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SUBJECT: RCC Branch in the Sudan?

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A behind-the-scenes furor has recently been set off in Khartoum by the partial public disclosure that some officers in the Sudan Defense Force (SDF) are trying to establish a branch of the Egyptian RCC. Newspaper men attempted to persuade the Minister of Defense, Khallafalla Khaleed, that he should make a statement in the public interest. Khallafalla stated that he was not aware of any crisis in the Ministry of Defense, but as he went on to expand this he let the cat out of the bag by saying, "I know there is something going on in the Sudan Defense Force which does not relate to either the interest of the Army or the interest of the country. On the contrary, these things are contradictory to the obligations of the Army officers who should be loyal and faithful. I will some day deal with these matters and will take action there once we are free of the important business now at hand."

Most senior SDF officers know that three young SDF officers are trying to start a branch of the RCC but they have not met with support. The Minister of Defense is now aware of this and he has indicated privately that he will see that none of these is given a position of authority. This whole development is so clouded with secrecy that it is difficult to obtain the facts. We have been able to find out that Salah Salim held a meeting with a number of Sudan Defense Force officers on one of his former trips to the Sudan. As a follow-up of that meeting he invited three SDF officers to Egypt. According to Lieutenant Shaddad) entered into a conspiracy to start up a branch of the RCC in the Sudan. Some officers claim this movement has the blessing of Prime Minister Azhari but there is no proof for this. The majority of officers in the SDF would oppose an RCC movement oriented toward Egypt. There is a possibility, however, if the political situation here should deteriorate further, that SDF officers might attempt a military coup to establish an independent Sudan. It is the succession of developments of this type that further complicate current political involvements in the Sudan.

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cc: Cairo  
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 London

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By VH, NARA, Date 9-19-86

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