

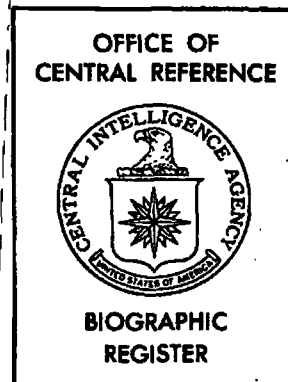
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ZANZIBAR

Abdulrahman MOHAMED (Babu)

Minister of External Affairs and Trade

As a result of the coup d'etat of 12 January 1964, which ousted the coalition government of the Zanzibar Nationalist Party (ZNP) and the Zanzibar and Pemba Peoples' Party and installed the coalition government of the Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP) and the Umma Party, Abdulrahman Mohamed, president of the Umma Party, became Minister of External Affairs and Trade. Mohamed (who adopted the name Babu) is probably a Communist and certainly a Communist sympathizer. Able, smart and aggressively tough, Babu claims that the banning of his Umma Party by the government, shortly after he returned from Peking in December 1963, was the final injustice which touched off the revolt. The government's stated reason for banning the party was suspicion of the Umma Party's involvement in plotting a revolt.



Formerly general secretary of the ZNP, Babu resigned from that party in June 1963, when the moderates in the ZNP refused his demand that his supporters be given six safe seats in the upcoming July 1963 elections. A few days after his resignation, he announced the formation of the Umma Party. Thwarted in his plans to obtain the seats, Babu attempted to form a united opposition under his direction, drawing on the radical factions--which were personally loyal to him--in the Federation of Progressive Trade Unions (FPTU), the Zanzibar and Pemba Federation Labor (ZPFL), and the ASP. With the immediate goal of preventing passage of two government bills requiring registration of societies and publications, Babu successfully proposed formation of the United Front Committee (August 1963) to be headed by ASP president, Abeid Karume--an indication that substantial solidarity had been achieved between the opposition leaders. Shortly thereafter, Babu traveled to Peking, remaining there until December 1963.

Abdulrahman Mohamed has been the mainspring of Communist activity in Zanzibar. He has a long history of close association with both Communist China and the USSR, has made numerous visits to both countries in the past several years and receives money from the Communists. Through speeches and editorials in the left-wing newspaper, Zanews, he has been Zanzibar's most vociferous critic of the West, and of the US; and he has been the hub of opposition to the US Project Mercury station there. It was believed that he planned and initiated the arson attack on the American Consulate in August 1961 and was behind the subsequent attempts on the consulate and other buildings in April and May 1962.

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Abdulrahman MOHAMED (Babu) (cont.)

A Somali Arab, Babu was born 22 September 1924. He went to Britain in 1951 to study journalism at Regent Street Polytechnic, but attended evening classes only when he had insufficient money for drink. He first came to notice in 1951 as a Communist sympathizer and, by 1953, was submitting articles revealing his pro-Communist attitude to the pro-ZNP newspaper, Mwongozi, as well as to other publications. Two years later he had achieved sufficient prominence to be appointed chairman of the East Africa Committee of the Communist-penetrated Movement for Colonial Freedom; he may also have become a member of the Communist Party of Great Britain about this time. Babu returned to Zanzibar in May 1957 and became a member of the Youth's Own Union, bringing his pro-Communist convictions to bear on that organization. Joining the ZNP, he became its principal propagandist and, by 1958, his political fortunes had risen with the ascendancy of the ZNP. His first contact with the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) occurred in October 1958, when he offered his services in the dissemination of their propaganda; in 1959 he visited WFTU headquarters in Prague. In November 1959, in his capacity as general secretary of the ZNP, he secured the agreement of UAR authorities to the establishment of an office in Cairo. This office, managed by his proteges, was instrumental in assisting Zanzibaris to obtain Iron Curtain scholarships, and in maintaining contact with the Chinese Communists, through the Chinese diplomatic mission in Cairo. In January 1960 Babu visited the USSR and Red China, indulging in violent attacks upon Britain and America while there; in October of that year, he stopped off in East Germany on a return visit to Russia. In 1960 and 1961 he established ZNP offices in London and Havana and staffed both with persons loyal to himself. Babu was defeated in the January 1961 Zanzibar elections because ZNP leaders had placed him in a constituency where he had little chance of winning. That same month he went to a meeting of the Communist-front International Organization of Journalists in Baden, Austria, and upon returning to Zanzibar, became the East African correspondent of the New China News Agency. The following July he attended an anti-atomic bomb conference held in Japan and strongly supported the resolution that none of the countries represented there should permit American consulates or bases to be established in their territories.

In December 1961, the Zanzibar Government, under the terms of the State of Emergency legislation and because of an inflammatory issue of Zanews, arrested Babu for sedition. The arrest resulted in a conviction and fine in April 1962. The following month Babu was again arrested on a charge of sedition and sentenced to 15 months imprisonment; he was released early, in April 1963. Besides Zanews, Babu has been associated with several other publications. In 1961 he ran a ZNP-owned Swahili paper, Umma. He is presently a member of the Executive Committee of the

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Abdulrahman MOHAMED (Babu) (cont.)

All-Zanzibar Journalists Organization. Babu is on the editorial board of a monthly illustrated magazine entitled Revolution Afrique Amerique Latine Asie, a pro-Chinese Communist publication, printed in Switzerland.

Babu speaks English. He has a family.

FA:ljc

21 January 1964

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