

September 15, 1964

**Record of Conversation of the Chairman of the USSR
Council of Ministers N.S. Khrushchev with the Prime
Minister of UAR Ali Sabri**

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Summary:

Khrushchev and UAR Prime Minister Ali Sabri discuss the challenges of implementing socialism in Egyptian agriculture, focusing on the organization of production, the role of machinery, and the distribution of goods. Khrushchev emphasizes the need for large-scale mechanization to raise productivity and describes Soviet agricultural reforms as a model. Sabri expresses interest in learning from the Soviet experience, particularly regarding agricultural modernization and the integration of socialist principles into the economy.

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Record of conversation of the Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers N.S. Khrushchev with the Prime Minister of UAR Ali Sabri

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[handwritten at bottom of page] * record of conversation did not/was not to be [unintelligible] and N.S. Khrushchev did not [?review?].

Comrades V.B. Kuznetsov, V.Ya. Yerofeyev, and A.D. Shchiborin were present from the Soviet side at the conversation.

From the Arab side were: Deputy Prime Minister Aziz Sidki and Abdel Muhsin Abu an Nur, and UAR ambassador in Moscow Murad Galeb.

N.S. Khrushchev: Again I welcome you within the walls of the ancient Kremlin. I am glad to see you and talk with you. We are ready to hear all issues of interest to you and provide answers to them.

Your upcoming visit to the Hungry Steppe is very timely and useful. There you will see how reclamation of the land is proceeding both by machine and manual means. We intend, apparently, to transition fully to machine means by 1968 or 1970.

However, even now you will see thousands of machines there. Your trip is simply enviable and I am sorry that I cannot go with you. It is very good there right now.

How is the health of the President?

A. Sabri: He is feeling good. The President instructed me to convey his greetings to you and all the Soviet people.

N.S. Khrushchev: How is Marshal Amer?

A. Sabri: Good.

I thank you for the hospitality with which we have been met. I am very happy to visit the Kremlin for the third time. Every visit to the Soviet Union is always productive and useful. Of course, this time I am most of all interested in the progress that has been achieved in your country in the area of agriculture from both a technical and an organizational standpoint. We are interested in the application of socialist principles in agriculture.

As Chairman Khrushchev has himself ascertained, we are still in the initial stage of carrying out socialist principles in agriculture. At this stage, implementation of socialist principles in agriculture is one of the most significant difficulties in our country. I came here specially to become familiar with your experience. The span of my visit with you is, undoubtedly, very short, and I myself cannot sort out all the issues, but the experts accompanying me will remain here for some time in order to extract the maximum benefit out of your experience.

N.S. Khrushchev: But you will manage to get a complete picture. You will go to the wilderness and see a blooming garden. You will become familiar with the full organization, see homes and roads that have been built. Your Musselmen are working there. Comrade Rashidov will be glad to meet you.

A. Sabri: In addition, Doctor Aziz Sidki and I would like to take advantage of the occasion to discuss issues on the use of the new Soviet credit, about which an agreement was achieved during your visit to Egypt.

N.S. Khrushchev: I advise you to look over the house-building plant of Engineer Kozlov. I admire this creation of the human mind. I myself was much involved in construction, I suffered it, but what Kozlov has done is hard to imagine. Not long ago there was an exhibition of these machines and representatives of foreign firms were there. They were in rapture. We have also had inquiries from a number of firms with requests to buy the license for these machines. We will introduce this equipment throughout the Soviet Union. This invention signifies a revolution not only in housing construction, but in the construction of canals, etc. It will find wide application, although to begin with it is intended only for housing construction. Kozlov will show

you everything, even the 9-story home that has been built and the 16-story one under construction now.

A. Sabri: Thank you. Housing construction very much interests us. It is a problem for us.

N.S Khrushchev: It is a problem for all of mankind. We have this equipment – an innovation of which I'm proud. I also very much like the system which we used for growing cotton in state establishments.

It is impossible to go to socialism having such trivial land ownership as in Egypt and throughout the Arab world. Socialism can conquer only at a higher level of production. Machines are needed for this, but for them to work, one needs a large economy. What I saw in your [country] is at the level of the time of Ramzes II. The same hoe and ox. But there are more people, their civilization has advanced, demands have grown, yet such production is not in a state to satisfy them. Either one must freeze at the level of Ramzes II, or break down the old system and build a new one. Capitalism conquered feudalism, in that its productivity was higher, it was more progressive. We are fighting against it, but we value its historical progressiveness. Now, this very capitalism has become a brake on development. Socialism is going to replace it. In the Hungry Steppe, where conditions are reminiscent of yours, you will see your tomorrow, if, of course, you embark on that path.

Without machines, it is impossible to raise labor productivity. In order for there to be more, one needs to produce more. God does not throw rice from heaven. It grows on the earth.

A. Sabri: There can be no argument that machines help mankind. But there are not enough machines in order to solve issues of agriculture. Capitalist countries also use many machines. The means of organizing production is more important.

N.S Khrushchev: Yes, this is a question of distribution of production. Socialism is a means of production and distribution of goods.

A. Sabri: That is what we would like to become familiar with.

N.S Khrushchev: But on the Hungry Steppe you are unlikely to see this. You will see thousands of workers, hundreds of agronomists, houses with all comforts. There for the first time, perhaps, peasants have been plunged into hot water. You will see people who have grown up and become managers. You will see tractor operators, guys and gals, who are creating these valuables. You will see how cadres grow. I think you would need to select cadres and send them here for a season. Studying in an office is hard, one needs to study in the field. Your guys will become proficient at the work. It is necessary to select directors and let them work here. They would have a good example before them. You can take our system, then see how it suits you, retouch it. Indeed, the system is not a frozen thing, it is always changing. We ourselves are constantly improving it. In November, I will give a report at the plenum of the TsK [Central Committee]. Again we will introduce changes. We made a decision on poultry production to build 700 factories which will yield 24 billion eggs and 1400 thousand tons of poultry meat over 5 years. And we are doing this. We are also planning to make a similar decision, before the plenum, on pork meat so that we will get 9 million tons of pork. Large factories will be needed for this. We have sent our people to America in order to buy their models.

The issue of meat production – this is a question of the expenditure of feed per kg of meat. That is the main thing. There are factories where they expend 1.8 kg of feed for 1 kg of chicken meat. Even the fellah [Egyptian peasant] considers how much a chicken eats. It will itself run looking for feed. If it does not find it, it becomes hungry. That must change. It has been established that it is more advantageous to feed poultry to satiety. This is cheaper than keeping them half-starved. We will discuss all this at the plenum. I am supposed to be going on vacation, but in fact I have to prepare for the plenum.

A. Sabri: Apparently, special breeds of chickens are needed.

N.S Khrushchev: Of course, but a system of maintenance and a system of preparing feed is also important. We need a scientific approach.

A. Sabri: To whom will these factories belong? – kolkhozes and sovkhoses, or industry.

N.S Khrushchev: Industry. It does not have anything from agriculture. Agriculture will

provide the feed, while industry will process it. Factories will be built close to the consumer. It turns out that it is cheaper to deliver feed to the chicken than the chicken to the consumer. But we can continue a discussion on this issue. Mikoyan is coming to you now. Besides that, you need to eat.

Drafted: O. Kovtunovich

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