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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP  
INTELLIGENCE REPORT

COUNTRY Syria/Trans-Jordan

DATE: 25X1X6

SUBJECT Trans-Jordan Opposition Refugees  
in Syria

INFO. [Redacted]

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SUPPLEMENT



1. As a result of the Government's action in closing down the Trans-Jordan Popular Party (Ash Sha'ab), eight prominent members of the Party have taken refuge in Syria. They arrived in Damascus on 8 July 1947.
2. The members in question are:
  - Abdul Mahdi Shamalah, former Minister of the Interior in Trans-Jordan, and leader of the Party
  - Turqi al-Kayad
  - Isa al-Awad
  - Ahmad al-Najdawi
  - Salah al-Najdawi
  - Abdul Rahman Rusan
  - Muhammad Akhun Rashid
  - Dafa Allah Salah
3. The refugees were well received by the Syrian Government and President Qawatli has granted them a monthly allowance of 600 Syrian pounds.
4. These men have joined forces with Dr. Subhi Abu Ghanimah, leader of the Damascus-based Trans-Jordanian Reform Movement.
5. A joint meeting was held in Damascus at the end of July, at which the following was decided:
  - a. To form a committee for the direction of propaganda against King 'Abdallah.
  - b. To continue agitation for the introduction of a new liberal constitution in Trans-Jordan.
  - c. To demand the abrogation of the Anglo-Trans-Jordanian treaty.

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6. Rashid Isa, Secretary-General of the Syrian Communist Party, has offered Communist support to these Trans-Jordanian opposition groups. Ghanimah has already used the presses of Sawt-al-Sha'b, the Communist newspaper, to print anti-monarchist pamphlets on behalf of the Trans-Jordanian Reform Movement.
7. An Arab with good connections reports that liaison between the exiled members of the Trans-Jordan Popular Party in Damascus and those members who work secretly in Trans-Jordan is carried on by Farah Izhak. Izhak resides in Irbid and circulates in Trans-Jordan all statements issued by Ghanimah and by the Popular Party in Damascus. 25X1A6a

Note: The following background information on some of the above-mentioned groups and individuals may be of interest.

8. Source with good official contacts reports that at present the Trans-Jordanian Reform Movement is aided financially by the Syrian Government, but not by Russia. Ghanimah's group contains all shades of political opinion and is essentially anti-'Abdallah, rather than pro-anything. Ghanimah is therefore inclined to accept any alignment or assistance which will serve this opposition.

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9. Dr. Subhi Abu Ghanimah was born in Irbid, Trans-Jordan, educated in the Turkish schools of Istanbul, and studied medicine at the University of Berlin. Returning to Trans-Jordan in 1924, he became opposed to British-controlled 'Abdallah and helped form the terrorist "Al-Gaf Al-Aswad" organization to assassinate all collaborators with 'Abdallah and the British. A trip to Germany in 1932 impressed Ghanimah with the merits of National Socialism, and he became an enthusiastic advocate of the Nazi doctrines in the Middle East. In 1936 he supported the rebels in the Palestine outbreaks. In 1938 he again returned to Germany and, with the Mufti, continued his activities for a revolt against the British in the Middle East. When World War II ended Ghanimah came to Syria and there resumed his leadership of the Trans-Jordanian opposition.
10. Abdul Mahdi Shamalah is a member of the Shamalah tribe in Karak. He was born in 1887 and was educated at the Turkish schools in Karak and Istanbul. In 1912 he was conscripted in the Ottoman Army and shortly thereafter was transferred to the Civil Service in Beirut. When 'Abdallah set up his Hashinite Kingdom in Trans-Jordan, with British help, subject entered the Trans-Jordanian Government and held various administrative and ministerial posts. In 1945 he was Minister of the Interior. A source in Trans-Jordan reports that Abdul Mahdi Shamalah is at present under house detention at Ghor al-Safi and that it is his son Adel al-Shamalah who has fled to Damascus. Adel al-Shamalah is an active member of the Trans-Jordan Popular Party. He was involved with Ghanimah in the conspiracy to murder 'Abdallah and is now considered a tool for Ghanimah.

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11. Turqi al-Kayad is the son of Sheikh Kayad Pasha, a well-known tribal leader. Subject took part in the Arab Rebellion in Palestine in 1936-1939. He was a pro-Nazi during World War II.
12. Isa al-Awad is a Greek Orthodox Catholic who was educated at the Ottoman School in Damascus. He served in the Post and Telegraph Department in Trans-Jordan. Oddly enough he was among the first to call for 'Abdallah as King for Greater Syria in 1946. Reportedly he has no principles in politics and is undependable.
13. Ahmad al-Najdawi served with the Arab bands during the Palestine Rebellion in 1936-1939. He took an active part, with Ghanimah, in a conspiracy to murder both 'Abdallah and Samir Pasha Rifai, Prime Minister. The plot fell through and Najdawi was deported to Aqaba but was later released.
14. Farah Izhak, a wealthy Christian, is an active member of the dissolved Trans-Jordan Popular Party and of the Administrative Committee of the Irbed Branch. He studied law at the Law College of Damascus. He is extremely popular both with the people of Trans-Jordan and with the L.P.C. trade union workers whom he has defended and assisted.

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