

they have followed his lead in every battle. It was only natural that they would continue to do so when Nasser, in his endeavor to build a unified economic and social structure, extended in July 1961 his socialist decrees to the Syrian Region. These decrees, and the Syrian secession of the following September engendered a serious dialogue within the ANM. On the one hand stood the "traditional leadership" represented by Dr. George Habash, Hani al-Hindi, Dr. Wadi' Haddad and Dr. Ahmed al-Khatib. This group did not only accept and defend the socialist decrees, but also agreed that such decrees could and should be carried peacefully within the framework of a broad alliance between the working-classes, the intellectuals, and the national capitalists. On the other hand stood Muhsin Ibrahim, the editor of al-Hurriyah and a small but vigorous group composed mainly of a younger generation of Arab Nationalists. This group accepted the socialist decrees in principle, but questioned the possibility of carrying out such drastic measures in the absence of a socialist party. They rejected the theory of peaceful transition to socialism as inappropriate.²⁴

The secession of Syria from the U.A.R. which was prompted by the feudalism-bourgeois alliance proved the argument made earlier by the Ibrahim group. Hence a new program, which accepted the thesis of class struggle, was

²⁴ Muhsin Ibrahim, "Arab Socialism in the Making" in Kemal H. Karpat (ed.) Political and Social Thought in the Contemporary Middle East (New York: Praeger, 1968), p. 213.