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SUBJECT: Cabinet Reshuffle

The Prime Minister announced on May 5, 1954 the appointment of four new Cabinet Ministers: Yahia el Fadli, Mohammed Ahmed el Mardi, Khidr Hamad, and Ahmed Geilli. The first three are members of the House of Representatives and the latter is a Senator. All are members of the National Unionist Party; the first two belong to the Ashigga wing and the latter two to the Khatmia wing.

These appointments are as Cabinet Ministers and it is still not clear what posts each will have. At the moment Yahia el Fadli is Social Affairs and Mohammed Ahmed el Mardi is Local Government, both new portfolios, while the other two are Ministers without Portfolio. It is believed that when Mirghani Hamza decides which of his three portfolios (Agriculture, Education and Irrigation) he is willing to give up there will be a further redistribution of posts.

This cabinet reshuffle has been pending for some time and was only possible because Prime Minister Ismail el Azhari worked out a compromise acceptable to Sayed Ali El Mirghani and the Khatmia wing of the NUP. The compromise was that in exchange for allowing him to appoint Yahia el Fadli and Mohammed Ahmed el Mardi he would grant ministries to Khidr Hamad and Ahmed Geilli - thus maintaining the present balance between the Ashigga and the Khatmia. Some observers still insist that this reshuffle will eventually bring about resignations, but there is no concrete evidence of this as yet.

Ismail el Azhari wanted Yahia el Fadli because, although Yahia has a reputation for crookedness, he and Azhari work as a team. Yahia is the idea man of the two and Azhari in his cautious way sifts out Yahia's ideas, eliminating the impractical ones. Yahia is also a sort of political hatchet-man willing to do unpleasent tasks and take the blame for them. Mohammed Ahmed el Mardi is the political philosopher of the Ashigga wing. He has a keen brain and is able though ruthless. Khidr Hamad, the Secretary General of the NUP, is a Stalinesque type of party leader. He is absolutely dedicated to Sudanese nationalism. Although not himself a Khatmia, he is sympathetic toward the Khatmia wing, particularly in the sense that it favors independence rather than unity with Egypt. He is an able man in committee although his brilliance does not appear in parliamentary debate or in public acts. Ahmed Geilli was

appointed  
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appointed at Sayed Ali El Mirghani's request, he is SAM's personal emissary in the Cabinet and as an ex-police official it is understood he will report in detail to SAM.

The Cabinet reshuffle is a victory for Ismail el Azhari's patient maneuvering, and, in a limited sense, is a victory of the Ashigga wing over the Khatmia wing. Khatmia leaders have told the reporting officer that they accepted the reshuffle to prevent a party split but primarily because they are convinced the Ashigga wing will be destroyed politically by its ties with the Egyptian Government.

*Joseph Sweeney*

Joseph Sweeney  
United States Liaison Officer.

cc: London  
Cairo

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