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**Role of Protecting Industrial & Intellectual Property
Rights
in Promoting Development**

Study

by

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Role of Protecting Industrial & Intellectual Property Rights in Promoting Development

Egypt, a pioneer among Arab nations, acceding to international conventions and setting legislation for protection of industrial property rights some fifty years ago, is today far behind in keeping up with the importance of such protection and its role in developing our national industry and economy.

Many intellectuals and officials are unaware of the importance of such rights, thinking that such laws were enacted to protect interests of rich industrial countries at the expense of poor countries.

This is totally wrong. Egypt should seek to take part in all international activities, as a full-fledged partner that is keen on applying economic discipline within its territories and that urges other countries to do the same, according to the Principle of Reciprocity.

For the Sake of Promoting Egyptian Industries

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It is necessary to plan for benefiting from information received from abroad, by virtue of international conventions, which pile up in the Patent Office, becoming state property after the lapse of ten years.

It is necessary to extend bridges for exchanging knowledge between research centres in our universities and the Patent Office, in order that Egyptian students would be updated on the latest accomplishments of the human mind in the realm of science and technology, worldwide.

It is important for industrial centres to benefit from patents that become state property or that fall under compulsory licence.

Finally, if we hope for Egypt to assume a leading role, in the future, within the realm of technology, we should lay down a comprehensive plan for the reform of education. A new generation of inventors cannot emerge in Egypt, except after raising the standard of education.

In this context, we propose the following:

1. It is necessary to review all curricula and systems applied within the educational process. Those depending on memorization and dictation should be minimized, giving way to conclusion and discovery;
2. Seeking to develop faculties of observation, conclusion and invention within Egyptian children from the very beginning;

3. Encouraging creativity and inventions through contests inside schools and outside in science clubs and youth centres;
4. Raising awareness, throughout the educational process, on concepts of industrial property rights and their close relation to economic growth;
5. Linking between inventions and needs of our national industry, where industrial centres could finance and orient researches towards realms that would help develop and improve performance.

This is what Far Eastern countries did, when they set technological development as their national target, laying down short-term and long-term plans, in order to achieve their goal.

Thus, their economy prospered, their resources doubled and they became a strong rival to Western countries that have been monopolizing these fields, ever since the industrial revolution.

Means of Protecting Consumers

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1. An incontestable means of protecting consumers is verifying the validity of advertisements on products, whether audio-visual or written. Advertisers resort to all sorts of tricks and deceptions, going as far as presenting the product as a scientific fact, news released by officials or ascertained press coverage;

We agree that verifying the validity of an advertisement is not an easy matter. Still, it is not impossible, especially if we set certain control measures. Proper documentation should be submitted to verify the validity and accuracy of data included in an advertisement.

Here, legislation is needed for both the advertising agency and the advertising person;

Such legislation exists in both developing countries and advanced countries.

2. It should be conditional to submit certificates or results of experiments and laboratory tests, accessible to the public, or else to refer the product to trustworthy scientific authorities for testing the validity of data and components. Also, a quality certificate should be issued from an acknowledged national authority, before putting the product on sale on the market, or even starting to advertise for it;

Among important examples of commodities related to health, integrity, security and safety of Egyptian consumers are foodstuffs, electric appliances, fire extinguishers, pressurized canisters, gas cylinders, paints, detergents, etc.

3. Scientific and national authorities concerned should raise awareness of the public on results of tests and investigations carried, in order to verify products that are safe for human consumption and others that are not;
4. The government should set strict control measures on outlets of production and distribution, all over the country, not only in the capital and major cities. This calls for enhancing such control authorities with the necessary technical, human and material potentials;
5. Considering crimes that touch the health and integrity of citizens, as well as all sorts of commercial and industrial fraud, as dishonourable crimes. Names of culprits should be published in the papers. Such cases are to fall within the competence of special courts, where filing, proceedings and verdicts are to be swift and easy;
6. Establishing a higher council for protecting consumers, formed of all authorities concerned with this vital issue. Also, the establishment of associations for protecting consumers should be encouraged, all over the country;
7. Reconsidering Law No. 354/1954 for protecting copyrights, amended by Law No. 14/1968 and Law No. 34/1975, with the aim of imposing harsher punishments and penalties, in line with the growing phenomena of fraud and encroachment on intellectual and invention rights.

Recommendations

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1. The spreading phenomenon of commercial fraud in Egypt poses a threat to the purity and progress of our society. It should be tackled and confronted, not only at the official level, but also at the popular level;
2. Mobilizing all media channels to highlight this phenomenon and its impacts, while raising awareness of consumers;
3. Setting control measures and restrictions on advertisements, in order to verify the validity and accuracy of advertised data and information;
4. Considering crimes that touch the health and safety of citizens, as well as all sorts of commercial and industrial fraud, as dishonourable crimes. Names of culprits are to be published in the papers and in audio-visual media channels. Such cases of fraud are to be handled by special courts, where filing, proceedings and verdicts would be swift and easy;
5. Establishing a higher council for protecting consumers and encouraging the establishment of associations for protecting consumers all over the country;
6. Reconsidering laws pertaining to protection of copyrights and inventions;
7. Spreading governmental control authorities all over the country, not only in the capital and major cities, while enhancing such authorities with what is needed to implement their task.

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