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FROM : USLO, Khartoum

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

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SUBJECT:

The Political Issue of the Southern Sudan: Current Developments

1954-01-29, Azhari, South, Sensitivity

National Unionist Party leaders who form the present Sudanese Government are sensitive about their responsibilities toward the South. This sensitivity is further complicated by their suspicion that both the Opposition and British administrators are secretly trying to stir up trouble in the South to make unnecessary difficulties for the Government. Normal political opposition is often interpreted as a devious scheme to start a separatist movement in the South. The following recent developments have caused greater political discussion than usual about one of the Sudan's permanent problems.

1. The summoning of the Juba Conference by pro-Opposition Southern leaders (see above reference despatch) has continued to prove irritating to the Government.
2. Prime Minister Azhari has summoned a meeting of all pro-NUP Southern Members of Parliament this week to discuss Southern demands with the Council of Ministers.

a. Bullen Alier, Minister of Animal Resources, has led the movement within the Government ranks to demand excessive concessions to Southerners, such as the promotion of Southerners to high civil service posts regardless of their qualifications.

b. The Prime Minister hopes to work out with the Southern Members of Parliament a reasonable statement of their demands which he will make public and take a series of highly publicized steps to meet these demands.

c. According to critics of the Government this meeting was called primarily to prevent Southern Members of Parliament from attending the Juba Conference, but the Juba Conference organizers have postponed the opening to October 15.

3. Both the Government and the Opposition have been "working" on Southern members of Parliament who are notoriously venal. Out of this campaign individual shifts of allegiance are anticipated. Only one Southern Parliamentarian appears to be above bribery and subsidization, Benjamin Lwoki

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from Yei; literally all the others are reimbursed in one way or another by either the Government (through the NUP) or by the Opposition (out of the coffers of SAR; Euth Diu, for example, lives in a house provided by SAR.)

4. Renewed discussion has been directed toward the desirability of giving the South a larger degree of autonomy within the present framework of self-government. Although basically opposed to this because it believes it shatters the kind of national unity at which it aims, the Government recognizes the political advantage of handling the Southern problem separately. Furthermore the Government is willing to go a long way in the matter of concessions to obtain conciliatory Southern opinion. Umma leaders sincerely believe (and promised during the election campaign) in individualized handling of the South even to the extent of federation. The Communists are exploiting the disruptive advantages of excessive Southern demands.

5. Daoud Abdel Latif, the able, recently appointed Sudanese Governor of Equatoria has been suddenly transferred to become Governor of Bahr El Ghazal. He is to be replaced by Abdel Azziz Omer El Amin, also a Sudanese civil servant, with a reputation as a "strong man". Daoud's transfer is an involved episode which reflects the Cabinet's lack of confidence in him and a determination to control developments in the South as they think they should be controlled.

6. Euth Diu has become involved in a parliamentary defamation case which his adherents claim was flagrantly arranged by the Government to discredit their ablest Southern critic.

7. Khatmia members in the Cabinet are pressing to have the South informed the Sudan will become independent to allay Southern fears of Egyptian influence.

8. Basically, most Northerners consider the Southerners inferior. The venality and naivete of the Southern politicians has unfortunately served to reinforce Northern attitudes of superiority. One now encounters expressions of this, whereas formerly the expression of such prejudices was considered politically inexpedient.

9. NUP politicians are becoming skeptical of the wisdom of investing large capital amounts of Government funds in an unappreciative South, although the calmer heads among the Government leadership still recognize this is necessary.

cc: London
Cairo

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