

foreign goods which singled out the Arab Nationalists as the most fanatic group on the campus of the American University of Beirut.

Without doubt Naser al-Din's example and precept were behind the founding leaders' attempt to create a close community impermeable to outside influences. It is significant to note that the establishment of such a community have helped develop l'esprit de corps among the Arab Nationalists more than anything else. No wonder that many "old timers" look back with pride to those formative years when every Arab Nationalist was "a crusader in the purification of national life".⁴⁷ The founding fathers of the movement strived to create a better community for their followers. In fact they aspired to develop a model to be employed as a guide for planning work on a larger scale. In other words they likened their small "community of believers" to that of the future Arab society. They envisioned every member in the movement as a model for the future Arab citizen. "We should practice what we preach" demanded a directive issued by the Arab Nationalists' leadership in the early days of the movement.⁴⁸

⁴⁷Statement by Thabet Mahayni, personal interview, November 11, 1968.

⁴⁸"Ma'alim al-Hayat al-Hizbiyah al-Selimah" [The Features of the Correct Party Life], p. 1.