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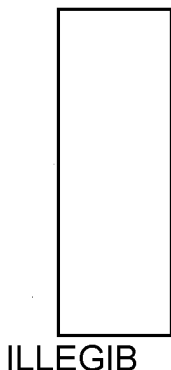
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SOURCE Akhir Sa'ah.

A CHALLENGE TO COMMUNISM IN EGYPT

[Comment: One of Egypt's leading newspaper men and political analysts, Muhammad at-Tabi'i, wrote a lengthy denunciation of Communism in the 14 January 1953 issue of the Cairo weekly periodical Akhir Sa'ah. At-Tabi'i, who declares himself to be a foe of Communism in the article, proposes that a group of neutral Egyptians be sent to Moscow to "find the truth about Communism." Such a denunciation of Communism by a man of at-Tabi'i's reputation could help to discredit the USSR in Egypt at this crucial time. The following are the highlights of at-Tabi'i's article.]

It was heartening to read the report of Mme Zaynab al-Ghazali al-Jubayli, chairman of the Moslem women's group that attended the Partisans of Peace Conference in Vienna during December 1952. Mme al-Jubayli concluded her revealing report with the following:

"It is a wonder that we should allow these Partisans of Peace to live among us while they continue to spread corruption and disharmony among our citizens and ignite the fires of discontent and revolt among our youth. The Egyptian Communists claim, and all their claims are lies, that they were the first to take steps for safeguarding our nation and all it stands for. We, on the other hand, must not rest until we have exterminated these corrupt atheistic segments in our country; nor must we allow the Partisans of Peace to establish branches throughout the country for the dissemination of atheism and confusion in the name of peace. We must pursue and exterminate them wherever we find them, for they are not worthy of conveying the sacred message of peace. I believe that it is in the interests of the Communists to wipe out Christianity and Islam, and it has therefore become imperative upon these two religions to frustrate this Communist conspiracy, which is aimed at all religions."

Mme al-Jubayli's report reminded me of the time in 1943 when the Allies were fighting side by side with the USSR against Nazi tyranny, and I had written an article in Akhir Sa'ah praising Stalin and his valiant people, who had withstood the German onslaught magnificently. Shortly after I had published the



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article, I received a blistering letter denouncing me as a Communist atheist from one who seemed to be a Hitler enthusiast at the time. I now wonder if that critic of 1943, who was so enthusiastic about German successes, might not be an ardent Partisan of Peace today; since it so happened that most Egyptians who liked Hitler and Mussolini in their heyday have developed the same liking for Stalin and his Communism in recent years. To this segment of the Egyptian population, Fascism or Communism is not an end in itself but a means to an end, namely, a quick ascendancy to power.

By 1945, my enthusiasm for the struggle of the USSR in World War II had reached its height, and I decided to visit that country before the war was over, for two reasons: (1) I wanted to take part in the Red Army's victory march into Berlin; and (2) I wanted to find out for myself, by watching the Soviets at close range, as to the factors behind the Communist triumph over Nazism. I was very sincere in my intentions, and I asked the USSR Legation in Cairo for permission to enter the Soviet Union. All my efforts to secure a visa from Soviet officials in Cairo ended in failure, and I finally decided to go to Istanbul in the hope of persuading Soviet officials there to grant me permission to enter the USSR. I again failed in my endeavors. But, while in Istanbul, my illusions about Soviet greatness and glory quickly vanished as I uncovered tales of horror concerning the behavior of the liberating Red Army in the small countries of the Balkans. I was appalled at the stories I heard from the refugees that came from Rumania, Bulgaria, and Hungary regarding the Communist reign of terror in the occupied territories. Back in Egypt, I wrote of what I had seen and heard about the USSR in Akhbar al-Yawm, and I immediately drew the fire of Egyptian Communists, who called me an Anglo-US agent, a favorite phrase applied by the Communists everywhere to anybody who does not sing the praises of the USSR.

While the above might all be a thing of the past, one cannot honestly say that our grappling with Communism in the future is going to be any easier. The fact remains that there are thousands of Egyptians today, among them the educated youth and leading intellectuals, who are completely in the dark as to the real aspects of Communism, both in theory and practice. More often than not, however, I have found that those intelligent Egyptians, and especially my colleagues in the newspaper business who seem sold on Communism, have either never been exposed to Soviet Communist tactics or have become the victims of the stupendous Communist propaganda machine. Therefore, no matter how one looks at the problem, one comes up with one conclusion, namely, that a great deal of the truth about Communism has been withheld from the Egyptian people.

One fact has become crystal clear: the Egyptian people must know the truth about Communism and about life under Communist regimes not only in the USSR but also in the other Communist countries. There is only one way to find the truth about Communism, and that is to see it in action. I therefore recommend that an Egyptian mission be sent to Moscow for that purpose. The mission should be composed of neutral Egyptians who have been known for their honesty, good judgment, and discretion. The group should be composed of Egyptian newspapermen, educators, and men of business and industry, who on their return to Egypt, would publish the truth about Communism.

Naturally, I would exclude from such a mission men like myself, who for several years have been fighting Communism and everything it stands for. I would recommend, however, that the following newspapermen be included in the mission: Fikri Abazah of the al-Hilal publishers, Husayn Abu al-Fatih or Muhammad Khalid of al-Misri, Ahmad as-Sawi Muhammad of al-Ahram, Muhammad Abd-al-Qadir Hamzah of al-Balagh, and Zaki abd-al-Qadir of the Akhbar al-Yawm publishers. None of these gentlemen has ever come out for or against Communism and can be counted on to relay to us a true picture of what they saw or heard.

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Only this way could we possibly know the truth about Communism, and the Egyptian people deserve to know the truth in order to make up their own minds on the Communist issue. Of course, there remains only one question mark in this whole plan: Will the USSK grant such a mission unqualified permission to perform its tasks, or will it close its doors in the mission's face, just as it did to me in 1945?

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