

relied on the huge oil revenues, especially after the price of crude oil quadrupled in 1973. This rapidly enriched certain strata of the middle and petit bourgeoisie, which were connected with the ruling strata by political relationships and/or clan and regional loyalties. Furthermore, it led to these strata becoming a parasitic and bureaucratic bourgeoisie engaged in marginal (non-productive) fields of the economy, as middlemen between the state institutions and the international monopolies, in exchange for huge commissions or bribes. This money is then divided among big state officials, ministers, directors and government economic administrators.

Meanwhile, the great majority of the petit bourgeoisie (merchants, employees, small workshops owners, etc.) and the urban workers experienced more economic and social deprivation. Their share in the national income decreased, while the gap separating them from the richer strata in the society increased.

The same thing occurred in agriculture. There was mass migration from the rural areas to the city, motivated by the needs of industrial growth and of enlarging the consumptive sector of the economy that depended on oil revenues. Agriculture and animal husbandry declined sharply. The countryside could no longer supply the growing food needs. The middle and rich farmers began to flourish at the expense of the small peasants and rural proletariat. Gradually capitalist agriculture became predominant in accordance with the bourgeoisie's policy of renouncing agricultural reform.

The social origins of the forces and parties that led and still lead the Arab liberation movement in these countries, is urban and rural sectors of the middle and petit bourgeoisie. However,

the socioeconomic changes implemented by this leadership played a major role in the growth of the parasitic, bureaucratic and big bourgeoisie, which are linked to the world capitalist market. With some exceptions, this leadership and the ruling parties basically represent the interests of the wealthy strata of the bourgeoisie.

This distorted path of capitalist development followed by these countries in the framework of subordination to the imperialist, neocolonial economy, has had long range effects on social conditions. Broad strata of the bourgeoisie were led into organic linkage with the capitalist market; they were subordinated not only economically, but politically and ideologically as well. Thus, these strata definitively lost their nationalist, anti-imperialist sentiment. This was embodied in the economic trend declared by Sadat, known as the open door policy, which emerged in other countries under different banners, such as the policy of using western technology as a method for rapid, explosive development, and consequently neglecting and abandoning state projects in favor of the private capitalist sector, as happened in Egypt and Iraq, etc. This is also evident in the sharp increase in imports, mainly consumer goods from the imperialist countries, depending on the huge financial resources provided by Arab oil production and price increases. This involves not only the oil-producing countries, but other Arab countries as well.

Despite the ruling bourgeoisie's demagogic about democracy, human rights and what is called the «state of institutions», the fascist, dictatorial tendencies of bourgeois rule have been reinforced by revoking more of the political and

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