

organization set up and social structure. Unlike the loosely formed bloc parties which were usually dominated by big families, the Ba'th introduced a centralized organizational structure based on a system of underground cells.³⁵ In addition to that the Ba'th attempted to place its organization on a working class foundation. If it met little success in that respect, it nevertheless spread among students, intellectuals and petty bourgeois elements.

In the third place, the Ba'th rejected the "regional approach" assumed by the old guard nationalists in their endeavor to struggle for complete independence within each Arab state. Instead the Ba'th advocated a "national approach" according to which all nationalist forces in the Arab World should wage a common struggle against their enemies. In fact the Ba'th looked upon itself as the embodiment of nationalism in the Arab World.

The advent of the Ba'th, therefore, opened new vistas for the Arab national movement. Far from accepting the status quo, the Ba'th triggered a whole set of issues and problems relating to the Arab national movement. In theory and practice, the Ba'th have helped speed up the political and social synthesis in the Arab World. It is perhaps not incorrect to assume that the alliance between socialism and Arab nationalism which was first advocated by

³⁵ Abu Jaber, op. cit., pp. 139-144.