

## **Spotlights On the Egyptian Industry**

On Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> May ,the Cultural Committee held a seminar In the training Hall ( Thebes) in the administrative building situated in Gesr El Suez.

The subject of the seminar was, "Spot Lights on the Egyptian Industry" The speaker was Engineer Taher Beshir , Head of the Egyptian Association for Industry and Environment, and ex president of the Holding Company for Chemical Industries.

**Dr. Engineer Nader Riad** welcomed the visitor guest, focusing on his history and personal experience , and his distinguished personality which shone during the era of the reform, together with his person which was treated as an expert in the age of the private sector and the decline of the public sector.

**Dr. Nader** continued saying , I can remember Engineer Taher Beshr when he spoke to us as students in the faculty of Engineering following the military setback that befell our forces, Engineer Beshr said," It is the time that you should be educated my sons for this is the time to learn, for after this period of learning the resources of knowledge shall differ, and many obstacles shall be installed , so preserve your learning for knowledge is the capital of mankind which can neither be stolen nor nationalized.

Engineer Taher Beshr gave a speech in which he set spotlights on the phases of development of the Egyptian industry, from the time it started by foreigners in the period prior to the outbreak of the Revolution, then came the phase of the Revolution and nationalization up to the phase of privatization and globalization .

He spoke about his journey with the industry in the Dekahlia Paper Company which was owned by a group of Greeks in Alexandria, and how he started his professional life following his graduation , the benefits he collected from the expertise of workers and employees , than his work in Edfu Company for pulp.

During the period of nationalization of industrial companies in 1961 , Engineer Taher became close to the political decision makers , he benefitted from his experience during this period on how to manage the state as well as means of organization.

Then came the period of challenges that faced him in his work from 1961 to 1968 in Kraft Company for packaging which was created by Aboud Pacha under the care of Al Nasr Company for Chemical Fertilizers , by using the excess water and power of the company.

The plant was managed by a German expert who kept all the work secrets to himself. At the Time Engineer Taher called all the engineers and chemists and provided them with books so as to teach the, "workers" and laborers while Suez governorate provided a place for training and learning, the training period continued for three months followed by trips for thirty trainees to Austria, and Finland.

The outcome of the training was flabbergasting, and ten of those trainees reached the position of members of boards of important companies, the challenge during this period was in fact to prove ones ego.

Engineer Taher Beshr proceeds saying , we gave in to the reigning situations until we reached the difficulties that we faced , but we did not cry over the changes of the age since privatization does not denote transfer of ownership , but the development of the state and the investment of the return, it

was a must to revert to privatization because the government system is known to be a bad producer and a loser in trade; yet the problem is that the government got rid of industry by just transferring ownership , and badly used the returns of the sales in reverting to what has come to be known as early retirement, and did not allow investment in the public sector, and all industries were functioning with a minimum production capacity except for the fertilizer sector....

The state also opened its doors for other productions such Chinese, haphazardly and without any planning.

In a funny but meaningful anecdote Engineer Taher mentioned several situations among which was what the Austrian Ambassador said, " you in Egypt are very strange , for everybody wears a watch but you have no respect for time...you put shoes in shop windows, and loaves of bread on the pavement!!!

In a question around the program for the modernization of the industry and the grants and resources attributed to this objective in Egypt , and how far can Egypt's capacity go to realize this modernization; Engineer Taher responded saying, we are not experts in laying out agreements for the good use of grants, for example Tunisia was able to modernize a large part of its industry due to its wisdom in exploiting resources and grants, the problem is that grants given to Egypt remain in closure within the corridors of the government, then it reaches the beneficiary when it is too late, or is consumed in travel expenses, and bad planning. Another point is that we in Egypt lack the concept of " Team work " as well as the dialogue within the team . What we need are leaderships that enjoy "a special Charisma"

At the closing of the Seminar, Dr. Nader Riad said, We are presently living in the age of challenges and struggle, or an age of defeat and victory, more than any other time, but this does not mean that he who is defeated should be killed and buried, but the defeated shall return one degree backwards , so as to work on an individual basis , or on the level of institutions , as mega units shall be dismantled so as to become small entities with lesser level individuals , while other small entities shall assemble to become bigger entities , as an example of this we have the field of Information Technology which is a witness of the Egyptian expertise overshadowing foreign expertise.

For Egypt despite the fact that it is going through an economic crisis at the individual and institution level , nonetheless specialized professions are flourishing/