

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Division of Biographic InformationMARA'I, al-SayyidEGYPT

Al-Sayyid Mara'i, Minister of State for Agrarian Reform since June 1956, was given the additional portfolio of Minister of Agriculture on November 3, 1957. At the same time, the Liberation Province Board was dissolved and the affairs of the Liberation Province were placed under Mara'i's authority in his capacity as Minister of Agrarian Reform. Competent, conservative, pro-West, Mara'i is a former member of the Chamber of Deputies. Embassy reports indicate that, as a business man and a "hard core conservative", it is unlikely that he will be used by the Communists. A report of July 1956 (B-3) indicates that 'Abd al-Nasir has considerable respect for Mara'i's intelligence and personal courage. The same report stated that Mara'i is a cousin and "lifelong personal enemy" of Muhammad Abu Nusayr, Minister of Commerce.

Mara'i was born August 26, 1914 and was graduated from the Faculty of Agriculture, Cairo University in 1937. For some years he was engaged in private enterprise. In 1945 he was elected to Parliament; after serving a four-year term he returned to private business in 1949. In 1952 the Revolutionary Government appointed Mara'i Director of the Supreme Agrarian Reform Committee, which was created to implement the 1952 Agrarian Reform Law (for redistributing and reclaiming land). In 1955 Mara'i was elected Chairman and Managing Director of the Agricultural Credit and Cooperative Bank; at the same time he retained his post on the Supreme Agrarian Reform Committee.

Mara'i is married and has three children.

IRC:BI:VHMacLean:mh

November 12, 1957

SECRET