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SUBJECT: The Closed Districts Order

The Salah EL DIN incident, in which a former Egyptian Foreign Minister was prevented from visiting the South, served to give publicity to the Closed Districts Order. This law gives the Sudan Government the right to prevent foreigners from visiting certain closed districts in the Southern Sudan. In some instances Sudanese may be prevented from visiting closed districts. One potentially disturbing aspect of this law is that the Governor-General has the right to declare any area in the Sudan a closed district. Because of the uproar created when Dr. Salah El Din was denied entrance to the South under the Closed Districts Law, the Public Relations Office of the Sudan Government has published the full law. It is attached as Enclosure No. 1 UNCLASSIFIED.

Soon after the publication of this law, Egyptian Major Sallah SALLIM made the point that the Closed Districts Order had been raked up and re-introduced. So far as we can tell, the Closed Districts Law has been in effect all of the time and has not been rescinded or re-introduced. The publication of the law by the Public Relations Office resulted in various charges by the Sudanese that this was done to show a new amendment. As a result of this latter public discussion, the PRO issued a supplementary release explaining why the Closed Districts Order had been published. This is attached as Enclosure No. 2 UNCLASSIFIED.

Major Sallah Sallim and Group Captain Zulficar both gave the reporting officer to understand that the Egyptian Government planned to insist on the repeal of the Closed Districts Order. According to Zulficar the reason for this was that the Egyptian Government had been embarrassed by the Salah El Din incident. He claims that if the Governor-General had informed General MAGUIB that Salah El Din was about to visit the South, that General Naguib himself would have prevented Salah El Din from going. The Governor-General gave no advance warning to the Egyptian Government that he intended to prohibit Dr. Salah El Din from visiting the South, and as a result Naguib had to back Salah El Din. Growing out of the Salah El Din incident, there is a strong feeling in Egypt, according to Zulficar, and among pro-Egyptian groups in the Sudan that the Closed Districts Order should be repealed at least for the duration of the elections.

According to Group Captain Zulficar, Selwyn LLOYD, British Minister of State claimed that he would be pleased to abolish the Closed Districts Law with the understanding that the Egyptian Government would prevent Egyptians from going there.

J.Sweeney:ef  
REPORTER  
DECLASSIFIED BY *V.H.*  
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.5  
NND 823900  
DATE *9-19-86*

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not do so because there would be no way that objectionable British citizens would be kept out. For example, Selwyn Lloyd said, according to Zulficar, "What would we be able to do without the Closed Districts Order if someone like Lord BEAVERBROOK wanted to visit the South!" Some preliminary discussions, according to Zulficar, were conducted in Cairo which he believed would result in repeal or replacing that portion of the Closed Districts Law which gave the Governor-General the right to exclude Sudanese from any part of the Sudan. Gawain BELL, Assistant Civil Secretary, informed me on April 4 that the Executive Council had considered repealing the above mentioned section of the Closed Districts Order but had not reached a final discussion. Bell believed this partial and temporary repeal was likely but gave as his considered view that the Sudan Government would not agree to any complete repeal of the Closed Districts Order.

*Joseph Sweeney*

Joseph Sweeney,  
United States Liaison Officer.

Enclosures: *AM*

- 1. Closed Districts Law.
- 2. PRO Release Explaining Publication of Closed Districts Order.

cc: London  
Cairo

*gmc*

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