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SUBJECT: **The Political Future of the Sudan**

Professor J. C. Hurewitz of Columbia University has just completed a brief visit to the Sudan, February 21-25. During this visit to the Khartoum area he spoke to a wide cross section of Sudanese leaders as well as the ranking British and Egyptian officials, accompanied by the reporting officer. Professor Hurewitz made an excellent impression on the Sudanese, Egyptian and British with whom he talked and they were all impressed with his wide knowledge of Near and Middle Eastern affairs. The information he obtained and the discussions he stimulated have prompted a brief recapitulation on the political future of the Sudan, although it should be realized that his discussions took place before the fall of General Magoub which has dampened Sudanese enthusiasm for unity with Egypt.

1. Sudanese Opinion.

Professor Hurewitz found that majority opinion among the Sudanese favors independence, but an independence geared into a close relationship with Egypt. He was surprised by the depth of anti-British feeling. Although the National Unionist Party (NUP), the party in power, favors some sort of unity with Egypt, Professor Hurewitz found that the precise form of this unity has not been carefully thought out and no attempt has been made to define it. It seems clear that the NUP does not want a federal union and the closest he could press the leaders to come to a definition was an "alliance plus." The NUP leaders indicated that they first wanted to remove British influence from the Sudan and that they would explicit Egyptian help to accomplish this. They will face the decision on what their relations with Egypt will be when the British are gone. Despite the fact that the Sudanese are not taken in by the Egyptians completely, they feel more sympathetic toward them than they do toward the British. In a very significant statement made in confidence, Khidir HAMAD, Secretary General of the NUP told Professor Hurewitz that his party was wise to the Egyptian game but that they would play it for all it was worth to get rid of the British and then they would make up their minds about their relationship with Egypt. In general Khidir Hamad believed this relationship would be cooperation between two equal and independent states.

The Opposition, made up of the Umma and Liberal Parties is led by an independent Mohamed Ahmed MANSOUR, with whom Professor Hurewitz talked.

Magoub indicated/

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Mahgoub indicated as strongly as the NUP that the Opposition did not want the British to remain, but neither did he and his followers want Egyptian domination. They stand for a completely independent Sudan.

II. Egyptian Opinion.

Group Captain Hussein Zulficar SAMY, Member of the Governor General's Commission and the ranking Egyptian official in the Sudan, spent considerable time explaining the Egyptian point of view toward the Sudan. Zulficar insisted that Egypt does not want to incorporate the Sudan. In the first place, he claimed, the economic problems of Egypt are so pressing that the Egyptians cannot afford to take on the added responsibility of the Sudan. He explained that as a result of policy in the past and the slogans which this policy generated most Egyptians favored the integration of the Sudan into Egypt. The RCC could not fly full in the face of this point of view and it would take gradual education to bring the majority of Egyptians to the view of the RCC. What the RCC wanted was an independent Sudan which would cooperate with Egypt on such matters as economic planning, utilization of water, defense, foreign affairs etc. through a series of coordinating committees. These coordinating committees would have to have sufficient executive power to commit their governments in principle but the decisions would have to receive the full approval of the respective governments. Thus far, he admitted, Salah Salem, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Abdel Fattah Hassan and himself had done most of this thinking and there were many aspects of the future about which he was not sure. He emphasized Egyptian good will toward the Sudanese and the Sudan, spoke of his fear of British intentions, and hoped for the best.

III. British Administration Opinion.

W. H. T. Luce, Advisor to the Governor General on Constitutional and External Affairs, spoke extremely frankly to Professor Hurewitz and started his side of the discussion by saying that the British Government assumed that it was the Egyptian intention to dominate the Sudan. The British Government and the British administrators in the Sudan wanted a free and independent Sudan. He believed that this was what most Sudanese wanted. He recognized that there would be great difficulties for the Sudanese in the future in developing their own country. He admitted frankly that "the British Government has never spent a penny on the Sudan," and that the cost of development would be high. He stressed that the British administrators considered themselves the servants of the Sudan Government, and not of the British Government. His hope was that by working honestly in the interests of the Sudan Government the transition period would be orderly and that the way would be paved for future friendly relations between an independent Sudan and Britain.

Comment:

This brief summary does not do justice to the many facets of Sudanese life and interests which Professor Hurewitz covered. I have not alluded to the stimulation which he gave Sudanese leaders. In his impartial and friendly way he pointed out to them many of the difficulties, from the standpoints of political

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