

Movement are carried by representatives of the higher levels whose authority cannot be questioned by the rank and file.

From the above, one might be led to believe that the Movement's "flexible centralism" is what other revolutionary parties call "democratic centralism". In fact, the Movement itself began to speak of the principle as such since 1957. The Movement's literature now defined the principle as "... the prominence of the democratic procedure in the application of centralism, or the acceptance of decisions taken by the center in the light of free discussion below."⁴ However, one should not accept the ANM's claim at face value. For one thing, the incompatibility of centralism and democracy is profoundly increased in an organization where all party posts are delegated by the higher levels instead of being elected through democratic processes.

The ANM's structural organization resembles a pyramid, in which the base represents the rank-and-file, and the apex represents the leadership. Like the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, or any authoritarian Party for that matter, its structure is highly centralized. The ANM organs at all levels are sealed off both vertically and horizontally from relationships and information which the ANM considers unnecessary for the performance of their tasks.⁵

⁴ANM, "al-Markaziya al-Democratiya", 1957, p. 1.

⁵ANM, "Mafahim tanzimiyah", [Organizational Concepts], p. 3.