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SUBJECT: The Case of Yahia El Fadli

The case of Yahia El Fadli is indicative of many of the present stresses within the NUP Government. Because it is politically one of the most important internal difficulties which the Cabinet has faced it is reported in some detail. In essence this case is that of a prominent member of the NUP who was not given a ministerial post and who felt slighted. He immediately set about to maneuver and cause dissension within the party thinking that by causing this dissension the cabinet would relent and make him a minister. The cabinet, however, stood firm and refused to concede to his threats and has in turn made it clear that if he does not abide by party discipline suitable action will be taken against him to see that he is not re-elected to parliament. Although the case is now for all practical purposes settled, Yahia El Fadli remains a dissatisfied man and he is still considered politically dangerous.

Yahia El Fadli was elected to parliament as a NUP member for Khartoum South. A founder member of the Ashigga Party he is on the NUP Executive Committee. He has a universal reputation for dishonesty but he also is known as a clever and astute politician. After a brief service in the Finance Department as a civil servant he went into business for himself. He set up an export-import firm and at one time amassed a considerable amount of money by obtaining permits from the Egyptian Government to export goods and then selling these permits to merchants in the Sudan. He has been mixed up in a number of questionable commercial deals. His present small fortune has resulted from marriage to a wealthy Jewess, an unusual departure in the Sudan. He is a fast spender and the current rumor is that he will go through his present small fortune quickly.

When the NUP won the election considerable speculation arose as to what position Yahia El Fadli would be given. One of the shrewdest observers on the local political scene known to this office stated that if Yahia El Fadli was not made a member of the cabinet the cabinet would fall in three months. Although this was an exaggeration, it was a tribute to El Fadli's reputation as a political maneuverer. Yahia El Fadli himself informed the reporting officer before the cabinet was formed that he would like to be Minister of Interior.

J.Sweeney:md  
 REPORTER

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When the discussion among the NUP leaders took place to determine the cabinet posts, Mirghani HAMZA and Hamad TEWFIK, the former the chief Khatmia leader and the latter the ex-leader of the Unionist Party, both insisted that Yahia be excluded from the cabinet because of his reputation for dishonesty. The NUP high command accepted these objections and Yahia El Fadli was excluded. An attempt was made to place him on the Sudanization Commission in order to get him out of the way, but it was decided that no member of parliament should sit on this Commission.

Yahia El Fadli then decided upon an overly clever maneuver to force a decision on his situation. It is generally accepted that the NUP will not confirm Ibrahim AHMED, the pro-Umma member of the Governor General's Commission. Knowing that this was the plan Yahia El Fadli then said that he and a following of some 15 MP's would vote against Dardiri Mohammed OSMAN, the pro-NUP member and the Umma Party would of course cooperate with them and the result would be that the pro-NUP member of the Governor General's Commission would not be confirmed. He seriously threatened to carry this through unless he was given a Cabinet position. This was an unwise maneuver on his part. He meant it only as a threat, and it is doubtful that he ever intended to carry it through. By attacking Dardiri Mohammed Osman he challenged Sayed Ali MIRGHANI, the leader of the Khatmia Sect. Dardiri Mohammed Osman is closer to Sayed Ali Mirghani than any other man and Sayed Ali then let it be known that he would not approve Yahia El Fadli's appointment to the cabinet and furthermore, if Yahia El Fadli continued with this disloyal type of behavior he would insure that he was not re-elected to parliament. The cabinet then held a session with Yahia El Fadli and made it clear that he would not be admitted to the cabinet and that he must behave himself. Furthermore, Mirghani Hamza and Hamad Tewfik, Ministers of Agriculture and Finance have let it be known that they would resign from the Cabinet if Yahia was given a ministerial post. A rumor then spread that Yahia El Fadli would join the Umma Party and become a member of the opposition. In a public letter published in El Ittibad, a pro-NUP journal, Yahia publicly recanted and said that he had no intention of joining the NUP and urged his followers to support the NUP and promised to do likewise himself. Here the matter now rests.

Yahia El Fadli is too astute a politician to push his case further at this time. Yet he has made no secret of his personal disappointment. Many observers in the Sudan believe that the greatest weakness in the present NUP Government is that it is made up of a great many different factions and eventually it will split over some disagreement. If such a disagreement comes, Yahia El Fadli will be able to exert influence. Although he claims to control 15 MP's, the NUP Executive consider that he could only control 7 including himself. The strength with which the NUP Cabinet rejected Yahia El Fadli's threat has been well received among the general public. In fact this case of Yahia El Fadli has reacted in the Government's favor. Yahia is in the political wilderness at the moment. Because he is such a schemer and very clever it is generally believed that the last word has not yet been heard. But no one seriously believes that Yahia El Fadli could bring the Government down in the immediate future.

cc: London, Cairo

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