

The Ba'thists were the third significant group on campus. It was only natural that the Arab Nationalists would join forces with this like-minded group. But the Arab Nationalists had their own misgivings about the Ba'th. In the first place, the Arab Nationalists were impressed with the need to formulate their own policies and tactics with direct reference to the Palestinian problem. They wanted to give the union issue a priority in the order of things. Palestine was lost because of the weakness and division of the Arab states. It was only natural for those who wanted to challenge the Israeli threat to seek strength through union. Albeit the Ba'thists did not respond favorably to the Arab Nationalists demand that the national struggle should be first concentrated on the union issue. They insisted that the issue of socialism was equally important and therefore a combined action against both foreign influence and local exploiters should be carried at one and the same time.²⁹

The Arab Nationalists were also disturbed about the increased involvement of the Ba'thists in the local politics of the Arab states. The full entry of the Syrian Ba'th into parliamentary politics angered the Arab Nationalists who did not believe that anything fruitful would come out of the

²⁹Nessim Rejwan, "Arab Nationalism in Search of an Ideology", in Walter Z. Laqueur (ed.), The Middle East in Transition (New York: Praeger, 1958), pp. 155-157.