

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT
OF
THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY AT CAIRO
TO THE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR 1952-53

In presenting this final report to the Board of Trustees, I am concerned to review the growth of the University since the end of the war and the position it is now in as I terminate my service as President. The detailed record of and comment on, the year's work will be found in the appended departmental reports, which should be studied with care.

I - THE NEW ERA

In discussing the revolution of July 1952, a group of former Cabinet Ministers, meeting in the American University at Cairo, said, "Whether we like the new regime or not - agree with its policies or not - we must recognize that Egypt has entered a new era."

What they were saying is that the abdication of the King and the subsequent proclamation of a Republic was not merely one more familiar shift in the scenery of Government. A new center of political gravity has emerged in Egyptian life. For the first time in many centuries, the state is headed by a genuine Egyptian, who is at the same time a part and symbol of the middle class that has been slowly rising to prominence. The old hierarchy of position and privilege is being dislodged; a determined drive on the graft and corruption that is almost as old in the East as human life itself, is under way. Drastic social changes are being forced on the upper class. If new determination and far-reaching alterations in national life are the criteria, Egypt has indeed entered a new era.

What has happened is not that a group of power-hungry army officers took the occasion of popular discontent to seize the government. Behind the coup d'etat lies the rising pressure of mismanagement, frustration, poverty, the failure of party government and an increasing confusion in foreign relations. The Muslim is apt to justify everything as the predestination of Allah; in this case, it was the predestination of events that moved steadily to the inescapable explosion.

What is important in these events is that they are evidence of Egypt's determination to work out her own salvation. In the past, crucial internal failures in Arab lands have usually been set right by some form of foreign pressure or occupation. Now native forces have risen to the occasion and set their faces toward the dawn of a

new day. If they succeed, the nation will undergo a moral regeneration that is a banner of hope for the future. If they fail, the "last state of that man will be worse than the first", for the nation will have proved to the world - and itself - that it cannot set its own house in order.

This situation is of the utmost concern to the University. Dedicated to the regeneration of Near Eastern life, integrated past most foreign institutions in the life of the Muslim and Arab community, existing only with the goodwill and cooperation of national leaders, its future as an institution and its effectiveness as a Christian influence is bound up with the general progress of the country. What are the indications the "new era" has for the work of AUC?

First, new impetus has been given to the work of social reform. At the heart of the government's national program are plans for basic social changes that will give the peasant a better life. The most dramatic of these is the limitation of land ownership and the distribution of the excess land to villages. With the help of the Technical Assistance Program of the United States, large scale developments in land reclamation and agricultural improvement are being carried forward. If the new regime can solve its problem of relations with Great Britain, its major energy will be given these urgently-needed internal reforms. This means that more than ever Egypt will need a generation of educated youth devoted to social service, and trained in all the techniques of social improvement. With its past experience and present reputation, the University is in a position to render the country unique service. The growing popularity of the Faculty of Education and the Division of Extension "in service" classes is an evidence of how ready Egypt is to accept assistance in the training of its future social leaders.

Second, a new pattern of political life is emerging. The old parties have been dissolved, and with them have gone many of the leaders whose names have been appearing in Egyptian news for the last generation. It is the intent of the new government to produce a fresh, less class-dominated, more devoted political life, free from the dominance of old-line politicians. This means that the country needs, and will need increasingly, men trained in government administration and inspired by a sincere and patriotic idealism. In the past, the University has done little to prepare its students for this kind of work. Now it has the opportunity of bringing the best Western experience in political theory and administration to the service of Egypt.

Third, the new government has thus far been hopefully tolerant of, and cooperative with, foreign influences and institutions. Free from the hysterical pressures of professional party politicians, General Naguib's regime can afford to utilize every friendly foreign resource without endangering its political prestige or stability. The President of the Republic has gone out of his way to reassure the foreign community, and by his personal presence has indicated his friendliness for institutions such as the American College for Girls and the American University. Ministries of the new government have been unusually cooperative and have turned to the University for various services. All

this indicates that now is the time for the institution to lay the basis for any expansion or enrichment of its present work. The future is still plastic; while the shape of things to come is being determined, the University has an unrivaled opportunity to become entrenched in the life of the country even more deeply.

Yet it must not be assumed that the future of the "new era" is completely certain. Discredited parties and discarded politicians still hang on the sidelines in the hope of getting back into the game. The Moslem Brotherhood maintains its organization and is ready to assume power if the Revolution falters or fails. Their future is still a gamble, but a gamble which must be made and in which, in my opinion, the greatest hope lies in the ideals and programs of General Naguib's regime. Therefore the University must read the signs of the future as shrewdly as possible, and ally itself with every movement and program that looks toward a better, more liberal and more stable Egypt.

II - UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

With what resources does the University face this task? First, there is the obvious confidence and cooperation of leading Egyptians in and out of the government. Both the vanished regime of the Kingdom and the new leaders of the Republic have not only welcomed the University, but have worked with it and contributed to its program. The magnitude of this fact must be judged against the constant irritation with and criticism of the policies of the United States toward the Near East since the war. Of all the periods in recent Egyptian history, this is the one in which a welcome to an American institution would be least expected. That the University has been so warmly received is due in part to its close identification with local culture and national aspirations. It is perhaps the least foreign of the foreign institutions. Where other schools hung back from close association with the Ministry of Education, the University welcomed these contacts and made the most of them. Long before the state ordered the "arabization" of education, the University was pushing the study of the Arabic language. The local staff has been advanced in rank and responsibility so that now two of the University's major departments are headed by Egyptians. And the University policy of inviting into its counsels and upon its platforms Egyptian leaders has created a sympathetic circle of those who understand the institution precisely because they have shared in its work.

Deeper than all this, however, is the patent objective of the institution to serve Egypt and the Near East with no other aim than that of true Christian friendliness. In a world where economic advantage, international security and Western prestige are the moving forces, it is refreshing to our Eastern friends to find an American influence built solely on good will and dedicated to cooperation in furthering a better world.

A second resource is the truer University status the institution has attained since the war. With the closing of Lincoln School, AUC was freed from the (mistaken) local reproach that it was primarily an institution of secondary education. Its energies were set free for concentration on the University level of studies. Courses have been multiplied and become more technical and specific. The School of Oriental Studies now offers a Master's degree, the first graduate work of the institution. With the opening of in-service classes in social work by the Division of Extension, all the University departments now offer degrees. The recent establishment of the Social Research Center, with the assistance of a grant from the Ford Foundation, carries the University into the field of research - a need that has long been felt. By reinstituting the Bachelor of Science degree, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences has both enriched its program and met an urgent educational need. That the institution now appears in Egyptian eyes as a full and unequivocal University is shown by the fact that the Egyptian government recently invited the President to serve on its Committee to Review University Education.

A third resource is an increased and diversified staff. The permanent appointments now include two Research Scholars in the School of Oriental Studies, a trained sociologist in the Division of Extension, professor of Chemistry and an anthropologist in the Faculty of Education. To these must be added the increasing number of Egyptian scholars who give part-time service of a highly specialized character. Many of these have been trained in the United States and occupy leading positions in the Egyptian Government or Egyptian institutions of higher learning. While part-time teachers involve some problems of schedule, they not only make possible the offering of a wide variety of specialized courses, but give the University a reputation for scholarship and professorial resources that it needs. Of particular value have been the Visiting Professors made available through the Fulbright program. Although serving the University for only a year at a time, these have brought to the institution the newest developments in their fields, and outstanding reputation.

A fourth source is the University's just reputation for individualized, creative education, with emphasis upon small classes and intimate guidance of students by the staff. Since the war the State universities have grown so rapidly that they are in danger of surrendering to assembly line techniques. Cairo University alone enrolls nearly 20,000 students. In the face of this mass education, AUC's program has become recognized as desirably unique. Enrollment has been kept at a modest level, and probably should not be increased. Entrance and graduation requirements have been steadily lifted - and rigorously adhered to. A new program of scholastic, aptitude and comprehension tests has been introduced, emphasizing native ability and scholastic development rather than the mere amassing of factual information. Despite larger graduating classes, every Senior must still present a project of independent research and submit to a searching oral examination on it. All this is costly in time and staff, but ensures that each student is given the maximum opportunity to develop his own creative talents. With the prospect of

continued growth in State institutions, and the increasing pressure to provide a "University" education for every secondary-school graduate, Egypt will need more than ever the self-restrained program of the American University.

III - NEEDS FOR THE FUTURE

To utilize these resources effectively in the future, the University needs to be strengthened at many points.

First is the physical plant. Although the present buildings have been maintained in good condition by constant supervision and a minimum of expenditure, some of their facilities need to be expanded. Ewart Memorial Hall, now in almost daily use for University and public functions, must have better cinema equipment, some alterations to the stage, and a refurbishing of seating and sanitary facilities. The School of Oriental Studies needs more room for its growing work. The Faculty of Education, which has increased its enrollment by over one hundred percent since the war, not only needs more classroom space, but special facilities for its own research and demonstrations. The Library is inadequately housed and must have more books - and special facilities to use them. The Faculty of Arts and Sciences has not only outgrown the physical capacity of its present building, but finds that building increasingly burdensome to keep in condition and lacking in specialized facilities such as laboratories. And the student body of all the faculties need better provision for the social activities.

All this points to the necessity of carrying forward present plans to demolish the old Khairy Palace and replace it by a new structure. The building of Hill House has given the University badly needed dormitory accommodations - and symbolizes to the public the institution's determination to push ahead in its service. This must be followed as quickly as possible by the erection of a new academic center and the rehabilitation and expansion of some of the present buildings. Located in the heart of the city where it is constantly in the public eye and used increasingly because of this location, the University cannot afford to have buildings either unsuited to its purposes or unattractive to its constituency.

Second is staff. Under the institution's "minimum University budget" a teaching staff has been recruited sufficient to maintain and justify the present program at the current level. But this level cannot remain "current" in the developing opportunities and demands of the future, without employing staff increases. The most urgent needs are for an American librarian and an American social scientist. There is also the necessity of another man in the field of philosophy and religion - who can give special attention to