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SUBJECT: The First Government of the Sudan

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The first cabinet chosen by the National Unionist Party represents many compromises within the party. It bears the stamp of approval of Sayed Ali EL MIRGHANI, the head of the Khatmia sect. It is about equally divided between the pro-Egypt wing and the more pro-independence Khatmia wing of the NUP. Some NUP leaders who were expected to be in the cabinet were not appointed. In its final stages the composition of the cabinet was arrived at in a hurry in order that the cabinet could be formed to allow the "Appointed Day" to be set as quickly as possible. It seems likely that there will be some reshuffling and there probably will be new members added. According to the present legal provisions three additional members could be added.

Politically, among the most interesting aspects of this cabinet are:

1. The Ministry of the Interior -- The Prime Minister himself is the Minister of the Interior; he did not particularly want this post but it was extremely difficult to decide who should have it. The Khatmia supporters wanted Mirghani HAMZA to have the post. He himself preferred Education. The other candidates were Nur EL DIN, Yahia EL FADLI, and Khidr HAMMAD. Mirghani Hamza was opposed to Nur EL Din because he is not a good administrator and is one of the leaders of the pro-Egyptian wing. Almost all sections were opposed to Yahia EL Fadli because they are all agreed that he is dishonest. Khidr Hammad was opposed by SAM because he is not a Khatmia. The general feeling further, was that Khidr Hammad is young for this key post and that he should be kept as free as possible to devote full time to the party organization as he is the Secretary General. To solve this deadlock Azhari decided to take this portfolio himself and this solution was accepted.
2. The exclusion of Yahia EL Fadli posed a problem as he is a particularly strong party man with a great many supporters and an undeniable reputation for dishonesty. It required considerable strength on Azhari's part to deny him a post and some consolation will have to be found. Many observers believe that Yahia is more dangerous outside

the cabinet,

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the cabinet than in and if he is not given some sort of position it may cause trouble. The NUP leaders deny this and while admitting that a position must be found for him, insist that he is politically astute enough not to cause trouble.

3. According to legal provisions there must be two Southern members in the cabinet. The NUP exceeded this provision by appointing three. All were appointed as Ministers Without Portfolio. This has caused some resentment because the Southerners thought they were entitled to a specific post and it is thought that an adjustment must be made. The Southerner most people thought would be made a minister was Siricio IRO. He was not made a minister because the NUP intend to appoint him to the Governor General's Commission when they have rejected Ibrahim AHMED, the pro-Umma member.

In general it is fair to say that the first NUP ^{Cabinet} candidate is a strong one. The ablest members more or less in this order are: Mirghani Hamza, Ismail El Azhari, Hammad Tewfik, Ali Abdel Rahman, Mubarek Zarouk. The weakest member is generally thought to be Nur El Din, although little is known about the competence of the Southern members. The British administration is skeptical of the ability of all of these men except Mirghani Hamza. The background and point of view of the individual members is as follows:

Prime Minister Ismail EL AZHARI - (See Khartoum 158, January 13, 1954)

Minister of Finance, Hamad TEMFIK - The newly appointed Finance Minister is an elected member of the House of Representatives from Messellemya in Blue Nile Province. Hamad graduated from the old Gordon Memorial College in 1923. He entered government service and resigned for political reasons. At the time of his resignation he was the "financial expert" in the Ministry of Agriculture. He was one of the few Sudanese to achieve any prominence in the government's financial setup. A founder of the former Ittihadiyeen Party, he believed at the time in unity with Egypt in which the Sudan would have dominion status. He has not changed his ideas very much but now is more or less in the camp favoring union between two independent countries. When he left the government he was appointed Managing Director of the Watania Cinema Company. In this position he handled the finances for one of the most important Sudanese companies in the country. A man who sticks to his version of what is right no matter what the consequences, his resignation from government was a case in point. Another was his refusal of the title of Bey from ex-King Farouk as a protest against the dismissal of the Wafd cabinet. Now in his 48th year, Hamad suffers from eye trouble and must wear a specially tinted pair of glasses. A nasty rumor circulated at one time that Hamad was not mentally right. The basis for this rumor was that he had a severe attack of cerebral malaria and had one or two public "spells" before the malady was treated. An exceptionally hard working individual, Hamad was responsible for the request to USLO to provide the NUP

cabinet ministers/

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cabinet ministers with printed material on government and finance in the United States. From talks that the reporting officer has had with him recently, it is obvious that he has been diligently reading this material. Although Hamad appears to have a good grasp of local finances, he does not have extensive knowledge of international finance. It is significant that before the appointment when his name came up as a possible Minister of Finance, Financial Secretary CARMICHAEL volunteered to me that he thought Hamad Tewfik was an honest and able person who would make a good financial secretary.

Minister of Education, Agriculture, and Irrigation, Mirghani HAMZA - Mirghani Hamza was elected a member of the House of Representatives from Omdurman South Constituency in Khartoum Province. A graduate of the old Gordon Memorial College in the Faculty of Engineering, Mirghani Hamza served for over 35 years in the Public Works Department. At the time of his retirement he was Deputy Director and held one of the highest positions in the civil service ever occupied by a Sudanese. He has been a member of the Northern Sudan Advisory Council, the Graduate's Congress, and the Omdurman Town Council. He was considered one of the most prominent leaders of the National Front movement. Following his retirement, he joined a firm of engineers and architects known as Redgman Works and Mirghani Hamza Company. At the end of 1952 he gave up active participation in this organization to devote full time to politics. A man with an impressive bearing, Mirghani Hamza is respected by virtually everyone. He has a stubborn streak and is something of a fanatical Sudanese national. Because of his stubbornness and hardness the British often refer to him as "Mahogany" Hamza. Bitterly anti-British, in part because of treatment he alleged he received in the Civil Service, and partly because he believes that the British have deliberately held back the development of the Sudan, Mirghani Hamza is the leading Khatmia in the NUP. He is a trusted confidant of SAM.

Minister of Public Works, Mohammed Nur EL DIN - Mohammed Nur El Din is an elected member of the House Of Representatives from Halfa in North Province. A short man who invariably wears a tarboosh, Nur El Din is probably the most pro-Egypt member of the cabinet. He was for many years an agent of the National Bank of Egypt and retired in 1946. He has independent wealth, part of which he inherited and part of which comes from wise property investments around his native city of Wadi Halfa. He was Vice President of the former Ashigga Party of which he was one of the founders. When it split he headed up the pro-Egypt wing. Throughout his entire political career he has been an advocate of unity of the Nile Valley. The British administration in the Sudan imprisoned him several times for his pro-Egyptian activity. He is now Vice President of the National Unionist Party. Despite his wealth, many people in the Sudan consider him venal. There was some hope among these people that he would not be appointed to a post where he could gain financially. As one local journalist phrased it "He can take much from Public Works." Nur El Din has a very strong following within the party and there are a great many people who follow his words without question. He will undoubtedly be one of the major obstacles if the Sudanese people should decide for independence rather than unity with Egypt.

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Minister of Justice, Ali Abdel RAHMAN - Sheikh Ali Abdel Rahman is an elected member of the House of Representatives from Khartoum North in Khartoum Province. The new Minister of Justice is a tall, astatic looking man who always wears Sudanese dress. He is the only member of the present cabinet to do so. A distinguished authority in Islamic law, Ali Abdel Rahman was Sharia Kadi of the Southern Provinces. He is often referred to as the major theorist of the NUP, but this is denied by NUP leaders who stress his character and ability but insist he is not a theorist. He undoubtedly had a considerable influence in securing the affiliation of many Southerners to the NUP. He was appointed by the NUP to tour the South where he has considerable influence. He gave up his government post to contest the elections. A graduate of the old Gordon Memorial College, Ali Abdel Rahman is by nature a conservative. His appointment as Minister of Justice was well received on all sides. Chief Justice Lindsey informed me in confidence that he considered him an excellent appointment and he felt confident that Ali Abdel Rahman would respect the independence of the Judiciary. He is a close friend of S.A.M.'s and his emphasis will be on Islamic culture in the future NUP government.

Minister of Communications, Mubarak ZARRUG - Mubarak Zarrug was elected to the House of Representatives from the Graduate's Constituency. He led the poll of the five members elected to this constituency. A graduate of the old Gordon Memorial College, Mubarak Zarrug went on to complete his training at the School of Law at Khartoum University College. He is one of the most prominent Sudanese advocates and has a very profitable law firm. A tall, youthful looking man, Mubarak Zarrug is equally at home in English or Arabic. His first interest in politics was as a member of the Ashigga Party. He became one of the leaders of this party. He was also a prominent member of the Omdurman Town Council. Mubarak Zarrug is unmarried which is unusual for a man of his position in the Sudan. He supports a very large family as his father died just as he left school. Most observers consider Mubarak Zarrug the ablest speaker in the NUP. It was this ability which led to his selection as Leader of the House. He has not had extensive training in the field of communications although he once held a position as traffic inspector with the Sudan Railways. He is interested in this ministry and realizes the importance of the development of communications in the Sudan. He has traveled in Europe and has spent a good deal of time in Egypt. He acts as a liaison between the NUP and Egyptian officials. In a long discussion with the reporting officer just prior to the electoral campaign Mubarak Zarrug spoke of his interest in international affairs and indicated that if the Sudan ever had a diplomatic service he would be interested in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Essentially a compromiser in internal affairs, he does not believe in compromise with the British. He is as anti-British as any member of the NUP cabinet. Mubarak Zarrug possesses a facile intelligence and he is so quick that some of his intimates complain that he occasionally does not study his brief carefully, but he is clever enough to make up his arguments as he goes along. He is one of the few Sudanese leaders who has given much thought to the Sudan's role in the Middle East and Africa. Next to AZHARI and Mirghani HAMZA he is probably the most popular NUP leader.

Minister of Defense....

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Minister of Defense, Khalafalla KHALID - Khalafalla Khalid is a member of the Senate to which he was appointed by the Governor General. An administrator and an officer in the Sudan Defense Force, Khalafalla Khalid rose to the rank of Bimbashi (the equivalent of Lt. Colonel). He entered politics as a Khatmia member of the Ashigga Party and was one of the founders of the former National Front. He occupies the party post of Treasurer of the NUP. A cantankerous and difficult man, Khalafalla Khalid was the pro-NUP member of the Sudan Electoral Commission. It will be recalled that he was the only member of the Electoral Commission to refuse to sign the final report. An intimate of SAM's Khalafalla Khalid's access to SAM is through Dardiri Mohamed OSMAN to whom he is related. A long-time advocate of unity of the Nile Valley, Khalafalla Khalid is in the pro-Egyptian wing of the cabinet. His appointment as Minister of Defense did not please the British administration as he has been a persistent critic of the British. Most observers feel that if there is trouble between the NUP cabinet and the British administration it could easily start with the new Minister of Defense. His reputation as a soldier was more or less mediocre although he was considered personally brave.

Minister of Economics and Commerce, Ibrahim EL MUFTI - (See Khartoum 151, dated January 11, 1954.)

Minister of Health, Dr. Amin EL SAYED - The Minister of Health was elected to the House of Representatives from Dongola Constituency in the Northern Province. A graduate of the Kitchner School of Medicine, Dr. Amin El Sayed served for many years in the Ministry of Health and reached the position of Assistant Director before his retirement. Until shortly before the recent election he had never taken any particular interest in politics. He is a member of the Khatmia Sect. His appointment to the Ministry of Health was made because he is the only important medical man from the NUP who was elected to parliament. There is some question about the accuracy of his election (See Khartoum 138, dated December 29, 1953). The opposition claims that in this particular election the votes of the two candidates were erroneously switched. According to this contention, Dr. Amin El Sayed should have lost rather than won. This controversy has been referred to the Speaker of the House who is now conducting an investigation. In his service with the Ministry of Health Dr. Amin El Sayed had a better than average reputation and had few enemies. In other words, he seems to be a pleasant individual without great ability. In a long discussion with him one evening he spoke of the need for expanding public health facilities and referred to specific American publications in the field and went out of his way to indicate his admiration of progress made in public health in the United States.

The Southern Ministers: Three Southern members of parliament were appointed to the cabinet as Ministers Without Portfolio. Not too much is known about these Southern members.

1. Bullen ALIER....

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1. Bullen ALIER - Elected to the House of Representatives from Bor in the Upper Nile Province, Bullen Alier had a brief and contentious career as a civil servant. He attended Khartoum University College and spent two years in the School of Administration. He was appointed a Sub-Mamur and seemed to be continually in difficulty with his British superiors. A Sudanese official who served on the Promotions Board a year and a half ago that considered him for promotion and rejected him, informed me that he was not promoted simply because he was not a good, competent administrator. According to this source, Bullen Alier has a difficulty which is encountered among some Southerners, that is that in moments of crisis he is apt to go completely blank. In handling one or two tricky political difficulties he "went blank" at the crucial moment and his superior had to take over. At the same time the Sudanese source thought that he had ability, was popular among his own people, and seemed to have a feel for political activity. The NUP selected Bullen Alier to second the nomination in parliament of Azhari as Prime Minister.

2. Sentino DEMI - Elected to the House of Representatives from Aweil East in Bahr El Ghazal Province, Sentino Deng is a member of the Dinka Tribe. Now thirty one years of age, he was educated at a Verona Fathers' Mission, and also attended Kawjok Elementary School and St. Anthony's College at Busseri. He was a civil servant in the Department of Agriculture and served in the Lakes District. He is a Roman Catholic. He campaigned as an independent and then declared his preference for the NUP.

3. Dak DEI - Dak Dei was elected to the House of Representatives from the Central Nuer East District in the Upper Nile Province. He is known as an opponent of Buth Diu, the Nuer leader who is the Secretary General of the new pro-independence Liberal Party. Dak Dei ran as an NUP candidate. Little is known of his background other than that he is anti-British and pro-Egyptian.

cc: London
Cairo

Joseph Sweeney

Joseph Sweeney,
United States Liaison Officer.

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