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 By D NARA Date 3/2/84

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January 6, 1953  
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SUBJECT: New York Times Correspondent and the Suggestion that SAR May Become King of Egypt and the Sudan

Albion ROSS, formerly Middle East correspondent of the New York Times, is now in Khartoum. He is on his way to the Union of South Africa and indicated that he would soon become the African correspondent of the New York Times. He did not originally intend to come to the Sudan, according to his story, but stopped in Khartoum because of the necessity of having a location for ten days after receiving a yellow fever shot prior to entry into South Africa. He has established contact with the Government of the Sudan and the PRO is responsible for him. I understand from William C. BURDETT, former Liaison Officer here and others, that Ross is a controversial figure and there is some question as to how accurate his reporting is--although the same people seem agreed that he is a shrewd observer. For what it is worth, he related to me the following story and said that in his view it was not fantastic and, despite obstacles, might come to pass.

- 1) When SAR\* visited Cairo, he and Premier MAGUIB had a lengthy talk, which is public knowledge. Upon coming down the stairs from this conversation, Maguib is reported to have exclaimed: "If we had had a man like that on the Egyptian throne, there would never have been any question about continuing the monarchy!" Ross says that this story has been widely circulated. He further claims that when it was told to SAR, the import was that SAR might well aspire to becoming King of both Egypt and the Sudan.
- 2) In discussing this episode with Ibrahim BEDRI, Secretary-General of the Socialist Republican party, Bedri told Ross he had asked the Minister of Wakfs, when he was here in Khartoum with Major Saleh SALLIM, whether or not it was true. The Minister of Wakfs requested a Koran and swore upon it that this incident was a complete fabrication. Bedri said on such a basis, of course, he had to dismiss it; but he gave Ross the impression that he did not really dismiss it.
- 3) Ross believes that in the event of no Anglo-Egyptian solution being reached, Premier Maguib might work out a formula whereby SAR became a highly respected constitutional monarch for both Egypt and the Sudan. By such a maneuver Ross believes that Maguib and SAR could make it impossible for the British to remain in the Sudan.

4) Ross pointed out that there were many obstacles that would have to be overcome before such a move was made. The most important was that, according to the

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the orthodox Moslems of Egypt, SAR was an heretic and would have to make some sort of recantation to bring about a reconciliation. The next most important obstacle was that the followers of SAM\* would probably be forced to resort to violence unless it was made very clear to them that they would be completely outnumbered. The other obstacle, as Ross sees it, to such a plan is that SAR's son, Sayed SIDDIK, is not the same calibre of man as his father, is generally considered opportunistic, and might not be thought a fitting successor to his father.

COMMENT: This whole idea may well be fantastic. I have not encountered it from any other source, but I am passing it along merely for the information of the Department. Ross impresses me as a man who finds his theory first and his facts later.

Action Requested: Will the Department please arrange to send to the United States Liaison Office in Khartoum clippings of Albion Ross's despatches on the Sudan which appear in the New York Times.

*Joseph Sweeney*

Joseph Sweeney,  
 United States Liaison Officer.

\*SAR ✓ Sir Abdel Rahman el Mahdi  
 SAM - Sayed Ali Mirghani

cc: London  
 Cairo

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