

The Party of the Arab Ba'th

19

Constitution

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

First Principle: Unity and Freedom of the Arab Nation

THE ARABS form one nation. This nation has the natural right to live in a single state and to be free to direct its own destiny.

The Party of the Arab Ba'th therefore believes that:

- 1) The Arab fatherland constitutes an indivisible political and economic unity. No Arab country can live apart from the others.
- 2) The Arab nation constitutes a cultural unity. Any differences existing among its sons are accidental and unimportant. They will all disappear with the awakening of the Arab consciousness.
- 3) The Arab fatherland belongs to the Arabs. They alone have the right to administer its affairs, to dispose of its wealth, and to direct its destinies.

Second Principle: Personality of the Arab Nation

The Arab nation is characterized by virtues which are the result of its successive rebirths. These virtues are characterized by vitality and creativeness and by an ability for transformation and renewal. Its renewal is always linked to growth in personal freedom, and harmony between its evolution and the national interest.

The Party of the Arab Ba'th therefore believes that:

- 1) Freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of belief,

¹ From a French version made by the Bureau Arabe de Presse et de Publicité, Damascus, 1951. The Arab Ba'th is officially described as "A national, popular, revolutionary movement fighting for Arab Unity, Freedom, and Socialism." (S. G. H.)

as well as artistic freedom, are sacred. No authority can diminish them.

2) The value of the citizens is measured—once all opportunities have been given them—by the action they take to further the progress and prosperity of the Arab nation, without regard to any other criterion.

Third Principle: The Mission of the Arab Nation

The Arab nation has an eternal mission. This mission reveals itself in ever new and related forms through the different stages of history. It aims at the renewal of human values, at the quickening of human progress, at increasing harmony and mutual help among the nations.

The Party of the Arab Ba'ith therefore believes that:

1) Colonialism and all that goes with it is a criminal enterprise. The Arabs must fight it with all possible means, just as they must take it on themselves to help, according to their physical and moral abilities, all peoples fighting for their freedom.

2) Humanity constitutes a whole, the interests of which are solidary and the values and civilization of which are common to all. The Arabs are enriched by world civilization and enrich it in their turn. They stretch a fraternal hand to other nations and collaborate with them for the establishment of just institutions which will ensure for all the peoples prosperity and peace, as well as moral and spiritual advance.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Article 1 The Party of the "Arab Ba'ith" is a universal Arab Party. It has branches in all the Arab countries. It does not concern itself with regional politics except in relation to the higher interests of the Arab cause.

Article 2 The headquarters of the party is for the time being located in Damascus. It can be transferred to any other Arab city if the national interest should require it.

Article 3 The Party of the Arab Ba'ith is a national party. It believes that nationalism is a living and eternal reality. It believes that the feeling of national awakening which intimately unites the individual to his nation is a sacred feeling. This feeling has

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within itself a potential of creative power; it binds itself to sacrifice, it seeks the exercise of responsibilities, and it directs the individual personality in a concrete and active manner.

The national idea to which the party appeals is the will of the Arab people to free themselves and to unite. It demands that the opportunity be given to it to realize in history its Arab personality, and to collaborate with all the nations in all the fields which will ensure the march of humanity toward welfare and progress.

Article 4 The Party of the Arab Ba'th is a socialist party. It believes that socialism is a necessity which emanates from the depth of Arab nationalism itself. Socialism constitutes, in fact, the ideal social order which will allow the Arab people to realize its possibilities and to enable its genius to flourish, and which will ensure for the nation constant progress in its material and moral output. It makes possible a trustful brotherhood among its members.

Article 5 The Party of the Arab Ba'th is a popular party. It believes that sovereignty is the property of the people, who alone is the source of all authority. It believes that the value of the state is the outcome of the will of the masses from which it issues and that this value is sacred only to the extent that the masses have exercised their choice freely. That is why, in the accomplishment of its mission, the party relies on the people with whom it seeks to establish intricate contact, the spiritual, moral, material, and physical level of whom it is trying to raise, in order that the people may become conscious of its personality and that it may become able to exercise its right in private and public life.

Article 6 The Party of the Arab Ba'th is revolutionary. It believes that its main objectives for the realization of the renaissance of Arab nationalism or for the establishment of socialism cannot be achieved except by means of revolution and struggle. To rely on slow evolution and to be satisfied with a partial and superficial reform is to threaten these aims and to conduce to their failure and their loss.

This is why the party decides in favor of:

- 1) The struggle against foreign colonialism, in order to liberate the Arab fatherland completely and finally.
- 2) The struggle to gather all the Arabs in a single independent state.
- 3) The overthrow of the present faulty structure, an overthrow

which will include all the sectors of intellectual, economic, social, and political life.

Article 7 The Arab fatherland is that part of the globe inhabited by the Arab nation which stretches from the Taurus Mountain, the Pocht-i-Kouh Mountains, the Gulf of Basra, the Arab Ocean, the Ethiopian Mountains, the Sahara, the Atlantic Ocean, and the Mediterranean.

Article 8 The official language of the state, as well as that of all the citizens, is Arabic. It alone is recognized in correspondence and in teaching.

Article 9 The emblem of the Arab state is that of the Arab revolution begun in 1916 to liberate and unify the Arab nation.

Article 10 An Arab is he whose language is Arabic, who has lived on Arab soil, or who, after having been assimilated to Arab life, has faith in his belonging to the Arab nation.

Article 11 To be excluded from the Arab fatherland: whoever has fought for or has belonged to a factious anti-Arab association, whoever has lent himself inside the Arab fatherland to colonial ends.

Article 12 The Arab woman enjoys all the rights of citizenship. The party struggles to raise up woman's level in order to make her fit to exercise these rights.

Article 13 The party strives to give all the citizens the same opportunities in the field of schooling and livelihood in order that, in the various aspects of human activity, everyone should be equally able to show his real abilities and to develop them to the maximum.

THE WAY: INTERNAL POLICY OF THE PARTY

Article 14 The regime of the Arab state will be a constitutional parliamentary regime. Executive power is responsible before the legislative, which is directly elected by the people.

Article 15 The national tie is the only tie that may exist in the Arab state. It ensures harmony among all the citizens by melting them in the crucible of a single nation and counteracts all religious, communal, tribal, racial, or regional factions.

Article 16 The administrative system of the Arab state is a system of decentralization.

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Article 17 The party strives to make popular feeling universal and to make the power of the people a living reality in the life of the individual. It undertakes to give the state a constitution guaranteeing to all Arab citizens absolute equality before the law, the right to express their opinions in absolute freedom, and a true choice of their representatives, thus ensuring for them a free life within the framework of the law.

Article 18 A single code of laws is to be established freely for the whole of the Arab nation. This code will be in conformity with the spirit of the times and will take into account the past experiences of the Arab nation.

Article 19 The judicial power will be independent. It will be free from interference by other powers and enjoy total immunity.

Article 20 The rights of citizenship are granted in their totality to every citizen living on Arab soil who is devoted to the Arab fatherland and who has no connection with any factious association.

Article 21 Military service is compulsory in the Arab fatherland.

FOREIGN POLICY OF THE PARTY

Article 22 The foreign policy of the Arab state will be guided by the interests of Arab nationalism and of the eternal mission of the Arabs which seeks to establish in coöperation with other nations a free, harmonious, and secure world, continuously advancing in progress.

Article 23 The Arabs will struggle with all their power to destroy the foundations of colonialism and of foreign occupation and to suppress all foreign political or economic influence in their country.

Article 24 Since the Arab people is the sole source of power, all treaties, pacts, and documents concluded by governments which detract from the total sovereignty of the Arabs will be abrogated.

Article 25 Arab foreign policy seeks to give a true picture of the will of the Arabs to live in freedom, and of their sincere desire to see all other nations enjoy the same liberty.

ECONOMIC POLICY OF THE PARTY

Article 26 The Party of the Arab Ba'ith is a socialist party. It believes that the economic wealth of the fatherland belongs to the nation.

Article 27 The present distribution of wealth in the Arab fatherland is unjust. Therefore a review and a just redistribution will become necessary.

Article 28 The equality of all the citizens is founded on human values. This is why the party forbids the exploitation of the work of others.

Article 29 Public utilities, extensive natural resources, big industry, and the means of transport are the property of the nation. The state will manage them directly and will abolish private companies and foreign concessions.

Article 30 Ownership of agricultural land will be so limited as to be in proportion to the means of the proprietor to exploit all his lands without exploitation of the efforts of others. This will be under the control of the state and in conformity with its over-all economic plan.

Article 31 Small industrial ownership will be so limited as to be related to the standard of living of the citizens of the state as a whole.

Article 32 Workers will participate in the management of their factory. In addition to their wages—fixed by the state—they will receive a proportion of the profits, also fixed by the state.

Article 33 Ownership of immovable property is allowed to all the citizens so long as they do not exploit it to the harm of others, and so long as the state ensures for all citizens a minimum of immovable property.

Article 34 Property and inheritance are two natural rights. They are protected within the limits of the national interest.

Article 35 Usurious loans are prohibited between citizens. One state bank is to be founded to issue currency, which the national output will back. This bank will finance the vital agricultural and industrial plans of the nation.

Article 36 The state will control directly internal and external trade in order to abolish the exploitation of the consumer by the producer. The state will protect them both, as it will protect the

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national output against the competition of foreign foods and will ensure equilibrium between exports and imports.

Article 37 General planning, inspired by the most modern economic ideas, will be organized so that the Arab fatherland will be industrialized, national production developed, new outlets opened for it, and the industrial economy of each region directed according to its potential and to the raw material it contains.

SOCIAL POLICY OF THE PARTY

Article 38 Family, Procreation, Marriage.

§1) The family is the basic cell of the nation. It is for the state to protect, to develop, and to help it.

§2) Procreation is a trust given in the first place to the family, and then to the state. Both must ensure its increase, and look to the health and education of the descendants.

§3) Marriage is a national duty. The state must encourage it, facilitate it, and control it.

Article 39 Public Health. The state will build, at its expense, institutions of preventive medicine, dispensaries, and hospitals which will meet the needs of all citizens, for whom the state ensures free medical treatment.

Article 40 Labor.

§1) Labor is an obligation for all those who are capable of it. It is for the state to ensure that work is available to every citizen, whether intellectual or manual.

§2) The employer must ensure at the least a decent standard of living for his employee.

§3) The state sees to the maintenance of all persons incapable of work.

§4) Just laws will be promulgated to limit the workman's daily hours of work, to give him the right to paid weekly and annual holidays, to protect his rights, to ensure social security for him in old age, and to indemnify him for any cessation of work, whether partial or total.

§5) Free workmen's and peasants' unions will be established and encouraged, so that they may constitute an instrument efficient in the defense of their rights, in raising their standard of living, in

developing their abilities, in increasing the opportunities offered to them, in creating among them a spirit of solidarity, and in representing them in joint works councils.

§6) Joint works councils will be created in which the state and the unions of workmen and peasants will be represented. These councils will have power to decide the issues arising among the unions, the works managers, and the representatives of the state.

Article 41 Culture and Society.

§1) The party seeks to develop a general national culture for the whole Arab fatherland which shall be Arab, liberal, progressive, extensive, profound, and humanist; it attempts to disseminate it in all sections of the population.

§2) The state is responsible for the protection of the liberty of speech, of publication, of assembly, of protest, and of the press, within the limits of the higher Arab national interest. It is for the state to facilitate all the means and the modalities which tend to realize this liberty.

§3) Intellectual work is one of the most sacred kinds. It is the state's concern to protect and encourage intellectuals and scientists.

§4) Within the limits of the Arab national idea, every freedom will be given for the foundation of clubs, associations, parties, youth groupings, and tourist organizations, as well as for obtaining profit from the cinema, radio, television, and all the other facilities of modern civilization in order to spread generally the national culture, and to contribute to the entertainment of the people.

Article 42 Separation of the classes and differentiation among them are abolished. The separation of the classes is the consequence of a faulty social order. Therefore, the party carries on its struggle among the laboring and oppressed classes of society so that such separation and differentiation will come to an end and the citizens will recover the whole of their human dignity and will be enabled to live in the shadow of a just social order in which nothing will distinguish one citizen from another except intellectual capacity and manual skill.

Article 43 Nomadism. Nomadism is a primitive social state. It decreases the national output and makes an important part of the nation a paralyzed member and an obstacle to its development and progress. The party struggles for the sedentarization of

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nomads by the grant of lands to them, for the abolition of tribal customs, and for the application to the nomads of the laws of the state.

POLICY OF THE PARTY IN EDUCATION AND TEACHING

The educational policy of the party aims at the creation of a new Arab generation which believes in the unity of the nation, and in the eternity of its mission. This policy, based on scientific reasoning, will be freed from the shackles of superstitions and reactionary traditions; it will be imbued with the spirit of optimism, of struggle, and of solidarity among all citizens in the carrying out of a total Arab revolution, and in the cause of human progress.

Therefore the party decides as follows:

Article 44 A national Arab stamp will mark all the aspects of intellectual, economic, political, architectural, and artistic life. The party establishes once again the links of the Arab nation with its glorious history and urges it toward a future even more glorious and more exemplary.

Article 45 Teaching is one of the exclusive functions of the state. Therefore, all foreign and private educational institutions are abolished.

Article 46 Education at all stages shall be free for all citizens. Primary and secondary education shall be compulsory.

Article 47 Professional schools with the most modern equipment shall be established, where education shall be free.

Article 48 Teaching careers and all that relates to education are set aside for Arab citizens. An exception to this rule is made in the instance of higher education.

AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION

Single Article The fundamental and general principles of the Constitution cannot be amended. Other articles may, however, be amended, provided that two-thirds of the General Council of the party agree thereto, on a motion put by the Executive Council, or by a quarter of the members of the General Council, or by ten members of the Party Organization.