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Saddam Hussein

Private Property

and the Responsibility of the State

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Introduction

The Office of Culture and Information arranged a meeting with the comrade representatives of two civilian and two military divisions of the party organizations in the governorates of al-Ta'mim and al-Basra in the presence of Comrade Saddam Hussein who followed the real discussion and answers by the comrades concerning many organizational, intellectual and political questions with the aim of reviewing the level of political and doctrinal awareness by the party apparatus through direct contact with the party organizations. Comrade combatant Saddam Hussein talked about the meeting that was held on 16 FEB 1978. He discussed a vital subject of great importance to the party's socialist thought which reflects the practical reality of its special nature with respect to one of the crucial questions concerning the reality of private property and the responsibility of the state towards it.

The ease of our path is attributed to the fact that it responds to the problems of the nation and benefits from it; its difficulty is in the fact that a new path needs continuous intellectual enrichment and a dynamic theory for renewed action. A clear path enables [our nation] to understand the conditions and laws that govern life and provide it with the opportunity for serious participation in its structuring and development. That is why you find the Ba'thist thinker...

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--is more capable than many other revolutionaries in advanced dealing with life; while the others for the most part communicate their conceptions of and engagement with life through the appropriation or borrowing from the experiences of other people and communities ...As for the Ba'thist, he deduces his path and devises as he proceeds on a track of continuous development and renewal ... The process of deducing and devising is not an easy process, because it requires the Ba'thist to independently craft, over its course, every aspect of the theoretical conceptions of his party in understanding and changing life ... This is why we find that the theoretical intellectual effort - following and observing phenomena in real life, analyzing them and establishing the necessary actions for handling their difficulties - a central and basic question for the Ba'thist ladder of duties and struggle. Although considered difficult, it enriches life and humanity and contributes to the maturation of the conditions of their progress and advance more than other paths that depend on transferring and borrowing the theories and experiences of other people.

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Two Aspects in Building Socialism

This is why we find that our path in building socialism contains two aspects at one time. It is, in one respect, considered easier than other paths by virtue of it responding to the masses ... and their interacting with it ... and it possessing the fundamental historical conditions for revolutionary change for Arab society, because it follows from its reality in conceptions and solutions. It responds to the interests and aspirations of the masses in response to a fundamental essential nature. In another respect, we find it more difficult, because it is a new path that requires efforts that are constant and strict with respect to theory and practicality, in the conceptions and solutions ... in addition to the difficulties that face it in the international arena.

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Intellectual Action is a Humanitarian Position

Appropriation naturally causes the aspect that is appropriated to lose [its] original strength of character. It loses it conditionally, whatever the conditions for advancement and development may be, because appropriation comes in forms and contexts of action removed from the dynamic of internal national development, for they are transferred mechanically. It may represent one part of the humanitarian construction and intellectual treatment of these societies. If, in the conceptualization and solutions, one part of them is considered as having a general nature that goes beyond the influence of the national and racial framework of the society in which they were constructed and thus remains in its basic aspects and in the total outcome for the construction of the concept and solutions designed on a basis and governed by the facts and circumstances of the society in which they are mainly found, intellectual action can only be a humanitarian position. In all circumstances, appropriation and mechanical transfer causes it to lose its spirit and its usefulness. At the time when theory and solutions proceed from the national and racial society, it will make the theory and solutions an advanced case essentially on the basis of the prevailing facts and circumstances at that time. In this way, they are linked to the past and developed for the present at the time when they maintain the bases and conditions of the future view for development. Now then, how does the appropriation form a basic condition among the conditions of advancement...

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-- and development?

Because appropriation transforms without acts of thought to create a developed way of life, it is different from what is prevalent in the society and rejects the forms and circumstances responsible for the backwardness of the society and people. You know well how the effort differs in kind between the action of one who translates some book and the author of the book, and between one who uses something and the user

The process of continuous creation is a basic and central condition for the goals of advancement and development while appropriation only stands still at the prevailing situation for handling life in the best of circumstances. This is why it hinders the dynamic of the actions of will and thought as independent revolutionary actions that go beyond the circumstance to what is better in a qualitative leap that provides significant service, not just to the national and racial society intended in an effort such as this, rather, to humanity in its entirety. This is why the conduct of those who appropriate, from an objective perspective, is rightist. This position of theirs is a rightist position from the perspective of will, intellectual action and the requirements of general human development, whatever may be the disguise which they use to hide and conceal the weakness of their conduct.

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Slowness in Adopting Socialism Leads to its Abandonment

indecision in adopting socialism and in addressing private ownership and private enterprise with a revolutionary mind and spirit, and confronting their exigencies on this basis naturally leads to surrender and being kept back, and next, regression. Likewise, speed without consideration of precision in building socialism, hasty expansion in its fields, and the un-objective and unscientific position toward non-exploitative private ownership naturally embroils socialist adaptation in boundless problems and constriction. Among these is the harm to many people whose agony we are able to avoid, in addition to these measures providing cover and conditions for regression by another path.

This is why the problems that face our party in building socialism are numerous and many. They need a constant and continuous presence in conceptualization and solutions, and continuous faith in the importance of staying away from rigid molds in conceptualization and finding solutions to such problems. [They need] action especially in restraining ownership and private enterprise, and eliminating any kind of conflict

between the private enterprise and private ownership that is permitted and the socialist sector and socialist way in general. [This should] not just take into consideration...

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--the material requirements for socialist adaptation, but rather its human conditions...first and foremost, because socialism in the view of our party is a philosophy integrated with life in all of its main and subsidiary elements. It is not just economic treatments and solutions. In this way, we avoid the ruin of the human being who is the goal of socialist adaptation.

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Difficulties in Socialist Adaptation

We are not alone in facing the difficulties of socialist adaptation. The difficulties that we face are much less than the concerns of other experiments that have preceded us in their socialist adaptations. [These have included] full and quick control by some socialist experiments in their adaptations to socialism over all means of production, and banning ownership and private enterprise absolutely without balancing [this] step with the scientific and objective requirements for the conditions for the development of life, and the requirements of social maturity and cultural and psychological preparation. [These lacked] significant power to handle the building of socialism and the conditions of its development. These experiments resulted in costly strangulation from the viewpoint of development and human loss; for example, these sacrifices, in addition to other factors, cost Stalin approximately thirteen million human beings, and one third of the livestock wealth of the Soviet Union...

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-- in addition to other material and spiritual effects. This matter throws some light on the Soviet Union's retreat in its view of non-exploitative individual ownership, as well as some countries of Eastern Europe like Poland, Yugoslavia and Hungary not being able to overcome ownership obstacles.

Banning private enterprise and non-exploitative private ownership, taking complete control over the means of production and most economic enterprise and placing them under the management of the state and its apparatuses is considered an easy path when one looks at the question in its immediate materialist framework without taking into account the influences of the social and psychological dimension, and of the dimension of development and its degree. I am saying: A measure such as this is considered easier for the state, if one looks at it with an immediate materialist perspective compared to our way in building socialism. However, it certainly causes serious harm.

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Requirements of Building Socialism

One of the most important requirements for building socialism is taking control of the means of production and turning private ownership into public ownership to an extent and at a rate that covers all requirements for the preparation of the material basis of building socialism, and to maintain the desired balance between this and what is desired by the role and activity of private ownership and private enterprise in the service of socialism in its comprehensive view of life in accordance with its circumstances and successive stages of development.

This viewpoint, therefore, does not presume that all means of production and all economic activities should be public property. However, it imposes as a condition that private ownership should be placed in the service of general tendencies and laws on behalf of the society through socialist building and socialist relationships. The scope of the private enterprise and its tendencies are determined by the circumstances of change. Nevertheless, we do not consider it a basic part of the central principles of our party and something that adheres to all stages of the socialist building and the dynamic of its development. It bans exploitation and fighting against [the party]. It rejects and fights the tendencies that create from possession and private enterprise a value detached from the values of socialism as a firm truth that may not be violated or acted freely upon for any reason there may be.

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Property holding and private enterprise in our estimation serve only a limited role that is prescribed centrally. The basis of its legitimacy is not simply just its lack of conflict with the socialist way and the socialist movement to build a new society. On the contrary, it

must be in the service of this too and be coordinated with it in activities, forms and goals in accordance with what the nature of the successive stages and the requirements of the sought after development and change require ... Therefore, what is desired is not just the regulation of non-exploitative private enterprise. On the contrary, [it is] also its submission to the stages' policies and their perspective concerning the roles, scopes and nature for this that it must undertake.

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Determining the Scope and Type of Ownership

The doctrine on the existence of private ownerships and private enterprise does not make [its] generalization incumbent on all sectors and enterprises in the workings of the society's dynamic, rather the place, scope and kind of ownership is determined in light of the ability of the socialist sector's apparatuses to manage, control and supervise. [This is achieved] in light of the development of technological means and science, and their reflection in this and other dimensions, and the development and maturity of the society in general. [It also follows from] the diminution of the distance between the preparation of man with respect to socialism in the psychological and cultural field, the ability to implement and comprehend the tasks as appropriate to the dynamic of the building of socialism, and also taking into account strictly the desired role with respect to socialism for private ownership and private enterprise ... In all of this, the designation should be according to the requirements of the situation and the conditions of development ... It is not necessary that private ownership be equivalent or similar in the different sectors, enterprises and segments of society. However, it must certainly be integrated and properly proportioned as it fulfills a general function to the service of the society along with public socialist ownership, as we indicated ... In this way, the relationships of production in the public-owned sector or in the sector of private ownership and private enterprise, including the activity...

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-- cooperative [enterprise], are socialist relationships in the socialist society, where the system is called a socialist system in spite of the existence of private enterprise and private ownership of the kind to which we referred. This is when the basic pillars in the economic, cultural and social fields obtain the character of relative stability for their kind

and scope, and the adaptations of the basic supports and laws for building socialism are at their specific historical stage...

Permitting private enterprise and private ownership within the limits that Ba'thist socialist adaptation permits, and rejecting exploitation at the same time, calls for a reexamination of ownership and the private sector with concern for the kind, scope and orientation, from time to time, and from one field to another, in accordance with standards and frameworks that are reasonable in socialist doctrine across successive stages of development with respect to the basic affairs and elements of life. In this way, the revolution and its apparatuses bear significant burdens across the renewed forms to ensure continuous equilibrium between the requirements of socialist change and the requirements of restraining the private sector from overstepping the boundaries stipulated for it. When we take the agricultural sector, we find that the scope of ownership in it is not fixed absolutely. Rather, it is tied to diverse factors, including: development of the use of mechanized agriculture ... Development of the means of science in control of...

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pests or in improving the kind and size of agricultural production or in the development of irrigation and drainage methods in addition to social and political considerations of the revolution's society. On this basis, we find that the scope of ownership at its highest and lowest extent. Whenever the land is not fully reclaimed, or has high salinity, the productivity is reduced and the size of parcels for private ownership should be larger than ownership in land that is reclaimed, or in fertile land which is irrigated by flooding or other means. Similarly the sizes private ownerships are different in rain-fed lands than in areas when the land is brought under flood irrigation or is irrigated through an irrigation project that is built for this purpose. Likewise, for much the same reasons, we find that the quality, scope and kind of agricultural product changes for the better when the necessary pesticides and protection means are made available for plants and livestock, and are placed under the control of farmer at reasonable prices and quantities, or by way of improvement of the role of the state in this field. This must lead to appreciation of the quantity and value of the agricultural product from the land assigned to the farmer. Consequently, production averages and surpluses surpass the estimates of what the development and improvement of cultural circumstances and living standards...

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--for all the socialist society and the workers in the agricultural sector; consequently, reexamination of ownership becomes a necessary issue...

However, one must not let the conceptualization stray to the point where the reexamination of agricultural ownership is always a dynamic issue, rather than being an obligatory question, especially at the beginning of the revolution and the beginning of growth, and most especially, for those lands whose true value is only fulfilled through a series of technical and scientific measures in the field of reclamation and irrigation. In all cases, the matter necessitates that we balance scientifically and strictly between what the matter requires in the way of supervising the affairs to which we have referred and the importance of fulfilling the factor of relative stability for ownership in general and agricultural ownership in particular in order that we do not put the beneficiary in a state of distress about his future. It is necessary that the beneficiary understand, without feudal elements or those possessing an exploitative inclination, that reexamining ownership in accordance to these calculations will be continuous on the basis of their better and great benefit and by what increases the improvement of their cultural circumstances and living standards. [This is] because this falls within the basic parts of the goals of building and the socialist struggle and not vice versa.

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Development of the Requisites for the Comfortable Life in the Socialist Sense

When we examine the highest level of ownership as evaluated in terms of currency-equivalence or the upper limit of wealth in terms of the highest level of monetary ownership, we must introduce in our calculation the development of the requisites of the comfortable life in the socialist sense on the basis of the nature of national and racial development, development in the outside world, and development of the value of the currency that is measured against it. This is why what we consider an appropriate level for financial ownership now may come to be underdeveloped in ten years time. Whereas the additional country home is not considered necessary for ordinary habitation, for example, it may become necessary in socialist ownership at some other time. It is likewise for the ownership of tools for sowing, reaping and so on. In the same way, some examples of the society's other conditions may be compared in this context in all sectors, and in the framework of the socialist structure in general, so that our adaptations prove sound for the development of socialism through adaptation of what is harmonious with our starting points and the theory of our action in these fields and with what accepts specific socialist-types of non-exploitative private ownership and [private] activities...

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-- at the time when it rejects exploitation, oppression and robbery...The matter requires reexamination from time to time of ownership and private enterprise in scope, kind and orientation through what guarantees the necessary improvement of the circumstances of the socialist society and prevents the growth of the factors and basis of exploitation.

The state in the capitalist systems now does not play the role of the main regulator of economic operations and other activities in the society. In this way, its role is limited. The burden of economic and social life does not fall on its apparatuses as it does on the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, because those organizations proceed from the doctrine: "Leave it alone". The basic explanation of this principle is to leave man to act in absolute freedom with regard to exploitative ownership, and to make ownership in this way the central means for life to control the affairs of society and to use the state as a tool in the service of the bourgeoisie capitalist orientation.

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The State and its Establishments in Serving Society According to Socialism Development

We consider the state and its apparatuses to be in the service of society through the building of socialism, while capitalists consider, from no more than a theoretical perspective, the state and its apparatuses to be neutral in a capitalist society. However, in practice, ... they have put the state and its apparatuses in the service of "absolute" private enterprise. In this way, the state and its apparatuses come to be in the service of the exploitative class, while the state in the socialist system is in the service of the majority of the people at a stage that opposes the interests between the rest of the exploitative minority and the mass majority in the first stages of the socialist revolution. It becomes the state of all the people when the conflict is eliminated and the socialist edifice is m

Some of our comrades as well as the people's masses sometimes criticize the expansion of the number of ministries and government institutions in our socialist times. [They] compare this to the number of ministries in the Iraqi state at the time of the king, or with the ministries of France and other Western countries, forgetting one of the objectives and scientific truth that the state is basically the responsible authority for taking care...

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--of societal affairs in all of its activities and fields...This is why its organizations expand on this basis at those times when affairs are subverted by capitalist or quasi-capitalist and quasi-feudal organizations. The basic activities in the society are carried out by the private sector and its monopolistic companies. The duty of the state, therefore, is limited in these organizations ...

As a result, an important part of the duties of the state and its organizations is clear to us, at the present time and historically, in the Ba'thist socialist society or through its building across different stages of development.

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