, psychological, military and political factors and the activities of the indigenous Communist party, chose to unite with Egypt rather than lose their identity completely."¹ In spite of this precedent, however, fear of communism does not seem likely to influence any other Arab countries towards forming a close union with the United Arab Republic.

If, then, neither military conquest nor fear do lead to the formation of an effective pan-Arab union, it seems most

1. "Middle East Report, 1959" ed. W. Sands. Middle East Institute, Washington, D.C., 1959, p. 83. Arab writers, of course, tend to stress that other and more positive factors led to the formation of the union.

unlikely that such a union will come into being except as the result of a feeling shared by the governments of all the Arab countries that their individual economies would benefit thereby. Such feelings of common economic interest, although assumed with such conviction to exist by Arab nationalist writers, seem at the present time neither deep, widespread nor realistic.

Great stress is laid by observers in both the Western and Arab worlds today on another possibility; this is that skilful propaganda may succeed in persuading the Arab "masses" to hate and seek the destruction of their present forms of rule. The regions newly liberated from the "clutches of the Zionist-Imperialist reactionary stooges", to use the common Arab nationalist phraseology, would then, it is argued, inevitably move towards greater Arab unity. The use of such propaganda for several years, however, has obviously not, so far at least, led to this desired result, as the present situation in Iraq and its strained relations with the United Arab Republic seem to prove. It would seem foolish to assume that propaganda and subversion alone, of however violent or cunning a nature, will be able to unite effectively the entire Arab world from the "Gulf to the Atlantic" in the foreseeable future.

CHAPTER FOUR:

THE FORM OF THE UNION.

An important element in the ideology of Arab Nationalism is, by definition, a desire on the part of its advocates to bring about a closer form of union between the Arab countries than exists at present. That it is of great difficulty and of doubtful value to attempt to formulate the constitution of a state which remains only a theoretical possibility at the present time is obvious. It is not surprising, therefore, that comparatively few Arab nationalist writers have examined this question in any detail in their writings. Those few writers who have, however, attempted to define the powers of the President of the proposed union and to resolve the difficult question of the means and form of the representation of the at present divided Arab states within the union. These proposed constitutions are surprising for their extreme diversity; no two Arab nationalist theoreticians are joined in anything like unanimity over the basic problems of the form of the united Arab state they advocate. It is interesting to examine the proposals they make and the constitution of the United Arab Republic, a state which is considered by some contemporary Arab writers to be the first step towards the greater pan-Arab union.

Arab Nationalist writers seem in the majority agreed that some form of federation (ittihād) must be the necessary prelude to the eventual and ideal complete union. They see this federation itself, however, as a close form of union in which centralised government is envisaged, with a unified military command, single diplomatic representation abroad and common economic policy and treasury. Dr. Yūsuf Haikal, writing in 1943, seems to have been the first Arab nationalist writer who made an attempt to deal with the problem of formulating a suitable constitution for the proposed union. He pointed to a division in the Arab world between those countries, Sudan, Tripolitania, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco, which were all at the time under direct rule by Western Powers, and those countries Egypt, Syria, Iraq and the Arabian Peninsula which he considers did enjoy some degree of national sovereignty.¹ Realising this and other difficulties in the way of a complete union between all parts of the Arab world, he concludes that the solution is to be found in some form of federation: "A federation is the best form of union for the Arab countries for each region would then remain in possession of its internal sovereignty, governing itself and directing its affairs as it must and wishes. By federation, too, the strengths of these regions would be made one and they would

1. "nahwa al-wahdah al-'arabiyyah." Cairo, 1943, p. 79.

follow a united foreign policy. They would thus become one large state in their relations with other foreign states."¹. It is interesting to observe the emphasis in this comment placed on the need for union for the sake of a united Arab foreign policy; it seems clear that this is in Haikal's opinion the most important argument in favour of a federation of Arab states. This emphasis on the importance of external affairs in comparison with internal affairs is typical of the writings of many Arab nationalists, especially in those works written before or soon after the Second World War. More recent works, while emphasising the need for a united Arab foreign policy lay far greater emphasis than they did at that time on the assumed socio-economic advantages of union.

Dr. Haikal goes on to point out the main difficulty in the attainment of an effective Arab federation; there are, he writes realistically, kings and governments in the various parts of the Arab world who would be unwilling to give up their sovereignty in external affairs and "submit to a high, centralised authority."². Dr. Haikal concludes in expressing his opinion that a satisfactory provisional solution to the difficulty would lie in the creation of an Arab confederation. He suggests that the Arab governments set up a joint association to be called an "assembly of confederated Arab states,"

1. Ibid., p. 81.

2. Ibid.

and proposes his own simple yet interesting plan for the formation of the Assembly of the confederation. He divides the Arab world somewhat arbitrarily into four natural units. The first would consist of Egypt and the Sudan, the second of greater Syria including Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Trans-Jordan; the third unit would consist of Iraq and the fourth the Arabian Peninsula. He proposes that each of these unities should be represented by five delegates selected by the governments concerned. He goes on to suggest that a permanent headquarters for the confederation be set up in one of the towns situated roughly in the centre of the Arab world. The President of the assembly of the confederation should, in Haikal's opinion, be elected each year and would have no executive power; each of the units comprising the confederation would take turns in supplying the President. The activities of the Assembly should, he writes, concern matters of education, legislation, customs, defence and foreign policy. Despite his argument quoted above concerning the need for unity to achieve common Arab foreign policy, he makes the apparently contradictory comment: "As for foreign affairs and diplomatic representation, these too should remain the concern of each of the confederated states alone, provided that these states do not contradict by their foreign policy the principal bases on which they have agreed within the confederation."¹ The most

1. Ibid., p. 87.

obvious and extraordinary aspect of Haikal's suggested plan for confederation lies in his assumption that each of the units he considers to exist would be agreed to accept equality of representation in the proposed assembly. That Egypt and the Sudan together would have been content to accept five representatives in the assembly and an equal power to that of the five proposed representatives of Iraq, for example, seems unlikely.^{1.}

At about the same time as Dr. Haikal was writing his work in support of Arab union, some of the governments of the Arab states were in fact taking the first steps which were to lead to the creation of the Arab League. This League was eventually formed in 1945 as the result of a chain of actions and events which are generally considered to have been given their stimulus by the statement made by the British Foreign Secretary, Antony Eden, in the House of Commons in May, 1941; in this statement he expressed the support of the British government for some form of Arab union. The initiative was then taken by the Iraqi Prime Minister, Nūrī Pasha al-Sa'īd who, at the close of

1. While it is, of course, true that the Arab League is constituted on the basis of equal representation between each Arab country, it may, I think, be assumed that Haikal envisaged that the confederation should have more effective executive power than the League enjoys.

1942 and in the beginning of 1943 prepared a collection of documents and proposals relating to Arab unity and which laid particular emphasis on the problem of Palestine. These proposals, which he sent to the British Minister at Cairo, are known as the "Blue Book". The basic idea behind these proposals was that a fairly effective union of Greater Syria and Iraq would help defeat Zionist aims and ambitions in the Arab world and would provide a strong nucleus about which a fuller Arab union might eventually be constructed. Opposition to these proposals came from a number of sources on a variety of grounds. It was felt, for example, that such a union would in fact provide the Zionists already firmly established in Palestine an opportunity to exert their influence over an even wider area. It was felt, moreover, that no union could be effective and valuable without Egyptian participation, which might prove even more difficult to obtain in later years.¹ Fear and jealousy on the part of some Syrians and Egyptians at the possibility of the acquisition by the Hashimite Kings of Trans-Jordan and Iraq of greater authority and influence no doubt had their part to play as well. The

1. c.f. Cecil A. Hourani: "The Arab League in Perspective" Published by the Arab Office, Washington (no date) p. 4/5. Previously published in the M.E.J., Vol. I, No. 2, April, 1947.

uncertainties concerning the political status of Iraq and the independence of Lebanon and Syria were, too, probably additional factors which led to the shelving of these proposals of the Iraqi statesman.

The next step in the creation of the Arab League was "taken by Mustafa Nahhas Pasha, the Prime Minister of Egypt, who was urged by Nūrī al-Sa'id and other Arab nationalists to invite the various Arab governments to send representatives to Cairo to discuss the possibility and desirability of calling a general Arab conference."¹ The discussions which followed throughout 1943 and the first half of 1944 encouraged Nahhas Pasha to call a conference of high representatives of the Arab countries, including Palestine. The conferees reached a wide measure of agreement in their discussions at Alexandria and they formulated a document, known as the "Protocol of Alexandria" which set out the points on which they agreed. The League of Arab states it proposed was to be formed from all those independent Arab states which wished to join. It was to have a general council which would meet regularly to discuss problems of interest to all Arabs. Decisions of the

1. Ibid., p. 6. Nūrī al-Sa'id, it will be observed, is classed here by Hourani directly as an Arab nationalist; this contrasts strongly with the view widely held by Arab nationalists before his death, which they celebrated with great delight in July, 1958, that he was a "stooge of the imperialists" and an opponent of Arab unity.

Council would not be obligatory on those Arab governments which did not wish to carry them out; the use of force to decide disputes between member states would in no circumstances be permitted. The Protocol's first section contained the very important and direct clause: "In no case will the adoption of a foreign policy which may be prejudicial to the policy of the League or an independent member state be allowed." The Protocol laid special emphasis on the support of all the signatories for both the independence of Lebanon and the rights of the Arabs of Palestine.

From the date when the Protocol of Alexandria was agreed until the date when the Arab League itself was created in March 1945, important governmental and constitutional changes took place in some of the Arab countries. Perhaps mainly as a result of this, the Pact of the League differed considerably in spirit and tone from the Protocol. As Hourani points out: "Whereas the Protocol had envisaged a progressively increasing surrender of sovereignty, the Pact lays emphasis on its retention. For example, the prologue, after its statement "desirous of strengthening the close relations and numerous ties which link the Arab states and anxious to support and strengthen these ties," adds the phrase "upon a basis of respect for the independence and sovereignty of these states. "The Pact omits the clause of the Protocol which stated that "in no case will a state be permitted to pursue a foreign policy which

could be detrimental to the policy of the League or to any of its member states. "It also omits Article 3 of the Protocol looking toward a further degree of unity in the future, but specifies that states will co-operate 'with due regard to the organisation and circumstances of each state.' Finally, the Pact specifically binds each member state not to interfere in the systems of government of the others, whereas the Protocol had no such clause."¹.

Whatever the disappointments expressed by some Arab nationalists over the final form of the Pact of the Arab League, its establishment was seen by many Arabs to be a positive step towards ensuring greater Arab cooperation in the future. The preamble of the League's Covenant lays considerable emphasis on the widespread public demand for closer cooperation between the Arab states: "In order to affirm the close connections and numerous ties which link the Arab states, and being desirous of maintaining and establishing those connections on the foundations of respect for the independence and sovereignty of those states, and in order to direct their efforts towards the general good of the Arab states, the improvement of their circumstances, the security of their future, and the realisation of their hopes and aspirations,

1. Ibid., p. 9.

and in response to Arab public opinion in all parts of the Arab world, have agreed to enter into a Covenant for this object..."This Covenant led to the establishment of the Council of the Arab League, on which each member state has one vote and which is competent to mediate in disputes between these member states and advise the measures to be taken against aggression directed towards any Arab country. Unanimous decisions of the Council are binding on all member states; it was agreed that majority decisions of the Council should be binding only on those states which accepted them. The pact emphasises the sovereignty and independence of each of its members and the right of any member states to enter into any closer agreements they may desire. The Council, under the presidency of a representative of each member state in turn, meets ordinarily twice each year and in extraordinary session where necessary. The pact left membership of the League open to any independent Arab state; any member state may withdraw its membership after notice of one year, and any member state may be expelled from the League on the unanimous decision of the other members.

That the Arab League has not yet achieved that degree of close cooperation in the affairs of the Arab countries

which Arab nationalist writers desire, is obvious.¹ We find, indeed, that very shortly after the ratification of the Pact, some writers began to express their disappointment with various aspects of the charter of the League. In 1945 itself, Rafīq Kāmil al-Qiṭān complains at the lack of real power of the League given by its Covenant. He writes: "This Covenant did not give the League the power which would enable it to fulfil these national aims. On the contrary, it confined itself to making of it an organisation in which nothing more than mere attempts could be made at specific times, by the delegates of the states taking part in it, to strengthen the ties between their countries and to further the policies of these countries. It is clear that the Covenant has not given the League the necessary power to carry out what it wishes."² He goes on to criticize the fact that the Covenant did not make clear the way in which the delegates of the Arab

1.c.f. "The Arab League, while seemingly representative of Pan-Arab unity, in reality based its strength on its success in redirecting internal rivalries and bitterness outward against any foreign intrusion or intervention in Arabian affairs." Carol A. Fisher and Fred Krinsky: "Middle East in Crisis." Syracuse, 1959, p. 20.

2. "Al-wahdah al-'arabiyah wa sūriyah al-kubrā." ("Arab Unity and Greater Syria.") Damascus, 1945. Page dāl of introduction.

countries in the Council should be selected; thus, he writes, it is the governments of the countries concerned alone which choose whomever they wish to represent them.¹ The distrust of the Arab governments shown here is typical of the attitude of many Arab nationalist writers and several of them have criticised the League on similar grounds.

Having made his criticisms of the Arab League, al-Qiṭān puts forward his own plan for Arab unity. He considers that this can be achieved by the formation of an Arab Conference or assembly (mu'tamar) on which each Arab country would be represented by six delegates, whose term of office would last for four years. He proposes that the parliament of each Arab country should elect its six representatives bearing in mind the individual, specialist qualifications of each applicant. The chosen delegates need not necessarily be members of parliament and he stresses that the governments of the Arab countries should not exert any pressure in the selection of these delegates. The proposed assembly should have a president at its head elected by the delegates on a majority vote and he would have the authority to represent the assembly at governmental level. The decisions of the assembly, which would concern itself mainly with disputes between the governments of the Arab countries, would be binding on all these governments.

1. Ibid.

Each state participating in the assembly must agree to notify and obtain the agreement of the assembly before agreeing to any pact or alliance with a foreign power. He compares the supervisory power of the assembly with that of the Senate in the United States over the foreign policy of that country. Al-Qitān proposes the creation of a unified Arab military command and an economic committee to work for the abolishment of customs tariffs. The assembly must, he writes, devote all its attention to the achievement of the complete freedom of all Arab countries and should permanently be situated in Damascus.¹

By the year 1950, disappointment with the Arab League had become widespread in Arab nationalist circles and we find it criticised in very strong terms. Muhammad Hassan al-A'zamī and Abd al-Karīm Muhammad write, while discussing the problems with which the League has been presented for solution: "The League is faced with problems other than these which are more dangerous to its existence than the problems it was created to solve."² These authors, while agreeing on the need for the League and advising its extension to include

1. Ibid., p. 1 - 9.

2. "al-wahdah fi-al-sharq." ("Unity in the East.") Beirut 1950, p. 122.

other Muslim and Asian countries, are strong in their criticism of its actual effectiveness. They consider that the League has failed to deal with the problems presented to it in the proper spirit and the fact that the resolutions adopted by the Council have not in effect been implemented by the governments concerned has led to friction between its members. They claim, further, that the League has failed to face up to its problems with sincerity and has employed unsuitable methods in circumventing them. They point out, moreover, that the League has failed to deal effectively with the Palestine problem, neglected economic and social questions and unwisely devoted all its attention to political disputes.¹

Sāṭi' al-Ḥuṣarī is similarly critical of the effectiveness of the League in one of his books first published in 1953. He writes: "It must be observed that the unity which this pact created between the governments participating in it is weak, if not, indeed, really feeble. For, the Covenant gives no executive authority to the League's Council and fails to make the decisions of the Council binding on all."²

The writers of some of the most recent Arab nationalist works and apparently in particular those who strongly support the policies of the United Arab Republic, seem convinced that

1. Ibid., p.

2. "al-'urūbah baina du'ātihā..." p. 142.

the Arab League was a British inspiration and was imposed upon the Arabs with the deliberate intention of keeping them disunited. The Egyptian Ibrāhīm Jum'ah, for example, writes: "So that the Arabs would not achieve this unity, we saw the British particularly encourage the Arabs to form this instrument...we saw them urge on the Arabs to form the League of Arab countries in 1945 in the hope of creating a bloc out of the tribal, feudal and reactionary governments and elements within an Arab organisation which Britain could exploit to fulfil its own desires."¹ Similarly, Muhammad Majdhūb refers to the Arab League as a "British invention."² Ahmed Sa'īd is even more specific. After noting the statement of the British Foreign Secretary made on the 29th. of May, 1941, which implied that Britain would support and aid the formation of some form of Arab union, he writes: "Britain was able, and France with her, by means of their agents the leaders of some Arab countries, to impose a charter for the League which made its Council impotent from taking any unanimous decision, as the Covenant demands, against the imperialist Powers by reason of the presence of reactionary forces cooperating with the imperialists at the head of the countries from the majority

1. Op. cit., p. 33.

2. Op. cit., p. 20.

of which the Arab League Council was formed."¹ The attitude of mind demonstrated here is typical of 'popular' Arab nationalist writers today; they seem content to blame all the difficulties of the Arab world on the so-called imperialist powers.

Perhaps the most recent of attempts to formulate ^{in detail} a practical solution to the difficult problem of the constitutional form of the proposed Arab nationalist union are those of Muḥammad 'Izzat Darwazah and Walīd Qamḥawī. Dr. Darwazah in particular examines this question at length in his work published in 1956; he shows, too, that he is aware of the difficulties of finding a suitable formula for the proposed union and examines briefly the earlier attempts made to bring about this union. He points to the speech of Prime Minister Nāzim al-Qudsī delivered before the Arab League in 1951 and the enthusiasm with which this speech, calling for effective Arab federation mainly to meet the threat of Zionism, was received by the Arab people, if not by the Arab political leaders. It failed, he writes, to inspire action because of personal and dynastic rivalries.² The Mutual Defence Pact of 1951, which established the principle that all Arabs would unite in mutual action in the case of aggression against any

1. Op. cit., p. 50.

2. Op. cit., p. 133.

Arab state, was, in Darwazah's opinion a failure because of a complete lack of action on the part of the Arab governments at times of obvious aggression. The statement made in 1954 by the Iraqi government calling for Arab union failed, in Darwazah's opinion, to inspire action chiefly because it was considered to be the work of the British.¹

Dr. Darwazah goes on to write that the desired United Arab state will not be achieved until an Arab state adopts Arab nationalism as official governmental policy. He suggests that Syria and Egypt are best qualified to accomplish the task.² Having expressed his conviction that Arab nationalism would be likely to achieve great support in Egypt in the near future, Darwazah goes on to give his own opinion concerning the constitutional form and powers of the proposed union. He considers that the union should be full and absolute in military, economic and diplomatic affairs and that currencies and communications should, as well as cultural and educational affairs, all be directed from central ministries. He proposes that one legal system should prevail over the whole area and that it should be supervised by one Ministry of Justice. All Arabs should enjoy the right to live and work in any Arab region without discrimination. Although, he writes, the union

1. Ibid., p. 143.

2. Ibid., p. 602.

should be effective in all these major affairs, Arabs would retain local nationalities corresponding to the regions in which they at present live and would make use of these rights in local elections and other regional affairs. The union should, Darwazah considers, guarantee to all citizens free exercise of their special customs and form of worship, so long as this does not conflict with the national union and the interests of the countries within this union.

Darwazah goes on to present a detailed plan for the actual organisation of the government of the proposed union. He suggests the formation of executive and legal assemblies and the creation of a unified military command. The executive assembly should consist of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Finances, Defence, Communications, Culture, General Legislation, Nationality and Labour. The president of this executive assembly should be the titular head of the union as well and should be elected for office of two years duration. His duties would be restricted to the representation of the union abroad on official visits, the reception of foreign envoys and dignitaries, the signing of alliances, agreements and laws and the direction of sittings of the executive assembly.¹ Darwazah

1. Ibid., p. 623/4. It is interesting to observe the complete lack of the personal power of the president on which Darwazah insists.

suggests that each of the regions of the union should take turns in supplying the president according to alphabetic precedence; he should be chosen by the legislative assembly from three candidates proposed by the region concerned. The responsible ministers in the executive assembly should be elected by the legislative assembly from candidates put forward by each region for each ministerial post. Legislation, political agreements and economic and military pacts should come within the jurisdiction of the executive council. The effective power in the union proposed by Darwazah would, it is clear, be held by the legislative assembly. The members of this assembly should be elected from each region according to local custom; each region would provide one representative for every half million, or perhaps every quarter million of the total population of the region. As well as this form of representation of the people of the regions, each regional governmental cabinet should appoint one member of the legislative assembly for each one or perhaps two million of the population of the region. This assembly should have two sittings each year of its four year period of office; its decisions should be reached by majority vote where necessary, except in the case of resolutions declaring war or peace or resolutions from which economic or military pacts might result, the duration of which would exceed five years. In this latter case, such resolutions will

be accepted as official and legal policy in the case of the affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of the assembly's members. War would be declared by the union of Arab states in the case of aggression against any member region, provided that a resolution recommending this declaration were passed by the executive committee and legislative assembly. The legislative assembly would have the power to enact new legislation; the president would have the right merely to defer his signature in case of his own objections, but would not be able to refuse to sign. The legislative assembly would have the authority to question the executive committee of the president and ministers on any matter connected with the affairs of the unified Arab state. It would be possible for the legislative assembly to call for and enforce the resignation of the president or the ministers of the executive committee in case of negligence or misconduct, provided that a motion recommending such action were passed by the legislative assembly by a majority of three-fifths of its members, and provided that a "Court of Social Justice" agreed that the accusations of the assembly were justified.^{1.}

1. In the case of accusations of treacherous conduct, or negligence on the part of the president or the executive committee which had caused actual loss to the treasury of the union, the matter would have to be referred, Darwazah suggests, to what he calls the "High Court of Crimes against the State."

Dr. Darwazah examines with equal detail the formation of the High Court of Justice, the members of which should be elected in the first instance by the legislative assembly from candidates proposed by each region of the union. Elected members of the Court, whose number should not exceed four, could not be dismissed and would have power to question, in light of the constitution, any actions of the governmental assemblies, as well as jurisdiction in all disputes between member regions of the union. The Court would also have power to examine all complaints by private citizens against the administration, if the administration itself refused to deal with the complaint. Requests and recommendations of the Court would have to be accepted, Darwazah writes, and its decisions carried out. If any regional government should refuse to submit to the arbitration of the Court, the Court would be able nevertheless to deal with the matter in the absence of representatives of the government concerned. If any regional government should refuse to accept the findings of the Court, the executive assembly would recommend to the legislative assembly what it considered appropriate as a fine or punishment and would have the power to recommend the use of force. This would only apply in the case of a majority decision of three-fifths of the legislative assembly.

Darwazah suggests that the capital of the proposed union should be Cairo and states that each region would retain the right to continue its present form of government or alter it as it saw fit. He concludes his proposals by recommending that all the members of the Arab league should take part in the union and that any partial union between the Arab states such as he suggests would be better than the present disunity.

Darwazah proposes, in short, a union of the Arab states with a centralised form of government in Cairo in which effective power would rest in the hands of a legislative assembly, representing both the governments and peoples of the separate regions on the basis of the relative size of their populations. The presidency of this proposed union would be a purely ceremonial office and the President's term of office strictly limited. While at first sight practicable and just, it becomes clear on closer examination that this form of union had obvious disadvantages. The form of proportional representation Darwazah envisages would clearly give Egypt effective rule over the other Arab countries. Egypt would have, for example, approximately fifteen representatives to every one from Lebanon and would have four times as many votes in the legislative assembly as Iraq. These figures do not seem to reflect justly the respective power and importance of the Arab countries and it seems very doubtful that such an arrangement would ever be

acceptable to them all. Despite these obvious criticisms, Darwazah's plan seems the most detailed and orderly attempt I have read within the body of contemporary Arab nationalist literature to formulate a constitution suitable for the proposed united Arab state "from the Gulf to the Atlantic."

Walīd Qamhāwī, too, gives a fairly detailed plan for the actual form of the proposed Arab union in his work also published in 1956; his proposals differ from those of Darwazah in several important respects. He states that the form and administration of the unified state should be organised on the basis of the separate geographic units into which he considers the Arab world may be divided. He considers that the union should be divided into four administrative regions, the first to consist of North Africa including Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and ^{the} second ^{of} the Nile valley of Egypt and Sudan. The third division should comprise the Fertile Crescent and consist of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq and the fourth unit would comprise the Arabian peninsula. He suggests that the local administration within these areas should be left in the hands of a "group of those governors present at this time who have demonstrated their sincerity to their peoples and the sincerity of their beliefs in Arab Nationalism."¹ The union should, in Qamhāwī's opinion, have a presidential form of government with

1. Op. cit., p. 497.

its headquarters in Cairo. This central authority should have extensive powers in directing the political, economic and social as well as military affairs of the state. At the same time, however, each region should be permitted to retain as much local authority as possible. The governing body itself should consist of two organisations, one executive and the other legislative, with a "supreme power" to coordinate and balance these authorities. The legislative assembly should consist of two halves -- one half elected by the nation as a whole. Each half million of the population of the state would be represented by one delegate. The other half of the delegates would be representatives of the trade unions, to which all workers would be obliged to join. Candidature for the legislative assembly would be open to all and all citizens would have the right to vote in the elections which would be held every five years. Qamhāwī gives little idea of what he considers should be the means of election of the members of the executive assembly and writes merely that it should consist of a cabinet of the usual ministers. He gives no details of how he would recommend that the difficult problem of the proportional representation of the four regions of the union would be resolved in the choice of the second half of the delegates of the legislative assembly. The vagueness and obvious verbiage with which he discusses the formation

of the executive assembly are extraordinary: "The executive committee should be formed from a Cabinet of Ministers at the head of whom should be a man of singular ability. It should consist of the usual ministries with various advisory committees...Its duties should be to serve the nation and direct its affairs, to enact the laws, organise and manage the relationships between individuals, to work to raise the standards of all citizens physically, intellectually and economically, to watch over their rights of (free) thought and assembly and aid them to fulfil their various national duties."¹ Qamhāwī has nothing further to write concerning the details of the formation or powers of the proposed executive committee.

Qamhāwī goes on to discuss the formation of the "controlling authority" (al-sultāh al dābitāh) which he proposes. It should consist, he writes, of twelve members, three directly elected in each of his proposed four administrative and geographical areas into which he divides the Arab world. These elections should be held every twelve years. The President of the proposed Arab state should be chosen from this group and his term of office should be two years. The work of the President and the 'controlling authority' should consist, Qamhāwī writes, "in representation of the being of the state,

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1. Ibid, p. 499.

the supervision of its binding links and the balance within it. It should also have the duty of creating and organising judiciary bodies which would ensure justice to all."¹.

Qamhāwī's suggestions for the constitutional form of the desired Arab state seem remarkable for their vagueness, impracticability and apparent illogicalities. According to these suggestions, the legislative assembly should be formed on the basis of proportional representation of the population of the Arab world as a whole --- each half million of the population of each region would elect one delegate. This plan, essentially similar to that of Darwazah, would clearly give a very large majority to the unity comprising the Nile valley of the Sudan and Egypt. The 'controlling authority' however, should in his opinion be formed by three delegates from each region; the inconsistency seems obvious. It seems quite impossible at the present time, and could not have seemed probable at the time when Qamhāwī wrote his work, in 1956, that the region consisting of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq, for example, could agree on three suitable representatives to sit on this authority. The proposals Qamhāwī makes to overcome the difficulties presented in the creation of a suitable constitutional form for the union seem quite impracticable. By suggesting the four

1. Ibid., p. 501.

'natural, geographic' areas he seems to increase these difficulties fourfold.

Perhaps the most recent examination of the form of government most suitable for the proposed pan-Arab state is that written by Adīb Qa'wār in a special edition of the Beirut "Arab Culture" magazine published in 1959.¹ In the article, the magazine's editor expounds his belief in the need for gradual progress towards the desired Arab union. He examines the form of the Federal unions of the United States of America and of the Soviet Union and concludes that, for various reasons, federal union is not suitable for the Arab world. He expresses his opinion that a "unified decentralised state" (al-dawlah al muwahhadah al-lāmarkazīyah) would provide an acceptable final form of union and examines the system of government of the United Kingdom at some length and proposes this system as a model. The conclusions which he draws from his examination are perhaps worthy of quotation: "1) Since complete Arab unity cannot be attained all at once, we must aid any form of union, whether bilateral (thinā'i) or otherwise, or the union of two

1. "al-thiqāfah al-'arabīyah" Third Year, No. 2. Pages 17-27. This magazine is published by the Arab Cultural Club of Beirut. The club is an important centre of Arab nationalist activities in Lebanon. This edition of the magazine, from which I have here quoted, was the second of two devoted to discussions of Arab nationalism.

or more of the states of the homeland or the unification of various aspects of their life. All of these are steps we must try on our path towards complete Arab unity. 2) We must benefit from the battles now in progress between the ranks of the Arab leaders¹. to discover truths, define responsibilities and direct the consciousness of the masses in such a way as to achieve the aims of Arab nationalism...We must plant firm the idea that unity and all the nations' aims can only be attained at the hand of the revolutionary-minded Arab nationalist vanguard, revolutionaries in both action and methods. 3) The last inference we can draw from this study is that we should make the creation of a united decentralised state the final aim for our proposed Arab state."².

The most remarkable aspect of this article, written so recently is that it makes no attempt at all to define the extent of the power of central and local governments within the proposed Arab state, the powers and election of the Head of State or any of the other difficult problems in the way of achieving such a union. His choice of the system of government of the United Kingdom as a model for the form of the Arab state

1. No doubt the author refers to the rivalry between Pres. Nāsir and some of the other Arab rulers.

2. Ibid.

may be taken to show either the closeness of the union he envisages or its looseness; the matter hinges on the interpretation of the word decentralised and to what extent one considers the word applicable to the British governmental system.

The majority of Arab nationalist writers, with the exception of those I have quoted in this chapter, have not attempted in their works to formulate detailed plans for the constitutional form of the proposed united Arab state which would prove satisfactory to all the at present separated Arab states. Some contemporary Arab writers, however, consider the United Arab Republic as the foundation on which the desired united Arab state will be eventually built. These writers recommend immediate adhesion of all the Arab countries to the Republic. The Lebanese Muslim Muhammad Majdhūb, for example, urges this step and insists that a presidential form of republic, presumably of the type which exists in the United Arab Republic today, is the best form of government for the entire Arab world. He claims that: "The United Arab Republic does not ask the Kings and Princes to descent from their thrones. The most that is required of them is that they give up some of their power and absolute authority. Absolute monarchies must transform themselves into constitutional monarchies similar to the monarchy in Britain."¹.

1. Op. cit., p. 40.

In that the United Arab Republic has since its creation in February 1958 claimed to be a partial fulfilment of the wishes of Arab nationalists for Arab union and is considered as such by some Arab writers, it is of interest to examine the constitutional form of government exercised within it at the present time. The provisional constitution of the United Arab Republic now in force was first issued in March 1958. In an introduction to this constitution given in the official "Yearbook of the U.A.R. for 1959" issued by the Ministry of Information, it is stated that the "system of government of the U.A.R. must be looked at and understood in its context as a part and continuation of other constitutional movements in both regions of the Republic as well as the entire Arab world, in the 19th and 20th centuries."¹. It goes on to state that this provisional constitution is "an expression of the movements strongly rooted in our civilisation in the Arab movement and the constitutional movement. The Arab movement finds expression in the union between Egypt and Syria. The provisional constitution is a step forward in the constitutional movement in the Arab world, providing a system of government based on the wishes of the electorate -- a system which is best suited to their conditions, their life and thought."².

While one might agree with some of the inferences of this

1. Op. cit: p. 47.

2. Ibid.

statement, it seems clear from an examination of the provisional constitution that the form of the authority within the state is remarkably different from that envisaged by Arab nationalist writers who have theorised on the form of the United Arab State, the creation of which they have recommended.

The provisional constitution of the United Arab Republic bound together the previously independent states of Egypt and Syria into a full political union. Power within the new state is held by the President, who is the Executive authority, by the Legislative Assembly and by the judiciary. The powers of the President are defined in a manner which is remarkably vague. The constitution lays down that "the executive power is vested in the President of the Republic and he exercises it in the manner prescribed by the constitution."¹ This power is defined as the power to appoint or dismiss Vice-presidents or ministers each of whom "supervises the affairs of his department and executes the general policy drawn by the President of the Republic."² The President "has the right to initiate laws, to oppose and to promulgate them."³ The President may oppose any law and refer it for reconsideration to the National Assembly within a prescribed time.

1. Provisional Constitution, Article 44.

2. Ibid., Art. 47.

3. Ibid., Art. 50.

If the draft law under consideration is then voted for a second time by a majority of two-thirds of the members of this Assembly, then this draft law becomes effective, even without the agreement of the President. No mention is made in the constitution concerning such important matters as the election of the president, the length of his term of office, his dismissal in case of inefficiency or corruption or the relationship between him and his Vice-Presidents and their powers. Similarly, there is no mention of the Region from which the President of the republic should come. This is, of course, a matter which has been as we have seen, of great concern to the theorists of ~~the~~ Arab nationalism and they seem to be unanimous in considering that the President of the united Arab state should be chosen in turn from each region taking part in the union.

The legislative power of the United Arab Republic is said to be vested in the National Assembly; the constitution states that the "number of the members of the National Assembly and their choice are determined by Presidential Decree."¹ Article 14 states that "the National Assembly exercises control over the acts of the Executive in the manner prescribed by the constitution." In fact the only article which restricts the power of the President, who is the Executive authority, is that

1. Ibid.

article which refers to new legislation indicated above. Article 13 states that "at least half of the number of members must be members of the Syrian Chamber of Deputies and the National Assembly of Egypt." This presumably means that the other half of the members need not be parliamentary delegates from either region; the constitution gives no mention of the means of election of these other members, or the qualifications they should have. It similarly does not specify either the total number of these delegates nor what proportion of their total should come from either region of the Republic.

Although the law is referred to frequently throughout the provisional constitution, details concerning the introduction of new legislation or the revoking of old legislation are not given. The apparent lack of effective power of the National Assembly seems clearly indicated by Article 26, which states: "The National Assembly may express its wishes and proposals to the government regarding several questions." These 'questions' are not specified nor defined at all. The State's General Budget must, according to Article 32, be submitted to the National Assembly "for its examination and approval at least three months before the end of the financial year. Each section of the budget must be voted separately." The same article goes on to state in the next sentence, however, that "The National Assembly may not introduce any amendments to the

draft budget, except with the approval of the Government." It is clearly seen from this that the National Assembly does not in fact have any absolute authority over the finances of the state, that this authority is held by the government alone, the executive power of which is in turn in the hands of the President.

An examination of the constitutional plans proposed by the theorists of the Arab nationalist movement for the eventually united Arab state are remarkable for their vagueness, impracticability and diversity. That this is so points, of course, to the difficult nature of the problems they have been attempting to solve. To achieve support for their argument that an Arab union would be entirely to the good of all parts of the Arab world, they have attempted to devise plans which would guarantee to the government and people of each of the Arab countries some degree of internal independence. At the same time they have felt the need to insist that this wish for independence within the union must not be such as to compromise the effectiveness of the union itself. Great stress is laid in each of these plans for the form of the union on the need for just representation of each region within the governing bodies of the proposed state. Arab nationalist theorists seem, moreover, unanimous in their writings in agreeing on the principle that the head of the State, the President, should

have very modest personal powers and that each region of the union should take turns in supplying the candidate for this position.

The provisional constitution of the United Arab Republic is seen, on examination, to be more in contrast than in agreement with the apparently widely accepted constitutional theories of Arab nationalist writers. Effective power in the Republic clearly rests in the hands of the President. Indeed, one cannot but consider that the provisional constitution of the United Arab Republic seems to be one of the major obstacles in the way of an effective union of the Arab states. The local differences, prides and loyalties of the inhabitants of the various regions of the Arab world seem clearly too strong to allow their complete absorption into the Republic under this form of constitution. When, in the future, the Provisional Constitution of the United Arab Republic is modified, as it surely must be, some form of fairly close union between some countries of the Arab world may possibly come into being. Without such modification or the use of armed force by the U.A.R. to extend its domain, an eventuality which can, I think, be discounted, such a union seems clearly unlikely in the foreseeable future. One cannot but, I think, agree with A.H. Hourani who wrote: "Short of a Communist revolution in the Arab

lands, there does not seem any possibility of creating a supra-national State in the Middle East."¹.

1. "Minorities in the Arab World." Oxford, 1947, p. 120.

CHAPTER FIVE:

"ARAB NATIONALISM AND RELIGION."

The Arab world as it exists today has, of course, been the birthplace of three of the major religions - Judaism, Christianity and Islam; consequently there has been, for many centuries, within this area communities belonging to each of these three religion. The facts that Judaism is basically opposed to each of the others and that Christianity accepts only some of the historical tradition of Judaism and considers Islam as simply heretical, has led the communities belonging to these religions to maintain a close communal feeling at the expense of national feeling. The creation of Israel and the absorption within it of a large proportion of the Jewish community from the rest of the Arab world has helped to solve this problem in one sense while, of course, creating far greater problems. There is, however, an important and fairly large minority of Christian Arabs in several of the Arab countries as well as smaller minorities who subscribe to various other faiths.¹ Indeed, in one Arab country, the total number of Christians is officially considered to be greater than that of the Muslims.² A further complication

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1. For a valuable study of this complex problem see: A.M. Hourānī: "Minorities in the Arab World", Oxford, 1947. The conclusions the writer draws remain still valid today.
 2. The constitution of Lebanon is based on a confessional system which assumes that the Christian section of the community is in a majority over the Muslim section. This assumption is openly disputed in Lebanon today, particularly by the Muslims.

is of course added by the fact that the Muslims themselves are split into a number of sects the members of each of which look upon all other Muslims as at the best misguided and at the worst, infidels.

The Arab nationalist movement seeks to achieve a close form of union among all Arabs to achieve the aims of freedom from foreign interference and internal social and economic progress. The position of the religious minorities within this proposed united Arab state is, of course, of vital interest and importance to those who belong to them. The whole history of religious intolerance and strife between the various religious communities makes these minorities apprehensive of a full Arab-Islamic union at the present time. In the simple terms in which they express themselves, they fear to be 'swallowed up' in one large Islamic state. Arab nationalist writers are generally aware of this feeling of fear of the minorities and have sought to assuage it by denying the place of religion in nationalism; this attitude is, not surprisingly, particularly apparent in the works of Christian Arabs who support Arab nationalism. Some few writers, in contrast, ignore or at least discount the importance of the minorities and the value of their support and maintain that Arab nationalism must be built on the basis of the religion of Islam.

Those Arab nationalist theorists who deny the place of religion as a factor in the formation of nationalism base

their reasoning on an assumption that the state and religion are and should be completely divorced from one another. They maintain that the individual's method of communication with God and his relations with God are his own personal concern and that the interest of the state is restricted to his relationship with the other members of the community. This idea is quite contrary to the basic conception of the classical sharī'ah,¹ and the institution of the caliphate that the state must be formed on the closest of ties with religion and that the ruler is God's 'shadow on earth'. The modern Muslim writers who deny this conception of the relationship between the state and religion are breaking away from something, for the first time in the history of Islam, long accepted, at least in theory, as a basis of the political theory of their religion.

The first writer who has examined the place of religion in nationalism within the body of contemporary Arab nationalist literature is the Christian Arab Constantine Zurayq. In his "National ^{Consciousness} Awakening", published in 1939, Dr. Zurayq points

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1. The legal system based on the Qur'ān and the traditions of the Prophet. The classical system of the sharī'ah is only directly applied in the Arab world today in cases concerning personal status, marriage, divorce and so on. The Arab countries have, in the majority, evolved in recent years legal systems which are fundamentally similar to those instituted in Europe.

to the conflict among Arab nationalists who, on the one hand, look at the whole question of nationalism from a narrow, sectarian point of view and those who demand the necessity of completely excluding religion from nationalism. He gives his opinion that these two attitudes stem from a lack of correct distinction between true religious spirit and sectarianism. He maintains that true nationalism can in no way be in conflict with true religion: "for it is in its essence nothing other than a spiritual movement seeking to regenerate the internal strengths of the nation and achieve its intellectual and spiritual progress, so that the nation can offer its share towards the civilisation of the world and its culture."¹. It is narrow sectarianism that nationalism must fight, in his opinion, and not religion. Assuming a fundamental similarity between the aims of true nationalism and true religion, he concludes that it is the duty of Arab nationalists to go back to the original bases of their religions and examine the lives of their prophets, to enjoy the spiritual message and strength which these will give.

The same subject is examined by the Muslim writer 'Abdullah al-'Alāyilī in his work published in 1941 and he reaches

1. Op. cit., p. 112.

conclusions similar to those of Dr. Zurayq. He denies outright that unity of religion is a necessary factor in nationalism but considers it very desirable to examine the relationship between the two. In his opinion Arab nationalism is not capable by itself of achieving any great power and influence over people because it lacks symbolic attraction. He points out very significantly: "The truth is that when we feel that we wish to stimulate and encourage bravery for the sake of nationalism, we do not use pure nationalist methods. We resort for help sometimes to religion and sometimes to history... Nationalism is, then, something basically practical which can only be examined from fundamentals to a limited degree. What idealistic attraction it does contain is very weak. Nationalism itself is very deficient in symbolism and there is no solution but to create a symbolic content for it."¹. He concludes that the three possible philosophical systems which could fulfil the need are either a system based on pure ethical beliefs, formalised religion based on a belief in a divine Being, or 'natural religion'. The first of these is, in his opinion unsuitable to supply the necessary basis for nationalism

1. Op. cit., p. 131.

as it would itself necessarily lack symbolic content and would be subject to too violent and rapid changes. These changes, he considers, occur as the result of personal changes of opinion in the followers of the various schools of philosophy themselves. He goes on to examine the suitability of revealed religions to supply what is lacking in nationalism; he concludes that the mutual animosity of Judaism and Christianity makes them obviously unsuitable. The only revealed religion which accepts the others is Islam, which would itself prove unacceptable to all Arabs as a spiritual basis for nationalism: "I know that the choice of Islam to be the symbol for nationalism or its religion would undoubtedly and decisively bring about the severe opposition of the other religions."¹ 'Natural religion', in contrast, he considers to consist of all those factors on which the other schools of thought are agreed -- the existence of God, the everlastingness of the spirit, punishment, reward, good deeds and so on. Based on such widely acceptable and indisputable truths, he considers that: "It is a suitable symbol to supply a spiritual content to nationalism and to bring about the development of its philosophy in simplicity and high idealism."² He goes on to

1. Op. cit., p. 131.

2. Ibid., p. 132.

explain that acceptance of the so-called "natural religion" as the basis for nationalism will not mean the construction of a completely new religion, but merely the adaptation and use of those elements and philosophies common to all religions. He points to the widespread disillusion concerning traditional religion in the modern world and blames the differences in the religions solely on the religions dignitaries¹: "All the disputes which have occurred within the Arab homeland, if we examine them basically, have had the fingers of the priests in them and have been provoked by them. We say to them in all sincerity that all religions have reached agreement on their bases and aims and have differed in ways and means only. Differences in means are no reason for disagreement; let each of us follow his own path to reach God."².

Al - 'Alāyilī does not give any specific idea concerning how this religious consensus can be achieved nor any further

1. This feeling has for some years been growing in the Arab countries. For an expose of the reasoning on which it is frequently based see the highly controversial "Min hunna nabda 'n." ("From here we start"), by the Egyptian author Khālīd Muḥammad Khālīd. Originally banned and later published in Arabic in Cairo in 1949, it was translated into English by Isma'īl al-Fārūqī and published by the American Council of Learned Societies in Washington in 1953.

2. Op. cit., p. 133.

details on what he means by the acceptance of religious truths as a spiritual basis for Arab nationalism. It is interesting to observe how Al-'Alāyilī acknowledges and deplures the lack of intellectual and spiritual appeal in nationalism; this is in marked contrast to the opinion of those writers who consider nationalism to be itself a religion.

We find in this respect that, for example, the Egyptian Coptic writer, 'Ayādī al-'Abd al'Ayādī considers: "Arab nationalism is a social entity, political system and religious belief. This is because it stands above all sects and is the combining force of all religions."¹ Similarly, 'Alī Nāsir al-Dīn, a Lebanese Druze writing in 1945, examines the criticism of those who consider that a lack of religious unity is a factor against Arab nationalism. He replies: "Do not these people realise that Arabism is something apart from religion and that it is outside the scope of Christianity and Islam, since it was founded before either of them and includes within itself both Christians and Muslims?"² He adds a very interesting footnote at the bottom of the page to explain this remark: "Arabism is itself a religion for us Arab nationalists; it is, nevertheless, a pure nationalist religion. As far as it is concerned, paradise exists in this world, just as hell does

1. Op. cit., p. 22.

2. Op. cit. p. 113.

too. Its call is for what is most valuable in revealed religions-their spiritual ideals and virtues."¹. He goes on to deny absolutely that unity of religion is a necessary factor in the formation of a nationalism; men have existed and tribes formed long before religions were formulated.

The plea on which these writers seem in agreement, that accepted religious truths should be considered as a fundamental basis for Arab nationalist ideology, does not seem to have had any great effect on more recent writers or upon the opposition of some religious groups to the movement at the present time. The majority of Arab nationalist writers today either simply deny any connection between nationalism and religion and insist on their continued separation or, in contrast, claim that the movement must rely basically upon Islam and be considered as a necessary prelude to an Islamic union.

The whole question of the position of Islam with regard to the Arab nationalism is made more complicated by an apparent disagreement among the movement's theorists concerning its historic origins. Some nationalist writers lay emphasis on the connection between Arab nationalism and the general 'Arab awakening', which is generally considered to

1. Op. cit., p. 118.

have had a religious basis and was expressed in such movements as the Wahhābī in the Arabian peninsula and in the works of the essentially religious reformers Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, Muḥammad 'Abdūh and their followers. They maintain that there are the strongest connections between these Pan-Islamists and reformers and the contemporary basically secularist and political movement seeking Arab unity. We find, for example, that in his work entitled "Arabism and Religion" Aḥmed Ḥassan al-Bāqūrī points to a succession of Arab leaders including 'Abd al-Wahhāb, Muḥammad 'Alī, al-Afghānī, Muḥammad 'Abdūh and, in the Sudan, the Mahdī who had all "sought the freeing of the Arab mind and Islamic law and their purification from the impediments of ignorance and falsehood." "Each of them", he writes, "knew his path towards the goal to which the Arab nation is sailing. This goal is unity which would make one nation of these divided peoples."¹ He goes on to show that he considers President Jamāl 'Abd al-Nāṣir as following in the line of succession of these, with the exception of Muḥammad 'Alī, exclusively Islamic revivalists: "and in the shadow of these feelings which emerged from the inspiration and glories of Arabism, Jamāl 'Abd al-Nāṣir brought about his pure and splendid revolution calling on the Arab nation once again to play its part in life."² In the same paragraph

1. and 2. "Urūbah wa dīn". ("Arabism and Religion") Cairo, 1959. p. 68.

he refers to President Nāṣir as a hero "believing in his Lord."¹.

Dr. Fā'iz Ṣāyigh, a Christian supporter of Arab nationalism, disagrees completely with the identification of Islamic union with Arab secular, political union and denies any historical connection between the two. He maintains that the Arab world as a whole, with the exception of Morocco, which was never under Ottoman rule, had been administratively united by the Ottomans. He considers that this was particularly true of the Fertile Crescent. The divisions imposed by the Allies on Greater Syria destroyed this unity and took away political liberties which Arabs enjoyed under the Turks. He concludes: "Accordingly it was the Arabs of the Fertile Crescent who were destined to utter the first call for Arab Unity in modern times."². He insists that when the idea of Arab unity was born: "it bore immediate and primary relevance only to the sector of the Arab world which was its cradle,

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1. Ṣāṭi al-Huṣarī does not agree with al-Bāgūrī in considering the Wahhābī movement to have been an expression of Arab nationalism. The former wrote: "The Wahhābī revolution was primarily a religious movement; it did not therefore have any effect worthy of mention in the emergence of the nationalist philosophy. "Muḥāḍarāt ..." p. 160.
 2. "Arab Unity". New York, 1958. p. 50.

namely, the Fertile Crescent,"¹ and that it was a movement seeking the restoration of a unity only recently lost. He is particularly explicit in his denial that the work of the Islamic revivalists in the various parts of the Arab world led to the emergence of Arab nationalism: "It was not the Islamic puritanical revival led by the Wahhābīs in the Arabian peninsula in the 18th and 19th centuries that evolved into the Arab national movement of the 20th century. Nor was it the Islamic reformers in Egypt and the Fertile Crescent who were the forerunners of the Arab nationalist leaders and seers of today. It was rather the 19th century awakening of the Fertile Crescent voiced and led by secular Muslim and Christian writers and theorists and stirred by Western stimulents that evolved into the Arab nationalist movement of the 20th century."² The difference in attitude towards the historical foundations of the movement shown by the Muslim writer Al-Bāqūrī, former Minister of Pious Foundations in the United Arab Republic and the Christian Arab Fā'iz Ṣāyigh is indeed striking.³

1. Ibid., p. 62.

2. Ibid., p. 91.

3. A similar disagreement is shown in the contrasting attitudes of contemporary Arab nationalist writers towards the Arab Revolt of 1916 against the Turks.

Sāṭi' al-Ḥuṣṣarī examines the place of religion in nationalism in his most recent work. After analysing the factors in the formation of the various European nationalisms and the lack of religious unity in each of them, he concludes that unity of religion is not a necessary factor in nationalism. An examination of these European nationalisms shows, he writes, that; "unity of nationalism does not follow religions and sects. Unity of religion and sect has not guaranteed victory over differences in nationalism, nor has any difference of religion and sect been able to prevent nationalist unity. Events have shown that unity of religion is one thing and nationalist unity is something else."¹. The only effect that religion had had in the formation of a nationalism is, in his opinion, on language, the main unifying factor in nationalism. In some cases in European history this effect has been positive and sometimes negative, but religion itself has never been, he maintains, "a factor in the formation of nationalisms."². To prove that Arab nationalism does not itself contain religion as a fundamental basis, he quotes a number of Arab authorities. Despite this denial of religion in Arab nationalism Al-Ḥuṣṣarī does consider Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī to have been an early propagandist of the movement for Arab union and not merely a

1. "Mā hīya al-qawmīyah?" ("What is Nationalism?") Beirut, 1959. p. 190.
 2. Ibid., p. 198.

proponent of the idea of Islamic unity. He states that historians have been quite wrong in considering al-Afghānī's interest in Islam preponderant over his interest in nationalism. He quotes al-Afghānī as writing: "There is no happiness except in nationalism (al-jinsīyah) and no nationalism except with (unity of) language...The two factors which unite large groups of people are unity of language and unity of religion...unity of language is the basis on which nationalism stands...language is firmer and more long-lasting than religion. We know of nations whose religion has changed twice or even three times in a thousand years without the recurrence of any defect in their language and nationalist unity. We can therefore say that the effect of the power of language in this world is greater than the unifying effect of religion."¹ The emphasis shown here on the power of language as a unifying force in al-Afghānī's work corresponds with the emphasis shown on the same factor in the works concerning nationalism written by al-Husarī. From his examination of the place of Islam in Arab nationalism, Sāṭi' al-Husarī concludes that Islam has certainly had a large part to play. It was, he writes, the driving force which led to the Muslim conquests which, in turn, broadened the scope of Arab nationalism. It was, similarly, the strength of Islam which maintained a

1. Quoted in "mā hīya al-qaumīyah?" p. 207.

knowledge of the Arabic language during the centuries of stagnation. He concludes, nevertheless, that: "This does not mean that Arab nationalism has remained connected with Islam; Islamic and yet not Arab nations, have, on the one hand, been formed and there are, on the other hand, Arab groups who are not Muslims."¹.

The Egyptian Coptic Arab nationalist writer, 'Ayādī al-'Abd al-'Ayādī, examines at considerable length the problem of the relationship between the state and religion in Arab nationalist philosophy; his attitude may be taken as typical of those Christians who do support the movement. He maintains strongly that Arab nationalism does not and must not favour any particular religious system more than any other and that the final form which the philosophy of the movement takes must be the result of the effect of all the factors active in the Arab world: "The basis of Arabism is mutual understanding between the individuals in society and consultation in the organisation of the government and the protection of religion with regards to its relationship between God and man."². In spite of his frequently reiterated opinion that religion must be divorced from the state, he clearly sees Arab nationalism

1. Ibid., p. 249.

2. Op. cit., p. 22.

itself as a God-given gift: "...Arab nationalism, which God gave to the leader of freedom and unity the day he drove the last prop of imperialism of the family of Muḥammad 'Alī from Egypt in 1952 will never be satisfied without unity and freedom in all Arab countries."¹. This conception of Arab nationalism as a divine gift does not prevent the writer from insisting that: "Religion is God's affair; Arabism concerns all,"². and that, similarly, "Nationalism is in no way connected with religion."³.

The Christian Al- 'Ayādi, clearly feeling the need to stress that there must be an equal place for Christians with Muslims in the proposed Arab national union, tries to prove that the differences between Arabs with these religious beliefs are merely superficial and not racial. He proves to his own satisfaction that Arabs and Jews are of the same basic racial origins and that Christ himself was Jewish and was descended from Abraham, a Yemeni Arab who emigrated in turn to Iraq, Palestine and Egypt. He points out that Christ was born and brought up in Palestine, a part of the Arab world and that therefore by both birth and upbringing, Christ was Arab.⁴ He discusses, as do so many Arab writers who deny any particular religious basis for nationalism, the religious differences

1. Ibid., p. 38.

2. Ibid., p. 57.

3. Ibid., p. 76.

4. Ibid., p. 61.

which have led throughout history to strife and bloodshed in Europe; he strongly affirms that no similar strife must arise in the Arab world due to religious differences. He points out: "The Christian believes in his homeland, his home and his church; the Muslim believes in his homeland, home and mosque. They are both, when not in church or mosque, bound to brotherliness and equality in both rights and duties."¹ There is perhaps a note of desperation in the modesty, or alternatively the conceit, of the following passage: "Arab nationalism is the compassionate mother towards the Christian as well as the Muslim. The few, like the small child, is more beloved to its mother than is the many or the large child...the small is more needy of care so that it grows big, just as the sick man needs care so that he gets well."² It is difficult to know how to interpret this quotation; it seems to have two quite distinct and different interpretations. Al-'Ayādī at first sight seems to be merely making a modest plea on behalf of the Christians for some share in Arab nationalism and some share of the care of the 'mother' state. On the other hand, the stress on the fact that the 'mother' shows greater affection for its weakest child and the emphasis on the fact that the small child needs more care so that it may grow big may be significant. The

1. Ibid., p. 118.

2. Op. cit., p. 118.

Copts have always in the past, especially during and immediately after the British occupation, enjoyed something of a privileged position in Egypt and his remarks can be, perhaps, understood to be a plea for the retention of this position.¹ It seems scarcely credible that the Muslim majority in Egypt will be prepared to grant the Coptic minority a position of extra care and protection under the State so that this minority will be able to grow big and strong!

A number of other recent Arab nationalist writers both Christian and Muslim do examine the relationship of religion to nationalism, and conclude that there should be no firm connection between them. Dr. George Hanna, for example, a Greek Orthodox Christian by birth but an atheist Marxist by present belief, states this unequivocally in one of his works. He points out that although it was the Islamic conquests which planted the seeds of Arab nationalism, it was those who were concerned with social and national problems who encouraged the seed to grow. This, he says, is something of which all should become aware -- ignorant Muslims are deluded in thinking they can exploit nationalism in their favour and deluded Christians are mistaken in fearing Arab nationalism.² He discusses the

1. For an account of the nature and importance of the Coptic community in Egypt see "Modern Egypt", the Earl of Cromer. Edit. of 1911, pp. 616 - 625. The Copts enjoyed a monopoly in the administration of taxation and accountancy.

2. "Ma'nā al-gaumiyyah," p. 49.

obstacles and opposition to this movement and concludes that religious sectarianism is probably the most important factor in the existence of these differences. He writes: "Arab nationalism is historical, social reforming and progressive -- it is a nationalism which is neither sectarian nor religious. There is no room in it for strife between those of its citizens who worship within Islam and the Christians or any other religion."¹.

The Lebanese Muslim writer Muḥammad Majdhūb comments on the fact that the provisional constitution of the United Arab Republic did not contain the previously accepted formula in the constitutions of Arab countries to the effect that Islam is the religion of the state. He welcomes the change and comments: "The U.A.R. is an enlightened and democratic state in which there is no difference or distinction between religions, races or colours...We hope sincerely that the coming permanent constitution will consecrate this fine precedent and make of the Republic a country free to all sects."².

'Abd al-Laṭīf Shārārah, too, agrees wholeheartedly that there is no place for religion in the formation of a state. He considers that this would: "contradict the nature of human history, since there has never been a religion, so long as the

1. Ibid., p. 59.

2. Op. cit., p. 161.

world has existed, which has not come almost by chance alone into the life of the community and been new in the existence of the nation, even though the truths which it discloses are eternal and everlasting."¹.

Michel 'Aflaq, the Christian Arab leader of the Arab Socialist Ba'th party, agrees with this opinion that difference of religious belief must be given no significance at all within Arab nationalist society. He examines the question from the Socialist point of view: "When we call for economic equality and equality of opportunity, this means that we have agreed that the Arab countries must be entrusted to their rightful owners, the individual people themselves. They are essentially a unit, with no distinctions between Muslim, Christian, Arab, Kurd and Berber. It would be ridiculous indeed for nationalism to be socialist and yet at the same time sectarian; for socialism is, in its philosophy, opposed to all distinctions and exploitation and the power of one group over others."². He goes on to maintain that the religious minorities have nothing at all to fear from the Arab nationalist union and that group sectarian feelings have been deliberately manufactured and encouraged by imperialists in an effort to

1. "Fi al-qawmīyah al-'arabīyah", p. 37.

2. "Fi sabīl al-ba'th", p. 116.

put obstacles in the way of nationalism.

'Aflaq's insistence so clearly expressed here on the need to ensure complete equality between the members of the religious communities in Arab nationalism seems to contrast remarkably in emphasis with what he wrote some thirteen years previously, in 1943. In a speech delivered in that year in the Syrian University in honour of the memory of the Prophet Muhammad, he stressed the part that Islam had to play in strengthening Arab nationalism. He stated his belief that the concept of the need to divorce religion from the affairs of the state was applicable in Europe, where Christianity is essentially a foreign belief expressed in foreign languages and which had gradually become accepted with the passage of time, but that this concept was quite inapplicable in the Arab world. Islam, expressed in Arabic and taught by an Arab is, he wrote, an inalienable part of Arab cultural expression. He concluded: "The relationship between Islam and Arabism is, therefore, unlike the relationship between other religions and nationalisms. The Christian Arabs will realise in the future, when their nationalism has become fully conscious within them...that Islam is for them a national culture which they must digest and enjoy until they (or so that they) understand, love and desire Islam as they desire the most precious thing in their nationalism."¹.

1. "fi sabīl al-ba'th," p. 50.

No Arab nationalist work that I have read condemns and refuses belief in the existence of God and everlasting life and the other beliefs common to Christianity, Islam and Judaism. Indeed, the majority do maintain that spiritual beliefs of this nature are of the essence of Arab nationalism and that materialism is something which must be fought by the movement; in this particular as in others, Arab nationalism comes into direct conflict with communism. Michel 'Aflaq makes his own position very clear towards materialism and atheism. He considers that religion is basically indispensable to mankind and that what differences have arisen between groups and individuals on religious grounds have been the result of misappreciation of the differences between the essence of religious belief common to all religions and their differing outward forms. In this respect it is seen that 'Aflaq is in complete agreement with Zurayq and al-'Alāyilī,¹ although he goes on to show that his ideas on what constitute these beliefs have a difference in emphasis and stress on revolutionary, social reform. He considers, apparently, that the essence of all religions is a revolutionary spirit towards social and economic justice. He expresses the opinion that religious reformers have always been revolutionaries fighting against exploitation. The

1. See this chapter above, p. 172 et seq.

misappreciation of religion has, he considers, grown among intellectuals and progressives because they observe the religious groups as part of the established order opposed to revolutionary change. Michel 'Aflaq agrees with some of the criticisms of the religious priestly classes but is convinced that religion is so vitally necessary a factor in life that it will triumph in the end. He is particularly deliberate in pointing out that he in no circumstances agrees with atheism itself: "We neither agree with atheism nor encourage atheism. We consider atheism a false attitude to adopt in life, a stupid, harmful and dishonest attitude. For, life means belief and the atheist is a liar. He says something and believes something else. He believes in something, believes in some principle. We look upon atheism as a manifestation of sickness, of which the causes must be known so that it can be treated. We do not look upon it as an evil which must be destroyed; this would not weaken atheism but would strengthen it."¹.

Not all contemporary Arab writers who support the idea of Arab unity agree necessarily that the proposed state must be completely divorced in its form from religion and that religion is not a factor on which nationalism can be built. Ahmad Sa'īd, for example, when discussing the bases on which nationalism must be built, places the religious belief of the people as

1. "Fi sabīl al-Ba'th, p. 206.

the first of these: "These bases are, first: "a people who still believe - in contrast to the majority of peoples today - in God, his religions, his power and the other life."¹.

Several writers who propagand for an Arab national union stress openly the particularly strong position of Islam in the Arab countries and maintain that the union must be constructed on this religious foundation. In a book published in 1950 under the joint authorship of a Pakistani, Muḥammad Ḥassan al-A'Zamī and 'Abd al-Karīm Muḥammad, who seems likely to be a Muslim Brother from the frequent references to this movement, one finds the most extreme emphasis placed on Islam. Arab unity is seen, indeed, merely as a prelude to a full Islamic union. It is, I think, surprising to find that even at this comparatively late date the writers can visualise as practicable a close union joining all the Muslim countries in matters concerning economic, political and military organisation: "If Arab union were realised, the Arabs would have made another step forward and the other Islamic countries would join up with it in a general union which would form the Islamic league. This would link up the Muslim countries and regions and would strengthen the ties between them and unify their policies and systems. When eventually the links become strong and the cultures, legal systems and all forms of scientific,

1. Op. cit., p. 260.

economic, military and political systems are unified, then at that time will Islamic union in its full meaning have been accomplished."¹. The authors go on to say how, when such a union is completed, - which they see in the comparatively near future, - there will have come into existence a third world bloc: "This third bloc is the Islamic league which is neither Eastern communist nor Western capitalist, but is rather Islamic and Qur'ānic. The Islamic bloc alone can maintain the international balance of power, accomplish equality and spread world peace in which both the League of Nations and the United Nations have failed."². This optimistically important role of the proposed Islamic league is not confined to merely political affairs. Indeed, the authors point out that a basic purpose of the League will be to spread the light of Islam to all mankind: "The Muslims will then be able to steer the ship of humanity to the shore and the land of peace; they

1. "al-wahādah fi al-sharq." ("Unity in the East.") Beirut, 1950, p. 55. This passage is enclosed in quotation marks in the original and seems likely to have come from a pamphlet issued by the Muslim Brotherhood. The authors consider the Muslim Brotherhood to have been the first movement seeking Islamic unity and that it was instrumental in the successful formation of the Arab League. Both these claims seem dubious in the extreme. For an exposition of the history and ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood see: "al-ikhwān al-muslimūn." ("The Muslim Brethern".) by Ishāq Mūsā Husainī. Beirut, 1952. Published in English in Beirut in 1956.

2. Ibid., p. 56.

will then be able to light up the path of truth, freedom, justice, brotherhood and true equality to the misled, troubled world and bring happiness to all humanity with the light of Islam and the wisdom of the Qur'ān and the guidance of the best of men."¹ It is interesting to observe how similar are the attitudes of both secular and religious propagandists of Arab nationalism towards the position of the Arabs with respect to the East-West conflict² and the part the Arabs have to play in civilising the world. They both stress the value of their bloc as a mediating force and 'third world power' and are convinced of the ability of the unified state, whether Islamic or secular, to be of real value in correcting the wrongs of the modern world. It is also of interest to observe that the above two writers give the following main reason for the achievement of the proposed Islamic union: "The necessity to reach agreement among all Muslims and to unify their aims has become imperative so that they can free themselves from the chains which the imperialists have imposed upon them."³ This purpose of the union, to free the peoples within it from foreign influence and pressure, is, of course, the main agreed aim of the proponents of the secular Arab nationalist union.

1. Ibid., p. 57.

2. See Chapters Six and Seven above.

3. Op. cit., p. 51.

That the plan for the formation of the Arab Union suggested and supported by the late King 'Abdullah of Trans-Jordan laid no small stress on Islam is shown by his instructions sent to the Trans-Jordanian delegate at the Cairo conference of the Foreign ministers of the Arab states held in February, 1945. He lays emphasis on the strength which Arab unity would give to all Muslim countries: "Arab Union, if combined with unrestricted freedom, sovereignty and military independence, will support and strengthen the ancient democratic states which with their majority of Muslim subjects, have kept alive a flourishing Muslim culture from the beginning of our era to the present day."¹.

Muhammad Darwazah writing in 1958, is one of the small group of contemporary Arab nationalist writers who lay particular emphasis on the place of Islam within the proposed all Arab union. His ideas are seen to be very similar to those of the proponents of the Islamic league. He considers that although religious unity is not absolutely necessary for the accomplishment of political union, such a union can be more easily achieved if there is a religious unity already existent. He points out that no less than 93% of the inhabitants of the Arab countries are bound by the religious

1. Quoted in "The Memoirs of King 'Abdullah of Trans-Jordan", edited by Philip P. Graves, London, 1950. p. 256.

ties of Islam and that the various sub-sects of Islam are seen to agree on all the most basic tenets of their religion. He moreover maintains that these inter-Muslim variations in belief are merely the result of the existence of differing forms of government in the separate Arab countries. A new society of sincere men who realise the superficiality of these differences and their danger to Arab nationalism will, in his opinion, arise to remove these differences. More widespread education will, he considers, make the differences between the beliefs of Muslims less important and he concludes that in no more than several generations a spiritual Muslim unity will have been formed.¹

Turning his attention to the fact that there are some two and a half million Christians in the Arab countries, he gives his opinion that the ties of race, history and language are greater by far than the religious differences between them and the Muslims. He stresses, in any case, the basic similarities between the two religions in their aims and principles and sees no reason for conflict between the followers of each religion within the proposed Arab state.² He goes on to point out that Arab unity is an 'Islamic necessity' as well as a need for a humanity. He quotes passages from the

1. "Al-waḥdah al-'arabīyah." pp. 76-77.

2. Ibid., p. 31/2.

Qur'ān exhorting unity and promising the Arabs, if obedient, a position of strength and influence among nations. He concludes: "If the Arabs play this great role which the Qur'an has made clear for them, the principles of Islam would become the religion of all humanity...The Arabs would become its standard bearers and light of guidance; they would thus achieve greater power among the nations and would be as the Qur'ān described them; the best nation which has emerged to mankind."¹. The extreme optimism shown here is typical of the attitude of many Arab nationalist writers towards the various problems of the contemporary Arab world.

What is, in my opinion, particularly extraordinary is the fact that the proponents of Islamic unity can be sure of their cause even when they do appreciate the enormous difficulties in the way of achieving such a union as they envisage. 'Abd al-Karīm Muḥammad and Muḥammad Ḥassan al-A'zamī give six basic reasons for the fact that Islamic unity, unlike political Arab unity, has received no official acknowledgement from the governments of Muslim countries. These difficulties are listed as follows: 1) Islamic unity is something which effects a far greater number of countries than does Arab unity and the movement has been subjected to a fiercer attack by the imperialists than that directed to Arab unity. 2) The fact

1. Ibid., p. 113.

that its best proponents have been transferred to 'higher posts'¹. before they have completed their work and their successors are therēfore forced to begin from the beginning. 3) Divergences of opinion and the multiplicity of political and sectarian differences. 4) The lack of a common language of communication between Islamic countries. 5) The great distances between these countries and inefficiency in means of communication leading to the impossibility of obtaining widespread support for this idea. 6) The lack of maturity in religious consciousness, multiplicity of the political and national movements and the engrossment of each country in its own affairs.² One had, I think, to agree with the majority of these reasons given for the failure; little progress seems to have been made in the last ten years, since this work was published, in overcoming the difficulties of the movement for Islamic unity.

The great divergence of opinion and confusion shown in the works of Arab nationalist writers concerning the relationship between religion and state in the desired Arab union are effectively demonstrated in a recent article written by Dr. Jamīl Kubbah in a special edition of the Beirut magazine "Arab Culture" devoted to a discussion of Arab nationalism. After

1. The meaning of this remark is not clarified in the source.

2. Op. cit., p. 51.

briefly examining classical Islamic legal theories concerning religion and state and the application of these theories today, he concludes that: "Nationality is completely independent from the religion of the state. Whether the state religion is Islam or other than Islam, the nationality of its inhabitants does not have to be Islamic or other than Islamic. The state religion is one thing and the nationality of its citizens is something else."¹.

Two pages later, however, when the same author attempts to formulate conclusive principles which should be followed in defining who should enjoy Arab nationality, he states: "Arab nationality should be conferred on every Arab individual who believes in his nation and is one of the elements in its formation. It will not be right for Lebanese Jews or any other group which does not belong to the Arab nation to hold Arab nationality. In addition to this, these people should be completely deprived of the rights given to citizens of Arab origin holding Arab nationality; they should in particular be denied the right to express any opinion on problems connected with the life of the nation and its mission."². A more direct

1. "al-thiqāfah al-'arabīyah", January, 1959. p. 50.

2. Ibid., p. 52. This remark seems to advise the exclusion of, for example, the important Armenian community from Arab nationality and Arab state affairs.

and uncompromising denial of the rights of minorities to express an opinion in the conduct of the state in which they live could scarcely be imagined.

The lack of agreement concerning the relationship between religion and Arab nationalism so clearly shown throughout contemporary Arab nationalist literature is apparent, too, in the official or semi-official publications issued in the United Arab Republic at the present time. The government of this state clearly wishes to obtain support for its Arab nationalist policies from as many of its citizens as it can. While the Muslims are the clear majority of the population in both regions, the Christian and other minority groups are not negligible in either their size or influence. There are, I think, two distinct trends discernible in these publications in the U.A.R. today concerning the relationship between religion and Arab nationalism. The first of these trends is to represent Arab nationalism and Islam as nearly synonymous; the second, which seems to contradict the first, is to deny absolutely that Arab nationalism gives any preference to Islam or any other religion.

That Jamāl 'Abd al-Nāṣir attaches very great importance to the 'circle of Islam' surrounding the Arab countries is clearly demonstrated both in his published work the "Philosophy

of the Revolution" and in his speeches.¹ He lays very great emphasis on the need to take full political advantage of such opportunities as are offered by, for example, the pilgrimage to Mecca to coordinate the political policies of the Muslim countries.² The facts that he has frequently used the words "Arabism and Islam" in direct and obvious connection in his speeches, that he has referred to the Egyptian struggle against imperialism as a holy war³; and that he has at times stressed a similarity between the conditions in the Arab world in the 7th century and the present day all seem to indicate that he does not feel any sharp distinction between Arab nationalism and Islam. He is, indeed, considered by some Arabs to be the leader of Islam as well as of Arab nationalism. No less a journal than the

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1. See Chapter Eight above, pp.298 et seq.
 2. In the early Autumn of 1954 an 'Islamic Congress' was instituted under the Secretaryship of an ex-Muslim Brother and original member of the Revolutionary Command Council which ruled Egypt in the months following the Egyptian revolution of 1952. This man, Col. Anwār al-Sādāt, is the author of a book, "al-thaurah 'ala al-Nīl." ("Revolt over the Nile"), Cairo, 1956(?) and published in an English translation in London, in 1957, which illuminates clearly the characters of the Free Officers who brought about the coup d'état. The Islamic Congress has held annual conferences in various Arab countries since its formation.
 3. See Chapter Eight above, p.301.

"Majallah al-Azhar" the official publication of the University of al-Azhar, the most respected seat of Islamic learning in the world, issued a special edition in mid-1958 which opens with a full-page portrait of President Nāṣir. The portrait bears the caption: "The leader of Arabism and of Islam President Jamāl 'Abd al-Nāṣir."¹ He is referred to not infrequently in various editions of the same journal and elsewhere as the "pious young man". (al-shāb al-mu'min) Muḥib al-Dīn al-Khaṭṭīb refers to him as a man sent by God: "Then God sent us this member of the Qurah tribe in good Upper Egypt and he addressed Egypt: "You are Arab, neither Eastern or Western."²

The recent trend in this Islamic magazine, which has a very wide circulation throughout the Muslim world, to concern itself more and more with purely political questions, may, perhaps, be taken to indicate the desire of the government of the U.A.R. to win support on political issues through the means of Islam. The magazine's increasing consciousness with political affairs is particularly marked since the appointment of Aḥmad Ḥassan al-Zayāt as its editor in early 1959; he has himself published a number of articles in the magazine which are almost exclusively political in nature. Of these we find, for example, an article

1. Vol. 30, No. 4 of 1958.

2. Vol. 30, No. 6 of 1958.

in the edition for November 1959 entitled "Woe to Iraq!" in which he attacks the present-day political leaders of that state in the most violent language.¹ Similar articles have appeared in the magazine recently attacking communism and imperialism while stressing the power of Arab nationalism and the wisdom of the policy of positive neutrality for the Arabs.

The Rector of the University of al-Azhar in Cairo, Muhammad Shaltūt, has published a pamphlet in which he seems to make clear that in his opinion the words 'Muslim' and 'Arab' are mutually comprehensive. He writes: "The Arabic Qur'ān, just as it made non-Muslims into Muslims, so did it too make non-Arabs into Arabs."² How many non-Arab peoples became with Islam and the Qur'ān Arabs! And how many non-Islamic peoples became with the Qur'ān through the medium of the Arabic language Islamic! In this way Arabism and Islam came together in the sea of this culture which the Qur'ān constructed; they mixed together and became a unity, from which neither part may be separated."³

This assumption of an indivisibility between Arab nationalism and Islam seems therefore clear in respected publications

1. "Yā ḥasratā 'alā al-'Irāq!" Vol. 31, No. 4.

2. The underlining is in the original.

3. "risālah al-Azhar." ("The Mission of al-Azhar.") published in August 1959, p. 10.

appearing in the U.A.R. today. In complete contrast to this, we find that the official policy of the U.A.R., as expressed in the U.A.R. Yearbook for 1959, seems to strongly deny that Islam has any specially privileged position over other religions in Arab nationalism. The second chapter of this work, which is entitled "Arab Nationalism" deals, in some seven thousand words, with the history of the Arabs from pre-Islam up to the present day. It is curious and significant to observe that in this chapter the word Islam is only mentioned twice and completely without emphasis; the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad are not referred to at all. The following passage, which is typical of the style of the whole article, refers obviously to the Islamic Conquests and yet the words Arab nationalism are substituted for the implied and expected word Islam: "When Arab nationalism became known for all the benevolent and strong characteristics that so clearly marked it, many of the neighbouring peoples who were suffering greatly under the tyrannic rule of either the Persians or the Romans turned towards this new nationalism hoping for justice, for freedom, for the end of tyranny, intrigue and destructive disunity."¹. The article goes on,

1. Op. cit., p. 12.

again referring clearly to the early stages of the Arab-Islamic Empire: "Another objective of Arab nationalism, even in the very early stages of its existence was to lay the ethical and social foundations of its society in a world that was being torn with discord and which tottered on the verge of disintegration and utter decay."¹. In the Arabic edition of the Yearbook, which differs considerably in this section from the English edition, the denial of any special place for Islam in the formation of the Arab nation is even more strongly expressed: "No origin ('unṣur) was given preference over any other, no connections of blood or race were given distinction over others, no religion was differentiated from any other religion and so the homeland became one."². This statement, which denies any special place for Muslims of pure Arab blood in the administration of the Arab-Islamic Empire, is a revolutionary contradiction of what is normally considered to be historical fact. It is difficult in the extreme to reconcile what is known concerning the privileged position of Arab Muslims over both non-Arab Muslims and non-Muslim Arabs in the systems of taxation which prevailed throughout the time of both the Umayyad and 'Abbāsid Caliphates.³.

1. Ibid.

2. "Yearbook for 1959," Arabic edition, p. 24.

3. See, for example, the articles under the words "jizyah", "kharaj" and "ushr" in the "Encyclopedia of Islam" as well as the passages which examine the subject of the relationship between the Arab ruling class & the "protected peoples" (dhimmis) in any of the accepted works of the Western orientalist concerning Arab history.

The relationship between religion and Arab nationalism is, indeed, a complicated one about which it is extremely difficult and of doubtful value to generalise. Certain trends and attitudes may, however, I think be observed from a study of contemporary Arab nationalist writings. All the Christian writers who have published works in support of Arab unity, and they form by no means an insignificant group in both numbers and influence, are, as is not surprising, agreed that formalised and sectarian religion should not under any circumstances be considered a basis of nationalism. This is the agreed attitude of both the Arab Ba'th Socialist party and of the "Movement of Arab Nationalists",¹ in both of which the Christian element is exceptionally strong.

The Muslim writers who support Arab nationalism are clearly divided into those who, like al-'Alāyilī, Sāṭi' al-Ḥuṣarī, Muḥammad Majdhūb and 'Abd al-Latīf Sharārah, maintain the necessity of separating the state from particular religious beliefs and an apparent minority who consider that Arab unity would be a necessary prelude to Islamic unity which would, in their opinion, be in turn a prelude to the acceptance of Islam as the world religion. Although this latter group are in a numerical minority of Arab nationalist writers their

1. See Introduction pp. 19-20.

attitude may well be expressive of a widespread popular understanding of the significance of the words 'Arab nationalism'. The words "al-'urūbah wa al-Islām" ("Arabism and Islam") are so very frequently used in such direct connection in the Arab world today that any distinction in the minds of some Arabs between the two seems extremely fine.¹

The propagandists of Arab nationalism are almost without exception agreed that the movement must uphold those principles on which they consider that all religions are based. An optimism which is so evident in many aspects of Arab nationalism is well exemplified in the attitude of the proponents of Arab unity towards differences of religious dogma and belief. They tend to deny absolutely the importance of these differences and even seem to assume that they do not really exist at all.

There seems to be no evidence that any significant number of Arab nationalist writers can be considered to be atheist or 'materialists'. Some Arab nationalist writers do, however, consider that revolutionary change in matters of religion are very desirable. These writers are openly critical of the

1. Wilfred Cantwell Smith is of the same opinion: "...the distinctive quality of their modern Arabism is integral to their particular version or instance of present-day Islam. Insight into the Arabs' contemporary crisis and insight into the characteristic Arab form of the faith today, cannot but go hand in hand." "Islam in Modern History." Princeton, 1957, p. 93.

considerable power of the religious dignitaries in the Arab world. It may well be, too, that, stimulated by outside influences, Arab intellectuals may become increasingly critical of the dogma of Islam and indeed of all religious belief.

In spite of the predominant demand apparent in Arab nationalist literature of the last twenty years for an Arab union in which church and state are clearly separated, one has, I think, to bear an important point in mind. Earlier Arab nationalist theorists, in whose work this emphasis is particularly evident, were trying to gain acceptance for an idea which was comparatively new and had little popular support. The movement was in those days essentially reliant upon the support of intellectuals alone, who no doubt were anxious to alienate as few Arabs as possible from any aspect of the movement and to gain support from anyone who would give it. If an effective Arab union is formed, however, and the movement retains its recently acquired widespread popular support, it may well be found convenient to stress Islam to a greater degree. It is interesting to observe that Fā'iz Sāyigh, the well-known Palestinian Christian Arab nationalist writer, foresees this as a possibility, although merely one of several: "Perhaps the resurgence of traditional Islam, embodied today in such movements as the Muslim Brotherhood in its infinite variations and animated largely by

political reaction to the political deeds or misdeeds of the West, may eventually suffocate the secular ideas of nationalist Arabism and emphasise the Islamic ingredients inherent in its origin and somewhat dormant in its present reality."¹ The lack of distinction shown between Arabism and Islam so clearly evident in the publications, both secular and religious of the U.A.R. today, seems to indicate that these remarks may well prove justified.

1. Op. cit., p. 93.

CHAPTER SIX:

"ARAB NATIONALISM AND THE WEST,

ZIONISM AND DEMOCRACY."

In the eyes of the majority of contemporary Arab nationalist writers the history of the relationship between the Arabs and the West has been one of direct collision since the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt at the close of the 18th century.¹ The Arabs, in a state of decadence and retrogression since the fall of the 'Abbāsids, have been in turn invaded by the Mongols, the Ottomans and the countries of Western Europe. The later invaders brought with them ideas and influences which were completely new to the Arabs and considered it necessary for their own interests to place the Arabs under direct rule of varying degrees of stringency. Inevitably this domination was unacceptable and hateful to the Arabs and the last decades have seen them striving in each area of the Arab world to free themselves from the individual occupying powers. With the achievement of this freedom in the majority of the area, there has developed a strong movement seeking to unite

1. c.f. Nusaibah, op. cit., p. 35: "The Napoleonic episode did not, in itself, awaken national consciousness from its torpor in the Arab countries as it did in Europe, but it set rolling that process of direct and sustained Westernization which has since encompassed the entire world and cast it into the Western mould. It initiated a chain of events and ideas, the latter in their totality constituting modern Arab nationalism."

all Arabs into one state with the agreed aim to bring them back to what they consider was a unity and influence they enjoyed in the early days of Islam.

It is not surprising that there are strong traces of an animosity which comes close to xenophobia in the present-day attitude of the Arab towards the Western nations which have directed or attempted to direct their affairs in the last years. The literature of the contemporary Arab nationalist movement gives strong evidence of these feelings of distrust and open hatred. Arab nationalist writers base their hatred for the Western imperialists on the grounds that these nations helped to split up the Arab world into various separated, political entities and dominated these entities economically and militarily, that they created or helped to create the State of Israel from a part of the Arab homeland and that they have so far successfully opposed the Arab nationalist movement which seeks a political union between all parts of the Arab world. The Arabs are not exclusively critical, however, of all the influences of the Western World; a minority of Arab nationalist writers do, in their works, give some credit to the material benefits which the West has brought with its other influences as well as to the stimulus which the Arabs

have received from Western political and social philosophy.

A large majority of Arab nationalist writers see the Western Powers as diametrically opposed to Arab nationalist unity. To substantiate their thesis they point to the fact that the Arab revolt of 1916 was begun under false pretences and the fact that the signing of the Sykes-Picot agreement in 1916 (~~signed~~) between Britain, France and Russia came only shortly after agreement had been reached with the Sherif of Mecca, guaranteeing allied assistance in setting up independent Arab rule in the majority of Greater Syria, Mesopotamia and the Hejaz. They maintain that British and French policies of the time were deliberate and planned treachery. From these days onwards, they consider, the Western powers have remained determined to prevent the Arabs from uniting. Even the creation of the Arab League in 1945 which several Arab writers recognise to have come into existence as a result of the initiative taken by the British Foreign Minister Eden in his speech in the House of Commons in 1941, is considered by contemporary Arab nationalist writers to have been a deliberate obstacle placed in the way of Arab union and to maintain the status quo. Ahmad Sa'id, making clear that this is his belief, sees the imperialists acting in direct alliance with the forces of reaction: "Britain and with her France, was able, by means of their helpers, the rulers of some Arab

countries, to impose a charter on the League which made its assembly incapable of taking any unanimous decision - as the charter makes obligatory - against the imperialists, by reason of the presence of the reactionary forces acting in concert with the imperialists at the heads of the Arab countries, from the majority of which the Arab League was formed."¹.

There are frequent references in contemporary Arab nationalist literature to the League as a British idea and invention put into effect solely to serve the interests of the Allies. Indeed Arab nationalist literature as a whole seems to depict British policy throughout this century as, on the one hand, open support for Arab unity and, on the other, discreet yet effective opposition to it. Kemāl Jumblāṭ, for example, the Lebanese Druze leader, refers to apparent British support for Arab nationalism in 1951, while he maintains that at that time Britain was in fact opposing the movement: "Everyone will recall that it was British foreign policy at that time to call for assistance for Arabism and to spread the philosophy of union; it called on its agents and friends to demonstrate in its favour as much as they could, while at the same time secretly and in fact working for the destruction of Arab nationalism itself and either to retard its progress or make it correspond with Britain's

1. Op. cit., p. 50/1.

interest in the East."¹.

The creation of the State of Israel in Palestine in 1948 had an enormous effect on the minds of Arabs and did much to make more bitter the relations between the Arabs and the West. The Arab defeat in the Arab-Israeli war, despite their reputed superiority in numbers,² was a crushing blow to Arab pride. As well as this, the Arabs look upon Israel as a great and powerful danger in the midst of their homeland. They refer to speeches by Zionist leaders which make plain that it is Zionist intention to expand in all directions inland. The Arabs have a living and genuine fear of this expansion and this fear may, I think, be considered to account to a large extent for what inter-Arab cooperation there has been since 1948.³

An important effect of the Arab-Israeli war and the Arab

1. Op. cit., p. 27.

2. Apparent Arab superiority in numbers of armed men in the 1948 Arab-Israeli war is disputed by Gen. Sir John Glubb in his autobiography "A Soldier With the Arabs." London, 1957, p. 94.

3. Note the comment, however: "One immediate effect of the failure in the Palestine war on Egyptian political thinking was outright denunciation of pan-Arabism. Inter-Arab cooperation and solidarity were considered to have failed a vital test." Anwar G. Chejne, Art. "Egyptian Attitudes Towards pan-Arabism." M.E.J. Summer 1957, p. 253.

defeat was the conviction born in Arabs that their leaders were inefficient and corrupt and had acted in a manner which was in the worst interests of the Arab cause. An intense dissatisfaction with the social and governmental institutions existing in the Arab world was the direct result and had a great effect in convincing the Arabs of the need for revolutionary change. The emphasis on this need for rapid change in Arab nationalist literature is to a large extent attributable to the effect on the Arab mind of the creation of Israel and their conviction that they will only succeed in defeating Zionism if and when they strengthen themselves by reform within a political union. Arab nationalist writers refer to the creation of Israel, almost without exception, as a deliberate act of opposition on the part of the West to the growing movement towards Arab unity. Muḥammad Majdhūb's comment is typical; he considers that Israel was created primarily to divide Syria from Egypt. He concludes, in a section of his work devoted to an examination of the Arab policy of positive neutrality and the strategic importance of Egypt and Syria, whether separated or in union; "The setting up of Israel in the heart of Arabism seeks, in the first place, to separate Syria from Egypt. The United States and Britain and the other imperialist countries of the West would not

support this growing state established by force with both arms and declarations except in order to break up the supports of freedom-seeking Arab nationalism, which is represented in the freedom-movements in Syria and Egypt."¹.

The reasons for the Arab opposition to the idea of the creation of a 'national home for the Jewish people' in Palestine are obvious and well known. They were well stated, for example, in the speeches of the delegates to the conference called by the Arab Committee for the Defence of Palestine in Bludan in Syria in 1937.² The Arab fears of the power potential of a stabilised Jewish state of Israel were reiterated by Constantine Zurayq in his book published in 1948. He wrote: "If a Jewish state were in fact created in Palestine and established itself internationally with the recognition of the United Nations and the other nations it would in a short time have the greatest air power in the Middle East. It would, too --may God prevent it -- have a merchant and naval fleet which

1. Op. cit., p. 73

2. Of the representatives at this conference a total of three came from Egypt and North Africa, nine from Iraq, some fifty from Lebanon, thirty from Trans-Jordan, eighty from Palestine and over one hundred from Syria. The conference was called to unify Arab efforts in opposing Zionism in Palestine. The speeches delivered at the conference are reported in a book: "Kitāb al-Mu'tamar", edited by Fu'ād Khalīl Mufarij, published in Damascus in 1938. The book is prefaced with the words: "Palestine belongs to the Arabs, not to the Palestinians alone!"

would be able to exert their influence over all these shores... This state would open its doors to the thousands of emigrants who would come to it from Europe as well as to the millions of dollars which would flow to it from America. It would become a human and financial power which it would be difficult to confine to its own area."¹.

In spite of this apparent awareness of the power of Zionism, only a small minority of Arab nationalist writers at the present time accept the desire of the Jews to form their own state and their consequent pressure on the Allies as important factors in Israel's creation.² Arab nationalist writers are content, in the majority, to refer to Israel as merely a fabrication of the Western Powers. They place the blame most of all on the United Kingdom and to a lesser extent on the United States; Russia's early acknowledgement of the existence of Israel, although sometimes condemned, is not stressed in the majority of contemporary works in support of Arab nationalism.³ The typical attitude expressed in these

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1. "ma'nā al-kakbah." ("The Meaning of the Disaster.") Beirut, 1948, p. 83.
 2. There are obvious psychological and tactical reasons for the apparent refusal of some Arab nationalist writers to see the history of the creation of Israel in a realistic historical context.
 3. Similarly, Communist supply of Israeli forces with arms and aircraft at the time of the "Second Truce" in Nov. 1948 is not condemned. See Lt. Gen. J. Glubb: Op. cit., p. 191.

works towards the British role in the creation of Israel is well expressed in a book published under the joint authorship of Nabih Amin Faris and Muhammad Taufiq Hussain, both of whom have taught at the American University of Beirut. They write: "Britain used its mandate over Palestine to facilitate Zionist immigration by the thousands. With British help and encouragement, the Zionists acquired the fertile areas of Palestine."¹ They continue, making no attempt to substantiate their assertions: "Even before the date set for the withdrawal of its troops -- May the 15th, 1948 -- Britain withdrew and left the country in a state of chaos, having done all it could throughout its twenty-eight year mandate to ensure the fulfilment of the Zionist dream."².

Arab nationalist writers seem agreed in considering that the Western Powers were motivated by two reasons in their support for the establishment of Israel. The first of these is considered to be their desire to create a consumer market for their products in the Middle East and a centre for economic infiltration and secondly their wish to have a

1. "The Crescent in Crisis." Kansas, 1955. p. 89.

2. Ibid., p. 89. The underlining is mine. It is nothing less than incredible to find such completely biased comments in a book written by respected academic writers, published under the auspices of the Rockefeller foundation. The authors claim, surprisingly, in their preface: "It was not our purpose to promote any one idea, or advance any one principle, or side with any one cause against another."

strategically centred base from which they can conduct military operations in the future. The assumed general Western opposition to Arab nationalism is considered to be motivated by a fear of an Arab revival which might lead to the creation of a "Third World force." Michel'Aflaq interprets the Suez canal crisis as an expression of this fear of the Western Powers and their determination to prevent the fulfilment of Arab nationalism: "It is clear, too, that the Suez canal crisis was nothing more than an occasion to expose their aims and fears of the recent Arab awakening and their determination to fight with it before the fulfilment of its growth."¹ This quotation comes, it is interesting to note, from an article written in September 1956, before the armed hostilities.

The Suez crisis proved to be a great stimulus to Arab nationalism. It seemed to give evidence, by the comparative solidarity of the Arabs in each Arab country with Egypt's stand, even in Iraq with its strongly pro-British government, that a feeling of oneness did exist which was strong enough to unite them to a certain extent at least, when one of them was threatened. It is indeed since 1956 that a new tone is

1. "ma'rakah al-maṣīr al-wāḥid." p. 89.

discernible in Arab nationalist literature, in both discussions concerning the ideology of the movement and in comment concerning the West. It is since this date only that one finds writers sure and confident and proud of the already proved existence of Arabism as a binding force. The emphasis in recent works is no longer on the need for proof of the power of Arab nationalism or on discussions examining the factors constituting Arabism, but rather the fact that its existence has been indisputably proved. Arab nationalist works published since 1956 are marked by an exuberance and self-confidence never before apparent.¹ It must not be assumed, however, Arab nationalist writers stress, that the support of all the Arabs for Egypt at the time of the actual military operations did more than give proof of the Arab solidarity already achieved since the beginning of the crisis with the nationalisation of the Suez canal in June, 1956. We find, for example, that Ahmed Sa'id writes: "When the Franco-British-Israeli aggression occurred against Ghaza and Egypt, both Arab

1. The military operations of the Suez war have been presented in the broadcasts and popular press of the Arab world in such a way as to convince the 'masses' that the Egyptian armed forces won extraordinary success in the actual fighting. For an opposite assessment based on reliable information see: Edgar O'Ballance: "The Sianj Campaign." London, 1959.

nationalism, which was fully awake and its conscious leadership of both the people and government had arrived at the closest levels of coordination."¹ It is, similarly, after the Suez affair that Arab nationalist writers have developed what seems to be an obsession with imperialism and a remarkable xenophobia. They consider that the "aggression" was undeniable proof of the evil intentions of the Western Powers towards Arab nationalism. They assume without question that there was in fact collusion between Britain, France and Israel in the whole campaign. Dr. Hannah, incredibly, considers that the whole operation was conducted under the protection of the United States. He praises the stout defence of the Arabs by the communist countries and "People's Democratic Republics" against: "the wicked aggression which Britain, France and Israel conducted against the Arabs, under the protection of the United States."² As it is considered that it is the aim of Western policy in the Middle East to fight Arab nationalism, there is, perhaps, some logic in the attitude some writers adopt that a primary aim of nationalist policy must be to fight the West.

1. Op. cit., p. 56.

2. "ma'nāh al-gaumiyyah." p. 124. For a clear and seemingly undisputable denial of any Anglo-American cooperation in the Suez War see the memoirs of Sir Anthony Eden: "Full Circle." London, 1960.

The situations in Algeria and Oman are the source of much indignation and, indeed, fury to Arab nationalist writers, and are to them positive proof of the continuing evil of the intentions of the West towards the Arab world. Aḥmed Ḥassan al-Bāqūrī has this to write concerning imperialism in an article entitled "Imperialist France and Islam." "Wherever imperialism, or rather oppression, if we wish to give the word its true meaning, persists, it is destructive and ruinous and an evident calamity. How could it be otherwise when its proponents direct themselves towards the subjugation of peoples and the destruction of nations?"¹. There is in Arab nationalist literature great emphasis placed on the rightness of the Arab cause in the Algerian war; no Arab political work of recent date which I have read attempts to give any explanation of the French point of view. They are condemned out of hand in strong terms as pursuing typical imperialist policy, of a type which the Arab world is assumed to have known for many years. It is interesting to observe how Michel 'Aflaq, whose comment is typical of those nationalists who examine the situation, considers the struggle to be one between the imperialists as a whole and the Arabs as a nation, not between the French and the Algerians: "In order to be

1. Op. cit., p. 11.

secure in the future, imperialism sees no choice but to strike at Arabism and to scatter it in all directions, for it realises more than do some of the Arabs that the Algerian revolt is the revolt of the Arab nation. It knows that the Algerian revolution is a complete revolution, which gives full meaning to the freedom and nobility of man and that the success of this revolution will affect the bases of imperialism in the whole world. It knows that the Algerian revolution is an Arab revolution which will assure a new stature for the Arabs; and will raise the level and intensity of the Arab struggle in every region."¹ Muḥammad Majdhūb, too, sees the Algerian war, if not as one between the Arabs and imperialism both combined, at least as one between the Arabs and the French. He lays the responsibility for ensuring success for the revolutionaries on Egypt and Syria. While there was active support, he writes, from these countries for the Arab cause in Algeria before the United Arab Republic was formed, this support was not well organised: "Egypt, before its union into the new republic, did help Algeria and Syria too helped her; neither of them ceased this help after the union was announced. We do not exaggerate if we say that the Algerian revolution rests more than anything on

1. "ma'rakah al-maṣīr al wāḥid." p. 145.

the shoulders of the Egyptians and the Syrians."¹. He goes on to comment on this support after the union: "If in the past, this aid arrived in a manner which lacked planning and organisation, today it has become more effective and organised and it is sent with regularity and speed."².

Several writers refer to the situation in Oman as being similar to that in Algeria. Indeed, Ibrāhīm Jum'ah makes the direct comparison. He writes: "The war which has broken out in Oman against the Arab freedom movement is very similar to the war of total destruction which France has declared against the Algerians; there is no difference between the British imperialists in the Arab South and the French imperialists in North Africa!"³. He, too, stresses that the battle in Oman is not merely between the inhabitants of that area and the British, but between the latter and the whole Arab nation. Significant, too, is the extreme emotionalism of the language in which he describes the conflict: "Arab nationalism stands behind those struggling in Oman, in the far South-East of the great Arab homeland. They are small, defenceless, isolated people whose blood Britain spills and whose resources Britain

1. Op. cit., p. 35.

2. Ibid., p. 36.

3. Op. cit., p. 234.

exploits and leaves to poverty, ignorance and deprivation."¹. The visualisation here of imperialism as a force exploiting the resources of the Arab homeland is similarly one frequently stressed in contemporary Arab nationalist literature.

Arabs feel particularly strongly that this is the case with the oil industry operating in the Arab world.² They consider that the oil companies assure for themselves profits which are unjustly high. There is a widespread feeling that if the Arab world were united, the Arab government which could be formed would be able to secure a higher price for its oil and a greater share of the profits, including those made in the distribution of the oil. Under the present circumstances they consider that the (oil) companies can threaten to slow down production of the oil from any one of the separated Arab oil producing countries if that country should demand a bigger share of the profit from the oil produced within it.

The completeness of the distrust of the policies of the Western powers in the minds of contemporary Arab nationalist writers is demonstrated by Ibrāhīm Jum'ah's attitude towards

1. Ibid.

2. This conviction is expressed in many recent Arabic publications. See, for example, "Amrīkā tanhab baṭrūl al-'arab." ("America Steals Arab Oil"), published in a series "maṣhākil al-gaumiyyah al-'arabiyyah" ("Problems of Arab Nationalism") Cairo, 1957.

the international charitable and cultural organisations, U.N.E.S.C.O., UN.W.R.A., Point Four and the U.S.I.S., which are all mainly supported by the United States of America. He writes: "By these treacherous means America advances the ranks of the imperialists, not seeking any humanistic goal, nor aiming at the good of the people of the area. In fact it seeks to destroy the capabilities of the Arabs, to break up their independence and retard their progress towards freedom by means of allurements and snares."¹.

A similar distrust is evinced towards the Western plans for military pacts and economic aid for those countries joined into these pacts; Arab nationalist condemnation of the Baghdad Pact, visualised in this form, is unanimous. The "Eisenhower doctrine" is, similarly, condemned as an imperialist plan to gain influence in the Arab countries. Dr. George Hannah considers that the doctrine represents a definite danger to Arab nationalism. The reasons he gives are first, that Arab nationalism is still growing and taking form and needs a period of time to consolidate itself on humanistic and yet nationalist principles and must have freedom from external influence during this time. Secondly he considers that accepting the doctrine would place the Arab governments in the

1. Op. cit., p. 128.

American sphere of influence and give America the power to direct Arab nationalism. Thirdly, he gives his opinion that acceptance of the doctrine would place the Arabs clearly on one side in the "cold war" and incur the anger of the other side and fourthly, in a "hot" war, the Arabs would find themselves forced to support the American side.¹ He goes on to point out, moreover, that: "The Eisenhower doctrine is against Arab nationalism because it ignores the danger of Zionism to Arab nationalism."²

Arab nationalist writers strongly emphasise the necessity for the Arabs to avoid involvement in the "cold war" on either the side of the West or the East; there are very frequent references to the need to follow a policy of non-alignment and of "positive neutrality". Almost all Arab nationalist writers in recent years lay great emphasis on the wisdom of this policy for the Arabs. They have, no doubt, been influenced in their conviction of the advisability and success of this policy by what they consider to have been the success of the other neutral countries in adopting this policy; they have been particularly influenced by the example of India and Yugoslavia in this respect, as it is shown by the frequent references to these countries in contemporary Arab political works.

1. "ma'nāh al-qawmīyah." -p. 126/8.

2. Ibid., p. 136.

Al'Ayādī, the Coptic writer, considers that neutrality is of the very essence of Arab nationalism and stems from the Arabs' love of peace: "Arab nationalism is, by its very nature and origins 'neutralist' -believing in neutralism in its external relations. That does not mean that it is isolationist or separationist; it means that it is 'peaceful', believing in World peace...Its external relations are based on friendship with all without exception. Enmity is the last thing about which Arab nationalism thinks.¹ It resorts to enmity only as a means of defence and to repel aggression."² Michel 'Aflaq sees a policy of neutrality as a sure means of bringing about a positive change in international relations which will lead to peace and cooperation among all nations.³ Muḥammad Majdhūb maintains that neutrality, which he equates with peaceful co-existence, is the sure means of guaranteeing further life to the human race in the age of the hydrogen bomb and artificial satellites. Neutrality is the only means of achieving peace "which is a necessity of life to mankind,

1. This seems remarkably in contrast with Walīd Qamhāwī's criticism of the movement. See above p. 72. It contrasts, too, with the frequent Arab assertion of the inevitability and desirability of a war of destruction to be waged against Israel.

2. Op. cit., p. 24.

3. "ma'rakah al-maṣīr..." p. 176.

for war means total destruction and complete extinction."¹.

As it is obvious that the majority of Arab nationalist writers consider that the Western imperialists are the known and undisputed enemies of the movement seeking unity and that they consider that the policies of the Soviet Union and other communist countries have been marked towards them by a contrasting friendliness and understanding;² there seems to be something of basic illogicality in the professed adoption by the Arabs of a policy of positive neutrality. A minority of Arab nationalist writers do, indeed understandingly, acknowledge a preference for the Eastern to the Western bloc. Muhammad Majdhūb criticises the defensiveness of the attitude of the Arabs to a charge of sympathy with the communist bloc--an attitude which leads some Arabs to claim that they accept communist aid only as a last resort. Majdhūb considers that this attitude results from a misappreciation of the situation. He maintains that there are clear ties between the Arabs and the Eastern bloc which are not merely economic. "It is not loyalty, justice or honesty for us to cooperate with a country which has extended to us the hand of friendship in our time of need and difficult circumstances which nearly

1. Op. cit., p. 80.

2. See Chapter Seven above: "Arab Nationalism and Communism."

led us to destruction and then for us to assert that our relations with her are economic only which will come to an end when their economic justification is at an end."¹ He goes on to deny that positive neutrality is a mere policy of opportunism and taking advantage of the cold war.

That there is a certain incongruity in the stress on the need to follow a policy of positive neutrality shown in the work of the Irāqī communist writer 'Azīz al-Hājj is obvious; he writes: "Our positive neutrality is not a negative attitude nor a manoeuvre to make use of the military blocs. Positivity means precisely, opposing imperialism and continuing to direct fire against it, without respite nor negligence nor seeking points of contact with it. Thus positivity means a fighting alliance with all the enemies of imperialism and reaction and wars. In their vanguard come the peoples of the Socialist bloc."² Al-Hājj lays somewhat greater stress on the need for positivity than on neutrality in his examination of the external policy which Arab nationalism should follow.

Michel 'Aflaq, too, writing in December 1956 clearly sees the East as more friendly to the Arab cause than the West. He acknowledges the help given to the Arabs by the United States in condemning the Suez action and thus ensuring its failure but he nevertheless has this to say concerning general

1. Op. cit., p. 88.

2. Op. cit., p. 59.

American foreign policy: "In her continuing help for Israel and her support for the Baghdad Pact it is as though she were saying that the Arabs must remain split up and divided and that their lands must remain an economic area exposed to Israel's attacks, a consumer market for the West's products, provide strategic bases for Britain and France and that the Arab lands must remain a pasture for corruption and treachery."¹ He concludes: "This is what encourages the Arabs to extend the hand of friendship and cooperation to the peoples which appear to understand their problems and to be an effective help to them, no matter what may be the differences in belief and ideology between them and these peoples. What keeps the Soviet forces away from the Arab countries is the distance kept by the imperialists and their complete withdrawal from them. It follows, then, that this is a means by which the Arab nation can achieve its nationalist aims and allows it to enjoy its complete freedom and unity."² He goes on immediately to write that despite the obvious revolutionary similarities between the East and the "New revolutionary world", he refuses to see all the good on one side and all the bad on the other. He makes plain his complete agreement with a policy of non-alignment with either side; only by non-alignment can he foresee that the Arabs will attain their objectives of freedom and progress.³

1. "ma'rakah al-maṣīr.." p. 125.

2. Ibid., p. 126.

3. Ibid.

It is not, perhaps, out of place to give an example of the less logical and more deliberately emotional accusations cast at the Western Powers which occur so frequently in contemporary Arab nationalist literature. In a discussion of the meaning of the word "sha'b", Aḥmad Sa'īd interpolates that the American view of the Arab "sha'b" is clear. He points to President Eisenhower's Congress speech in 1957 in which he said: "we must never let the Middle East fall into the enemy's hands." Sa'īd interprets this statement in the following way: "The enemy referred to by the President of America is you, Oh brother! with your desire for freedom from the imperialists and their helpers and their exploitation. The "enemy" are all those who help you and stand by your side in the struggle against your reactionary enemies, the capitalists and the imperialists."¹.

Despite the outright condemnation of the political and economic policies of the Western countries towards the Arabs, so evident in Arab nationalist writings of recent years, some theorists do state that they do not want to deny absolutely all the contributions which Western culture and civilisation have made to the Arab world. Muḥammad Majdhūb, for example, states: "Arab nationalism as a philosophy, a movement and an

L. Op. cit., p. 26. The widespread use of the communist-type phraseology shown here is a striking feature of contemporary Arabic political works, especially in those works published in most recent years.

attitude does not deny to Western civilisation the services that it has contributed to humanity in the fields of science, technology and culture. It does not adopt an attitude similar to that of the Westerners to the Arabs, who detract from the value of the Arab civilisation, heritage and nationalism."¹.

Muḥammad Wahbī devotes a chapter of his work to an examination of the attitude of the Arabs to the West. He considers that this attitude is characterised by firstly, an outright opposition on the basis that Western civilisation is merely material, while that of the East is spiritual, and that the former has imperialism as its basic motive. He goes on to write that the second attitude is one of complete acceptance as a result of admiration for its very materialism and thirdly an acceptance of only the scientific side of Western civilisation. He considers himself that all these points of view are based on the false assumption that Western civilisation has only a material content. He maintains that the achievements of Western civilisation would not have been possible if this were the case. He writes: "There is no

1. Op. cit., p. 65. It is interesting to observe how, even here, the writer turns implied praise of the West into open criticism.

2. "al-'urūbah wa al-insānīyah." ("Arabism and Humanity.") Beirut, 1959, p. 15.

spirituality in the East today; spirituality is, however, represented in the West. The origin of prosperity is this very spirituality."¹. He concluded that by the very nature of the strength of the influence of Western civilisation it cannot be avoided by the Arabs in the contemporary world. He denies, moreover, the existence of any particularly Western civilisation; there is today, in his opinion, only a world civilisation. He considers that an understanding for and belief in the value of freedom form the essence of this civilisation: "Freedom is the essence of other efforts whether they are scientific or social. For this reason, the concept of national freedom was one of the most important contributions which arose from this civilisation in the political sphere."². He goes on to point out regretfully that it is only the external and visible facets of Western civilisation which have had any real impact on the Arabs - he lists machinery, nationalism, war, weapons, hygiene, medicine and political parties as the obvious examples. Western civilisation has, however, he writes: "veiled from their sight those of its factors which are least apparent. Ethical, for example, and human values, the value of the individual, the position of women, social progress,

1. "al-'urūbah wa al-insānīyah." ("Arabism and Humanity.")
Beirut, 1959, p. 15.

2. Ibid., p. 20.

scientific study and freedom of thought and those other ideals which emerged with it, these all form its spirit and the nerve centre of its life. The new civilisation lives today in the Arab intellect as a body with no soul."¹. It is indeed unfortunate that an Arab writer can give this opinion in a work published in 1959.

The fact that Dr. Zurayq foresaw the problem and warned against the possibility of its development is shown in his work published twenty years before this date. He wrote: "Economic organisation with science behind it and with philosophy at the back of both of these are, in my opinion, the main elements of which the truth of the West consists. Whoever wishes to rise up with the national awakening should make sure that he understands clearly these three roots. In that way he will feel the spirit of the Western civilisation flowing out towards us. If he joins to this understanding an appreciation of the internal personality of the nation with respect to both its strength and weakness, he will be able to look correctly at contemporary Arab life formed out of the interaction of these two mighty forces."².

There is a strong feeling in the minds of some Arab nationalist writers that the time has come for more constructive thinking in the development of the ideology of the movement

1. Ibid., p. 28.

2. "al-wa'y al-qaumī." p. 37.

and in examining the ways and means by which the union can be achieved, as well as in developing policies which the unified state will be able to carry out. The superficial attitude of the majority of Arab nationalist theorists in condemning outright Western imperialism and blaming all the troubles of the contemporary Arab world on the West is seen to be merely negative, although, of course, all are agreed that there is some justification of this attitude. Michel 'Aflaq, writing in 1955 expresses this opinion, although what he has written himself since and some of which I have quoted, seems to belie this: "The time has come for the Arabs to put an end to making excuses and running away from responsibility and throwing all the blame on the imperialists and for them to look deeply at their problems from within, and consider themselves alone responsible for their destiny, both first and last. It is up to us to consider imperialism as a result of our backwardness in changing our faulty internal circumstances, not a cause in the creation of these circumstances and their continuance."¹.

Similarly, Walīd Qamḥawī, writing in 1956, considers that the exploitation of anti-foreign feeling is nothing less than the main danger facing contemporary Arab society: "The first

1. "ma'rakah al-maṣīr..." p. 27.

danger is that hatred for the invaders and fighting against them will become, with the passing of time, a safety-valve for the relief of the feelings of the nation, distracting it away from the evils which confront it and diverting it from the reforms which must be made. Every Arab, whether ruler or ruled, swears by the fiercest oaths that the foreigners are the cause of corruption in rule, for the spread of poverty, the obviousness of tyranny, the decline in morals and the confusion in the markets! For this reason, whenever the masses in any Arab country become restless, immediately the leaders divert this restlessness to the rock of the invaders. They know that the masses are too powerless to weaken this rock by their buffeting...In this way they prevent the masses from stifling their feelings and they return pleased and co-operative to their leaders."¹.

No examination of the relationship between Arab nationalism and the loosely-defined "Western" world would be complete without some indication of the former's attitude towards democracy.² I wish to avoid a general discussion of this word

1. Op. cit., p. 255.

2. For a general discussion of the reasons for the apparent failure of democratic institutions in the Middle East see: "Economic and Social Foundations of Democracy in the Middle East" by Charles Issawi. Article in "International Affairs", Vol. 32 of 1956, p. 27.

which is so difficult to define and which has been frequently applied to many differing forms of political rule. It perhaps is sufficient to say that in my opinion the word is generally used to refer to the conceptions that the right to rule is vested in the people of any nation, that each individual enjoys equal voting rights, is obliged to perform equal duties when required to do so and enjoys absolute equality before the law. Freedom of speech and expression are, it is understood, essential parts of democracy.

Each Arab nationalist writer has referred, almost without exception, somewhere in his work to democracy and the need to build the new Arab society on democratic principles. Apart, however, from such referencē, Arab nationalist writers do not lay great emphasis on this need nor do they attempt precise definitions of what they understand by the word. Some, moreover, seem to consider that it is used to denote merely a system of government which allows a multiplicity of political parties. They frequently use the word in a disparaging way and connect the word with the type of rule which the Western Powers attempted to set up in the newly independent Arab states in which political power was vested in the party most able to obtain a majority in parliamentary elections. There is a widespread feeling among Arab nationalist writers that this system was instituted by the 'imperialists' so that they

could bring influence and pressure to bear on the individual political parties and in this way maintain effective control over the country's affairs. It is felt that the Arab politicians who took part in government under this system were corrupt 'reactionaries', quite uninterested in the good of their country. Arab nationalist writers seem widely to feel that Arab society with its recent traditions of powerful tribal, feudal and religious leaders does not allow the efficient running of 'democratic' elections which presuppose that each voter expresses his wish according to his assessment of the candidates for election and their policies. Dr. Walīd Qamḥawī, writing in 1956, is typical of many Arab nationalist writers in declaring his opinion that elective systems of government are quite impracticable in the Middle East. He concludes: "It is all the same whether the system of government is monarchical or 'popular', elective or dictatorial, religious or hereditary, the relationship between rulers and ruled does not contradict what I have said. For this reason almost identical political philosophies exist, for they arise from one source. This source is the belief that politics means merely playing with words and expressing a conviction in the value of negotiations, hiding from people what is not obvious and showing them the opposite of what is

concealed."¹ It is felt, in short, that in the Arab world today efficient, revolutionary progress for which the majority of Arab nationalists campaign can only be affected by strong and efficient government; this is interpreted to mean the rule by a dedicated, enlightened few of the illiterate and uninformed many.² This attitude is well expressed by a Syrian writer, 'Alī Badūr, who does not hesitate to state outright that democracy will not solve the present problems of the Arab world. In a clearly expressed and extremely forthright article he declares that the multiplicity of inefficient leaders in the Arab world is the main obstacle to unity and that this desired unity will only be attained by some form of dictatorship: "Democracy is the enemy of progression; our struggle for the sake of unity will be a long one. Only stability (istiqrār) and perseverance will be strong enough to attain it. It is

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1. Op. cit., p. 486/7. Qamhāwī's effective cynical and satirical style of expression, quite untypical of the majority of Arab nationalist writers, is well shown here.
 2. Revolutionary change which has taken place in the Arab world recently does not necessarily seem to have been motivated primarily, however, by this desire. The Irāqī regime of Nūrī al-Sa'id may be interpreted as having been of this form; those who overthrew it did so mainly in protest against the autocratic nature of his rule. For a complimentary assessment of Nūrī al Sa'id see Lord Birdwood: "Nuri Said." Cassell, London, 1959.

benevolent dictatorships which last longest."¹ He concludes: "We need the sword of a Bismark more than we need the eloquence of a Mirabeau ---- a group of Army officers devoted to Arab nationalism more than 'cultural propagandists', those parliamentarians love-sick with words and nothing else."²

Arab nationalist writers seem, in the majority, to consider the importance of the individual only in so far as he is a member of society; it is the society which is of supreme importance. Walīd Qamḥawī clearly expresses this widespread belief simply and with all the force of a direct statement: "The purpose of the existence of the individual is to serve society."³ The Egyptian Coptic supporter of Arab nationalism 'Ayādī al-'Abd al-'Ayādī examines the same relationship and reaches a similar conclusion: "Arab nationalism respects the personality of the individual and sanctifies his freedom. It is the basic obligation of every person to be a nationalist. That is to say he must believe in Arab nationalism in both word and deed. After that he is free to think believe and do as he wishes."⁴

Those Arab nationalists who support the policies of the United Arab Republic express their belief that the recently

1. "Al-Ādāb." Sept. 1957, p. 63.

2. Ibid., p. 64.

3. Op. cit., p. 417.

4. Op. cit., p. 22.

instituted system of electoral representation in that state known as the 'National Union' (al-ittihād al-qaumī) is in fact a new form of democracy which is appropriate to the conditions of the Arab world. The objectives of the National Union are defined in the first Article of the decree announcing its formation: "That National Union aims at the realisation of the goals of the Revolution of July 23rd 1952 and the exertion of efforts for building the nation on a sound basis by setting up a socialist, democratic, cooperative society free from political, social and economic exploitation."¹.

The decree gives precise details concerning the size and the organisational form of the National Union but is extremely imprecise in defining its actual powers. The Union is to consist of local, district and provincial committees on which sit its elected 'active' members. These local committees may make complaints and recommendations on certain unspecified matters to the National General Committee or to the Supreme Executive Committee of the Union. These organisations are to meet together annually under the chairmanship of the President of the National Union who shall be elected by a majority of the delegates; the President's term of office is to be for three years, and he is to be the head of the Supreme Executive

1. Published in the U.A.R. "Yearbook for 1959", p. 57.
The Yearbook is published by the U.A.R. Ministry
of Information.

Committee. The relationship between these executive committees of the National Union and the executive power of the state itself, vested in the hands of the President, is not made clear. The only clearly defined power of these committees is to nominate "candidates for membership in the National Assembly (parliament)."¹ It seems that the National Union is designed to have influence merely in matters of local government of the state; its powers seem likely to be purely advisory.

The claim of the National Union to be a completely democratic institution seems somewhat difficult to substantiate. Its supporters claim that it is in no sense a 'one party system' of the type found, for example, in communist Yugoslavia. While, however, Article 3 states that membership of the Union is open to all Egyptian citizens of not less than sixteen years of age, 'active' members must be recommended by two active members and their candidature approved by the local executive committee. "This approval is subject to the endorsement of the Regional, Executive Committee."² It seems clear from this that the National Union will be likely to represent only those citizens who support the policies of the

1. Article 50. The National Assembly of the U.A.R. is the legislative body in the government of the state. It has no executive authority.

2. Article 5.

National Union as well as the general policies of the state.

It is indeed obvious that the experience which the Arabs have had of the West up till now has left them with the firm conviction that the West is completely selfish for its own interests and that these interests do not correspond with those of the Arabs. That some of these interests are diametrically opposed to those of Arab nationalists is obvious. It is likely for many years to come that, for instance Arab nationalists and Great Britain will be in direct opposition to one another over the privileged position of the latter in the Persian Gulf shiekhdoms, in Oman and in Aden. It is similarly impossible that France will give up what she considers to be her rights in Algeria. Added to this, and probably more important than all the rest, is the question of Israel, whose existence has been guaranteed by the West. There seems no possibility of any rapprochement between the Arabs and Israel for very many years to come; the problem of the Palestinian refugees appears insoluble. From all this it seems, therefore, that the relationship between the West and the Arabs will remain extremely strained for the foreseeable future, although it is unlikely that this relationship will become any more bitter than it has been in recent years. This bitterness is very apparent in contemporary Arab nationalist literature.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

ARAB NATIONALISM AND COMMUNISM

Communist influences in the Arab world are of comparatively recent date and the effect of these influences has only been reflected in relatively recent Arab nationalist works. Those writers whose first works in support of Arab nationalism were published before or during the last war - Dr. Zurayq, Amīn Sa'īd, 'Abdullah al-'Alāyilī and Dr. Yūsuf Haikal, as well as the works of Sāṭi' al-Ḥuṣarī which were published more recently, show no signs that I have observed of communist influence or even of interest in communism. They look upon Arab nationalism as a movement leading, among other things, to a more equitable distribution of wealth in the Arab world, but they display no obsession with a class struggle as such and they give no evidence of an interest in the communist world or its ideology.

There have been small communist parties in existence in all parts of the Arab world since the early nineteen-thirties but they never enjoyed either strong local support or significant external financial support.¹ Rafīq al-Ma'lūf, a Lebanese

1. For a detailed study of the history and development of the communist parties and their influence in the Middle East, see: "Communism and Nationalism in the Middle East"; Walter Z. Laqueur, London, 1956. A second edition, with a postscript, was published in 1957.

anti-communist writer, puts a very recent date to the commencement of effective communist influence in the Arab world and gives three main reasons for its infiltration. These factors are: 1) lack of support for the ruling body. 2) the penetration of military men into politics, and 3) the inter-party struggle among the people. "These factors created the problems of the Middle East and led to military and political revolutions and numerous incidents. These factors created an anarchical situation which prepared the way for communist infiltration and necessitated a rapprochement with Moscow."¹. He goes on a little later to write that the Egyptian-Russian arms deal of 1955/6 and the loans which followed from Russia were important in aiding communist penetration: "The decision which Egypt took to buy arms from the Soviet Union and the communist bloc and the Soviet economic and military loans to Egypt and Syria which followed this played an important role in establishing Soviet influences in the Middle East."².

A strong factor in the comparative lack of influence of communism in the Arab world up to this late date, despite the existence of the communist parties is no doubt the fact that

1. "al-taghalghul al-shuyū'ī fī al-sharq al-awsaṭ." ("Communist Infiltration in the Middle East.") Beirut, 1959, p. 13.

2. Ibid., p. 14.

when West-European influences were strong in the area, communist publications and activities were strongly curtailed. Arab intellectuals in general and Arab nationalists in particular seem, moreover, to have been preoccupied to a remarkable degree with their struggle for complete freedom and independence from Western imperialism; although early Arab nationalist literature contains not infrequent mentions of the necessity for reform and progress these aims are naturally given far less prominence than the urgent and pressing need for political independence and unity. Those Arab nationalist works published in more recent years do, in contrast display great emphasis on the need for revolutionary social reform and economic progress, at the same time as they show a great interest and even preoccupation with the ideological similarities and differences between nationalisms and communism. They are, similarly, full of discussions concerning the 'cold war' and the opposing ideologies of the capitalist and communist camps.

The majority of Arab nationalist writers cannot be divided into clearly defined groups of supporters or opponents of communism, although a small minority consisting of the two Irāqi writers 'Azīz al-Hājj and 'Āmir 'Abdullah and the Lebanese writer Dr. George Hannah, may be considered as strong sympathisers with a form of 'ideal' communism, if not indeed of

the Russian variety.¹ It is, I think, necessary to make a distinction between 'ideal' communism or Marxism and communism as it is practised in the Soviet Union and Communist China. Apart from the three writers referred to above, no other Arab nationalist writer whose works I have read, agrees wholeheartedly with the Soviet form of communist rule, even if he believes in the principles of Marx. Indeed, in their discussions of communism, Arab nationalist theorists do not fail to make clear that they see a distinction between Marxism and Leninism. It is interesting to examine what Arab nationalist writers think about communism as a principle and as a system of politics as it is applied in the Soviet Union and the other communist countries.

Arab nationalist writers deny that the communist revolution of 1917 in Russia and the spread of Marxist principles in Europe had a great effect in the Middle East. They strenuously deny any similarity in the social and economic structure of the Arab world and either Western Europe where the ideology was formulated or Russia where an attempt was made to put it into practice. Dr. Qamhāwī is in the minority of Arab nationalist

1. Michel 'Aflaq, too, the prominent Ba'thist leader is considered by Laqueuer to have been: "One of the founders of the Syrian Communist Party but left it in 1943." Op. cit., p. 330. I have not seen or heard suggested elsewhere, however, that 'Aflaq was in fact a member of the communist party at any stage of his career.

theorists in considering that early Arab progressives saw a similarity between conditions in Czarist Russia and the Arab world and that the Soviet solution to these problems seemed to them to be pertinent to the Arabs. He writes:

"When some Arabs looked at their homeland and saw it afflicted with many of the social and economic problems which existed in Czarist Russia, they thought that the only way to reform their institutions would be to follow the path of the Soviet Union, to embrace its philosophy and to immerse itself in its civilisation."¹ I have seen no evidence to substantiate this statement in the contemporary Arab nationalist literature I have read and we can take it to refer exclusively to those Arab "progressives" who were in fact members or active sympathisers with the actual Arab communist parties.

Dr. Clovis Maq̄sūd is typical of the majority of Arab nationalist writers in denying anything but the most superficial of similarities between the Soviet Union and the Arab world. He examines the social and industrial situation in Europe and the influence of communism there and the split which developed between the Marxist theorists and the supporters of the Leninist form of communism. It is this Leninism adopted by the Russian communists which has had an effect in the Arab countries, and not the original Marxist theory: "If there were

1. Op. cit., p. 289.

any Marxism in the Arab world it was not the result of conviction in the principles of Marx as he laid them down, but rather the influence of the interpretations that Lenin gave to these principles and which in fact changed many of the Marxist principles. From this there becomes clear to us a basic difference between the growth of the left movement in our nation and its growth in Europe...Socialism grew in the Arab countries as the result of the clash with communism or in reply to the bitter struggle it caused."¹. This distinction seems to me thoroughly justified and of importance in achieving an understanding of Arab socialism. The conviction Arab nationalist writers express of the need for socialism seem to have stemmed not so much out of a firm humanistic belief in the need for change in the Arab world so much as in answer to and in defence of communist propaganda.².

Michel 'Aflaq denies that European and Arab social and economic situations are notably similar and therefore that a similar remedy can be applied to cure the ills of both. He maintains that when communists call to Arabs to join and support communist ideology they ignore two facts. These are first,

1. Op. cit., p. 58.

2. See Chapter Two pp. 89 ^{et seq.} above, and Bakdash's remark p. 255 above.

that "The Arab nation is historically independent of West European history and that the ideologies and political system emanating from Western civilisation do not answer the needs of the Arab situation, nor offer it any progress. Secondly, the Arab nation is not like any small and secondary nation which can help to fulfill any mission other than its very own, and ride in the train of another nation and live off its charities."¹ Communist thought is only strong in the area, he considers, because of the weakness of general thought and of nationalist philosophy in particular. He denies absolutely that communism is strong in the Middle East as a result of the strength of its ideas and as a result of the social and economic conditions of the area. The danger in the problem is, he writes, obvious and the solution clear: "We are sure that communist ideology will remain a very serious danger to Arab nationalism so long as this nationalism does not provide itself with a comprehensive, tightly-knit and scientific ideology."²

The question of the attitude of communists towards Arab nationalism is, of course, a very interesting one and is examined at some length by Rafīq al-Ma'lūf in his recent work. He quotes from a speech delivered in 1957 by Khālīd Bakdāsh, the

1. Op. cit., p. 15.

2. "fī sabīl al-Ba'th." ("In the Path of the Ba'th Party." Beirut, 1959, p. 73. (from article written in 1944.)

leader of the Syrian-Lebanese communist party before the party's central committee. He gives three plans of action for the communist party to adopt in the Arab world. The communist parties in the Arab countries must support Arab nationalism as a step in the direction of socialism. They must secondly aid national capitalism and align themselves with it. The communists must, thirdly, Bakdash maintains, infiltrate into the nationalist and socialist parties.¹ Al-Ma'luf goes on to report that Bakdash in the same speech gives his reasons for the need to support Arab nationalism in this way. It is the nationalist movement which will in his opinion arouse the masses against the Western imperialists as enemies of unity and as the creators of Israel. In this way, Bakdash considers, feeling will be raised against the United States as the country most responsible for the creation of Israel and communist policies will, as a result of an inevitable loss of American influence, be very well served. In this same speech, Khalid Bakdash is quoted as saying: "The people's organisations, as for example, the student groups, the intellectuals and the small traders, are all strong factors in the battle against the imperialists. The activity of these classes cannot possibly bring bad results, so long as they form a group about the working class and go along under its leadership, side by side with the peasants. As for

1. Op. cit., p. 24/5.

the rest of the nationalist, bourgeois groups, these are not a part of the revolutionary classes; they can, however, be relied upon temporarily and in a limited way in helping the revolutionary movement."¹ While so deliberately and openly acknowledging communist desire to make use of the efforts of the nationalists for their own purposes, Bakdash complained bitterly in 1951 that the nationalists had been employing the same tactics: "They try to exploit the increasing popular orientation towards socialism, they especially destroy the effectiveness of our slogans of distribution of the lands of the feudalists and big landowners to the peasants."² It certainly seems at the present time that the nationalists have succeeded in gaining distinct advantage over the communists in these tactical engagements. The nationalists have successfully incorporated much basically communist ideology in their ideology without destroying its essential nationalist flavour and appeal. For the communists, on the other hand, to incorporate the nationalist ideology based on a pride in both Arabism and Islam in their own ideology would clearly destroy the universalist flavour of communism itself.

Apart from this deliberate attempt to make capital out of the activities of the nationalists from merely opportunist

1. Quoted in al-Ma'lūf, Op. cit., p. 38.

2. Quoted in Laqueur, Op. cit., p. 160.

motives, al-Ma'lūf considers that the Syrian communist leader is of the opinion that nationalist intellectuals are basically communists in any case: "As for intellectuals, Bakdash considers that with their publications, broadcasts, talks and discussions, they will be of great use in removing Western imperialism and in exciting students and workers. They would in fact prefer to believe in communism but they fear to do so for reasons connected with their bourgeois upbringing and they satisfy themselves by announcing their allegiance to Arab nationalism."¹.

In my examination of contemporary Arab nationalist literature, I have found no direct and orderly criticism or appraisal of Marxist or communist ideology. The socialist principles to which the majority of Arab nationalist writers claim allegiance, however, and the great and obvious emphasis they lay on a class struggle and the language in which they express these convictions,² do give strong evidence of communist influences in the way in which they view the internal social, political and economic structure of the Arab world. There are, similarly, not infrequent mentions of Karl Marx as a great socialist.³ We find, for example, that Aḥmed Sa'īd writes, dealing with the materialist interpretation of history:

1. Ibid., p. 29.

2. See Chapter Two above, p. 85 et seq.

3. c.f. Laqueur, Op. cit., p. 352.

"This appeared strongly and forcibly in the train of the industrial revolution which Europe witnessed at the end of the Middle Ages...It was Karl Marx, the first socialist, who adopted this materialist interpretation, affirmed it and made of it a principal philosophy in the study of the development of human society."¹ Although Sa'īd refers to Marx in this extraordinary and presumably flattering manner, he is quick to point out that the materialist interpretation of history is not entirely satisfactory. He points to the example of the Algerian nationalists and their helpers in the present war and concludes that spiritual, intellectual and emotional factors have a great part to play in the progress of history. In extension, he maintains that although the imperialist powers have great material superiority in this war, the non-material and moral strength of the Arab world will prove successful in defeating it.

Dr. Muhammad Majdhūb in his list of criticisms of communism agrees with this denial of the complete validity of the materialist interpretation of history. He goes on to point out that the communists insist on agnosticism or atheism as a basic part of their dogma and that they ridicule spiritual philosophies. "Communist philosophy," he writes, "does not hide its feelings about religion and its inclination to destroy and

1. Op. cit., p. 14.

abolish it."¹ He contrasts this attitude with that of Arab socialists who, he writes, "are certainly not sympathetic towards atheism and consider themselves the guardians defending the spiritual heritage which the prophets and messengers have created for us. They go even further than that and declare that religion is, in the Arab East, an element of its vitality and progress."² Dr. Majdhūb goes on to show that he agrees with many other Arab nationalist writers in considering that communist dogma does not admit the existence of any national entity as such, denies that nationalist spirit and calls for the abolition of national boundaries. He quotes Marx's saying that the workers have no nation, but disagrees with it outright: "Arab socialism is not prepared to give up its nationalism, because this nationalism is the aim of every Arab and the only link and common factor among all Arab patriots."³ He refutes Marx, perhaps rather naively, by writing: "Experience has shown that the workers themselves adhere to nationalism just as the other classes adhere to it."⁴ He concludes his examination by denying absolutely that communist ideology, born of a European philosophy based on special European conditions will find fertile ground in the Arab world. The Arab nation, he points out, has a different history from that of

1. Op. cit., p. 104.

2. 3. and 4. Op. cit., p. 104/6.

Europe and the industrial revolution taking place within it differs completely from that of Europe. The problems of the Arab workers are, therefore, completely distinct from those of European workers and demand a different solution.

It is interesting to see how Michel 'Aflaq gives much the same criticisms of communism as early as 1944. He objects in particular to communism's denial of nationalism and the insistence on interpretation of all aspects of life in terms of the material. "Communism," he writes, "is not a mere economic system, but a 'mission' too - an artificial, universalist mission which denies the truth of nationalisms in the world and denies the historical influences on which the nation stands. It organises life completely on a materialist basis and imposes a particular type of both internal political rule and external relations, as well as particular social systems, spiritual and moral beliefs and even family ties. Thus communist philosophy cannot be divided up - either you accept it all or reject it all."¹ Similarly, in an article written in 1947 Michel 'Aflaq gives a typical radical left-wing socialist interpretation to the wrongs of the internal situation in the Arab world, but denies strongly that communism is the best solution: "Our society is in a sickly state; the situation is one of feudalism and exploitation and to this sick situation

1. (Op. cit.) p. 104-6.

"*al-ma'arakah al-masiv*..."

is suggested a sick solution - this is the communist movement which has come to cure the sickness with sickness itself."¹.

Ahmed Sa'īd, too, although his work shows a generally sympathetic and friendly attitude towards the communist world, in marked contrast to his uncontrolled and vicious criticism of the 'capitalist' countries, is not completely convinced that the communist bloc is to be considered ideologically in harmony with Arab nationalism. He quotes Mao Tse Tung as saying: "Reactionaries must be destroyed wherever they are found." Sa'īd considers that it is clearly necessary to define the word 'reactionary'; according to Marx, he writes, belief in the Arab homeland and in Arab nationalism contradict the essence of the socialist organisation. He too quotes Mark's denial that the workers have any homeland. Ahmed Sa'īd asks with great indignation: "Is a belief in the Arab nation and its independence and its freedom from the influence of Moscow, for example, considered as the mother capital of international socialism, is this belief reactionary? Is every Arab who believes in his homeland and its freedom from the influence of Moscow or Washington, either spiritual or material, a reactionary? Are the Arabs considered by Moscow to be reactionaries? Moscow's attitude towards Yugoslavia, for example, reinforces this view, in spite of the smiles of the

1. "ma'rakah al-masīr al-wāhid." p. 15.

Soviet Central High Committee."¹ He continues to state that this is the great problem of contemporary socialism. Nations wish to free themselves from capitalist monopolies and exploitation and any attempt to gain influence is imperialism, whether from the West or the East.

'Azīz al-Hājj and 'Āmir 'Abdullah, the two Irāqi communist sympathisers if not party members, are the only two Arab writers whose works I have read who are outright and absolute in their support for communism and yet at the same time claim allegiance to the Arab nationalist movement. Whether one is justified in considering them as Arab nationalists or not is a matter of some doubt; the fact that they consider themselves as such is perhaps a strong enough point to justify their inclusion in this study. Whether sincere Arab nationalists or not it is clear from their works that, unlike many contemporary Arab nationalist writers, they do not consider the formation of the United Arab Republic in February 1958 as a very valuable step towards the fulfilment of the true aims of the movement.

'Āmir 'Abdullah discusses internal difficulties in the Syrian region after the union with Egypt and points out: "Reactionary forces conspiring in the 'People's Party' and the 'constitutional' bloc and the tribes, whose hands were paralysed

1. Op. cit., p. 282.

and prevented from action before the union, have now woken up and begun to carry on their destructive activity. At the same time these forces have begun a vicious attack against the communists and progressive elements in Syria."¹ The connection in the author's mind between communists and progressives is obvious. Similarly the same writer lists cooperation and friendship with the Soviet Union as the last of his aims of Arab unity. These aims are given as: "Fulfilment of the means of winning victory in the Arab fight for freedom and the maintenance of the freedom of the liberated Arab countries and securing their development and progress by reliance upon the firmest ties of friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries and the other forces of peace and freedom in the world."² The insistence here of a full and firm friendship with the Soviet Union is quite atypical of the attitude of a majority of Arab nationalist writers, who look, as we have seen, with some suspicion at least upon that country's policies.

It is interesting to see how Ahmed Sa'īd is justified in his fears that Arab nationalists may be regarded as 'reactionaries' by the communists from the following assessment by 'Āmir 'Abdullah. He interprets the present Egyptian call for

1. Op. cit., p. 24.

2. Op. cit., p. 32/3.

Arab unity to come from the 'bourgeois' social and economic class. Discussing the suggestions put forward concerning the means of fulfilment of Arab unity, he writes: "The solutions put forward to fulfil this aim differ according to the classes which put them forward. The top 'bourgeois' class in Egypt, for example, suggests today a solution to the problem of unity which denies the principal interests of the working classes and revolves within the circle of the political and economic interests of this bourgeoisie."¹.

A truly incredible over appreciation of the communist system is shown by 'Azīz al-Hājj. He refers to the 'cold war' struggle in the following terms: "The battle taking place in the world today between the two camps is not one over spheres of influence. The battle is one between the forces of freedom and peace and socialism on the one hand and the forces of slavery, war and exploitation on the other. On the first hand stand all the oppressed peoples and all the freed Asian countries whether they like it or not, whether they know it or not, so long as they fight imperialism and its pacts and spheres of influence and its aggression. The Soviet Union and all the other socialist countries move in the vanguard of this world organisation opposed to war, exploitation and slavery."². He goes on to express his surprise at the fact that some Arabs

1. Op. cit., p. 43.

2. Op. cit., p. 60.

equate these forces of good and evil: "It is most surprising that the Arab patriots who criticise the Soviet Union today propagand for socialism and affirm that they are indeed building this system. Can you not see, however, that Arab socialism turns criteria upside down and equates between socialist states which the workers and peasants rule and countries which are run by the nuclear and petrol monopolies?"¹. It is interesting to observe in this passage the use of words which have an obvious emotive value. The extraordinary naivety 'Azīz al-Hājj displays is scarcely credible; if he can be assumed to believe what he writes, then his attitude is clear evidence of the effectiveness of communist propaganda in the Middle East. Propaganda can only be truly effective on the ignorant; that the Arabs are ignorant of the communist world is something they readily admit themselves.

The long contact of the Arabs with the Western world has given them the impression that they do know a great deal about it and that they are justified in their dislike of it. Communist ideological and direct Russian influence in the Arab world is of such recent date that Arabs do not know quite why they should oppose communism directly and in all fields, or even in some cases as we have seen, whether they should oppose it at all. Muhammad Majdhūb expresses this widespread feeling: "It seems to us, that the Arabs know a great deal about the West from their collision with it. On the other hand they do

1. Ibid., p. 61.

not know very much about the East because of the recentness of their contact with it and because of its political and social system. The West has taken more than one opportunity to smear the true face of the Eastern bloc and to diffuse slanders and falsehoods concerning it."¹.

The lack of knowledge of or at least disbelief in communist aims of world domination and their complete conviction that this is the aim of the Western world, lead Arab nationalist writers to express very understandable surprise and indignation at the reaction of the West to recent Arab endeavours to gain aid from the communist bloc. The obvious example of this type of situation is the Egyptian arrangement to buy arms from the communist countries in 1955/6, the Western reaction to which is considered by many observers to have been the withdrawal of aid for the Aswan dam. The indignant Arab attitude to this reaction is clearly and forcibly expressed by Dr. Ibrāhīm Jum'ā: "The arms which Egypt and Syria bought from Russia are not in themselves communist, for arms are merely arms and are not subjected to any nationality or ideology... They would be pure if bought from Britain or America and diseased if bought from the Eastern bloc."².

The caution, circumspection and even at times obviously critical attitude which Arab nationalists adopt in the

1. Op. cit., p. 96/7.

2. Op. cit., p. 200.

majority towards the ideological aspects of communism are in marked contrast to their almost unanimous praise for Soviet and communist bloc foreign and economic policy to the Arab countries. They are surprised and delighted at the attitude of these countries towards them; they consider that the Western nations, on the one hand, still maintain their influence against their will, exerting force in the area and economic blackmail. They consider that although the communist bloc is to be treated with some suspicion on ideological grounds, Arab nationalism can lay no actual crimes at their door and their presence is not and has never been felt in the same way that Western influence is felt. The communist countries have, moreover, given fairly generous economic aid and come to the aid of the Arabs in times of need, without attaching any apparent conditions.¹ This attitude is clearly expressed by the head of the broadcasting system of the United Arab Republic, and consequently an influential personality in the direction of Arab thought,

1. The comment of the American observer R.L. Allen is perhaps justified at the present time: "In general, Middle Eastern countries have been disappointed and frustrated in their economic relations with the Soviet area, disturbed over the techniques employed and over the heavy dependence which is developing and have become increasingly sensitive to the political implications of the trade." Such disillusionment is not, however, apparent in recent Arab nationalist writings. From article entitled "Report on the Middle East and the Communist World", p. 81 of "Middle East Report, 1959." Middle East Institute, Washington, D.C. 1959, ed. W. Sands.

Ahmed Sa'īd. He writes: "The Arab people finds in the socialist camp a support in its fight against its enemies and a force helping to bring about the failure of their plots, an aid to the Arabs in all their political, military and economic battles which, every day and in every place, confront them against these enemies."¹ He goes on to give the usual and very naive interpretation of communist motives in giving this help: "The socialist camp sees in the Arab people and its freedom and power over the Middle East a 'popular' and governmental force opposed to the chief powers of capitalism. This force will come between capitalism and the strategic exploitation of the Arab area on one hand and will also exhaust the power of its capitalist enemies and will thus pave the way to the creation of a socialist society in the Middle East."² He concludes on the next page that: "The capitalist camp is in the position of an enemy towards Arab nationalism; the socialist camp stands as a supporter of Arab nationalism."³

1. Op. cit., p; 170.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 171. Some Arab nationalist writers, it will be observed, prefer to use the word "socialist" where "communist" would clearly be more apposite. Laqueur's comments concerning communist motives in the Middle East are no doubt justified: "The declared aim of the Soviet economic drive in the Middle East in 1955-56 was to help the Arab countries to get rid of "Colonialist" economic tutelage. Its real aim was that the political and economic stability of the countries concerned should become dependent upon the maintenance and increase of trade with the Soviet bloc and China." Op. cit., p. 361.

Several Arab nationalist writers detect a basic change in both the internal, social situation in the Soviet Union and in the political ideology of communism in recent years. They refer in particular to the twentieth party congress of the communist party in the U.S.S.R. held in 1956 as the point of departure for the new policy. Clovis Maqsūd, for example, analyses the internal political and social situation in the Soviet Union after the death of Stalin and considers that he sees evidence of the rise to power of a new managerial class. It was, in his opinion the emergence of this new class which led to the changes in attitude apparent from the congress. "This congress," he writes, "made the Soviet Union alter its position into that of a great power which has interests and desires some of which correspond with the principal interests and desires of the Asian and African governments and peoples. Its attitude has changed from being, as it was in the time of the Stalinists, that of a government which considered that all who did not conform with its ideological policy were enemies it wished to destroy. It was this change in principles and politics which made the Czechoslovak-Egyptian arms deal and the Syrian-Russian rapprochement possible without those firm relations being established which would have resulted in a loss of sovereignty for both Egypt and Syria. On the contrary, the relations which were established strengthened the sovereignty of these two Arab regions and affirmed their independence."¹.

1. Op. cit., p. 44.

The Iraqi pro-communist writer, 'Azīz al-Hājj considers, as may be expected, that it is a deliberate and unselfish desire on the part of the Soviet Union which has led to its help and support for the Arabs rather than a merely negative aim of foiling the plans of the imperialists. He divides the whole world into the Socialist and the 'military' camps and comments with surprise on the fact that some proponents of the policy of 'positive neutrality' assume that the two camps may be equated in their relationships towards the Arab world. To refute this, he contrasts the history of war and interference in the Arab world on the part of the Western powers with the help and encouragement shown to the Arabs by the Soviet Union. In assessment of Russia's motives for giving this help, he writes: "The socialist countries have helped the freedom-seeking revolutions since their birth and have supported the liberated Afro-Asian countries not only because they realise that these movements and their triumphs strike at the imperialists and their plans for war. On the contrary they wish for the continuation of the development of these countries for the good of their peoples and for the good of humanity as a whole."¹.

I have noticed little evidence in Arab nationalist literature of any disillusionment caused to Arabs concerning communism by the intervention of the Russian army in the

1. Op. cit., p. 44.

Hungarian revolution of 1956, although the majority must be aware of the course of events from the books and articles in Arabic which deal with the subject. Those few writers who do refer to the massacres in Hungary at all seem to tend to be sympathetic towards the Russians rather than the Hungarians. The following quotation from Dr. Majdhūb's recent book shows the complete detachment with which the subject is discussed. It is interesting to observe, moreover, how the West is blamed, at least in part, for the situation: "It would have been possible for the Hungarian revolutionaries to achieve what they wanted if they had merely followed the right path. It had been the intention of the new leaders of the Soviet Union to grant them a bigger share of independence and freedom in their relations with Moscow, after they realised the seriousness of the situation and the fury of the majority. The demonstrations, however, took on a radical deviationist stamp, after the interference of the West and incitement of the people to revolt and secede, which threatened that Hungary would withdraw completely from the Eastern bloc and socialist principles. This situation forced Moscow to use violence and brutality to maintain the system existing in Budapest."¹.

It would, however, be very false and misleading to give the impression that Arab nationalist writers are unanimously uncritical of the internal political systems of rule in the communist countries. Dr. 'Abdullah 'Abd al-Dāim is cutting and

1. Op. cit., p. 112.

satirical in his assessment of the force and terrorism he considers to be at the base of communist rule. He discusses the concept that the ideal communist society where government would be unnecessary is recognisably far away and that the communists say that in the meanwhile a socialist society must be constructed which will eventually lead to the ideal. He comments with bitter sarcasm: "In anticipation of that promised stage and of that happy day, there is no alternative but to accept the existence of a government and, moreover, that it shall be the most extreme of governments in violence, cruelty and oppression."¹ He goes on to point out the basic fallacy in communist rule and how it is in no real way democratic: "There is no solution other than a tyrannical form of government which will grasp the revolution with a grip of iron and which will, as they say, fulfil the 'dictatorship of the working classes'. What is this dictatorship of the working classes? It is the rule of the majority by means of the communist party and the rule of the communist party by means of its central committee of fifteen members and the rule of the central committee by means of the political office - the politburo - which consists of five members."² He goes on to criticise very bitterly the

1. Op. cit., p. 108.

2. Ibid.

'police-state' form of government in the communist countries, which relies, he considers, on armed forces to maintain order over everything, the "trade unions, the factories and all the people."

Dr. Hassan Sa'b, too, belongs to the minority of Arab nationalist writers who are outright in their criticism of communism; he believes that communists do still maintain their basic aims of world domination. He points to this in one of his recent books and gives as his opinion that the current political and ideological movements in the Middle East are not sufficiently strong to combat communism. He stresses the need for a new, effective ideology: "The strength of compulsion and of oppression, and the strength of the nationalist sentiments streaming forth, and the pivoting about the personality of one single leader, the strength of the call for a 'democratic, cooperative, socialist society', the strength of (the call for) the commencement of the creation of unity as a living truth and the strength of the policy of positive neutrality, these are not sufficient alone to stand up against the strength of communist ideology."¹ Dr. Sa'b shows his own personal refusal to be influenced by communist propoganda by pointing out that the supposed communist miracles which have been brought about in Russia and China are no greater than those accomplished

1. Op. cit., p. 15.

in America, Europe and Japan, for example. He quotes from Milovan Djilas, the disillusioned Yugoslav communist who claims in his book "The New Class" that the communists do not really know themselves what they are doing in the field of economics. "Thus," concludes Sa'b, "we find ourselves before the fact that in the present-day human situation there are many different ideological paths towards a better human destiny."¹

The developments which have taken place in Iraq since the revolution of July 1958 are assumed by many Arab writers to show a definite communist influence in that country and anti-communist feeling has grown rapidly in Arab nationalist circles in the rest of the Arab world, as a result. 'Ali Nāṣir al-Dīn, a Lebanese writer who has been active in developing and spreading the ideology of Arab nationalism since he formed the Beirut section of the "League of Nationalist Action", one of the earliest Arab nationalist parties, in 1936, is typical in the strength of his criticism of communism of this recent trend. He is obviously convinced of the communist aims of world domination: "Communist imperialism is indeed and in truth a terrible and frightful imperialism; it is an imperialism of the intellect, of thought and of the emotions; it is completely opposed to the individual and national being. It is an absolute, terrible and yet imperceptible overpowering

1. Op. cit., p. 24.

influence...it is absolutely opposed to people's customs, religions and history."¹. He goes on to give his opinion that the aim of this imperialism is to bring all the peoples of the earth under the rule of Russia which, he says, "is greedy for power over the earth by means of communism, that daughter of Jewry or the second Zionism."². He very significantly adds a footnote at the bottom of the page referring to this last remark which says: "The positive proof of the truth of what we say, if there is any need for proof, is the present situation in every country which the Russians have colonialised in the name of socialism - for example Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and others."³. It is from assessments such as this and the attitude here shown that one has the suspicion that the suppression of the Hungarian revolution was not entirely without effect in bringing about a disillusionment among some Arabs with regard to certain basic aspects of communist policy. Indeed, one has the impression that, despite what some of them in fact express in writing, not a few Arab nationalist theorists have serious doubts concerning the motives for offers of aid from the communist bloc and the advisability of accepting such aid. They feel in such need of help, however, against their assumed enemies the 'Western imperialists' that they feel constrained to

1., 2. and 3. "mihnah al-Iraq." ("Iraq's trial".) Beirut, 1959, page 7. (pamphlet)

put their doubts, fears and conscience to one side.

The policy of some Arab governments in accepting economic and military aid from the communist countries while at the same time effecting deliberate suppression of Arab communist parties and conducting violent anti-communist propoganda campaigns must lead to considerable confusion in the minds of the lesser informed Arab peoples. Dr. Muhammad Majdhūb makes this obvious from his own attitude to this problem. He makes an implicit criticism of the policy of the United Arab Republic in conducting an anti-communist ideological battle with communism despite the fact that it accepts aid from the Soviet Union. He considers that it is wrong and ridiculous to accept aid from the East while forbidding the people to hear the principles on which it is based. "So long as we remain battling with the imperialists and so long as the Eastern bloc holds out to us the hand of friendship, it is disgraceful, ridiculous and a burdensome mistake that we should open up a new bloc before the people and yet encourage it to oppose the internal principles which this bloc is constructing."¹ This attitude is significant and probably quite widespread in the Arab countries; it may perhaps point to what may result in the growth of

1. Op. cit., p. 142.

communist influence in the area as a consequence of the acceptance of aid from the communist countries.

The relationship between Arab nationalism and communism is, as this examination has made clear, a very complicated one about which generalisation is unjustified and impossible. There are some contemporary Arab nationalist writers who are absolutely opposed to both the ideological and practical political manifestations of communist policy. On the other hand there is a minority of writers who support the idea of Arab unity and the formation of the united Arab state who are open in their complete agreement with both aspects of communism. The position of the greatest number of Arab nationalist writers lies somewhere between the two extremes of open criticism and unquestioning support. Those who are not entirely convinced by communism seem to express their criticism in examinations of its ideological rather than its practical political aspects, a complicated subject about which they may not be very well informed. In spite of the widespread disagreement concerning the ideological aspects of communism among Arab nationalist writers they, in the large majority, express delight and gratitude in accepting military and economic aid from the communist countries to help them in their struggle with the West. This criticism of communist ideology and acceptance of communist aid has

created an obviously illogical situation which is noticed and criticised by some writers.

In trying to assess the effects of communism on the Arab nationalist movement, one ought, of course, to make a distinction between communism as an idea based on the belief that social equality and justice can only be achieved through the revolutionary rule of one party, the communism party, and that the resources of the country should be managed exclusively by the State, and between the concept of communism as a universalist political philosophy. The majority of Arab nationalist theorists do not seem to be in conflict to any marked degree with the social and economic theory of communism. They refer to limitation of private property and personal fortune and seem to support the idea of state-ownership of land and industry.¹ The 'socialism' they support seems, in fact, to be of an extreme left-wing variety and great emphasis is placed in many works on the need for change of a violently revolutionary nature. The reaction of the majority of these writers to the idea of a one party form of rule is not, unfortunately, very apparent; they simply do not seem to have given the subject a great deal of thought, especially in their discussions of communism.²

1. See Chapter Two above, pp. 89 et seq.

2. For a brief discussion of the "National Union" ("al-ittihād al-qaumī") party being developed in the United Arab Republic, see Chapter Six, above pp. 242 et seq.

Some Western observers are of the opinion that the traditional view that Islam forms an "effective bulkwark against communism" is no longer applicable in the Arab world. Walter Laqueur, for example, writes that "the discussion about the affinity between Islam and Communism is no longer of vital interest. It was of importance so long as the vast majority of the people believed in religion and Islam continued to be the only active force in their lives."¹ He is in fact, clearly of the opinion that because Arabs do not at the present time display a preoccupation with religious observances of a formal nature, as they did in the past, the influence of Islam has declined. Arab nationalists are, however, by definition those who have pride in the Arab nation which they assume to exist, from "the Gulf to the Atlantic." They are conscious that it was Islam which originally motivated the creation of this nation, and they are intensely proud, both Christians as well as Muslims, of the culture and civilisation which the Qur'ān and Islam created. Whether or not the Arab world accepts universalist communist dogmas would ultimately seem to depend on whether or not Arabs do retain their pride in Arabism, of which Islam is so important a part. In this respect at

1. Op. cit., p. 6. See too the article "Communism and Islām." by Bernard Lewis. "International Affairs" Vol. XXX, Jan. 1954.

least, therefore, Islam may certainly be considered still to be an important bulwark against communism of a universalist nature.

If, however, one considers that by communism one means the acceptance of an internal form of totalitarian rule based on a one-party system, after, for example, the Yugoslav model, one must accept that Islam is not necessarily opposed to communism. If one accepts this type of definition for communism, one cannot but agree with Laqueur that: "the Arab countries are now more likely than most others to provide a favourable breeding-ground for communism."¹ The dividing line between totalitarian dictatorship and communism is agreed by many to be very fine; such dictatorships may clearly become firmly established in the Arab world.

It would, however, be most unwise to forget that Western concepts of democracy are widely understood and secretly accepted in the Arab world, despite the fact that many Arabs seek, for psychological reasons, to deny this at the present time. In the unlikely event of the establishment of communist "puppet" regimes of the East European variety in the Arab world, the new rulers would be likely to find, in my opinion that: "It is easy to conquer any Arab country, but their natural inclination to rebellion makes it difficult and expensive for the invader to maintain his control."²

1. Ibid.

2. Glubb, *Op. cit.*, p. 37.

CHAPTER EIGHT:

JAMĀL 'ABD AL-NĀSIR AND ARAB NATIONALISM.

No examination of the ideology of contemporary Arab nationalism would be complete or of value without an attempt to define the place of Jamāl 'Abd al-Nāṣir, President of the United Arab Republic, within the movement. It is by no means easy, however, to deal with this subject in a satisfactory manner. Nāṣir is, on the one hand the undisputed leader of the Arabs, held in great esteem in all the Arab countries, and yet, on the other hand, he has not spoken always in his speeches in the way typical of the vast majority of Arab nationalist writers and theorists of the last thirty years. The latter have been and are, almost without exception, individuals who have apparently seen themselves from an early age to be Arabs first and foremost and only secondly nationalists of the political entities in which they live. The opposite seems clearly to have been the case with Nāṣir until comparatively shortly before the formation of the United Arab Republic of which he is now head.

Arab nationalist writers have been seen in the majority of their works to use the words ummah (nation), sha'b (people), waṭan (homeland) and al-qaumīyah (nationalism), with particular reference to the Arab nation, people, homeland and nationalism all of which they consider to exist. Nāṣir, however, in the

majority of his speeches delivered before the autumn of 1956 used these words to refer specifically to the Egyptian nation, people and nationalism. We find for example, that he said in a speech delivered on the 23rd. of February, 1953 : "Yes, let us have confidence in ourselves and in our nation; Egypt, whether weak or strong, is a free nation." (ummah). In the same speech, clearly referring to Egypt and not to the Arab world, he said: "The forces of evil have since time immemorial conspired in vain against this homeland (watan) and its eternal civilisation." He also used the word "qaumīyah" in the same speech in an obviously exclusively Egyptian context; the word Arab is nowhere mentioned in this speech: "We are not fighting for the sake of our freedom and our nationalism; no force, no matter how strong, can stand in our way." In another speech delivered in Cairo, in which he addressed the Egyptians as Egyptians and made no mention of the word Arab, he said: "We are, O citizens, a strong people (sha'b), an ancient people."¹.

In the following year, on the 31st. of May, 1954 in a speech delivered in Bulāq, he defined in comparative detail what he considered to be the limits of the homeland (watan). He said: "We do for Bulāq what we are doing because it is a part of this whole homeland. We look at the whole country,

1. On the 26th. of November, 1953.

from Alexandria to Aswān. We look at the country as a whole from Alexandria to Tel al-Kabīr; this is the whole homeland." At al-Gīzah on the 23rd. of the same month, he stated the aims of the Army revolution of 1952 referring solely to Egypt and without mentioning the Arab world: "This revolution took place only to fulfil national glory (al-'izzah al-qaumīyah) in this country." He ended the speech with these words: "Lastly, I want to affirm to you that Egypt will never after today be ruled by other than its loyal and honourable citizens, who believe in the homeland (waṭan), the people (sha'b), freedom and national glory."

Throughout the "Philosophy of the Revolution", issued in 1954, Jamāl 'Abd al-Nāṣir refers to Egypt as the homeland (waṭan). It is very evident from this work that Nāṣir was thinking, when he wrote it, primarily as an Egyptian. In Part Two, where he examines the aims of the 1952 Army revolution and the means by which they may be attained he wrote: "There is no doubt that we all dream of a strong, liberated Egypt. This is a matter on which no two Egyptians differ."¹ It is interesting, too, to observe the way in which Nāṣir refers to the Arabs as one of the numerous waves of conquerors who have ruled Egypt for periods throughout history: "In my opinion, Egypt's history under the Pharoahs cannot be overlooked. Then comes the interaction between the Greek culture and ours. The Roman invasion

1. pp. 31 and 33 of English and Arabic editions respectively.

and the Islamic conquest, with the waves of Arab migration which followed should also not be left out of the picture."¹. At the conclusion of this chapter, having discussed the means of achieving the desired aims of the Revolution, and the work open to men of "understanding and experience", he wrote, : "Our mission lies in gathering them together to work for the future of Egypt - strong, liberated Egypt."².

A complete absorption in Egyptian affairs is similarly shown in a speech delivered on the 15th of November, 1954, shortly after the supposed attempt at his assassination reputedly made by the Muslim Brothers: "We Army men work from ideals and principles and the confidence we express today is only a confidence in these ideals and principles. All these aim at one goal-- the glory of Egypt, the freedom of Egypt, the dignity of Egypt, until social justice which will satisfy all citizens is achieved in this homeland."³.

1. pp. 38 and 42 resp.

2. pp. 47 and 53 resp.

3. The apparently exclusively Egyptian aims of the 1952 revolution in Egypt shown here and frequently elsewhere in Nāsir's speeches delivered between 1952 and 1956 differ remarkably from the aims more recently stated to have been those of the revolution which are stressed in many more recent Arab nationalist works. In the official Handbook for the U.A.R. for 1959, p. 18, for example, we find: "This revolution was the turning point in the whole of the Arabs' modern history. It was quickly responded to by every part of the Arab world and was taken as the much hoped for rise of the Arabs against corruption and oppression, both external and internal.

Since President Nāṣir is now the popular figurehead of Arab nationalism, it seems indeed remarkable that in the speeches he delivered in the whole period from 1952 to 1956, periods of several months at a stretch often passed by without his using the word 'Arab' publicly at all. In this period he used the two words 'Arab' and 'qaumīyah' (nationalism) in direct connection in his speeches no more than perhaps ten times. The speeches Nāṣir delivered on his trip to India and Pakistan and in Indonesia in 1955 at the Afro-Asian conference in Bandoeung are extremely interesting in this connection. He made great efforts to present himself as an Egyptian rather than as an Arab and made only infrequent passing references to the Arab countries. In India, for example, he stressed that both India and Egypt had great civilisations in ancient times, and that each could therefore be justly proud. In the Bandoeung Conference on the 19th. of April 1955, he reiterated that the six aims of the Egyptian revolution were: "1) To raise the standard of living of the ordinary man in Egypt, both materially and spiritually. 2) The creation of a true democratic life based on sound principles in the country. 3) Abolition of feudalism by agricultural reform. 4) Freeing of the economy from the grip of the monopolists who deprive the individual of his freedom and the state of its sovereignty. 5) The

strengthening of the Army to defend our sovereignty and to fulfil our international obligations. 6) The spreading of social equality." The speech makes no mention of either Arab unity or the Arabs.

In a speech he delivered to the Muslim countries over the radio from Bandoeung on the following day, in celebration of the holy month of Ramadān, Nāṣir expresses delight at the obvious respect felt by Asian countries towards Egypt and consequently his own pride at being Egyptian. Neither the Arab countries, nor even the word 'Arab' is mentioned at all. On the President's return from Bandoeung to Egypt on the 2nd. of May 1955, he said, in a speech he delivered in Cairo: "In the last fifteen days, I thought of you all frequently and about Egypt and about Egypt's future. I longed all the time for Egypt and for the people of Egypt. I left the homeland (watan) for far off places only to fulfil your aims and to emphasise your principles. The whole world feels today that Egypt has a separate being and an independent personality."

In the Officers' Club in Cairo, on the 19th. of the same month, Nāṣir reiterated the six aims of the Revolution, all exclusively concerned with internal Egyptian affairs, just as he had outlined them in Bandoeung. In a speech he delivered in the same club on the 23rd. of July, 1955, he expressed his

absorption in Egyptian affairs. He said: "We will all cooperate together, the army with the people, the people with the army, to build up a strong Egypt and to fulfil our hopes and reaffirm our aims. We will all, people and army (seek to achieve) the aims for which we revolted. We will create a great Egypt, a strong Egypt, an Egypt made strong by its glory and its nobility. (We will work for) an Egypt which can strive to unfurl the flag of freedom in all regions, an Egypt which can unfurl the flag of glory in other countries, an Egypt which can unfurl the flag of dignity in all civilised lands." It is interesting to observe the constant repetition of the word Egypt in the oratorical style employed in this speech, a style reminiscent of that employed in the speeches of recent European nationalist politicians. In a speech delivered on the 5th. of July 1955 we again observe the repetitive use of the word Egypt to inspire his audience with suitable fervour: "The revolution will last so long as Egypt has a people, so long as Egypt has patriots, for this revolution represents every individual Egyptian, every group of the people of Egypt, every village in Egypt and every town in Egypt." ¹

1. Remarks of this nature did not, of course, go unnoticed in the Arab countries. As T. Little comments, "Nationalists of the region, although deeply impressed by the evacuation agreement, believed that President Nāsir was lukewarm towards Arabism and solely concerned to revive Egypt, even if it meant coming to terms with Israel." "Egypt", Benn, London, 1958, p. 255.

Although this examination of Nāṣir's speeches show his primary concern for and interest in Egyptian internal affairs, it would be false to maintain that he had no thoughts at all for the Arabs throughout the period up till 1956.¹ Indeed, both the "Philosophy of the Revolution" and his speeches show clearly that Jamāl 'Abd al-Nāṣir was always keenly aware of the desirability of strengthening Egyptian relations with the Arab countries. In Part Three of the "Philosophy of the Revolution", Nāṣir expands earlier remarks concerning the geographical position of Egypt and the effect that this position must have on Egypt's destiny and role in international affairs: "The era of isolation is gone...It has become imperative that every country should look around to find out its position and its environment and decide what it can do, what its vital sphere is, where is the scene of its activity and what its positive role can be in this troubled world."² Although he consciously lays primary emphasis on Egypt as an independent country, he stresses its central position in the Arab world: "Neither can we ignore

1. In January 1956, the new Egyptian constitution was announced which acknowledged officially that Egypt was part of the Arab nation. From this date until the Suez War in Nov. 1956 Nāṣir continued, however, to lay far greater stress on purely Egyptian affairs than on Arab affairs.

2. pp. 51 and 59. (Eng. and Arabic edits.)

that there is an Arab circle surrounding us and that this circle is as much a part of us as we are a part of it."¹. He again stresses this position in the Arab world: "It is not in vain that our country lies to the South West of Asia, close to the Arab world, whose life is intermingled with ours."². He concludes: "There is no doubt that the Arab circle is the most important of all these circles and the circle most closely connected with us."³. It is interesting to observe throughout these passages how Nāṣir refers to the Arabs in the third and not the first person.

Later in the same work, Nāṣir shows clearly that he is thinking in terms of close Egyptian cooperation with the Arab countries. In a discussion of the sources of power of the group which the Arab countries and Egypt together form, he wrote that the first of these sources would be: "That we are a group of neighbouring nations welded into a homogeneous whole by every possible material and moral tie that would unite any such a group of nations."⁴. In the following sentence, in which he referred to one civilisation, it seems clear that he was pointing to that of the Arabs and not the Egyptians: "Our peoples possess peculiarities, potentialities, and a civilisation

1. pp. 51 and 60.

2. Ibid.

3. pp. 53 and 61.

4. pp. 64 and 74.

inspired by the spiritual principles of the three divine religions which can never be overlooked in any attempt to build an new, stable and peaceful world." The use of the word 'peoples' (shu'ūb) in the plural here is significant; his most recent speeches refer, of course, to the 'Arab people' in the singular.

Nāṣir's first public reference to Arab unity came in a 'message of greeting' published to the people of Irāq by the Iraqi newspaper al-Balāgh on the 4th. of August, 1953. In it, Nāṣir said: "Arab unity is the only path by means of which we can attain the aims of all the Arab nations.¹ (umam). We have suffered greatly in the past as a result of the intrigues which the occupation sought to create between us and all this led us to lose our confidence in one another and even to lose our confidence in ourselves. We must now take warning from the past and its lessons and strive until each of us has faith in himself and in his brother. In this way we can achieve the aspirations of the Arab people.² This statement, quoted above

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1. The plural "nations", too, here contrasts with both the customary singular used by more typical Arab nationalist writers and with Nāṣir's own more recent usage.
 2. Nāṣir lays great stress in his speeches on the need for Egyptians and, later, Arabs to have confidence in themselves. Wilton Wynn in his book "Nāṣir of Egypt" (Camb. Mass., 1959) considers this 'search for dignity' the prime motive of Nāṣir's character. Georges Vaucher, too, writes: "It was wounded personal dignity and outraged national pride more than a desire for political revenge or the poverty of the people which caused the Egyptian revolution." Abdel Nasser et son équipe." Paris, 1959, p. 11.

in full, comes quite unexpectedly in the body of Naṣir's speeches, in which before this occasion, mention had scarcely been made of the Arabs at all. It is interesting to observe, incidentally, that in Nāṣir's early speeches, from 1952 to 1955, reference was made to the Arabs almost exclusively in speeches directed to non-Egyptian audiences.

The first direct public use of the words 'Arab nationalism' connected together in his speeches came in a reception for Arab students held at the Officers' Club in Cairo. For the first time, on the 29th. of May, 1954, Jamāl 'Abd al-Nāṣir declared his belief in Arab nationalism: "I have always pondered deeply over the Arab homeland and Arab nationalism, but I have never had the opportunity until the present occasion to hold a meeting with Arabs. What do I now feel? The truth is that I cannot distinguish between you, that is, between the Algerian and the Iraqi or the Jordanian and the Syrian. I am unable to differentiate between your names and the regions from which you come. You have all united under one name: Arabism. At the same time, I have felt strong feelings of brotherhood towards you; I am indeed a brother standing before his brothers, brothers in religion, in Arab nationalism, in sentiments and aspirations." He went on to say that all efforts of the imperialists to split the Arab world apart had failed and that Arab disunity inspired by the West had caused the Arab defeat in the Palestinian war. The speech lays no further stress,

however, on the need for closer Arab relations in the future.

The personal influence of Jamāl 'Abd al-Nāṣir in the policy and organisation of the 'Voice of the Arabs' broadcasting station is impossible to assess. On the one hand, the virulent anti-British and anti-colonialist attacks carried out by this station and the attempt to paint the picture of revolutionary Egypt as the friend of all persecuted nations, accords with Nāṣir's theories concerning the 'circles of influence' put forward in the "Philosophy of the Revolution." On the other hand, however, the remarkable conviction and insistence with which Egypt is represented as an Arab country in even the early broadcasts of the station, corresponds to no similar conviction detectable from Nāṣir's speeches from the same period. The overwhelming majority of his speeches from 1953 to 1956 do not refer to the Arabs at all.

However this may be, the following extract, from a speech delivered on the 4th. of July, 1954 in celebration of the completion of the first year's activity¹. of the 'Voice of the

1. In the first broadcast of the new programme, Gen. Naguib said that the purpose of the 'Voice of the Arabs' was to improve social and cultural relations between Egypt and the other Arab peoples. Naguib expressed his concern with Arab problems and a desire to "achieve the aims of the Arab world at the earliest possible time." He made, however, no reference to Arab political unity and stressed the plurality of the Arab peoples and the need for their full individual independence. See B.B.C. Publication "Summary of Radio Broadcasts in the Middle East." No. 378 of 10th. July, 1953.

Arabs' is remarkable for the strength of the apparent conviction in the existence of the Arab nation and of Egypt's place in it:" In the name of Almighty God, in the name of glorious and eternal Arabism and in the name of the one Arab nation, I send you an Arab greeting from Arab Egypt." He goes on to refer again to the united Arab nation: "Egypt broadcasts the 'Voice of the Arabs' from your heart in Cairo in war against the imperialists and as a thorn to prick the backs of traitors; Egypt broadcasts it to announce your personality and your strength...one nation which boundaries do not divide, which personal desires do not destroy and in the face of whose freedom no imperialist plot can stand." He also stated in the same speech: "I congratulate the great 'Voice' on its first birthday; I salute it in the name of Egypt which revolted for the sake of Arabism." This is apparently the first time Nāṣir referred to Arab nationalism as an aim of the Army revolution, which is usually stated in this period to be seeking nothing more than a free, united and democratic Egypt.

On the 23rd. of July, 1954, Jamāl 'Abd al-Nāṣir delivered a major speech in which he outlined the achievements of the revolution and its aims for the future and defined the attitude of Egypt towards Arab unity: "The aim of the revolutionary government is that the Arabs should be a united nation whose

citizens work for the common good. (This government) believes that the position which the Arabs occupy between the other regions of the world, their mighty services to civilisation, their valuable economic resources and their connections with the Islamic East and the East as a whole qualifies them for a great part in which they can influence the world's affairs." He affirmed that: "The Arabs' problems are the problems of the Egyptians too." He went on to stress the need for effective united Arab defence against the common enemy of imperialism and the need to strengthen the Afro-Asian bloc to achieve a third world power force. In spite of all this emphasis on Arab unity, however, he ended the speech in a plea to Egyptians to be proud of their Egyptian nationality: "Do not forget that you are the descendants of the Pharoahs and the Arabs, that you are Egyptians and that Egypt is a land of glory, civilisation and knowledge. Have confidence in yourselves, support the cause of freedom and the revolution." He ends the speech, as he frequently ended major speeches, with the words: "God is very great; glory be to Egypt!"¹.

1. It is interesting to observe how, at a later date, Nāṣir maintains that the pride of the Egyptians in the civilisation of the Pharoahs was deliberately implanted in their minds by the imperialists. In a speech delivered on the 23rd of July 1959, in celebration of the seventh anniversary of the revolution he said: "We have been able to see that the Pharoahonic propaganda which the imperialists, along with all their other propaganda, tried to plant firmly within the Egyptian nation, was merely a vain attempt on their part to divide the Arab nation and destroy it part by part."

From the clear statement here regarding a policy of support for Arab unity, one would have expected to find that from this date Nāṣir may perhaps have laid greater stress on Arab affairs in subsequent speeches. This is not, however, the case. Throughout the rest of 1954 and the following year, reference to the Arabs came only infrequently and usually in speeches addressed to Arabs, not to Egyptians. On the 6th. of January 1955, for example, Nāṣir addressed an assembly of Syrians at the Officers' Club in Zamalek: "We in Egypt always feel that the glory of Egypt is part of the glory of the Arabs, that Egypt's strength is Arab strength and that Egypt's dignity is part of Arab dignity." In marked contrast to the specifically Egyptian aims of the revolution expounded in Bandung some months later, Nāṣir said in the same speech: "When we began this revolution we did not do so seeking Egypt's glory alone; we were seeking the glory, strength and dignity of all the Arabs."

It is the Suez War of the autumn of 1956 which followed the "Egyptianisation" of the Suez canal and the Israeli attack on Egypt which seems to mark the time when Nāṣir became fully aware of the desirability of adopting an unequivocal policy of Pan-Arab nationalism. The change is clearly marked in his speeches of the period. On the 1st. of November, 1956, Nāṣir delivered a speech over the radio in which he protested emotionally against the Anglo-French operations, rejected the ultimatum they had made that the Egyptian as well as the

Israeli forces should retire from the Suez Canal region and expressed his complete determination to fight to the last. This speech is remarkable for the fact that the words "Arab", "Arab nationalism" or the Arab countries are not once mentioned. The conflict is described as one between the imperialists and Egypt. Nāsir once again refers to Egypt as the "homeland": "O Brothers, let us think today about our homeland, about Egypt." He stresses outright that the imperialists were fighting Egypt, not the Arabs as a whole as he has frequently since maintained: "We will fight bitterly; we will never surrender, for we are defending the honour of Egypt, the freedom of Egypt, the dignity of Egypt!" Similarly, in a speech he delivered at al-Azhar on the following day, he again made no mention of the Arabs and referred directly to the Egyptian "homeland and people."

President Nāsir seems to have been genuinely surprised at the strength of the support for Egypt which came from the Arab countries during this crisis. In his next major speech, delivered on the 9th. of November, we find that he lays great emphasis on the help both offered and given by all the Arab leaders to Egypt. He stated significantly: "The Arab peoples everywhere cooperated with us against the imperialists and the interests of the imperialists, from Iraq to Morocco. When we entered the battle, Arab nationalism was only words...when we came out of the battle it had become a real fact."

The form of union envisaged by President Nāsir throughout the period from 1952 to 1958, when Egypt and Syria merged into the United Arab Republic, does not appear clearly from his speeches. Arab union is referred to in merely the vaguest of terms. There seems no evidence to show that he was gravely critical of the Arab League and that he envisaged a really close union, such as that exists now between Egypt and Syria, between all the Arab countries. The only speech in which he gives any indication of the form of union he desired in the period from 1952 to 1956 and his assessment of the value of the Arab League, was delivered on the 22nd. of July, 1955. In this speech he appears to envisage a strengthening of the Arab League and not its abolition as some Arab nationalist writers have suggested: "Our Arab policy seeks to unite all Arabs by making them one nation, or rather one family...Our path to achieve this aim has been to adhere to and to respect the Covenant of the League of the Arab countries, to clarify what is obscure in it and strengthen what is weak. The Mutual Security Pact has been the fulfilment crowning and strengthening the Covenant of the Arab League."¹. He ended this speech, again rather surprisingly, with the words: "God is very great; glory

1. See above, Chapter Four, pp. 136 et seq.

be to Egypt." That the form of union binding Egypt and Syria together into the United Arab Republic is far closer than the authors of the Arab League Charter seem to have envisaged is shown by an examination of the provisional constitution of the new state.¹

An examination of the ideology of Arab nationalism in contemporary Arabic literature shows that certain attitudes and trends are apparent in the works of a majority of the writers who support the movement for unity. For example, it has been seen, that with a few notable exceptions there is some sort of community of attitude among Arab writers of the last twenty-five years concerning the place of religion in the state, the Western world and democracy and communism. It is of interest to examine President Nāṣir's speeches in the light of the general Arab nationalist attitude towards these problems.

A majority of recent Arab nationalist theorists apparently insist on the need to divorce religious and state affairs, in the proposed Arab union. Although the provisional constitution of the U.A.R. and the Egyptian constitution which preceded it do not refer to a state religion, it seems clear from his speeches that Arabism and Islam are, or were, nearly

1. Article nine of the Covenant does, however, signify its approval for the possibility that individual Arab countries might seek closer union than that actually provided by the Arab League.

synonymous in Nāṣir's mind.¹ In the "Philosophy of the Revolution" Nāṣir wrote of the circle of Islam surrounding Egypt in much the same terms as he wrote of the circle of the Arab countries. He stated: "The pilgrimage should have a potential political power. The world press should hasten to follow and feature its news not by drawing attractive pen pictures of its rites and rituals for the delectation of readers, but by its representation as a periodical political conference at which the heads of all the Islamic States, leaders of opinion, scientists, eminent industrialists and prominent business men assemble to draw up at this world Islamic parliament the broad lines of the policies to be adopted by their respective governments."²

The first reference to Islām in Nāṣir's published speeches comes in an address delivered in Alexandria on the 18th. of April, 1953. A short speech, in the typical phraseology of class and anti-imperialist warfare ends as follows: "If we think that imperialism will give way easily before us, we are wrong. The path is narrow and difficult...No matter what the

1. See also Chapter Five, pp. 200^{et seq.} above. It will be observed that Nāṣir is given the title "Leader of Arabism and of Islam" by the respected official journal of the University of al-Azhar.

2. pp. 68 and 80. The "Islamic Congress", set up in late 1954 under the Secretaryship of Anwar al-Sādāt, which holds annual meetings in different Arab countries, seems to be a concrete expression of Nāṣir's policy expounded here.

path we will go on struggling until we reach our goal...We will reach the end of the road, if God Wills, thanks to our solidarity...If Egypt frees itself, then Islām becomes free." The meaning of the last remark is obscure and open to various interpretations.

During the period in 1953 and 1954 when opposition against Nāsir from the Muslim Brotherhood was extremely strong, the Egyptian leader laid considerable emphasis in his speeches on God and religion. God is portrayed on the side of the Egyptians against the British over the dispute concerning the evacuation of the Suez canal bases. On the 15th. of August, 1953, arguing that all loyal citizens must be prepared to fight and die if need be for the cause of freedom, he expressed his belief in predestination: "I am sure that the fate of every man is limited by the day, the hour and the minute in which he will die." In a speech delivered on the occasion of the celebrations for the feast of al-Adḥā, on the 19th. of August, 1953, he said: "So God will give you a great victory and the whole earth will shine forth with the light of its Lord, for a proof of His help and pleasure came to you on the night of the 23rd. of July, 1952." ^{1.}

At the opening of the Arab Islamic Conference on the 26th.

1. The date of the coup d'état carried out by the Egyptian Army against the régime of King Farouk.

of August 1953, in Cairo, Nāsir frequently used the words 'Arabism and Islam' juxtaposed very obviously next to one another. The speech traces the course of Arab history since the early days of Islam and interprets the misfortunes of the period as divine retribution. The following passage is typical: "God's anger began to fall on us and His light to recede from us. For we had left the path of the truth, the path of love and co-operation in God's way, the path of patience, of holy war (al-jihād) and sacrifice to raise aloft God's word." The whole speech refers frequently to passages from the Qur'ān, on which its style seems modelled.

In a speech on the 26th. of August 1953 Nāsir referred to the need for a "jihād" (holy war) against imperialism: "Arabs and Muslims in all parts of the world must believe that they face one enemy, the imperialists. They must unite once more under the banner of federation (ittihād) and holy war (jihād)." ^{1.} The use of the word 'jihād', with its special connotations in Islamic law, must be deliberately employed here with at least

1. While other Arab nationalists refer frequently to the need to unite against the "imperialists", none except Nāsir, so far as I have observed, make a direct appeal to the Arabs as Muslims to fight in a "holy war" against the "imperialists" as, apparently, infidels.

some knowledge of its religious implications.¹ On the 1st. of January, 1954, Nāṣir used the word once again in calling for unity and sacrifice in fighting the British occupation: "The only path to freedom is holy war (jihād) and the formation of an army composed of men and women in every village and every town until the whole people become strong."

It has been seen that Arab nationalist writers are united in common condemnation of Western "imperialism." The speeches of Jamāl 'Abd al-Nāṣir show that he may indeed be considered a typical Arab nationalist in that he agrees wholeheartedly with this condemnation. In the section of the "Philosophy of the Revolution" in which he discussed the position of Egypt at the centre of the Arab, Afro-Asian and Islamic countries, he referred to the great circle of imperialism surrounding all these other circles: "Imperialism is the great power laying round the whole of the region a siege incomparably more vigorous and more rigorous than the siege that had surrounded our trenches in Fālūjah and all our armies and governments in the capitals from which we received our orders."²

1. See article under "jihād" in the "Encyclopaedia of Islam."

2. pp. 61 and 72. Some 2500 Egyptian soldiers, of whom Nāṣir was one, were surrounded at Fālūjah for several months during the Arab-Israeli war of 1948. The garrison refused to surrender and was eventually evacuated during an armistice.

He saw the activities of the Colonial Powers in Africa as unquestionably motivated by the desire for power and considered that it was Egypt's clear duty to fight on the side of the 'subjugated' African peoples: "We cannot under any condition, even if we wanted to, stand aloof from the terrible and terrifying battle now raging in the heart of that continent between five million whites and two hundred million Africans." He wrote somewhat vaguely and with great and obvious ambition: "We certainly cannot under any condition relinquish our responsibility to help to our utmost in spreading the light of knowledge and civilisation up to the very depth of the virgin jungles of the continent."¹.

Nāsir's speeches have been, since his first assumption of power, full of accusations against Western imperialism; he discounts absolutely any possibility of an altruistic desire on their part to bring material benefit to the countries over which they have control. The following remarks, made in a speech on the 20th. of November, 1953, are typical of many passages in his speeches: "The British very well know that to strengthen Egyptians will mean a weakening of their own strength and influence in this country. They claim before the world that they are working to raise the standard of life in the countries whose lands they occupy; this is a logic impossible to understand and cannot accord with reason in any

1. pp. 66 and 78.

way."¹.

Jamāl 'Abd al-Nāṣir is apparently typical of Arab nationalists in overestimating the extent of the cooperation between Great Britain and the United States of America. He accounts for the vacillating policy of the American government in offering aid and arms and then withdrawing such aid in the following terms: "The reason for this is clear; America is completely and absolutely bound up (murtabitah) with her ally England. Both have a common enemy which is Russia. America will not satisfy us to anger England."².

The attitude shown by Jamāl 'Abd Nāṣir towards communism and towards the Soviet Union is similarly seen to be typical of that we have seen to be demonstrated by the majority of Arab nationalist writers.³ Nāṣir has frequently spoken in the terms of a straightforward belief in a struggle between classes. His remark in a speech delivered on the 23rd. of February, 1953, expresses this clearly. In pre-revolutionary Egypt, the country was, he said: "divided into two factions, each hating the other. These were, in one category, the camp of the slaves and the other, the ruling classes." His speeches are, similarly, full of direct references to the evils of the capitalist economic system, with no emphasis

1. Ibid.

2. In speech at Suez on the 3rd. November, 1953.

3. See above, Chapter Seven.

at all on its advantages. Capitalism is seen by Nāṣir as a means by which individuals exercise undue influence over society and the state, and, moreover, one by which foreign states can infiltrate and penetrate and destroy the sovereignty of an independent state. The vast majority of his speeches contain passages and references which clearly show this attitude.

Although Nāṣir seems in these passages to have accepted some of the basic economic principles of communism, he has never, so far as I am aware, made reference to Marx, Marxism or communism in favourable terms. His refusal to allow the communist party to operate in Egypt before the union with Egypt and in the U.A.R. after its formation, demonstrate clearly his distrust for a party which he considers to be opposed to the ideology of nationalism. Nāṣir has said, moreover, that he considers communism to thrive only on economic backwardness and to be opposed to progress: "We all know that the only desire of communism in Egypt is to spread disorder, for it can only live in anarchy. It does not accept that the living standards of the people should be raised, for in this case it would not be able to spread its poison among them."¹. Since this comparatively early date, however, Nāṣir has rarely spoken in outright condemnation of

1. From a speech delivered on the 21st. of August, 1954.

communism in his speeches, although it is true that in the recent and continuing war of words between Nāṣir and Qāsim, President of Irāq, the former refers to the latter as a communist as well as a Zionist and stooge of the imperialists and no doubt some criticism of communism can be understood to be implied by this.

Nāṣir, in common with the majority of present-day Arab nationalist writers, clearly sees no overriding objection to accepting economic, military and diplomatic aid from the communist countries in what he considers to be his struggle with Western imperialism.¹ Communist aid for Egypt and the Arab world in great quantity stems, of course, from the Czechoslovak-Egyptian arms agreement of autumn, 1955. He well expressed his attitude towards acceptance of the communist offer in a speech delivered on the 22nd. of September, 1955. He stressed his disappointment with French, British and American policies which laid conditions on the supply of heavy arms to Egypt and maintained that the agreement with Czechoslovakia was a simple commercial agreement. He pointed out

1. Sino-Soviet credit guaranteed to Egypt from Jan. 1954 to Dec. 1958 is quoted as 626 million dollars by R.L. Allen on page 80 of "Middle East Report, 1959. Published by the Middle East Institute, Washington, and edited by W. Sands.

very forcibly, too, that he felt absolutely obliged to obtain heavy arms for the defence of Egypt and the Arabs from the danger of Zionist attack. In defence of the charge that the agreement meant that Soviet and Communist influence in the Middle East would inevitably become stronger, Nāṣir said:

"When I hear some spokesman declare that this is a victory for Soviet or foreign influence in the Middle East or Egypt, I recall the remote past and I assert that this commercial agreement without conditions or restrictions that we have signed is not a victory for Soviet or foreign influence, but that it merely ends the long period of influence in which we have been dominated and controlled."

In the speech he delivered at Alexandria on the 26th. of July, 1956, in which he announced the nationalisation of the Suez Canal, Nāṣir expressed a remarkably naive belief in the sincerity of the assurances given to him by the Soviet Foreign Minister on his visit to Egypt that the Soviet Union: "did not wish to come between us and the Western Powers and that Russia desired for peace between us and the Western Powers." Nāṣir again stressed in this speech that the loans offered by the Soviet Union were completely without conditions. It seems that he is completely convinced that the Soviet Union is disinterested in its friendship for Egypt and the Arabs. In one speech, at Banū Suwaif, he stressed forcibly that the

relations between his government and the Soviet Union is one of direct friendship. He stated: "When I visited the Soviet Union, they knew that it was a visit of friends to friends, for their stand with us was that of a friend towards friends." It could not be more apparent, indeed, that Nāṣir sees the Western "imperialist" Powers as his sworn enemies and the communist countries as his friends; it does therefore seem somewhat illogical that he, in common with other Arab nationalists, should insist on a policy of "positive neutrality" between his friends and his enemies. Nevertheless, Nāṣir stated in the same speech: "The policy, O Brothers, we have followed in the past and will follow in the future, is one of Arab nationalism, non-engagement and positive neutrality."

The name of Jamāl 'Abd al-Nāṣir and the words "Arab nationalism" have in recent years become inseparably connected with one another in the minds of both Arabs and Western observers alike. All Arabs are not agreed in considering him, however, truly representative of the movement for which they have themselves always worked. These Arabs consider him to be an unscrupulous Egyptian nationalist who is willing to exploit Arab nationalist feeling and even Islam for the sake of personal and Egyptian ambitions.¹

1. This is, clearly, too, the opinion of many Western observers. See for example, the comment of Lt. Gen. Glubb: "Colonel Nasser is personally charming. He is delightfully frank and sincere in appearance, but he is nearly always telling lies." Op. cit., p. 377.

Among many supporters of pan-Arab nationalism he is, on the other hand, considered to be the movement's outstanding figure and undisputed hero. They consider his assumed defeats of "imperialist" policies, his arms deals with the communist bloc, the nationalisation of the Suez Canal, the formation of the U.A.R. and the continued blocking of the Suez Canal to Israeli shipping and cargoes as well as his superficially successful policy of "positive neutrality" to be great victories for the Arabs as a whole. Whatever may have been the motives and influences which conspired to make Jamāl 'Abd al-Nāṣir adopt an unequivocal policy of full support for Arab nationalism, there is no doubt that he is seen by a very large proportion of the Arab "masses" throughout the Arab world today as their leader. The extravagant but at present justified language of the U.A.R. "Yearbook for 1959" well expresses how they do in fact see him: "He fought the enemies of Arab nationalism inside and outside the Arab homeland. He fought imperialism, feudalism and exploitation; he raised high the banner of Arab nationalism for the sake of building a new Arab society on new, solid and sound bases. At the hands of this hero, Arab nationalism became a real, live bond linking the whole of the Arab nation..."¹.

1. Op. cit., p. 18.

The position of Jamāl 'Abd al-Nāsir in Arab nationalism is certainly a controversial issue. Whether one considers that he is a typical, enlightened representative of the contemporary movement seeking Arab unity or whether one will consider that he represents a mixture of the least desirable characteristics of both Egyptian and Arab nationalism, will entirely depend on one's own nationality, beliefs and character. It is clear, however, that Nāsir is now to a large extent a prisoner of his own policies. He has created the vision of himself as the leader of the Arabs in their "war" against Israel and the "imperialists" and has personified himself as a pan-Arabist seeking an effective Arab union from "the Gulf to the Atlantic." Committed so firmly to a policy of revolutionary industrial and social progress, the creation of a united Arab state and, apparently, the destruction of Israel as a Jewish state, Nāsir must show results in these fields or his present support may well be lost. The appearance of President Qāsim of Irāq as a personality perhaps forceful enough to challenge his position as the leader of the Arabs is an extremely dangerous development so far as Nāsir is concerned. Communist party activity in both regions is, moreover, thought to be a growing danger to Nāsir's regime. Disaffection among Syrian intellectuals concerning various aspects of Egyptian rule is becoming increasingly outspoken; the resignation in 1959 of

all the Syrian Ministers from the Central Cabinet of the United Arab Republic is obvious evidence of a serious clash of ideas. The discontent in Syria is, moreover, having considerable effect in reducing Nāṣir's personal popularity in the neighbouring countries of Jordan and Lebanon.

President Jamāl 'Abd al-Nāṣir is considered by many Arabs to be a figure of truly historic proportions. Since his wholehearted adoption of Arab nationalism, the movement for Arab unity has unquestionably become much more vital than it has ever been before in the last decades. As a German writer has observed: "Pan-Arabism as an idea and aspiration is nothing new. What is new is that it has found in Nāṣir a visible point of focus, a "leader-personality" (Führerpersönlichkeit) through whom it can find concrete form and expression."¹ He has succeeded, if in nothing else, in giving the Arabs far greater confidence in themselves. The strength of his own personality and the emotional appeal of his name, coupled with the loyal support of his army and his propaganda services may well, in my opinion, enable him to overcome his present difficulties, at least for a considerable time. The problems he now faces are great, however, and they should not be underestimated.

1. "Die Arabische Revolution: Nasser über seine Politik." by Fritz René Allemann. Frankfurt, 1958, p. 103.

The theorists of Arab nationalism have long stressed Egypt's "natural" position in the heart of the Arab world. They are not in any way surprised that Egypt should have found in Nāṣir a leader who was willing to accept this position. Anīs Ṣāyigh well expresses the typical Arab nationalist attitude towards Nāṣir's adoption of Arab nationalism as official policy: "People will not ponder why Egypt acknowledges today its Arabism. They will wonder why Egypt has done so only today."¹.

1. Article in Beirut magazine: "Arab Culture", 3rd Year No. 1, p. 60.

CHAPTER NINE:

CRITICISM OF ARAB NATIONALISM

AND OPPOSITION TO IT.

Contemporary Arab nationalism, whether one considers that it was inspired by the 19th century influence of the pan-Islamists or, in the early 20th century, by the Arab revolt led by the Hāshimite family against the Turks, is a force which has clearly been actively seeking pan-Arab unity of some form for a number of years. Although the theoretical and short-lived government set up by Faisal in Damascus in 1920 was brought to an end by direct French military pressure and if allowed to stabilise itself might have led to some form of Hāshimite union embracing Iraq, Greater Syria and the Hejaz, the main reasons for the failure up till now of the full aims of pan-Arab nationalists must, I think, be sought within the Arab world itself. Some Arab nationalist writers show great interest in their works in trying to analyse the reasons for the movement's failure to achieve complete success. It is, I think, pertinent to a study of the contemporary ideology of the movement to examine what Arab nationalist theorists themselves consider to be its faults and how they describe and account for the opposition to pan-Arab unity within the Arab world.

Before the Arab countries did achieve complete

sovereignty and independence, as they have all now done with the exception of Algeria, Aden, and the Emirates of the Persian Gulf and Southern Arabia, and in the years immediately following this independence, the lack of unity in the Arab world could conveniently and justifiably be attributed to the direct or indirect action of the Western Powers; even today, indeed, Western imperialism is still frequently blamed for the present disunity. The majority of Arab nationalist writers are, however, now aware that there is a conscious and powerful opposition to pan-Arab unity within the Arab countries themselves, an opposition which cannot be ignored and should not be underestimated. The Syrian writer, 'Abdullah 'Abd al-Dāim, writing in 1959, clearly recognises this internal opposition to the movement. He emphasises that in the movement's beginnings the struggle was between nationalists demanding freedom and the imperialists who refused it. Imperialism is not, he considers, any longer the only enemy and is itself now almost non-existent; henceforward the battle is between the ranks of the enemies of imperialism themselves: "It is a struggle in the very heart of the enemies of imperialism themselves, a fight against the traces of imperialism in the souls of the people - a fight against greed and personal interests and against the efforts to create a spirit of separatism within the body of the unity..

There is no escape from a fight between those who want unity as a 'vehicle' and means of profit and those who consider that it is the beginning of new sacrifices and new toil - between those who consider it to be a means and those who consider it to be an end in itself."¹. It is interesting to see how 'Abd al-Dāim seems to characterise the Arab nationalist movement as essentially socialist and infers that opposition to unity comes only from the selfish and reactionary; while this is no doubt to some extent true, other writers do detect other aspects in the arguments of the opponents of Arab nationalism within the Arab world. Opposition to unity of the Arab countries has come, they consider, internally as the result of disagreement with the ideology of nationalism, from the fear of a united Muslim state on the part of the Christian and other religious minorities, from fear of Egyptian domination within the Union as the inevitable result of Egypt's serious and growing overpopulation, from the fear that the at present separate Arab countries which enjoy a high standard of living would lose this in an effective economic union and from the opposition to the movement which comes from the political leaders of the Arab world, who do not wish to give

1. Op. cit., p. 86.

up their personal power. There is no question, too, but that many Arabs distrust the character and policies of President Jamāl 'Abd al-Nāṣir, who has become personally involved as the undisputed figurehead of Arab nationalism today. They fear that he might misuse the personal power given to him in the provisional constitution of the United Arab Republic;¹ many who consider him responsible, sincere and thoroughly worthy of holding such power are not satisfied that his successors will be so incorruptible. While, however, Arab nationalists will freely admit such doubts in private conversation, Nāṣir's popularity is so great that it is considered inadvisable to express them in writing. External opposition to Arab nationalism is considered to stem from the Western Powers, from Turkey and, especially on the ideological level, from international communism.²

Arab nationalist writers are greatly concerned to expose what they consider to be faults in the ideology of Arab nationalism- faults which the movement's opponents use to their own advantage. 'Abd al-Latīf Sharārah, for example, considers that the movement is opposed on the ideological level by criticism of nationalism as: "a philosophy,

1. See Chapter Four, above, pp.162 et seq.

2. The subject of the relationship between Arab nationalism and communism is discussed in Chapter Seven, above.

principle and faith in general terms and also in that (its opponents) consider that it is opposed to (the best interests of) humanity and loftiness of mind and spirit."¹.

A minority of Arab nationalist writers is particularly outspoken in indicating the faults inherent in the philosophy and ideology of the movement. The Jordanian Dr. Walīd Qamhāwī, in this respect, criticises those Arab nationalist writers who consider nationalism as an end in itself and not the means of achieving reform in social and economic conditions. They imagined, he considers, that the secret of the success of the Western nations was merely in their adoption of nationalism; they, too, therefore, adopted nationalism, neither understanding on what bases it rested nor how it had developed. He considers that it was this misconception of nationalism as an end in itself which has led to the identification of the movement in the minds of both the leaders and the people with opposition to imperialism. He considers, too, that there has been complete neglect by Arab nationalist writers of the causes which led to the success of the imperialists in the Arab world. He concludes: "In this way, nationalism has become synonymous with the political relationship between the Arabs and their

1. "Fi al-qāwmiyah al-'arabiyyah," p. 7.

attackers and quite divorced from efforts to destroy social inequalities, economic injustices and faults of character and of thought which have descended upon the Arabs as individuals and upon the Arab nation in particular."¹ This extremely trenchant criticism is quite a-typical of the attitude of the majority of Arab nationalist writers, who satisfy themselves with the most superficial of examinations of the ideology of the movement. Qamhāwī goes on to say that the second most important danger in the ideology of nationalism is that it is based on the negative principles of enmity to other nationalisms. He points with concern to German nationalism and the manner in which it destroyed itself and considers that some aspects of Arab nationalism are analogous to this. He comes to the conclusion that although Arab nationalism has not yet arrived at such a level as did German nationalism, there are trends discernible in this direction in the present relations between the Arab countries.² Dr. Qamhāwī shows himself to be in complete disagreement with a majority of Arab nationalist theorists in maintaining that nationalism is basically and indeed completely materialistic. He goes on to state specifically that the third danger in nationalist philosophy is in

1. Op. cit., p. 281. This criticism is not now altogether just. See Chapter Two, pp. 85^{it sec.} above.

2. Op. cit., p. 282.

considering itself as an end rather than as a means: "it is in its essence materialistic to the utmost degree...it takes care lest any spiritual or humanistic tinge should be given to it and avoids exposing itself to natural and abstract principles."¹.

Muhammad Darwazah, too, criticises what he refers to as the 'inflexibility' and superficiality of the nature of the Arab awakening as one of the faults in Arab nationalism and one of the obstacles in the path of unity: "One of the innate or internal obstacles is the inflexibility of the general Arab consciousness and its negativity and lack of depth. The Arab masses are aware of the necessity for Arab unity...but they seem wooden, negative and superficial in their awareness."². If this were not the case, he concludes, these masses would force their will on those who wish to maintain the status quo in the Arab world.

The Palestinian writer Fā'iz Sā'igh sees three basic faults in the ideology of Arab nationalism which account for the movement's lack of complete success up till now. These are, in his opinion, : "Its vagueness as to form and its general indifference to instruments and to methods; its

1. Ibid.

2. Op. cit., p. 383.

oblivion to disuniting political forces; and its scorn for unilateral inducements."¹ Dr. Sā'igh goes on to attribute these failings to a series of faults in the Arab mind and character itself: "These three weaknesses may be jointly attributed to a psychological-existential attitude of the Arab mind; they equally reflect an imbalance in the Arab outlook on socio-political affairs marked by a preoccupation with ends to the exclusion of means and by the overshadowing of realistic-utilitarian values by idealistic values."² He also points to a failure of the proponents of Arab nationalism to appreciate what he calls the "real, objective and stubborn elements of diversity in the Arab world."³ This incisive analysis agrees in general with the criticisms expressed by other Arab nationalist writers concerning the philosophy of the movement. From my study of contemporary Arab nationalist literature I cannot but agree with Dr. Sā'igh's analysis in this respect. The majority of works propagating for Arab unity do, indeed, display a surprising disregard for practical considerations concerning the form of the union, the economic theory on which it would be based

1. Op. cit., p. 84. The exact meaning of Dr. Sā'igh's remarks is not clear.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 85.

and the means to bring it about. They are marked in general, by an optimism which in the present circumstances it is hard to justify. The Iraqî writer, 'Āmir 'Abdullah, is extremely critical of the vagueness of Arab nationalist writings. He comments, after quoting from some unnamed Arab nationalist publication: "It is most unfortunate that we find in the Arab world today writers who describe themselves as philosophers and then do not hesitate to remove the nationalist question from its context, flying high in strange skies, thinking that a mere desire for something is sufficient to bring it about."¹.

Two Arab nationalist writers point to a fact surprising in itself concerning the policies of the Arab governments in recent years. The governments of the Arab world have for some time maintained their own belief in and support for the idea of unity while at the same time, with the exception of Syria and Egypt which have in fact made what they consider the first step towards full Arab unity by their union in 1958, have adopted quite independent and at times rival policies. These various governments frequently accuse each other of being traitors to the cause of Arab nationalism. This apparent dichotomy between the words and actions of the

1. Op. cit., p. 20.

Arab leaders, while they all maintain the necessity of fulfilling the aims of Arab nationalism has been particularly noted by the Lebanese writers Dr. Ḥannah and Kemāl Jumblāt. Dr. Ḥannah points to the fact that lip-service to Arab nationalism is the ingredient considered necessary to all talks and speeches of a political nature in the Arab world: "For a long time our ears have been tuned to listening to the music of Arab nationalism. No Arab leader ascends an Arab throne without singing this song on every occasion possible. No Arab government makes a proclamation to its citizens without saying in it that it is the intention of that government to work for Arab nationalism. No conference is convened between the Arab governments without the conferees emitting the music of Arab unity."¹ Such comment points to a widespread impatience among Arab nationalist theorists towards their political leaders which is apparent in many respects in contemporary Arabic political literature. Kemāl Jumblāt, the leader of the Druze community in Lebanon and a supporter, with reservations, of Arab unity, questions the sincerity of the movement's proponents: "It is a strange fact that the majority of the leaders of 'patriotism' or the 'Arab nationalists' in the Arab world never kept their tongues still from advocating

1. "khawāṭir hawla al-jumhūrīyah al-'arabīyah al-muttahidah" ("Remarks about the United Arab Republic.") Beirut, 1958 p. 56.

unity and Arabism and from singing night and day about Qahtān, 'Adnān and Ya'rub, while not one of them set about in a practical way towards achieving this unity and this Arabism...Their actions, thoughts and efforts were the opposite of what they said...The attitude of the majority of those who work (for Arab unity) in Lebanon and the Arab countries is still of the following kind: it is an Arabism of copper overlaid with silver; you only see the overlaid silver while it was, is and still sees itself to be copper."¹.

Muhammad Darwazah is of the opinion that opposition within the Arab countries themselves constitutes a greater danger to Arab nationalism than do any external obstacles which may be placed in its way by foreign powers. He considers the ignorance of the ties binding the Arabs together and local material interests to be the biggest barriers to Arab unity.² The second of these points, the local material interests of the separate Arab countries outside a union is unfortunately referred to here very briefly and is completely ignored in the majority of works of Arab nationalist theorists. Indeed some of them consider that common material and economic interests between the Arab countries constitutes one of the most important bases of the movement's philosophy;³ they base their argument on the

1. "ḥaqīqah al-thawrah al-lubnānīyah". ("The truth about the Lebanese revolution.") Beirut, 1959, p. 28.

2. Op. cit., p. 341.

3. See Chapter Three above pp.122 et seq.

consideration of the Arab world as a viable and self-sufficient area in its very diversity of economic and natural resources. The whole question seems to be rather, whether it is in the interests of the separated Arab countries to join in an all-Arab union where the resources of the whole area would be shared between all its inhabitants. Dr. Darwazah is apparently conscious of this distinction and indeed, in my opinion, comes to the very heart of the problem when he discusses the rapidly increasing over population of the Egyptian Region and the effect this has on the minds of other Arabs: "Some (opponents of nationalism) express their fear at the growth of the population of Egypt on account of their numerical superiority over others and their apparent predominance over others in the realm of unity. This is mere fancy to which no reply is necessary and which no one except the regionalists, fanatical sectarians and hired mercenaries can believe. Unity will make the Arabs one nation and the Arab regions one homeland. This existed in the past at the time when the Arabs were united under the orthodox caliphs and the Umayyad state."¹ This attitude is typical of the apparent refusal of some Arab nationalist writers to examine the existing situation in a logical way and to draw from it logical conclusion. Darwazah shows that he is aware of a major objection in the eyes of the

1. Op. cit., p. 609.

Arabs in the separate Arab states to a union which would give Egyptians predominance over them in the affairs of the state and yet he seeks to nullify the objection by a sing-song cliché and follows this with a vague historical parallel which he does not attempt to justify. The fact that the writer does not make a more serious attempt to show that these fears are unjustified by employing a logical argument may perhaps be taken to show that such fears are not completely unjustified.

Opposition to nationalism within the Arab countries is not seen as coming from the various parts of the Arab world as states; opposition is seen to come from individual Arabs who are prosperous in the separated Arab countries. They are considered to constitute a force of some strength against Arab nationalism. The movement's theorists criticize these 'feudal, exploiting classes' extremely bitterly in their works; the Arab nationalist movement today sees itself as basically revolutionary and socialist.¹

The question of the leadership in the Arab world is similarly a subject of great discussion, as is the position of the hereditary, monarchical rulers in those Arab countries which still have this form of constitution. Dr. Haikal writing in 1943 was, of course, well aware of this problem,

1. See Chapter Two, above, pp. 84 et seq.

and considered that the position of the hereditary rulers within the union would be very difficult to define. He wrote: "It is not easy nevertheless to think of formalising a plan for the organisation of the Arab union; this is because there are in the independent Arab countries kings and governments whom it would greatly vex to give up their external sovereignty and to submit to the authority of a centralised power."¹ That this situation has to some extent been eased by the abolition of the monarchies in Egypt and Iraq since this was written is of course true. The comment still holds good, nevertheless, for those Arab countries which still have kings at their head and even applies, indeed, to those where presidential forms of government have been instituted.

Dr. George Hannah, writing as a Marxist, finds no difficulty in deciding that the obstacles in the way of Arab unity are, on the one hand, the reactionary economic and on the other the reactionary political situations in the form of the Arab states. After describing the economic system prevailing in the Arab world as basically corrupt, full of parasites who live off it giving nothing back at all in return, he turns to examine the prevalent political system in the Arab

1. Op. cit., p. 81.

world. He points out that it must be considered as quite reactionary in that its various parts are ruled either, in some countries by monarchies or in the others by "autocracy dressed in democratic clothing."¹.

Michel 'Aflaq in an examination of the opposition to Arab nationalism, lays particular emphasis on the socio-economic opposition which comes from those who are satisfied with the present form of social and economic system: "For many years past those with interests in doing so have been exploiting ignorance and fanaticism to split up the nation and prevent its freedom, progress and unity. They have resorted to various means to achieve this. The supporters of sectarianism in Lebanon build their case for separation from the body of Arabism on the backwardness of society in the other Arab regions...All opponents of Arab nationalism meet on one ground today--that is in opposing one thing--fine freedom-seeking Arabism, for there is within the movement an end to their economic control and exploitation. The sectarian chiefs in Lebanon and the hired men of religion in Syria and Jordan and the rapacious kings and monopolists of the resources of the Arab homeland meet and join their efforts with those of the imperialists and the supporters of Israel."².

1. "ma'nā al-qaumīyah." p. 63.

2. "ma'rakah al-maṣīr al-wāhid." p. 149.

Ahmed Sa'id, while agreeing with this basic analysis which considers opposition to Arab nationalism to come from the exploiting economic classes, (~~realistically~~) foresees that opposition to nationalism from government officials within the union when formed can be a very effective and powerful disruptive force. His appreciation is, I am sure, in this respect, realistic and significant: "The present and future generation of civil servants do not fully believe in Arab nationalism... we cannot ignore this important pre-condition to being a civil servant while we are in this dangerous transitory period in the annals of Arab history...for one regionally-minded civil servant in one administration...will be sufficient to set in motion a chain of trouble and difficulties for Arab nationalism."¹ The provisional solution to the problem is, in Sa'id's opinion to make all civil servants undergo instruction in nationalist affairs and in making them pass an examination in nationalism. This will make them realise the importance of their positions in the unified state. The real and basic solution, he goes on, will only be achieved when Arab nationalism is really firmly embedded in the minds of all Arab officials.

1. Op. cit., p. 323.

Opposition to Arab nationalism within the Arab world, which is seen as coming from the religious and economic fears of the reactionary classes is, Arab nationalist theorists are agreed, expressed in support for those regional nationalisms encouraged in the various parts of the homeland. The writers who support the movement for Arab unity are unanimous in condemning these regional nationalisms as deliberate fabrications instituted and encouraged in their growths by the imperialists.¹ They are likewise ridiculed as having no foundation in such solid bases as has Arab nationalism; the bases of common language, culture, history and interests are denied them out of hand. These regional nationalisms have, nevertheless proved to be not without some strength and Arab nationalist writers devote considerable space to examining their theses.

The main opposition from within Syria, which is considered by many writers to have been the birthplace of the contemporary, secular, socialist Arab nationalist movement, has come mainly from the Syrian Nationalist Party (or Syrian National-Socialist Party or P.P.S.) organised by Antūn Sa'ādah.

1. Some of these regional nationalist parties as, for example, the Syrian Nationalist Party of Antūn Sa'ādah, have pursued anti-British and anti-French policies of such violence that these assertions seem obviously false.

This party was formed first as a secret society and became a political party with open membership in 1935. The party calls in general for the unity and independence of the Fertile Crescent including Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan and somewhat strangely, Cyprus.¹ Later the proposed union was widened to include Iraq, which the party refers to as Eastern Syria. The party's principles are laid out in a pamphlet published in Damascus in 1950. They are:

"1) Syria is for Syrians, who form one complete nation. 2) Syrian affairs are an internal national concern completely independent of all other problems. 3) Syrian problems and affairs are those of the Syrian nation and homeland. 4) The Syrian nation is formed by the unity of the Syrian people born through a long history and originating in pre-historic times. 5) The Syrian homeland is that natural region where the Syrian people have evolved. It has geographical limits which set it apart from other countries. It stretches from the Taurus mountains in the North West and the Bakhtiyārī mountains in the North East to the Suez

1. The basic ideology of the party was first set out in a book published shortly before the Second World War by Antun Sa'adah entitled "mushū 'al-'umam" ("The Emergence of Nations.") This work, which is of considerable interest, examines the nationalist theories of European and particularly German writers and applies their conclusions to prove the existence of a Syrian nation. Republished in Beirut in 1959.

canal and the Red Sea in the South including the Sinai peninsula and the Gulf of 'Akaba and from the Syrian Sea in the West including Cyprus to the Arab desert crescent and the Persian Gulf in the East. It consists in general of the Fertile Crescent with Cyprus as the crescent's star. 6) The Syrian nation forms one society. 7) The Syrian National Socialist awakening will continue to draw breath from the gift of the Syrian nation and its cultural, social and national history. 8) The interests of Syria are above all other interests."¹.

The principles of reform of the party are given as the divorce of religion from the state and the prevention of religious interference in political and national affairs with the removal of all barriers between the various parties and sects. The party also stated its belief in the abolition of the feudal system and the organisation of the national economy on the basis of profit sharing and fair treatment of the workers. It considered necessary the creation of a strong army capable of taking an effective part in the country's affairs.²

Sāṭi 'al-Ḥuṣarī devotes a considerable part of his work entitled "'Arabism between its proponents and opponents" to an

1. Quoted in al-Ḥuṣarī: "al-'urūbah baina du'ātihā.." p. 104/6.

2. Ibid.

examination of the aims of the party. He considers that the party's opposition to Arab unity stemmed from a misapprehension in the party leader's mind: "I noticed clearly that the thought of 'Arabism was confused in the mind of Anṭūn Sa'ādah with, on the one hand, desert bedouinism and with Muslim partisanship on the other. The fellow thought that the philosophy of Arab unity was merely a veil which masked Islamic sectarianism and so he set about attacking it just as he attacked sectarianism in general."¹ Al-Ḥuṣarī denies completely the validity of the party's claim to form a unity based on the sole factor of geography. Sa'ādah, he considers, deliberately ignored the questions of unity, of language and of history as they would have clearly indicated Syria's place in a united Arab world.² The other Syrian political parties before the union with Egypt, with the possible exception of the Syrian Communist party, all supported the idea of a United Arab State.

Opposition to Arab nationalism, as a movement seeking a close form of political, economic and military union between all the Arab states, has come within Lebanon from many sections of the population. Muḥammad Darwazah in his "Arab Unity" points to the confessional constitutional system in Lebanon as

1. Ibid., p. 73.

2. Ibid., p. 119.

having been instituted and stabilised in Lebanon deliberately by the French to emphasise the separateness of the Christian, Sunnī, Shī'ī and Druze communities and to create among them a fear of Arab nationalism as an exclusively Sunnī Muslim movement. He concludes: "All this constitutes, as is obvious, a severe obstacle in the way of the creation of a complete Arab union in which Lebanon must be...It may be perhaps that Lebanese regional sectarianism is one of the strongest obstacles in the way of unity...it appears to observers sometimes that many of the Maronites and Catholics or that many of their religious and political leaders, who have power and influence over them, would prefer Lebanon to return under foreign rule rather than that there should come about any union between it and any other Arab country."¹ He later goes on to generalise on this same theme of religion as an obstacle to unity and gives his opinion that it is religious opposition which constitutes a major difficulty. He considers, however, that this religious opposition of the minorities will gradually become less important as literacy increases and education is improved. He advocates the abolition of foreign missionary schools or the institution of a form of censorship over their curricula. He makes this extremely strong criticism of these schools: "The foreign and sectarian schools have an effect in

1. Op. cit., p. 352.

perpetuating sectarian clamour and the reins of this sectarianism must not be left in their hands. They have played a destructive role in exciting dissention and the lack of communal feeling between the citizens of the Arab homeland and have stood in the way, to a lesser or greater extent, of the fulfilment of Arab nationalist philosophy. They have distorted Arab history and have planted sinful tendencies in some of the citizens which have led and still do lead to their adopting many harmful attitudes. It is necessary to abolish them and unify the teaching, making it official and nationalist and to ban the books which tell of religious and sectarian differences and quarrels."¹.

Another Lebanese Muslim writer, 'Abd al-Latīf Sharārah, agrees with the apparent majority of Arab nationalists in thinking that it is the 'imperialists' who have been primarily responsible in creating the "religious nationalisms" of the newly independent states of North Africa. Of Italian policy in Lybia, he writes: "In Mussolini's time, Italy maintained that it desired to protect Islam to gain the support of the

1. Op. cit., p. 557. In contrast to this, many Arab nationalist writers acknowledge that the origins of the contemporary movement towards Arab unity are to be sought in the missionary colleges set up in Syria and Lebanon in the 19th century. c.f. Antonius, "The Arab Awakening" p. 79 et seq.

Libyans, who placed their belief in Islam above all other considerations. They weakened their consciousness of being Arab, forced them to learn Italian and to neglect Arabic and tried to make their Sennūsī sect an obstacle between them and both the Tunisians and the Egyptians."¹ Sharārah goes on to state that it is "religious nationalism" in the North African Arab states which makes them less than completely enthusiastic towards pan-Arab nationalism and that this is the direct and desired result of Western policy.²

The fact that the Lebanese political and governmental system is organised on a strictly confessional basis permits one to make certain generalisations with comparative safety. The vast majority of Christians of Lebanese origin who live in Lebanon maintain the necessity of keeping Lebanon independent while accepting fairly close ties of friendship with the nearby Arab states. Dr. George Hannah's attitude may be considered as typical of this group from this respect. He first stresses that Lebanon is part of the Arab world: "Lebanon is a real part of the Arab homeland. The relationship between those who live in Lebanon and those who live in the other Arab

1. "fī al-qaumīyah al-'arabīyah", p. 85.

2. Ibid.

regions is that of brothers not a relationship of mere neighbours and friends."¹. Nevertheless, he goes on: "There is not one of us who will deny that the independence of Lebanon is the child of the wishes of the majority, nor will one of us deny that this desire came in complete agreement and conformity with the wishes of their brothers in all the Arab regions."². He concludes, therefore, : "Believing this, we give our blessings to the creation of the United Arab Republic, for we see in this creation and its protection a guarantee of the independence of Lebanon with regard to which both wishes are in agreement, those of its people and of its close friends."³.

The Lebanese Muslims seem to be in agreement, in the majority, with some form of fairly close integration with the other Arab states, but there seems to be a tendency at the present time to wait and see how the situation develops in the rest of the Arab world before actively demanding the complete fulfilment of Arab unity.

The Druze minority of Lebanon under the leadership of Kemāl Jumblāt is undecided about exactly what kind of relationship should be achieved between Lebanon and the other Arab

1. "khawāṭir ḥawla al-jumhūrīyah al-'arabīyah al-muttahidah"
p. 46.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 47.

states. Jumblāt insists on the need for close cooperation with all the Arab world but does not agree that there should be any attempt to bring about any really close union at the present time. It should of course be remembered while discussing the strength of Arab nationalism in Lebanon that the country contains a large number of Palestinian Arab refugees who have adopted Lebanon as their home; it is this group, both those of them who are Christians and those who are Muslims who are the strongest supporters of a fairly rapid union with the rest of the Arab world. It should similarly be remembered that there are many Arabs in Lebanon who genuinely desire a close form of union with the Arab states but are dissatisfied with what they consider to be some of the policies of the United Arab Republic and therefore insist on caution until the exact nature of government in that state becomes more clear.

Opposition to, or rather disregard for, the pan-Arab nationalist movement in Egypt has stemmed from two main factors. First, the widespread feeling in Egypt and reflected throughout the Arab world that Egyptians were not Arabs at all and had no common interest with the Arabs and second, from the internal Egyptian nationalist movement, which based itself on a desire for unity of the Nile valley in complete independence from all other states.

The present Egyptian tendency to consider itself the centre of the Arab world and those African territories with Muslim communities is in direct contrast to the earlier Egyptian isolationist feelings.¹ The Khedive Isma'īl Pasha is reported to have said in a speech accepting the conclusions of the committee of enquiry into Egypt's finances in August in 1878: "Mon pays n'est plus en Afrique; nous faisons partie de l'Europe actuellement."²

This feeling is echoed in a statement made by Sa'ad Zaghlūl in Europe soon after the first World War to a delegation from the Arab countries sent to try to persuade him to join forces with them: "Our problems are Egyptian, not Arab."³ Dr. Haikal himself writes that: "We do not deny that a section of people in Egypt considered it necessary to alienate themselves from the Arab world and others asserted that Egypt has no relationship with the Arab East and that its binding links are with the West."⁴ Similarly, Mr. T. Little in his recent work on Egypt writes: "Egypt being by temperament

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1. For an interesting article on this subject see: "Egyptian Attitudes towards pan-Arabism." Anwar G. Chejne, M.E.J. Summer 1957, p. 273. For a lengthy and detailed study in Arabic see: "al-fikrah al-'arabiyah fi miṣr", By Anis Sāyigh. Beirut, 1959.
 2. Quoted in the Earl of Cromer's "Modern Egypt", Vol I, 1911 Edition, p. 62.
 3. Quoted by Yūsuf Haikal, pp. cit., p. 26.

insular was not pro-Arab, but history and Islam had made it pan-Arab."¹.

That Egypt was becoming more aware of itself as an Arab country in the years immediately preceding the Second World War is demonstrated by the publication in 1939 of a special edition of the magazine al-Hilāl entitled "Arabs and Islam in the New Era", sponsored by King Farouk and all the other royal leaders of the Arab states. This edition contains many articles stressing the unity of all the Arabic speaking peoples. In one of these entitled "Egyptians are Arabs", Makram 'Ubaid Pasha states: "We, the Egyptian people, come from Asia and have been closest, since ancient times, to the Arabs in regard to colour, language and spiritual and racial characteristics."². It is interesting to see how the author makes a claim that Egyptians have been 'closest' to Arabs since ancient times, not as the majority of contemporary Arab nationalist writers contend today that Egyptians are and always have been Arabs. 'Ubaid goes on to give his opinion that Arab unity is the most important factor in the awakening of the Arab East; there must be unity against the common European enemy and the Arabs themselves must become more aware of their Arabism, which contains elements on which a flourishing civilisation can be built.

1. T. Little "Egypt". Benn, London 1958, p. 176.

2. Op. cit., p. 32.

The Syrian propagandists of Arab nationalism began at about this time to make serious efforts to persuade Egypt to support the movement, pointing out that Egypt's "geographical position made her the very heart of the Arab countries."¹ Amīn Sa'īd indicates the known danger of Italian colonial expansion in North Africa and in the Red Sea; Egypt, he says, has not the armed strength to resist this danger herself, can expect no help from the United Kingdom and must therefore look to the Arabs for allies. He concludes: "The national and patriotic interests of Egypt demand that she works towards the creation and strengthening of an Arab union."²

There is considerable emphasis in the works of the Syrian propagandists of unity on the economic benefits which would supposedly come to Egypt if it became part of an effective Arab union. Now that this desire has indeed become strong it is interesting to observe Dr. Clovis Maqṣūd's remarks. He stresses the economic basis of Egypt's denial of Arabism when the Egyptians were on the one hand occupied with the struggle for their own independence and were on the other hand economically self-sufficient. Its geographic and economic position enabled it, in his opinion, especially in view of its distinctive ancient culture, to maintain its

1. Yūsuf Haikal: Op. cit., p. 26.

2. "al-daulah al-'arabīyah al-muttahidah." ("The United Arab State.") Cairo, 1939, p. 644.

self-sufficiency. The other Arab countries, in his opinion, in contrast, did not enjoy this same economic strength and independence. He concludes that: "The awareness of the Arabism of the national personality in any Arab region is dependent upon the extent of its innate self-sufficiency."¹ This remark is perhaps of considerable significance; the growth of Egypt's awareness of its part in the Arab world does seem to have corresponded to a marked extent with a decrease in its standards of living and economic health at a time when its population has shown a rapid increase.

It has been the opinion of some observers that acceptance of a pan-Arab policy in Egypt was propagated by King Farouk and his advisers: "Who, either out of personal ambition or doctrinaire conviction, conceived the dream of an authoritative Muslim state in Egypt, embracing gradually all the Arabs and perhaps, in the fullness of time, all the Muslims."² That it was the ambition of Farouk's father Fu'ād to be accepted as the Muslim caliph is well known; that Farouk may have seen himself likewise in that position is certainly possible.

Egyptian scepticism in the mid-forties of the possibility of success of a closer Arab union are demonstrated clearly by

1. Op. cit., p. 88.

2. Elie Kedourie: "Pan-Arabism and British Policy". Article in "Political Quarterly", Vol. 28. No. 2, p. 142.

the attitude of the Egyptian elder statesman Muḥammad Ḥusain Haikal. He is quoted as saying at the time of the first formal conference on Arab unity held between the Arab states, in 1944: "It is doubtful whether the union will be a political one; it is doubtful whether, in case one of the Arab states is attacked the others will hurry to its aid. It is also doubtful if an effective cultural union, or a union of some other kind could take place, because the history, the legal codes, agriculture and industry are necessarily different in the different Arab states."¹ However true this has so far been proved, it is clear that the Arab League was set up in 1945 with strong Egyptian support and with Egypt recognised as occupying the position of first among equals.

Since the Army revolution of 1952, of course, there has been a growing tendency to stress the place of Egypt in the Arab world and indeed as its centre and obvious and undisputed leader. That the leaders of the revolution were determined to work in close conjunction with the other Arab states and that they were themselves persuaded that Egypt was itself an Arab country seems demonstrated by the insertion of an article into the new Egyptian constitution of 1956 specifically stating that Egypt is part of the Arab nation.² This determined acceptance

1. Ibid., p. 147. (Quoted from *Oriente Moderno*, 1944, p. 2.)
2. Until 1956, however, Jamāl 'Abd al-Nāsir, leader of the Egyptian revolution seems to have laid greater stress on the need to strengthen Egyptian rather than Arab nationalism. See Chapter Eight above.

of the cause of Arab unity culminated in the union between Syria and Egypt at the request of the former, in 1958. The United Arab Republic thus formed claims to be the first concrete step towards a wide all-Arab union; it similarly claims, and no small number of Arab nationalist theorists are in agreement, to be carrying out a policy both internally and in foreign affairs which is based on the accepted principles of the modern, socialist, secular Arab nationalist movement.

Remarkably little is said in Arab nationalist literature concerning opposition to the movement in the other Arab countries. Before the July, 1958 anti-monarchist revolution in Iraq the fact that there was obvious rivalry coming close to enmity between Iraq and Egypt is referred to, where it is mentioned at all, as the result of the policy of the late King Faisal, the Regent 'Abdul Ilāh and the late Prime Minister Nūrī al-Sa'īd. Similarly, Arab nationalist works give little comment of a constructive nature to account for opposition to Arab nationalist union in Sudan, Tunisia, Morocco and Saudi Arabia. That there is opposition to all Arab union in all these countries seems undeniable and this opposition has obviously so far proved stronger than any force within them working towards a union with the United Arab Republic. The attitude of 'Āmir 'Abdullah although he is reputedly a communist, despite his claim to support Arab nationalism, may

be taken, perhaps, as typical of those individuals in each of the Arab countries who do not wish to surrender their independence immediately by uniting with the United Arab Republic: "When we refused to link up Iraq with the U.A.R. in the artificial and hasty way in which the union between Egypt and Syria was formed, we only did so because we feel that this would not serve in any way the cause of Arab unity."¹ After summing up the historical path travelled so far towards union and the various factors involved, the author concludes: "The fulfilment of the Arabs' great plan to unite their nation is not an easy matter, nor one which will be attained in the near future."²

The majority of Arab nationalist comment in the Arabic press, radio and published pamphlets concerning the situation in Iraq since the revolution of July 1958 seems agreed that "the communists" are in control and that the opposition to the idea of an immediate all-Arab union does stem from this communist influence alone. Ibrāhīm Jum'ah is in the minority who look at the situation in what is, in my opinion, a more realistic manner. He comments on how the 1958 revolution in Iraq brought delight to all who thought that the days of the reactionaries were over and that Iraq had at last joined the ranks of the free Arabs. However, he writes: "Immediately

1. and 2. Op. cit., p. 38.

the position was reversed and the ideas of the free men were disappointed. Religious rivalry, sectarianism and separatism took the place of reaction and Iraq once again tumbled into an abyss from which there is no escape.¹

Arab nationalist writers in general adopt what seems to be an extremely unrealistic attitude to the whole question of the opposition to the movement which exists in the separated Arab countries themselves. They are quite content, in the majority, to dismiss this opposition peremptorily and out of hand as a mere fabrication of the imperialists. Ahmad Sa'id, for example, gives his opinion that the present day opposition to nationalism presented by imperialism takes the following forms. These are firstly: "The encouragement of regionalism, which claims, for example, that the Iraqi people are not pure Arabs and are in fact a mixture of Arabs and Kurds, that the Sudanese are a mixture of Arabs and a people with no connection with the Arabs at all, and that the people of Morocco are a mixture of Arabs and Berbers, each with its own origins, race and interests."² The second means adopted

1. Op. cit., p. 220.

2. Op. cit., p. 61. Sa'id's indignation is somewhat difficult to understand; no Arab nationalist work, as far as I am aware, claims the existence of pure racial connections between the Arabic speaking peoples. See Chapter Three pp. 119 above.

et seq.

by imperialism in Sa'īd's opinion in opposing Arab nationalism is to encourage inter-Arab dissention concerning the leadership of the Arab world. This, Sa'īd rather mysteriously remarks, is of no importance, because there is no difference between the various parts of the Arab world. The leaders of each section of the Arab world are Arabs even if they do not agree!

It is interesting that Muḥammad Darwazah considers that Turkey is an external enemy of Arab nationalism. He writes: "These incidents and continuous indications of the aims and reality of recent Turkish policy and the relations which existed between the Arabs and Turks under the authority of the Ottoman state force one to consider Turkey as one of the enemies of unity or Arab union and one of its external obstacles."¹ The reason which Darwazah gives for this opposition is basically a religious one: Arab unity will bring about a renaissance of Arab culture, reputation and influence. This will, he considers, in turn bring about a reaction in the minds of modern Turks, who will feel that the Arab success will destroy or shake the building which they have constructed - "an independent national structure uninfluenced in its culture and being by Arabs, Arabic culture

1. Op. cit., p. 331.

and Arab Islam."¹.

A minority of Arab nationalist writers do show in their works that they are conscious of faults and widespread misconceptions of the ideology of the movement for pan-Arab unity they support. These faults, they write, are stressed and exploited by their opponents to criticize nationalism; they realise that there is opposition to Arab nationalism from within the Arab world from those who fear that the proposed union would mean the loss of at least part of the religious, and economic as well as political freedom they enjoy to some measure now. Arab nationalist writers are almost unanimous in dismissing these fears as quite unfounded and moreover as mere fabrications of imperialism and Zionism, both of which they still in the majority see as definitely opposed to Arab unity. These theorists make little effort to deal in logical terms with the main argument against the separate Arab countries joining an all-Arab union. This main argument seems to be that the sharing of the resources of these countries with Egypt which has a large and rapidly growing population at a subsistence level of living, would seem inevitably to mean that this redistribution of the wealth of the area would work to their

1. Ibid., Darwazah, it should be recalled, sees Arab unity as a necessary prelude to Islamic unity. See Chapter Five pp. 95 above.

disadvantage and to Egypt's obvious advantage. This argument is valid, of course, for only as long as the oil resources of the area are both present and required in the world markets.

Standing against this opposition to nationalism on economic, religious and political grounds is the strong feeling of being an Arab which is commonly felt by the majority of those who live in the area between the Persian Gulf and the Atlantic Ocean. This unity, it may, however, be said, is only more strongly felt than the pride that the Iraqi has for being Iraqi, the Lebanese for being Lebanese and so on, at those times when there seems danger of attack from an external force. At such times feelings of shared Arabism are at their strongest; it must be similarly remembered that a main basis of the argument for Arab unity is the necessity to combat the common enemies of imperialism and Zionism. If it should happen, as seems likely, that the Arab world remains a 'neutral zone' in the Cold War struggle, with no foreign power daring to employ force within it, the strong consciousness of imperialism as a danger will probably disappear, and with it one of the most powerful reasons for unity.

Arab fears of the danger of Zionist expansion aims, which Arab nationalists genuinely believe to exist, seem, of course, likely to remain for as long as Israel exists. Time alone will

prove whether these fears of Israeli expansion are justified and whether or not such fear will provide a motivation strong enough to bring about pan-Arab unity.

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