

# FIELD INFORMATION REPORT

CLASSIFICATION OF SOURCE: A: Completely reliable. B: Usually reliable. C: Fairly reliable. D: Not usually reliable. E: Not reliable. (Applied as appropriate to doubtful honesty or loyalty, regardless of their competence). F: Reliability cannot be judged (Applied to subjects of doubtful loyalty).

CLASSIFICATION OF INFORMATION: 1: Confirmed by other independent and reliable sources. 2: Probably true. 3: Fairly true. 4: Possible. 5: Unlikely. 6: Not true. 7: Documentary: Based on original document.

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SOURCE: Well-informed German rightist in touch with Germans in Cairo (C)

Appraisal of Content: 3

1. Dr. Johann von Leers, <sup>aka [unclear] [unclear] 1)</sup> who went to Cairo from Buenos Aires in 1956 at the suggestion of Dr. Hassan A. Fakoussa, Arab League representative in Bonn, has still not succeeded in establishing a really important position for himself, although he has extensive contacts throughout Cairo. He is in touch with the Egyptian Ministry of Information and with the Arab League and with persons of varying degrees of influence, but in general he has little entree beyond a few not too important individuals. His sponsor, since Fakoussa went to Bonn, is Dr. Tawfik Bakri, a closer negro from the Sudan who is a friend of Fakoussa's from school days in Alexandria.
2. Leers supports himself by a number of activities:
  - a. He is a translator for the Egyptian Office of Information and Press in Hahmad Bey Bastuni Street. After the door of the West German Embassy was slammed in his face, Leers ceased to visit this office personally, conducting his business with it through his daughter Gesine. The person with whom he deals in this office is its chief, Schapihi (fnu), who also has some influence in the political department of the Cairo radio.
  - b. He is an instructor in languages at the Language School for students attached to Cairo University and also gives lectures on history of literature as a guest professor. This position is not too secure and he has to work constantly to maintain it.
  - c. He does translation work for Dr. Bakri in the Arab League, but for this he has not been paid since October 1956.

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- d. He is editing a book for an American of Jewish background, Lilienfeld (fnu), entitled What Price for Israel? (Welcher Preis fuer Israel?), which is to be brought out by the Arab League and Egypt. Lilienfeld got 6000 Egyptian pounds for it, of which the Arab League paid 1500, the Egyptians 2000, Syria 1200, and persons unknown the rest.
3. In addition to these professional contacts, Leers is in touch with a number of persons for whom he does occasional work. These include:
  - a. Dr. Mahmud Salih, head of the Anti-Zionist Movement in Cairo,<sup>2</sup> who has his offices at 14 Street of 26 July, Mairo-Meadi. Salih and Leers have been in contact for many years.
  - b. The Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, El Hussaini, in Cairo-Heliopolis. The Mufti is working especially with Morocco and Algeria and to a lesser extent with Yemen and Pakistan, with the primary aims of strengthening his spiritual leadership and extracting full value from it for political purposes. He is losing importance in Egypt however, since Nasser consults him less and less frequently. Leers' contact with him is primarily intellectual, and this is declining because of the Mufti's preoccupation with his political and religious affairs.
4. In early October 1957, Leers was trying to locate former tank officers in West Germany who would be willing to work in the Arab area. He was unwilling to state exactly where they would be employed, but his general statements indicated that it would probably be Algeria and Yemen. Although he did not state that this was the case, the work appeared to be undertaken at the request of the Mufti.
5. During September a German named Ernst von Kayser arrived in Cairo claiming to have been a colleague of Otto Skorzeny in Madrid and to have had to leave West Germany because of his opposition sentiments. He said that he was writing a book and brought along a secretary (but without a typewriter). Mrs. von Leers feels that this von Kayser is trying to use von Leers for an introduction to the Arab League and the Egyptian offices to collect information. His descriptions of his background have been very sketchy, and questions of his home, Osnabrueck, he counters with statements that he has been abroad so long he does not know the situation.
6. Leers has consistently refused to undertake any work for West German political parties. He advocates that the West German nationalist opposition groups establish direct contact with the leadership of the USSR and believes that country will be willing to conclude an agreement to withdraw from a unified Germany and restore the areas turned over to the Poles. The East German technicians and workers who have been in Cairo and other Egyptian areas for several months he considers not Communists but forced to represent themselves as such for protection. He also considers that West German nationalists such as Joachim Nehring and Georg Ebrecht and the Nationale Rundschau are justified in taking funds from East Germany for their activities if they expend them properly. He has for years written articles against Communism, but his present attitude is that there is no danger of Communist infiltration and subversion of the Near East because the Mohammedan religion protects the Arabs against a foreign ideology.
7. Part of Leers political attitude is apparently due to his conversion to Islam, which was accompanied by a change in his name to Dr. Omar Amin von Leers. He is becoming more and more a religious zealot, even to the extent of advocating an expansion of Islam in Europe in order

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to bring about stronger unity through a common religion. This expansion he believes can come not only from contact with the Arabs in the Near East and Africa but with Islamic elements in the USSR. The results he envisions as the formation of a political bloc against which neither East nor West could prevail. Leading Egyptian nationalists, however, disapprove of Leers' conversion.

8. In all his activities, <sup>von</sup> Leers is assisted most actively by his 20-year old daughter Gessing. She speaks Spanish, French, and English, and is learning Arabic; she expects to become secretary to the Arabian ambassador in Cairo. Mrs. von Leers is obsessed with astrology and takes little part in her husband's work.
9. Although von Leers has no great importance among the Arabs, he is useful to various persons and groups for his wide knowledge. He is unlikely to achieve any position of stature because his manner is somewhat too pressing for the Arabs. As a prolific and industrious writer, however, he has a world-wide circle of acquaintances, whom he is now trying to induce to work for the Arab cause.
1. Field Comment: For a previous report on Leers activities, see EGF-2116.
  2. Field Comment: For a discussion of this group, see EGF-2438.