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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP
INTELLIGENCE REPORT

COUNTRY Egypt

DATE: 25X1X6g

SUBJECT Communist Party

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1. The following members of the self-proclaimed Communist Party in Egypt are reported to be party leaders with authority in the order listed:

Anwar Khamil	Egyptian nationality
Georges Hamsin	" "
Zaky Salamah	" "
Ramsi Yunan	" "
Unidentified Jew (Syrian origin)	" "

2. The above-named persons hold weekly meetings, usually on Thursday nights, changing meeting places each week. They claim that they are the responsible directors of all Communist activity in Egypt. They admit that there are minor dissident factions among the Communists in Egypt who refuse to acknowledge their leadership and authority, but they regard them as inconsequential as well as irresponsible. They represent themselves to be doctrinaire Communists. They admit there have been differences between Trotskyists and what they term "Stalinists" within their own leadership, but that a reconciliation has taken place in order to achieve unity in general aims and purposes.

3. The following represents statements and claims of party members:

(a) The total membership of the Communist Party in Egypt is about 1,200, with 60 per cent in Cairo, 20 per cent in Alexandria, and 20 per cent in the rest of Egypt, chiefly Suez, Port Said and Tanta. Party headquarters have always been and still are in Cairo. In Upper Egypt, there are only scattered members.

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(b) The Communists in Egypt are impartial as to racial or religious backgrounds of members. It is estimated that the party includes about 180 Jews of Egyptian nationality and of all origins, chiefly French. The balance of 1,020 are also almost entirely of Egyptian nationality, with approximately 15 per cent Italian, French, Greek and other usual Middle East origins. The remainder are Arabs of which less than 20 per cent are Moslems. The average age of members is 25 to 30 years. Few students, as such, are members.

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- (c) The party is now weak and loosely organized, mainly owing to rigid government suppression, but also because of lack of funds. The party finances itself through member contributions. About a year ago, a small money contribution was received from the Communist group in Beirut, but none has been received since. The party at present is not receiving any financial assistance from any outside source, other than from its own members.
- (d) The party was forced to discontinue its one weekly and one monthly publication because of lack of funds. Main current activities include organizing new so-called "cadres", word-of-mouth propaganda and occasional pamphlet campaigns, but only when enough money can be raised from members for the purpose. Pamphlets are printed in Cairo, edited and published by Ramzi Yunan, with the assistance of Georges Henein.
- (e) The party occasionally receives Communist literature smuggled into Egypt by a Beirut Communist group. This literature is generally in the form of pamphlets, and is published and edited in Beirut, although some literature is believed to have originated in Paris. The party in Egypt thus far has not been able to reciprocate, i.e., send some of its own pamphlets to Lebanon or any other place outside Egypt, for the following reasons: only a limited quantity of material for its own use; close police surveillance; strict border inspections and customs efficiency; weak organization and lack of personnel who would be able to effect such distribution.
- (f) The party has not been involved in any manner, either officially or unofficially, with recent student disorders, as such, in Egypt. Recent student demonstrations are regarded by the party as of a purely political nature. The party did, however, help plan and support one riot in March 1946. (No other details obtainable).
- (g) The Communist Party is in no way connected with the Wafd, either at present or in the past. Nahhas Pasha is regarded as antagonistic toward Communist aims and ideals as evidenced by his arrests of members (including Anwar Khalil) and his campaigns against Communists generally.
- (h) The Communists are neither backed by nor affiliated with any political party in Egypt.
- (i) It is reported that a member of the Cairo headquarters call approached Sokolov, secretary of the Soviet Legation in Cairo, with a request for funds, or any other possible support. He was turned down by Sokolov, who stated: "The Soviet Legation is not interested in supporting any local party as it is doubted if the Communist Party in Egypt will warrant such support for at least twenty years."

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- (j) The two wealthiest Egyptian Communists, who contribute the biggest share of funds, are Georges Henein and Henri Curiel, the latter presently under arrest with twelve followers. The party believes Curiel was selected for arrest mainly because: (a) he is a Jew; (b) he is well-known, wealthy, very active, and has a past record; hence, he is a conspicuous example.
- (k) The party would welcome a trial of Curiel and his associates, or any Communist, on charges of being a Communist, but believe that the government is afraid to bring the Communist matter into the open.
- (l) Curiel frequently works independently of the so-called headquarters cell and claims the party leadership in his own name. This causes some suspicion among other members that he is in direct contact with Paris Communists (Thorez was mentioned by name, in this connection). It is also suspected that Curiel perhaps even receives funds from France to supplement his own money.
- (m) In 1944, Fathi al-Ramli, a member of the Communist Party, ran for election to Parliament as a Socialist. He needed 200 Egyptian pounds for his campaign; LE 150 to post in order to stand as a candidate. He put up LE 70 of his own money. Other members raised LE 30. Georges Henein put up the balance, LE 100. He was badly defeated and members felt he made a poor campaign, lost chiefly because he was a poor and unconvincing speaker.

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