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1954-10-18, Sudan, Umma, Egypt

SUBJECT: Umma Party Reaches Secret Decision Regarding Egyptian Interference

On October 12 a secret meeting of the Umma Party Executive met at the home of Sayed Siddik, son of SAR and President of the Umma Party. Four of the people present have informed the reporting officer that a far-reaching decision was taken at that meeting and they have intimated without specifically saying so that, if the Umma Party receives no satisfaction from the Government in its current complaints about Egyptian interference in the Sudan primarily through the activities of Major Salah Salim, it will (a) protest to the United Nations and (b) take steps which will eventually lead to a civil war.

Some hint of these decisions appeared in El Umma of October 12. In a bitterly defiant editorial this organ of the Umma Party criticized the NUP Government for allowing Egyptian interference in Sudanese affairs. The Egyptians, according to this editorial, accelerated their interference in Sudanese affairs after the ratification of the Canal Zone agreement. The British Government, El Umma claims, had full knowledge of this interference and paid no attention to it. "Supported by Anglo-American arms Egypt plans to force its influence and sovereignty on the Sudan." When this has been done, "the Anglo-American press and radio will mislead world opinion by explaining that Egypt was trying to restore peace in the Sudan." El Umma's editorial concluded by drawing the attention of the Government "for the last time" to this Egyptian interference. It assured the Government that if it failed to stop this Egyptian intrusion the Umma Party would take a step "that may result in fearful consequences".

It is quite obvious that Umma leaders are disturbed by Major Salah Salim's activities. Two of the chief Umma leaders repeated to me more or less the gist of what Major Salim had previously told me (see Khartoum's 50, October 5, 1954). They are very much concerned about the future, but while they say defiantly that they may have to fight, they apparently have no specific plans to organize a civil war. It would be most difficult to take any such steps without their actions becoming known to the present Government. From what appeared to be a swing toward independence the Sudan has once again been plunged into factional tension.

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LWC

cc: Cairo, London

Joseph Sweeney
United States Liaison Officer

JSweeney/ht
REPORTER

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