Jordanian Communist Party

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The **Jordanian Communist Party** (**JCP**; Arabic: الحزب الشيوعى الاردنى, *Hizb al-Shuyu'iyah al-Urduni*) is a communist political party in Jordan, founded in 1948. Its current general secretary is Dr. Munir Hamarana. It publishes *al-Jamahir* (الجماهير, 'The Masses').

History of the party

In June 1951, the Palestinian communists in the West Bank, then organized in the Palestinian National Liberation League, joined JCP. During the years to come the main stronghold of the party was in the West Bank, and the party leadership was predominantly Palestinian. Prior to the merger into JCP, the Palestinian communists had opposed the annexation of the West Bank by Jordan. However, in 1951, that policy was reversed and JCP recognized the West Bank as part of Jordan.

The main leaders during the initial period were Fu'ad Nassar, Fahmi al-Salfiti and Fa'iq Warrad. The party gained influence amongst urban intellectuals in Nablus and Jerusalem. In particular, the party developed a strong position in the Salfit village outside of Nablus, from where many prominent JCP leaders hailed. Other areas in which the party was active were Ramallah, Bethlehem and amongst refugees near Jericho. The main party organ was *al-Muqawamah ash-Shabiya* (المقاومة الشعبية, 'People's Resistance'), a monthly publication.

The party faced harsh repression from the Jordanian state. On December 29, 1951, Fu'ad Nasser was arrested. He was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. In 1953, a legislation was passed that ordered forced labor for JCP cadres. However, the party continued to work in a clandestine way.

The party built up mass organizations, such as the Democratic Youth Association and the Peace Partisans. In May 1954, it formed the National Front, through which the party took part in the elections that year. In that election the National Front won one parliamentary seat, Abd al-Qadir Salih from Nablus.

The party reached the peak of its influence in 1956-1957, following the Suez crisis and during the mobilizations against the Anglo-Jordanian Treaty. In the 1956 elections, the National Front won three seats. Salih retained his seat, and Fa'iq Warrad won in Ramallah and Yaqub Ziyadin won a seat in Jerusalem. Following the elections, there was a brief opening for the party. Salih was appointed as Minister of Agriculture in the government of Nablusi. Prisoners, like Fu'ad Nassar, were released from jail. The party press could be circulated openly. Its main opponent at the time was the Baath Party, which also sought to make inroads amongst the secular sectors.

The opening would however become very short. In January 1957, King Hussein attacked the party and the communists were accused of collaborating with Israel. Ziyadin and Warrad were arrested, after having their

Jordanian Communist Party الحزب الشيوعى الاردنى	
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Leader	Faraj Al-Tameezi
Founded	1948
Headquarters	Amman, Jordan
Ideology	Communism, Marxism–Leninism
Political position	far-left
Website www.jocp.org (http://www.jocp.org/)	
Politics of Jordan Political parties Elections	

Symbol of the party

parliamentary immunities removed. They were sentenced to 19 and 16 years' imprisonment respectively. The party activities nearly halted, except for internal cadre schooling and publication of *al-Muqawamah ash-Shabiya*.

In the mid 1960s, the United States Department of State estimated the party membership to be approximately 500.[1]

At the same time, the party suffered from internal divisions. The acting General Secretary in Amman, Fahmi al-Salfiti led the moderate sections of the party. He stood for rapprochement with the Hashemite dynasty. He opposed guerrilla actions and expressed a will that King Hussein would take the leading role in the struggle against Israel. The al-Salfiti fraction supported Resolution 242 of the United Nations Security Council. Al-Salfiti was opposed by the exiled leadership, led by the party general secretary Fu'ad Nassar.

After the Six-Day War (5–10 June 1967), the party organization in the West Bank was led by Na'im al-Ashhab, Sulayman al-Najjab, 'Arabi 'Awwad and later, Bashir Barghuti. In the West Bank, the party started publishing *al-Watan* (الوطن, 'The Fatherland'). Under al-Ashhab's direction, the West Bank communists remained cautious of armed struggle, arguing that it was premature under existing conditions. However the changed political scenario in the West Bank would force the local activists to review their stands. The pro-Jordanian positions of the party and its ambiguity towards the armed struggle were becoming more and more problematic. The West Bank communists moved closer to the Palestinian liberation movement. By 1973, the West Bank communists supported the formation of an independent Palestinian state of the West Bank and Gaza. These developments strained the relations between the West Bank communists and their formal leadership in Amman.

In exile, Fu'ad Nassar built up an armed militia for the Palestinian communists, the al-Ansar Forces, in March 1970. In theory the al-Ansar Forces would remain under the supervision of the JCP, the Syrian Communist Party and the Iraqi Communist Party. In practice, the group would not play a major role, largely due to the passivity of JCP. By 1975, the structure was disbanded.

In 1975, the West Bank communists split in two separate organizations. The pro-Salfiti branch formed the Palestinian Communist Youth Organization. The group which remained in JCP was reorganized as the 'Palestinian Communist Organization', which achieved autonomous status within JCP.

On February 10, 1982, after much debate, the Palestinian Communist Organization was separated from JCP. The Palestinian Communist Party was constituted as a separate party, merging the JCP branch in the West Bank and the Palestinian Communist Organization in Gaza.[2]

The JCP remained illegal until 1993.

In May 2006, the party organized a "Unity Conference of Jordanian Communists", merging sectors that had left the party.[3] However, the main splinter group, the Jordanian Communist Toilers Party, did not attend.

References

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2. Palestinian Political Parties and Organizations (http://www.mideastweb.org/palestianparties.htm)
3. http://www.rezgar.com/debat/show.art.asp?aid=64056

External links

- Official website (http://www.cpjo.org/)

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