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WORKSHOP ON URBANIZATION IN AFRICA

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RELATION OF URBANIZATION TO SOCIAL STRUCTURE, SOCIAL CHANGES AND LIVING CONDITIONS IN THE ARAB STATES OF AFRICA

(prepared by the League of Arab States)

INTRODUCTION

This paper has been devoted chiefly to the presentation of what would seem to be some of the most relevant considerations affecting the growth of industry and urbanization in the Arab States of Africa and its effect on social life in these States with great social change taking place.

Although industrialization is carried out on a national basis as an integrated part of the general process of economic development within each country, motivated in varying degree by national aspirations to complete the recently gained independence and ensure greater security and higher status and prestige, yet a great change taken place in the international production - especially of the highly developed countries - made in determining the type and character of their industries.

In fact, the attempt to speed up the process of industrialization has affected, to a great extent, each element of each country's social and economic life, its administration and even its relations with other countries.

In the Arab States of Africa the rate and nature of technical advance is great and many of the problems of industrialization have been significantly altered owing to the availability of various factors of production, since the power is becoming cheap and abundant.

Also, the Arab States of Africa, having a vast fund of knowledge and experiences drawn from the many difficulties and mistakes faced by the European countries during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, needed not to repeat their experiences.

It is a fact with regard to industrialization in the Arab States of Africa that economic development is regarded as an important element in human welfare and industrialization is not an end in itself but the ultimate, if not the immediate aim, is the raising of average levels of living.

In the circumstances prevailing in the Arab States of Africa, the raising of average levels of living is less a matter of effecting large increases in the incomes of a small minority in the community than of ensuring a steady and higher increase in incomes of the majority. This majority used to be large and rural working at agricultural tasks, and therefore industrialization in these countries is planned to divert a good number of those agricultural workers whose productivity is marginal and low to take new tasks and other occupations required for general economic development.

Another factor speeding the industrialization in these countries is that their Governments are playing a real positive role in guiding investment, preparing the factors for more productive employment and assisting in mutually beneficial adjustment of human and industrial needs, and carrying constructive efforts to overcome any of the features which are unfavourable to industrial growth.

The Arab States of Africa, generally speaking, are taking all measures to advance agriculture simultaneously with manufacturing to achieve steady economic progress and avoid structural disequilibria. This growth of the economy is accompanied with complementary changes in social life which are met by a balanced plan for education, health, housing, recreation and social welfare in order to avoid the rise of a phenomena which in the long run are likely to retard economic development. The Governments are providing a significant volume of services in the fields of education, health and general welfare.

In fact, industrialization in the Arab States of Africa is not merely a function of the availability of the necessary factors of production, industrialization involves structural changes in the economy and entails profound changes in social organization that needs adjustments in relationships and status as well as in the mode of living.

The importance of the human factor in industrialization bears emphasis. The human resources in the Arab States of Africa and their potentialities for development are abundant, since the body of knowledge amassed from tested findings and the capacity and training of the population to use this knowledge effectively, is being introduced.

Urbanization and Population Trends.

Consideration should be given to some of the outstanding facts with regard to the actual increase of urbanization in modern and contemporary times in the African Arab States. It will be illuminating to start off with a few representative figures.

The increase in the relative urban population of U.A.R. is well illustrated by the fact that in 1917, 20.99 per cent of the population lived in cities; in 1927, 23.55 per cent, in 1937, 25.04 per cent, in 1947, 31 per cent and in 1960, the urban population became 38 per cent. With regard to Morocco, the urban population has been increased from 12.8 per cent in 1936 to 18.8 per cent in 1956, while in Tunisia from 10.2 in 1936 to 12.7 in 1957.

Figures of population growth, the birth and death rates and the kind of population in the Arab States of Africa, indicate clearly four major trends, namely:

- (1) The trend in actual population growth which is still pointing upward and is likely to do so also for a long time.
- (2) The trend in the birth rate which is pointing upward and is likely to do so for a long time.
- (3) The trend in the death rate which is pointing downward and is likely to do so for a long time.
- (4) The trend in the "quality" of the population which, if measured by such things as intelligence tests, education, economic and social position, is pointing upward.

On the basis of these and other factors, it is likely to note that the population of these countries will not stabilize itself before several decades.

We may, therefore, consider briefly some of the social and economic consequences of a rising rate of population growth in the Arab States of Africa.

Perhaps, certain disadvantages may be found in that there will be an increase of unemployment as the number of workers increases. However, this will be limited by the fact that it is only the unskilled workers in the cities who are increasing most rapidly at the present time.

Further, if machines, especially automatic machinery, are introduced ever more rapidly, the growth of technological unemployment may also become a problem among the working class.

However, a possible gain could be made by raising the level of living of the majority of population so that significant consumption of food, goods, and services per capita, making possible the production of more goods and consequently opening more work chances for the increasing manpower.

As populations grow in the cities, there will be a larger market for farm products which will provide a higher level of living for the farmers who also become able to consume more manufactured goods and use more services.

The sheer pressure of population changes is thus working an economic revolution in the Arab States of Africa as the population growth will provide increased mass purchasing power and this will render necessarily steadier employment and higher wages and salaries. Thus, with a sane and equitable economic system founded on production for use and co-operative socialism, this increase of population growth could prove a real blessing. This marked increase in purchasing power and living standards are actually taking place in U.A.R. and there is current evidence that such is the case in all other Arab States of Africa.

On the other hand, no one need worry about the population growth in Arab States of Africa because this trend gets less dangerous as the idea of birth control has become one of the features of urbanization all over the world and, as a result, large families are decreasing. Moreover, another step to correct the situation is trying to make a better world into which to bring children.

It became the responsibility of the individual as well as the society, to correct those maladjustments in the modern world, now to discourage procreation on the part of thoughtful people and make small families an almost direct measure of parental foresight and solicitude. No society can expect its socially conscious families to bring large numbers of children into a world that threatens them with economic hardship, political tyranny and spiritual starvation. Procreation waits upon the assurance of liberty, security and abundance.

However, new tendencies may set in during the remainder of the twentieth century. Should the African Arab States move into an economy based upon abundance and production for use, this would be likely to have profound effects upon population trends.

It is obvious that a differential rate of population growth among the Arab States of Africa will, if it continues for any length of time, bring about readjustment in the relative power and prestige of the region. This will certainly be true as long as manpower continues to be of primary importance in determining the relative political and military strength of modern states and as long as the Palestine question is not peacefully solved.

The tendency for a relatively larger proportion of persons to live in urban communities, as compared with those dwelling in the country, has produced socio-psychological changes of real importance. Urban attitudes and interests have become more characteristic than even that of contemporary culture. The conflicts between city and country may possibly

become more extensive and sharper. On the other hand, one should remember that the automobile, the movie, the radio and the like, are bringing urban experiences into rural districts as well as making it possible for rural dwellers to spend relatively more of their time in urban centres.

The above-described tendency of population growth will produce an important social effect, namely, that of altering the relative numbers in the major age groups in the population. In urban areas there are relatively fewer children, more young people and many more persons over forty years of age. This shift in the relative age groups is bound to produce several striking results. Consumer habits will be considerably altered owing to the fact that masses might be subjected in period of readjustment to some difficulties and hardships which increased leisure might bring about.

It is sensible to recommend a comprehensive programme of research to reveal all the facts as to the nature and implications of the differential rate of population in this region, and the adoption of resolute and adequate social policies to solve the problems which might be emerging therefrom.

Urbanization and Social Structure and Change.

Among the numerous institutional and cultural developments of our time, it is probable that the great city of our day is the most novel and complex product of social evolution. It is a highly complicated society economic, political, legal, cultural and psychological phenomenon, which has appeared rarely, if ever before, in the experience of mankind. This fact has been well pointed out by Frederic C. Howe^{1/}, an expert on urban problems and urban evolution in a passage which is far more true today with regard to the Arab States of Africa than in 1915 when it was written in reference to many parts of the world.

^{1/} The Modern City and its Problems,
pp.47 - 48 Scribner's 1915.

The modern city is a social and cultural innovation, not alone on account of its relation to new industrial and commercial achievements in recent times. It is also a novelty because of its complex character as a social unit.

In the Arab States of Africa, cities are not, of course, exclusively a phenomenon of contemporary times. These were always important cities in the ancient and medieval periods. But modern cities differ from previous urban centres in size, number and character.

The commercial cities of the ancient Arab States of Africa were relatively numerous and important, though far and away the greater part of the population of all the States lived in the country and engaged in agriculture and pastoral activities.

The causes of the impressive urbanization of society in modern times are numerous and complex but they all gravitate about the major economic changes, specifically new developments in agriculture, industry, transportation and resulting growth of trade have produced the modern cities.

It should be generally understood that the late rapid urbanization in the Arab States of Africa has been closely related to the industrial development following the independence, the political freedom gained by the sacrifices and struggle of the Arab people against colonialism and the colonial powers who were dominating most of the African continent until recently. Moreover, the significant contributions of the agricultural development to urban growth should not be overlooked.

It has been the economic blockade which was put around the newly-independent Arab States of Africa that made it possible for increasing the efficiency of farming, for cities to become larger and numerous after industrial conditions has supplied a stimulus to urban growth.

The agricultural improvements made it possible to produce a far greater amount of food than ever before. Enough food could be grown by a lesser portion of the population to support a large non-agricultural group concentrated in urban areas. Furthermore, as farming became efficient, the number of farmers needed to produce food became less and the farmers' sons and daughters therefore were to seek employment in the cities. It has been predicted that, with the relative decrease in the size of the rural population, cities will no longer recruit from country areas in the future. But it seems likely that this process of migration from country to city is bound to go on for a considerable time. In other words, the region is likely to be able to go on replenishing the cities, if there is any economic need for such replenishment.

Factories required the concentration of a working population in the nearby neighbourhood especially where transportation facilities are meagre.

Industrial administration also helped to promote urban congestion. Offices of factory owners and managers are usually located in the factories themselves which are but an adjacent part of the city. This brought still more persons to live in the factory neighbourhood.

Retail merchants also tended to congregate in the same general section of the city, thus bringing about a congested population among those who dominated the process of distribution. The professional classes serving both industrialists and labourers such as lawyers, doctors, teachers and the like also naturally flocked to the new urban centres.

Geographical factors have played a leading part in determining the location and in conditioning the growth of cities in the Arab States of Africa. Most cities in this area began where an arid soil and the necessity for irrigation made community life and a dense population both natural and desirable as well as geographical considerations affecting trade and transportation have been of great potency in determining where cities will be built.

The rise of the modern city in the Arab States of Africa brought a host of new social conditions in its train. Indeed, a new era in human culture and social institutions was born therewith; we shall examine some of its outstanding characteristics. We shall also consider groupings which characterize city life and the urban types which have emerged as the result of urban experiences.

The outstanding social consequences of modern city life in the Arab States of Africa can be summarized essentially by the following:

A new complexity of social relations, the disintegration of the older traditions which came down from a rural era, a zeal for innovation and for radical departures from old standards of life. A sharp and marked separation of social classes; an increasing volume and speed of intra-community mobility and a sweeping revolution in the nature of the family and home life.

First, it will be well to note that very little of sectional distribution of activities and population groups is planned in any intelligent fashion. It has grown up, in part, as the result of function differentiation of urban activities and, in part, as a result of accident and habit. Only recently has there been some definite effort aiming to keep given types of businesses and related structures in specified urban regions by such regulations as separating residential from manufacturing districts.

One of the most striking things about the great cities of this region today as social community, is the unprecedented combination of physical proximity with social distance. All social types are thrown together by the tens of thousands within the same urban boundaries where most of the social relations are chiefly functional and professional in character.

It is obvious that with a diversity of social status, economic interests and cultural background, it is difficult to bring about any community of interest or unity of attitude in urban public affairs. Most of the urban population are drawn from different parts of the country and have, generally speaking, different types of mores, traditions and social habits. There is no community of tradition to perpetuate or any community standards to confirm and apply.

But the very exigencies and emergencies of urban life force the city to maintain a certain minimum of social coherence and community of policy. Rich and poor alike seek to educate their children, protect their health, defend their homes and property.

One of the most important changes which the city has brought in the fundamentals of social life has been its impact upon home and the family. The prevailing conceptions of the home, both in popular phraseology and in sociological discussion, revolve about the rural home and family of the pre-urban and economic foundation associated with the conditions of rural life and a farming economy. In the city these original bases of the family have been wiped out as ruthlessly and as thoroughly as has been the old rural neighbourhood life. People shift from one apartment to another, or from one tenement to another. This is true even of the relatively well-to-do.

It is not surprising that urbanization has been accompanied by a striking increase in the divorce rate.

Another culture and social change of importance has taken place in the field of education. Since the urban population are more interested in educating their children than those country people, mass production methods are used and enrollment in schools is becoming unstable and difficult to predict in urban areas. There will be a long time before the quality of education can be improved. The necessity for adequate adult education will be intensified. There will be relatively more older people in the population to require adult education, and they will have a greater need for adult education because of the necessity for sweeping readjustments in their life habits and modes of earning a livelihood.

The problem of migration and the adaptation of the migrant to its new environment are complicated by economic changes. While the population of the region as a whole is increasing rapidly, there are many places which become markedly over-populated. The slum areas harbouring the mass of unemployed in great urban centres will immediately come to mind.

Sanitation, Public Health and Housing.

With regard to these subjects, much can be said but here we wish to describe briefly the remarkable progress which has been made in sanitation, public health and housing in the cities of the Arab States of Africa. It constitutes an impressive demonstration of the success in epidemic control. This can be measured by city crude death rate in which the cities make a somewhat better showing than country districts. There is no doubt that cities have more and better doctors per capita than country areas and their services are readily available to all the city population and less expensive. Moreover, the large cities have far better hospitals and a more thoroughly organized public health service. This helps to offset the fact that, in most other ways, city life is less hygienic than country life because of population congestion, the congestion of buildings, lack of fresh air and ventilation.

It hardly needs to be pointed out that the prospect of serious accidents or accidental death is enormously greater in urban areas. About one other matter there can be no legitimate doubt, namely, that nervous and mental diseases occur far more frequently in cities because of the additional strains, stresses, noises and the like. Subsequent engineering progress and particularly the elimination of slums may alter this situation in the near future.

One of the most acute problems which cities have had to face in urban communities has been that of housing the ever increasing number of city inhabitants. Mention should be made that U.A.R., in its economic and social planning, has set up a policy based on establishing all the new factories in the countryside rather than its large cities. This would solve the migration problems and consequently many other problems regarding housing, transportation facilities, sanitation and the like. Moreover, new cities and factories are built according to plans which utilize all of the best advantages of modern theories and past experiences. The Socialist Government in Cairo carried on an extensive experiment in removing the slums and in constructing public housing projects providing

healthy, low-rent apartments, making them available to limited income workers and middle-class population. The good results were quickly apparent.

In the recent five-year development plan, it has been estimated that 150,000 new low-cost or low-rent dwelling units are urgently required. It has been decided to construct 113,000 units.

It is no exaggeration to say that even today at least one tenth of the city population in U.A.R. lives in dwellings which are truly unfit for human habitation.

The City and Social Pathology.

We shall not deal with this question in detail, but something should be said about the relationship of city life to some types of pathological social behaviour. In all the Arab States of Africa, the rapidly growing industrial cities, it was inevitable that living conditions had made for a greater social maladjustment. Men and women who had been accustomed to a simple farming life and were controlled by country folkways and rural public opinion, poured by the thousands into the mushroom cities. There were no well-established city folkways and mores to guide and control the new city population. The serious problems of readjustment to an altogether different mode of life, together with the all pervading poverty among the unskilled workers, naturally increased the prevalence of crime, vice and degeneracy. The fact that young people predominated among those who came from the country to the city was another reason for the disproportionate amount of crime and vice, for it is youth which is most active in these fields.

So much for the general historical factors which have contributed to make crime and vice more prevalent in cities on account of the greater difficulties of normal social adjustment. Let us now look at some of the more specific reasons for the augmenting of social pathology in urban life in the Arab States of Africa. In the first place there is far greater opportunity for crime per square mile in the city than in the

country - more wealth and hence a greater propensity for bigger "hauls" in criminal depredations. Cities provide a larger and more opulent clientele for these types of excitement. In spite of the better policing of cities, it is a fact that the criminal and vicious elements can hide themselves away more safely in urban districts than in most rural regions. The living conditions most favourable to the development of criminals are found mainly in the cities.

Since there is less opportunity for wholesome recreation in cities than in the country, substitute forms of expression must be found. We have already noted that urban life tended to break up the old rural family and to destroy its disciplinary power. Since nothing has been substituted for it as a type of social control, city youth tends to run wild. It will be observed that most of these special reasons for pathological life in cities are derived from a more fundamental cause to be found in the rapid and thorough breakup of those personal habits and social adjustment which have dominated mankind for millennia.

Some of the obvious reasons for the greater amount of criminality in the larger cities of the Arab States of Africa, such as better opportunities for gainful crime and the secrecy and safety, the prevalence of children, the breakdown of family life and the increase of juvenile gangs have already been indicated. Especially important with respect to juvenile crime in the cities is the inadequate provision for normal physical expression on the part of youth.

Mention should be made that drug addiction is more usual in cities. Many resort to drugs in order to dull the strains and distractions of city life. This drug habit takes the form of everything from relatively mild remedies for inducing sleep to indulgence in the more serious forms of narcotics. Since the drug addict is notoriously given to proselysing and spreading the habit, cities offer a far more effective medium for this type of degenerate conversion.

Against the undoubted fact that dependency, delinquency and degeneracy are much more prevalent per capita in the large cities of the Arab States of Africa than in any other sections of the region, it is necessary to keep in mind the fact that these cities also make the best provision for combating these conditions.

Social work is best developed, social settlements exist on a large scale in cities. There is better policing and more adequate provision for crime prevention. Various agencies suppressing the drug habit are numerous and effective. This situation tends to keep down what would probably otherwise be far more impressive and dangerous manifestations of social pathology in urban communities.

Cultural Life.

Cities have played the dominant role in the evolution of human culture, so is this remark correct of the Arab States of Africa.

From ancient Memphis and Thebes to contemporary Cairo, Benghazi, Tunis, Algiers, Rabat and Khartoum, the cultural achievements of mankind, which are studied by historians, have been produced by city populations. Hence, we may profitably analyse the character of urban culture in our day.

Before we endeavour to discuss the cultural life and institutions in our cities, it will be well to say a word about what the experts on city life regard as the somewhat typical urban mentality. This is important because the psychology of city life directly and powerfully influences the cultural interests and activities of urban communities. Attention has been called to the fact that city life presents so many diversified stimuli and such an ever-shifting range of impressions and personal contacts that the urban mind is characterized by a sort of dynamic superficiality. When the strains of city life become too great, pathological developments, both personal and social, become unusually rapid and devastating.

These facts about the mentality of city dwellers are not only important in their relation to the cultural activities of the city, but are also extremely significant on account of their dominant influence over the mental and institutional life of the region.

City life now pervades national life in all industrialized districts. The superficial and changeable urban psychology is a particularly serious handicap in an age which requires profundity and intellectual reflection as ever before in history.

City life has produced certain definite urban personality types, which can be fairly easily distinguished, and has also brought out certain definite female types.

Certainly when it comes to spreading before their inhabitants the accumulated culture of the past, the cities provide marvelous facilities. The public schools are relatively excellent. Unmatched provision is made for adult education. The People's University in Cairo and its branches spread all over the industrial cities and towns, afford excellent examples. The better public libraries in the cities have abundant literary resources and are efficiently administered. Elaborate museums of science and technology and richly endowed art museums abound. Musical tastes are ministered to by all sorts of public concerts. It is in the cities that we find the public forums at which the population may listen to the more distinguished intellects of the countries. Never before in human history has the average man had placed before him such cultural facilities as the greater cities of the Arab States of Africa of today put at his disposal. It is worth noting, however, that better distribution of daily papers, the wide use of automobiles, the exhibition of best moving pictures and, above all, the widespread exploitation of facilities of the radio, have become highly striking in cities. Television will carry this still further.

When it comes to creative culture - namely additions to extant cultural achievement - the cities possess far more outstanding advantages. The majority of authors and artists tend to live in cities where they execute their best work. Also the culture of the leisure and professional classes is far more achieved in cities. Commercialized sport depends for its revenue primarily upon urban patronage. This enthusiasm for commercialized sport and amusement has created an important type of urban business.

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of the proposed system on the performance of the system. The system is designed to improve the efficiency of the system and reduce the time required for the system to complete the task. The system is designed to be user-friendly and easy to use. The system is designed to be scalable and flexible. The system is designed to be secure and reliable. The system is designed to be cost-effective and efficient.

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