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By *D* NARA Date *3/20/88*
F U R L O G A T C H

745 W. 00/4-654
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FROM : USLO, Khartoum

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

REF : Khartoum 102, November 14, 1953

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SUBJECT: Anti-Subversive Activities Ordinance Repealed

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The Anti-Subversive Activities Ordinance passed by the former Executive Council was unanimously repealed by the House of Representatives on March 30. As USLO has reported in previous despatches, this proposed anti-Communist legislation proved very unpopular in the Sudan. The main objection to it was, according to its critics, that it was too broad and could even be used to cover Government activity against the Opposition and that it placed at least a portion of the burden of proof on the accused rather than the prosecutor. In actual fact, however, the proposed legislation was merely a stringent law which would have allowed the Government to arrest and prosecute Communists. Oddly enough, this legislation was introduced to the House of Representatives over the name of the Prime Minister, but as soon as it was introduced the leader of the House, speaking on behalf of the Prime Minister and the Government, said that the National Unionist Party was opposed to this legislation and called on the House to repeal it. The leader of the Opposition Mohammed Ahmed Mahgoub, a distinguished advocate, then arose and criticized the proposed legislation as too stringent and the gist of his attitude was that the best cure for an attack on democracy was more democracy. A series of speakers representing all segments of opinion in the House attacked the ordinance. Of particular interest among these speeches were those of Hassan Abdel Gader, Hassan El Tahir Zarroug, the sole representative of the Anti-Colonization Front, and Mohammed Gubara. The latter two are believed by the police to be Communists while the first member of the trio is believed to be pro-Communist. The Anti-Colonization Front representative in a speech reflecting the complete Communist line spoke of the friendship of international Communist front organizations toward the Sudan. He insisted that Communism would not hinder the development of the Sudan but on the contrary would work for the freedom of the Sudan.

Comment

The repeal of the Anti-Subversive Activities Ordinance reflects the political simplicity of the NUP Government. NUP leaders are not fully aware of the Communist threat in the Sudan. Police officials and British Administrators attempted to explain the Communist menace to Government leaders but they insisted that they were politically committed to repealing this ordinance because of the stand they took during the election. As the situation stands

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now, there is no anti-Communist legislation on the statute books of the Sudan. The Prime Minister and the leader of the House indicated informally to the reporting officer that if they should become convinced in the future that there was a Communist threat in the Sudan they would introduce a modified version of this legislation to combat it. Unfortunately, virtually the entire Arabic press indicated that it believed the repeal of this ordinance was a good thing. Meanwhile, Communist activity has proceeded among the Gezira tenants and police officials are convinced that the repeal of this ordinance will be a spur to Communist activity.

Joseph Sweeney

Joseph Sweeney
United States Liaison Officer

cc: London
Cairo

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