



## PRESIDENT NASSER'S MAY DAY SPEECH

**BROTHER COUNTRYMEN:** On this day—the Day of Labour and Workers, which is celebrated by all humanity in the West and in the East equally, in every spot of the civilized world which appreciates the sacredness of work and which knows the pioneer role of workers in building nations—it pleases me to be with you here, in this great fortress of the Egyptian industry.

Brothers: Important battles in the heroic struggle undertaken by the Egyptian people to realize economic and social advancement as well as social justice, occurred here, in Mehalla el Kobra, before and after the Revolution.

For tens of years, before the Revolution, efforts were made to establish a foundation for the spinning and weaving industry in Egypt. After the Revolution, money was invested here in Mehalla el Kobra, in these factories, thus resulting in the renewal and the expansion of this industry. It has been expanded by more than 200 per cent compared to what it used to be before the Revolution. Here, too, in this fortress of the industrial fortresses, the socialist change showed its effect. The same change occurred in all key spots of the production. This great industrial centre, and the means of the production have become public property, the property of the people, thus ending the domination of the national wealth by a small limited group of people . . .

Ownership has been transferred to the working people, to free the potentialities of production which have increased twenty-two times, and to free workers for the socialist transformation.

Each worker today feels that this stronghold belongs to him and that this industry, this production and these profits are his own. The outcome of the work of every workman will go to him and to the sons of his country rather than to a feudalist.

Each worker now feels that he has a share in the profits realized. By profits we do not only mean the share you receive at the end of the year, but also the profits which are turned into new investments to be used for expanding industry, employ new workers and increase our industrial power.

I remember that wages in 1959 totalled some £4,900,000 for 18,000 workers. Today wages for the 22,000 workers in this industry have reached a total of £6.5 million. This indicates how much the average income for the worker and the individual has increased. I have already said that we are not rich in resources. But we are a nation of powerful workers. We can achieve many things through the power of work. In our socialist transformation we depend on a strong alliance of the people's working forces.

## **WORKING PEOPLE**

What is the meaning of the working people? It is the people where every individual is working to improve his standard as well as the standard of his country. It is the society which is cleansed from exploitation in all its forms and colours; the economic as well as the social exploitation. The working people is the society where equal opportunities are provided for all. Each according to his labour and initiative to serve his country. The working people is the society of masters, not servants or slaves. It is where everyone is master in his own country. It is where the worker does not feel a slave to the machine nor to capital.

The worker toiled just to maintain himself alive and the fruit of his labour was usurped by the capitalists and the monopolists who collected millions of pounds and re-invested them to collect more millions.

The working people can only mean the liberation of the peasant from feudalism. Every farmer should feel that he is his own master, that he is not being dominated by another man; every farmer, whether he is a peasant or a small landowner, should feel that he is his own master, that he is not dominated by the feudalists.

The community of the working people means to get rid of the feudalist and capitalist societies and then build up the socialist society. . . .

Before World War II and before World War I there was a feudalist reactionary society dominated by a corrupt and exploiting ruling dynasty. This dynasty was co-operating with imperialism and reaction. The society developed and some agricultural exploiters established a capitalist and feudal society and thus capital allied itself with imperialism. Where was the working people? The working people was lost. What employment was there? There was but little employment and thus exploiting capitalists and feudalists secured the profits they wanted. They employed some workers but there was a constant demand for employment and the result was that there were many unemployed workers. The capitalists alone ate and enjoyed life, travelled to Europe and raised money. Workers and farmers; the working people found nothing.

The worker farmer or employee scarcely got what would enable him and his family to live. Of course they were always surrounded with groups of opportunists who served feudalism and acted as the whip with which to hit the people and exploit them. The feudal society cannot live; the society all of whose wealth goes to one family and whose people are of no value. Our society cannot exist under a feudalist rule. The people must claim their rights. . . .

The man who gathers a million pounds, two, three, ten or twenty million, how did he get all this money? Any man, living in this world, if he remained throughout his life working, and if we gave him the largest possible return of his work will never manage to gather this wealth or to have an income like this. . . .

## **THEFT**

It is either theft or exploitation.

By theft I mean commission. He builds a block of flats and gets commission, he concludes a transaction and takes a commission, buys aircraft and takes a commission, builds an airfield and takes a commission, builds an army and takes a commission. If he does not get the commission, well the dynasty does. But it is the people's money. It is not his wealth but the people's wealth. . . .

The second thing is taking the result of the sweat of the people, the workers. He pays one quarter of a pound to a worker who deserves one pound, thus taking the three-quarters of the pound for himself. This is what we meant when we referred to the exploitation of the worker. Hence the process is one involving a theft and exploitation. We saw this taking place in our society when we used to be a feudalist and a capitalist society.

Today we are witnessing a socialist transformation in our society, where all means of production are in the hands of the working people. There will be no exploitation in this case, as the people have managed to restore their rights, controlled production and exerted unusual efforts to develop it. . . .

What we pride ourselves upon is that we fought and eliminated the feudalist state, the exploitation of capital and the corrupt ownership. We fought for social justice and succeeded in getting it, and we fought for socialism and achieved prosperity on the path of socialism. . . .

We put an end to feudalism, corrupt capitalism and the agents of imperialism. We have taken steps for the liquidation of class distinction. The people have now control over means of production. At the same time the people put an end to agricultural feudalist ownership. The people drafted their National Charter, the charter of the working people. At the same time the people proceeded towards the realization of socialism based on sufficiency and justice. The people are trying to realize sufficiency by their work in all fields. It is the people that offer both the money and the work.

## **MONEY**

The past development plan required £1,500 million, part of which was borrowed from abroad, but the rest was raised by you, by the people and not by the feudalists, the capitalists or the opportunists. The people offered £1,100 million for the plan and the balance, £400 million, was borrowed from abroad.

The people besides offered work, built factories, constructed the High Dam, dug canals, reclaimed land, built houses, schools and hospitals.

The people not only controlled the means of production but also offered money and work for the sake of development and progress; they exerted efforts to build a powerful, developed, advanced country, depending on its own strength in all fields.

The people advanced to change decisively the shape of life on their land in order to make justice prevail among all classes. But have we dissolved class distinctions, brothers? Have we eradicated domination?

No, we are still working to attain our major objective: Socialism, social justice and equality of opportunity. . . .

The people everywhere will get their rights; farmers will get their rights and the people everywhere will work for the development of the country and for social justice and progress. . . .

But thanks to God, we have liberated ourselves from the community of feudalism, the community of exploitive capital and the community of monopoly and are now proceeding with strength and determination raising the slogans of the working people. We raise the slogan of the people's working power, the alliance of all the people's working forces in face of imperialism and in face of imperialist agents and reactionary powers.

Of course, we have not stamped out reaction yet. Reaction still remains and in 1956 reactionary powers found in the British the hope which might turn the clock backward and restore them their old influence. . . .

The year 1956 showed the people which regained its liberty, declaring it would fight for the rights it achieved. It showed the people—which got rid of imperialism, feudalism, monopoly and the corrupt ownership—standing against the imperialist aggression and defeating it. This people could, then, nationalize all the foreign economic interests in the country, and topple the pillars of exploitation.

It could regain its robbed rights, wealth and the means of production which originally belonged to it. . . .

Neither imperialism nor reaction will ever be able to defeat us in our country. We are undertaking the liquidation of imperialism and reaction around us and we are adopting a policy of 'long-wind' until we finish them. We will never get tired, because we are a struggling, fighting and sacrificing people. We do that for ideals. We are a revolutionary people fighting for socialist ideals. This is what we were aiming at in our struggle for the elimination of imperialism and exploitation.

Someone wearing a beard claims that socialism is atheism and blasphemy. Yet why is it atheism and blasphemy? Socialism restores the right of the worker. Socialism gives equal opportunities to all the people.

Socialism is the remedy for feudalism. It abolishes feudalism and changes the society from a society of slaves to one of masters. Socialism gives man his dignity as well as his life to live. Socialism means that all the people work towards the establishment of a dear and a dignified society. In a socialist society there is no family whose members obtain 170 million dollars or 50 million dollars and keep depositing it in banks. Socialism means that we put an end to poverty, take from the rich to give to the poor. . . .

Brethren, we are building the socialist society where equal opportunities are afforded for all, a society of social justice which is the product of the progressive revolution. In pursuing this goal, brethren, we are applying God's will and the doctrine of His prophet. We are not fooled by the ways of the bearded ones. . . .

## **NATIONALIZED**

Our grown-ups now tell their children about the bearded ones we had who turned this country into a feudal estate. But the people rose on July 23rd, 1952, and plucked their beards. We subsequently regained everything—the land, the means of production, our money and our country; we drove out the forces of occupation, the exploiters and monopolists; we nationalized the means of production and the people became masters over them. The people rallied together and exerted stupendous efforts to build the society of justice and sufficiency—a land of prosperity. We began to invest money and to work. We executed the first Five-Year Plan in which we invested £1,500 million and built more than a thousand factories all of which belong to the people. We have no bearded ones among us who own a single factory. The factories belong to the people—to you and to your children and kin and to your bigger family which is the whole people.

We have emerged from the Five-Year Plan with a very high percentage of production, and this income will not go to the pocket of this or that person.

The President of the Republic is not rich, nor is he descended from a feudal family. No such family will rule us. The son of the President of the Republic is no better than the son of any other person, he is like the son of anybody.

There are no classes in our society; we are dissolving class distinctions in our society.

Who is the President of the Republic? His father was an employee descended from the common people; he used to receive a monthly salary of £25; he was not a king, nor was he a sultan.

Who will tomorrow be the President of the Republic? One of you. Nobody will rule you but yourselves; you have regained your country.

This is what we have achieved and what we are fighting for. . . .

At the beginning of the revolution we planned to invest some £100 million in industry over a two-year period. We later planned to invest some £303 million in industry over a period of three years.

In the first plan of 1960, some £1,500 million were invested over a period of five years, in industry and other branches. This time we shall invest £3,166 million in seven years. Actually, I wanted to make them only five years, but I found out that you showed some signs of weariness. During the last five years some £1,500 million were taken from you for the construction of factories, schools, roads, bridges and hospitals. You naturally got a bit tired, because we took all this money to build factories, but not to buy luxury goods.

It goes without saying that when I say that I want to spend £1,500 million it means that I have to spend at least 40 per cent of such a sum in hard currency. Then comes the question: What shall I give you, factories or meat? I preferred to give you factories rather than meat.

Then when the price of meat rose, you grumbled a little bit. The reactionary elements and people abroad said there is a famine in Egypt. Despite the fact that while passing Al Azhar Street one smells the Kebab along this street, the broadcasting stations of Israel and of those who wear beards, as well as the papers of those with beards, claim that there is a famine in Egypt. Do you ever go hungry?

Instead of supplying you with meat for seven days a week, we made the meat available for four days a week. Since the meat of our country was not enough, we imported meat from China and Australia, Ecuador, the Sudan and Somalia. We also import wheat and maize. Last year when we doubled the production of maize, we did not import maize, or perhaps we imported a small quantity of maize.

## **CURRENCY**

The last plan, in which £1,500 million were invested, had created a number of problems for us, particularly the problems of hard currency.

We then discussed whether it was preferable to invest £3,000 million in five years, six years or seven years. We hesitated between exerting further pressure on you in the coming five years, or to stretch the plan to seven years instead of five. In seven years we will invest £3,200 million instead of just £3,000 million.

One year of the seven years is already past. By stretching the plan over seven years we were trying to relax a little bit to avoid bottlenecks in supply. We do not want to borrow much, because borrowing means paying a 7 per cent interest on the loans we get. We only get loans at a 2 per cent interest from the Soviet Union and countries of the Eastern bloc. On the rest of our loans we pay an interest of 7 per cent which means that after ten years we pay off the loan plus 70 per cent.

In the coming seven years, we need to borrow another £400 million and so limit or decrease the burden of the loans. But the rest of the money, the remaining part of the £3,200 million, that is £2,800 million, how shall we get them? Of course, it is you who will pay this amount. And the foreign currency which we shall need to buy the factories, from where shall we get it? Of course, we shall have to economize here and there and tighten the belt a little.

I used to entertain the idea that we tighten the belt once and for all and carry out the development plan in five years. But we later made it seven instead of five and relaxed the belt a little, in so far as necessities, and not luxuries, are concerned.

And then we are being teased now by the reactionaries abroad who are claiming that we are bankrupt and hungry. But we really do not care. We shall build our country but they will never achieve their objectives. They are the agents of imperialism and we shall pluck their beards for them. The people will never accept reactionary agents or feudalists who claim that they are having all the luxuries we lack since their people are deprived of the very necessities of life. . . .

So in the coming plan we will spend generously on the necessities, not on the luxuries. We will try to have self-sufficiency.

In the past Plan we invested £1,500 million, but in the coming Plan we will invest £3,200 million. Our hopes increase and our ability develops; we have now a solid base, an industrial base, an agricultural base, a production base in everything.

In the new plan allocations have been made for the various sectors: £1,102 million for industry (35 per cent of the plan); £263 million for electric power; £598 million for agriculture (including £41 million for the completion of the High Dam body); £558 million for transport communications, supply and the Suez Canal; £270 million for housing (to build 300,000 new housing units in towns and 600,000 new others in rural districts).

In addition, there are several other million pounds for investments in public services; health, education and public utilities.

Naturally, many of those present here are inquiring if we will be able to do all this. Yes: With action, money and determination we can achieve it all. I am telling you today that during the past few years, you in Mehalla have managed to expand your factories at a rate of 200 per cent. We tried ourselves, and experience is the best proof. We succeeded and can still achieve more successes. . . .

In order to establish the society we are aspiring for, we must double our national income in the shortest possible time. We must spend and even spend more than we can afford, and in so doing, we will be faced with problems and difficulties. Meanwhile, let us consider the other equation; the easier equation: if we do not spend and if we do not set up factories nor reclaim land, there will be no work and your sons and brothers will be unemployed and the country will remain undeveloped. In this case those who earn enough to eat, will eat and those who don't earn enough will starve. Why is there a greater demand for meat today? It is because people now earn more money than ever before.



Wages rose from £350 million in 1952 to £879 million today. The volume of employment rose from 4.5 million to 7,300,000.

Wages by the end of the Second Plan will reach £1,191 million and employment will reach 8,700,000 workers. Of course, we do not mean to employ more people without increase in production. For the more money people get, the more they buy and the more they demand.

We have faced many problems and we are apt to face other problems. If a certain factory faces trouble due to shortage in technicians, reactionary people and capitalists would blame it on socialism.

How shall we act in such situations? Is it possible that we may return the factory to the capitalist? Of course not. Under the capitalist management there were many problems, but nobody cared since these factories were considered the private property of a certain Pasha or Bey. You all know what boards of directors were like before.

For this purpose I say that we must study the past Plan and its circumstances and our capacity for work under these circumstances. . . .

The important thing is that we should learn a lesson and make a 100 per cent achievement in the Second Development Plan; we take a lesson in self-confidence and capacity for achievement. If we managed to benefit from the experiment of the first plan, then we can carry out the Second Development Plan and make up for the deficiency in the first. This means that we increase the production over the targets of the next plan.

We really benefited much. It was our first work in planning. Formerly, we were working in a vacuum: there were no accurate accounts and the number of experts was limited. We undertook a variety of projects. I wish to point out that we invested £400 million in the first Plan which gave us no cash return. The money we invested in the High Dam has not yet yielded any cash return. The same is the case with the land we reclaimed.

We have invested money in turning basin-irrigated land to perennial irrigation which has still not yielded any cash return. Money has also been ploughed into industries which have not started production.

But today we are more confident in our work and in our figures. We are working with greater force than before and the people working have increased. We have gained experience and enhanced our efficiency. The socialist system has been established in our labour unions and boards of directors. There is no conflict between management and labour; whatever there may be in this way is but a residue of the past. As we study the first plan and evaluate it, we must co-operate in order to bring management and labour even closer together. The success of the new plan and the achievement of its goals requires full

and enlightened mobilization of all efforts and not just enthusiasm. We need conviction besides enthusiasm, because enthusiasm which springs from conviction never wanes.

### **THE ASWAN HIGH DAM**

Ten years ago, we were seeking loans from the International Bank, America and England, so that we could build the High Dam. After two months they withdrew their offers to finance the High Dam; but we did not stop.

I told Abdul Hakim Amer that if the High Dam needed ten years to be built, we will build it in twenty years and will use primitive equipment instead of machines. I asked him to form a committee to undertake the building of the Dam in this way. We declared that we needed no loans for we were determined to have it built under whatever conditions. We did not stop and then we found people ready to help us.

But it was our workers who shouldered the burden. The Upper Egyptians are there in Aswan working side by side with Russians from Siberia. I always thank them for they are living under temperature of 40 centigrade. Our Siberian brothers, like our Upper Egyptians, do not bother about temperatures reaching 40 or 50 or 60 centigrade. They are used to this as you all know.

The Soviet Union extended to us all assistance; she extended to us facilities in the form of loans for the High Dam. We started with these and to them we added from local capital.

We have so far paid our instalments of the cost of the first stage; that is what we have so far paid to the Soviet Union. It is the Egyptian people who eventually pay, and this is natural; nobody will pay for us or on our behalf. Our work alone guarantees repayment, our work and our pockets, of course.

It was beyond their imagination that we would build the High Dam.

In August next year, we will obtain electric power from the High Dam; the first turbine will get into operation.

Those who fight us are not new to us; they are the forces of reaction and imperialism; we have become experts in fighting such forces.

They imposed a blockade on us and they failed; they set up anti-U.A.R. radios and they failed. They assembled the forces of reaction and it was no use; they installed Nuri el Said, but without avail. They set up bases, but without result; they brought their fleets to strike at us, in 1956, but in vain.

We have become accustomed to such matters. If we get up in the morning to find it calm and peaceful, we feel suspicious. We have been accustomed to the whole business since July 23, 1952. They have

never left us alone; they have paid money to kill us, to stage coups; they have paid money to the Moslem Brotherhood; they have sent arms to the Moslem Brotherhood, as you have read in the trials. They have bought the Moslem Brotherhood, but no use, no use.

It never happened that they managed to stop our work. Since the beginning of the revolution and till the present, our work has always been many-sided, despite all the attacks which were launched against us. A little earlier I was speaking of the 100 million pound programme of industrialization. Did they leave us in peace in 1953 and 1954? Weren't we fighting a political battle for evacuation and at the same time socially fighting the rule of the corrupt monarchy and the higher class and applying the first agrarian reform law?

The second step was the 303 million pounds programme of industry between 1957 and 1960. Of course, in 1956 they launched their aggression against us; they did not spare us for one day, one night or one month. No, between 1957 and 1960, we were in the thick of the battle against pacts, after the tripartite aggression, and we were in a battle against economic blockade.

We were never left alone, as we fought for Arab nationalism and unity, and during the First Five-Year Plan. We were operating at various fronts. We invested more than 1,500 million pounds, but at the same time supported all liberation movements everywhere. We were facing the setback of secession, holding the conference of popular working forces, issuing the Charter, going to Yemen to fight, and working for non-alignment and Afro-Asian solidarity. We faced all sorts of psychological pressures, built and armed a strong army, and got ready to face a confrontation with Israel some day. We never stopped working. . . .

## **CHANGES**

Some say that today there are changes and there is a reactionary tide whose effects we have witnessed in Asia and Africa. There is no doubt that imperialism has allied itself with reaction and that both are seeking day and night to hit us. Yet this dream of theirs would never come true on this land. Why? Because a struggling revolutionary people are living on this land. The Egyptian people will always hold out and this will cause the reactionary tide to recede. This is the inevitability of history. The reactionary tide will recede until reaction is completely defeated in the Arab world. . . .

We have two things before us: the formidable objective we are trying to achieve through the plan, and the bitter battle we are facing and which is represented by the imperialist reactionary tide. All this

would not hinder us and as in the past, our people will fight the two battles simultaneously for they are capable of building and fighting at the same time. In fact both are but one battle; the battle of the Arab's right to be master of his own land politically, socially and economically.

Therefore, it is the duty of the Arab to liquidate all powers of imperialism and exploitation. Everyone should know everything in his country and realize that his effort and his opinion contribute to the making of the future. We wish to proceed on this basis during the coming stage. The people must be mobilized and conscripted for the execution of the plan, so that we may face imperialism, reaction and the supporters of imperialism and Zionism. We are building on two fronts which are in fact one front. This is why I have said that the plan should be discussed at the Arab Socialist Union and its units as well as at production units, factories, universities and every Governorate. Every Governorate should know its share in the plan and the plan in general. Such a discussion should proceed side by side with the reports on the follow-up of the First Plan.

We take the Gharbia Governorate for instance and examine the accomplishments realized in it, how many schools have been built, how many health units, factories, covered drainage systems were carried out. We should get a clear idea of the things that were realized and the things that were not realized.

Thus everyone will be able to form a clear idea about what is being done in his country. Newspapers criticize more than they give a picture of the accomplishments. They criticize the productive unit, and the deviations that take place. They must write about these things and also about the accomplishments realized in the country.

This discussion must be extended politically. We must begin working out our permanent constitution, because our present constitution is temporary. The National Assembly must prepare the permanent constitution. When they complete formulating the constitution their work will not be over, they will have to serve the five full years. They must not think that the completion of the constitution means that the Assembly has served its purpose and that a new Assembly will be elected.

They should begin with an open discussion in each unit of the principles and all the chapters one by one. The A.S.U. executive committees or leaderships must take part, together with their bases, in the discussion. Each executive bureau and group of leaders must state its view, whether they approve or do not approve and make

known their observations. After that, when a referendum is held on the constitution, the ayes and nays should not be merely perfunctory, but the result of full comprehension and discussion by all in the production units, the A.S.U. units, the districts and the universities.

The masses fully understand the plan because it carries their hopes and belongs to them and they supervise its execution. The masses also understand the constitution, because it is the foundation of public action, a guarantee of freedom and of continued action by the masses in shaping their own future and enjoying it economically and politically. In this the masses carry out the will of God which is the will of justice. May God guide your footsteps and peace be upon you.