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***The Growth of Nationalism***  
***in the Sudan under Anglo-Egyptian***  
***Rule (1899-1956)***

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## DEDICATION

*You loved us all  
With caring eyes  
You took it all  
Without any gain  
Your troubled heart  
Feels my pain  
All glory to you  
Man of Faith  
All thrones belong to you  
Man of pain  
You gave me life  
And even more...*

*To the Memory of my Husband  
Abdelkrim Khebouza*

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## ABSTRACT

Lord Cromer established the Condominium in 1899 after the defeat of the *Khalifa* and the reconquest of the Sudan. From then until the country became independent in 1956, Britain and Egypt were jointly responsible for the government of the territory which had been once Egyptian. The establishment by Britain of the 'highly effective' Sudan Political Service ensured, however, that control was largely in British hands.

The joint responsibility could only result in tense relations between Britain and Egypt, and although when the Sudan decided on complete independence rather than some form of union with Egypt, Britain was much relieved. The latter regretted having to abandon her *protégé* Southern Sudanese so soon. On the whole, British administrators viewed with satisfaction their colonial enterprise in the Sudan with or without the Egyptians, their nominal co-domini. Nevertheless, if the Sudan's independence was a source of 'pride and anxiety' for Britain, it was a painful thorn in the flesh of Egypt.

This research traces the evolution of national and political consciousness in the Sudan under Condominium rule. It chronicles the growth of the major Sudanese political parties, their alliances and their complicated path to self-government and self-determination. There is an attempt, all throughout this research, to survey the events and indicate the major forces which have shaped Sudanese political history from the Condominium's inception in 1899 to Sudan's independence in 1956.

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## GLOSSARY

<i>Ashraf</i>	descendants of the prophet Mohamed (P.B.U.H.)
<i>alim (pl. ulama)</i>	learned one, especially of Islam
<i>al Istiqlal al-Tam</i>	complete independence
<i>Ansar</i>	followers of the Mahdi
<i>Defterdar</i>	commissioner
<i>effendi</i>	formerly an honorific for a professional, an educated man; later, anyone educated
<i>emir</i>	an independent ruler or chieftain, a military commander
<i>feddan</i>	a unit of land measurement; one feddan= 1,038 acres or 0,420 hectares
<i>fellaheen</i>	(sing fellah) a peasant in Egypt
<i>imam</i>	leader; title denoting the leader of prayers in a mosque
<i>Ingleez</i>	reference to English people
<i>Jabhat al-Kifah</i>	the Internal Struggle Front
<i>al-Dakhili</i>	
<i>jallaba</i>	pedlar
<i>jihad</i>	war; religious war
<i>kababish</i>	Sudanese soldiers recruited from the <i>Kababish</i> tribe
<i>khalifa</i>	successor



<i>khalwa</i>	place of seclusion; denotes both a <i>suffi</i> retreat and a Quran School
<i>kuttab</i>	elementary school
<i>Maahad al-Mashiqa</i>	Institute of Islamic Sciences
<i>al-Almia</i>	
<i>Mahdi</i>	the divinely guided one, expected by many Muslims to restore Islam and to herald the end of time
<i>majlis</i>	a council, court
<i>malik</i>	King or “Sultan”
<i>Mamalouks</i>	a member of military class, originally of Turkish slaves, ruling in Egypt from about 1250 to 1517 and remaining powerful until 1811
<i>mamur</i>	a district official
<i>mudir</i>	governor of a province
<i>mudirieh</i>	province headquarters
<i>muffatish</i>	district commissioner
<i>mufti</i>	expert in Islamic Law
<i>nebi</i>	prophet
<i>Pasha</i>	formerly, a high official of the Ottoman Empire or the modern Egyptian Kingdom: used after a name when used as a title
<i>Sayid</i>	formerly a religious title of respect, now roughly equivalent to ‘Mr’
<i>Sharia</i>	Islamic Law

<i>sheikh</i>	tribal or religious chief or high notable
<i>sirdar</i>	title of the commander-in-chief of the Egyptian Army
<i>suffi</i>	Muslim mystic
<i>tariqa</i>	a <i>suffi</i> order or brotherhood
<i>umda</i>	headman of a town or group of villages

# INTRODUCTION

Within the context of Africa, the Sudan can be distinguished by certain features which set it apart and make it of particular interest and appeal. Its colonial history from 1899 to 1956 was unique in certain respects. The country was governed under a peculiar constitutional arrangement by Britain and Egypt known “erroneously” as the Condominium. For more than half a century – for fifty seven years, to be precise – both Britain and Egypt continued to claim their right of control over the Sudan. Although the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of 1899 emphasized Egypt's indebtedness to Britain for its participation in the reconquest, the agreement failed to clarify the juridical relationship between the two condominium powers in Sudan or to provide a legal basis for continued British governing of the territory on behalf of the Khedive.

The Agreement was signed in January 1899 by representatives of the Egyptian and British Governments with a view to organizing the future administration of the Sudan which had just been conquered by their joint forces. The conquest was conducted in the name of the Khedive of Egypt, who was recognized as the ruler of both Egypt and the Sudan, when, as a result of the Mahdist revolt in the Sudan and British policy in Egypt, the remaining Ottoman-Egyptian forces were withdrawn. From the re-built capital Khartoum,

all governors-general (all were British) wielded powers virtually unlimited by statute.

The Condominium Agreement made no mention of sovereignty but the British claimed that it had established their joint sovereignty over the conquered land. Egypt which was itself also occupied by the British never recognized this claim. They always maintained that the Sudan was an Egyptian province of Khedival Egypt. The contest between these two rival claims naturally affected the internal politics of the Sudan, especially since the Sudanese themselves rejected both of them.

This 'hybrid' form of government – Lord Cromer's invention – made the Sudan a condominium, or more correctly, a slave with two masters. In this respect, the study of the Sudan's political and nationalist development under Anglo-Egyptian administration is the main focus of the present research work. It therefore throws some light on the nature, methods and controversies of the two co-domini governments in colonial Sudan. A study of the past is relevant for understanding Anglo-Egyptian relations before, during and after Sudan's conquest.

Condominium Agreement symbolized not only the anomalous status of the Sudan itself but that of Egypt as well. With regard to the Sudan, Britain had given the impression of acting as Egypt's advisor and trustee. But the Condominium Agreement brought effectively into focus the fact that Britain did have interests in the Sudan. After years it became clear to the Egyptians that Britain was in fact determined to be permanent master not only in the Sudan but in Egypt as well. Unwilling to yield, how were Egyptians' efforts to resist British domination in Egypt as well as in the Sudan, and, in return, how

was British resistance to these efforts? There is, actually, no attempt, via this thesis, to detail the exclusion of Egypt from power-sharing in the Sudan after the conquest, but some references are made to Egypt's constraints all throughout the Condominium period. How was therefore Egyptian nationalists' interpretation of the Condominium Agreement? Why did Britain always refuse to give meaning to the Condominium in the formulation of its policies in the Sudan? In all, what was the nature of Anglo-Egyptian dispute over the Sudan?

When they were able to speak for themselves, the Sudanese, who had not been consulted about the Agreement, rejected both Egypt's and Britain's interpretations of the Condominium and, instead, wanted sovereignty over the Sudan to be restored to the Sudanese. At first, the Sudanese' natural love for their land and property was expressed through tribal rejection of all outsiders. Though crushed with ferocity, this primary resistance to the British, in particular, was the culmination of radical sentiments which stemmed from the deep refusal of colonial domination.

To begin with, as the present research work addresses the main question of Sudanese nationalism, it is essential to mention its nature and its particularities. As a matter of fact, the concept of nationalism is very large. It has been the subject of exhaustive research made by social scientists throughout history. Out of a wide range of definitions and interpretations, a few have been selected for the purpose of the present study.

In a general context, nationalism is described as a form of political mobilization that "emerges" or "constructs" the nation. (B. Anderson, 1983:56). Other interpretations of the concept refer to it as "popular sentiments

towards the nation” (Breuilly:1998 and Smith: 1994) or even as “the sentiment of belonging to a community whose members identify with a set of symbols, beliefs and ways of life and have the will to decide upon their common political destiny.” (Guibernau, 1999:14) Collins Concise Dictionary’s definition does not differ from Guibernau’s but it adds the colonial dimension. It defines nationalism as “a sentiment based on common cultural characteristics that binds a population and often produces a policy of national independence.” (1995:982) Thus out of devotion, loyal men die for their land and country. They feel concerned with its defence and protection from all invaders. This sentiment of loyalty to an “imagined community” or nation (Anderson, 1983: 6-7) remains the nationalists’ driving force to restore their sovereignty.

In the Sudan, modern nationalism can be singled as a Northern Sudanese one. The North’s culture and language are based on Arabic and the Islamic faith. The South, on the other hand, has its own diverse languages and cultures deeply entrenched in Africa. The North is on the whole more homogeneous than the South. Islam and Arabic have acted as unifying factors and contributed to its homogeneity. It was, therefore, against this Northern homogeneous background that Sudanese nationalism emerged and struggled to achieve independence. The “imagined community”, or nation, those nationalists fought for was essentially the one which would embrace all the ethnic, racial, cultural and religious diversities which existed on their territory.

Modern Sudanese nationalism did not appear until after the end of the First World War. It was an Arab and Muslim phenomenon, with its support base in the Northern Provinces. Educated Northerners imagined nation that held its territorial shape from the colony but its cultural shape from

themselves. Being Arabs and Muslims, they affirmed Arabic and Islam as pillars of the nation. Their nationalism, thus conceived, could foster a sense of national identity in the northern areas (but in the south, it had serious limitations, especially to the non-Muslim or non-Arabic speaking populations). The nationalist movement could promote among the Sudanese, mostly the Northerners, a sense of loyalty to the Sudan as a fatherland and a political entity, and it could mobilize them for the purpose of achieving independence and socio-economic advancement.

Although these nationalists agreed on the ultimate objective of independence, some groups preferred to seek the realization of this aim by means of co-operation with Britain while others preferred co-operation with Egypt. The resulting political relations were further complicated, on the one hand, by the existence of regional differences between Northern and Southern regions, and, on the other hand, by policies deliberately introduced and vigorously implemented by the British Government of the Sudan. The remote, backward Southern Sudan was, in fact, administered separately. Was Mac Michael's Southern Policy a reasoned approach to the problems of that region, or was it the very symbol of the British imperial dictum of Divide and Rule?

This thesis is not just an account of the forces which affected and were affected by the political developments of the Sudan from 1899, when the Anglo-Egyptian regime was established, to 1956 when the country regained its independence. By implication it uncovers, whenever relevant, Anglo-Egyptian dispute and rivalry over the Sudan and other developments in the international field. But throughout the study, a special emphasis is put on the internal evolution of the Sudan.

In this regard, the thesis is organized in such a way that it falls on four chapters, each intended to discuss a particular aspect of Sudan's colonial history. The early relationships between Egypt and the Sudan, how Britain occupied Egypt, and how she subsequently extended her control over the Sudan are referred to in the first chapter. The chapter briefly mentions the British era of expansion overseas; it talks about weak Egypt and weaker Turkey and it refers to the Mahdi's forces which could scare the Egyptians and British alike. The chapter ends with the Anglo-Egyptian preparations for the Sudan's conquest.

The re-conquest of the Sudan by an Anglo-Egyptian Army which culminated in the establishment of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium is thoroughly discussed in the second chapter. The first sections of this second chapter deal with the foundations of the new administration where the British, for all purposes, were the real and sole master in the Condominium. While Britain provided the leadership of the Anglo-Egyptian Army, Egypt was paying for it. How was, therefore, the real British contribution to the Sudan conquest?

The Government in the Sudan must have presented an imposing edifice, rock-solid, permanent, unshakable. But Sudanese resistance to it started as early as the Condominium. How did the Anglo-Egyptian forces suppress it? Was policy towards Mahdism the result of analysis or of the irrational vengeance of Gordon, the Christian adventurer? The remainder of the chapter surveys the colourful and desperate occasional risings of religiously inspired rebels, but how was the Southern Sudanese rebellion of a different nature? In all, how could the British rulers, through hostile take over, impose their regime in the Sudan?



Cromer, Kitchener, Wingate, and other politicians in London, Cairo and Khartoum introduced, in part, great changes in the lives of the Sudanese to gain their support. Did they deserve it? Was economic development slow because the Sudan had little to offer, or because the ruling class was suspicious of development itself?

The third chapter is entirely devoted to the evolution of national and political consciousness in the Sudan from the First World War until 1933, the end of John Maffey's Governor-generalship (1926-1934). With Egyptian influence everywhere on the rise and increasing anti – British sentiments, Sudanese nationalism was trying to find its own way. How was, therefore, the nature of Sudanese nationalism in the early 1920's? British distrust of the Egyptian element in the administration of the Sudan was as old as the Condominium. How this anti – Egyptian feeling of many of the Political Service contributed to the increasing independence of the Sudan Government in the formulation of its domestic policy? Indeed in the Southern regions, was not the consolidation of the Southern Policy, as recognition of “tribal genius”, a sentence of perpetual inferiority? If the Northern nationalists could foresee its dangers, why did the British rulers, with missionary support, continue its implementation for nearly 25 years?

In addition, the troubles of 1924, the assassination of Sir Lee Stack, the evacuation of the Egyptian Army and its replacement by an all-Sudanese force, whose loyalties were still subject to suspicion, the rupture of Anglo-Egyptian relations (and the Sudan's place in them) : all these will be discussed in this third chapter.

The rapid development of Sudanese nationalism during the Second World War was part of a world-wide phenomenon. The wide publicity of the Atlantic Charter, the ascendancy of an anti-colonial United States and many other external factors; all tended towards a quickening political consciousness in the Sudan. The *Umma* Party – or Nation Party - (with Abdel Rahman Al Mahdi), the *Khatmiya* (with Ali Al Mirghani), the *Ashigga* (the blood brothers), the General Graduates' Congress, the Unionists, the Independence Front, the Sudan Party, the Socialist Republican Party, all participated, with varying degrees, in the political arena, as collaborators with the British Government or as a mouthpiece for Egypt. The way some of these political organs claimed for more constitutional advance is detailed in the fourth chapter.

The chapter explains also how, in its struggle for independence, Condominium status made the Sudan a special case in the history of colonialism and decolonisation. A feature of condominium was uncertainty: while independence was granted to some dependencies, the Sudan's was uncertain a fortnight before it was declared. Undoubtedly, the overthrow of King Farouk and change of Egyptian strategy which ensued were developments of great historical importance to the Sudan. How was their impact on Sudanese politics? Did the Egyptians really mean to grant total independence to the Sudanese?

Though the 1953 Anglo-Egyptian Agreement was a victory for Egyptian diplomacy, the new regime's willingness to allow Sudanese self-determination rested on the plausible assumption that Unity on the Nile Valley would result. Then, how could the committed Sudanese nationalists, in their struggle for self-government and self-determination, escape from Egyptian hands?

As independence was approaching, the Southern Policy, so vigorously enforced, was to be simply terminated. It was decided that the Sudan would remain one. This decision comforted the Northern nationalists but bewildered the Southerners, mostly the educated. Confused, betrayed, or most importantly, feeling different, how could ultimately be the Southern Sudanese reactions to the Northern, Arab, Muslim Sudanese who would replace the “trusted” British official?

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **Historical Background: the Early Relations of Britain, Egypt and the Sudan to 1896**

There are, in fact, hardly any of the recent features of the Sudan Question which can be fully understood or appreciated without some knowledge of, or reference to, the past. It is relevant and necessary, therefore, to know briefly the beginning and development of the early relationships between Egypt and the Sudan first, how Britain occupied Egypt, and how she subsequently extended her control from Egypt to the Sudan.

### **1 . Egypt's Contact with the Sudan**

The ancient Egyptian records remain the main source for most of the knowledge available about the early history of the Sudan. About 2800 B. C., Egyptians of the Old Kingdom carried out frequent raids into the Sudan, and during the Middle Kingdom of Egypt, from about 2000 B. C., the Egyptians colonized the Sudan as south as Merowe of the Fourth Cataract of the Nile. This Egyptian occupation lasted about three hundred years. But, possibly

owing to the invasion of Egypt by the Hyksos (1) from Asia in about 1700 B. C., the Egyptian administration in the Sudan collapsed. When the Hyksos were expelled from Egypt in 1580 B. C., the Egyptians were soon able to reassert their domination over the Sudan.

At the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium B. C., the Egyptian Empire declined; with that fall, the Egyptians disappeared once more from the Sudan for a period of about three hundred years. But in 1750 B. C., a Sudanese Kingdom arose at Napata, near what is now known as Meroe. Sudanese kings conquered Egypt, and their successors, among whom Tirhaka (688 – 663 B. C.) were most famous, formed the 25<sup>th</sup> dynasty of Egypt. But in about 660 B. C., the Sudanese rulers were finally removed from Egypt by the Assyrians.(2)

Later, the Arabs conquered Nubia, and subsequently established their rule there in A. D. 651. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Turks occupied Egypt and nominally extended their rule to the Sudan. In order to have an adequate appreciation of the modern history of the Sudan, it is necessary at this stage to refer back to the conquest of the Sudan by the Ottoman – Egyptian forces of Mohamed Ali Pasha in 1821. Turkish sovereignty became effective in the Sudan only when Mohamed Ali became Viceroy of Egypt and extended his rule over the Sudan. He began in 1820 to enforce the sovereign powers conferred on him, by the Sultan of Constantinople, over the provinces lying south of Egypt . These sovereign powers were set out in a firman to him dated 13 February 1841, as follows:

Whereas, as our previous firman, we have confirmed you as Viceroy of Egypt with hereditary rights on specific conditions and within well-defined

limits, we thereby confer upon you the additional vice-regal rights upon the provinces of Nubia, Kordofan and Sennar and all dependencies beyond the frontiers of Egypt proper.....The exercise of such rights does not, however, confer any hereditary prerogatives .By the experience and wisdom of which you have given proof you are to administer such provinces and manage their affairs in accordance with my wishes to justice and with a view to ensuring the welfare of the inhabitants . You shall send to our Sublime Porte an annual statement of all the revenues of the above-mentioned provinces. (3)

Yet there is no evidence that the Viceroy had obtained permission from the Sublime Porte for conquering the Sudan; nor did he discuss his motives for undertaking this enterprise .His subsequent policies however – particularly in connection with building a modern and efficient army and establishing an Egyptian – Arab empire independent from that of the Sultan in Constantinople (4) – leave little doubt that he had two principal objectives . The first of these was the illusory one of finding gold and other precious minerals in the country. The other was expressed in a dispatch to the *Defterdar* (or commissioner), one of his generals in the Sudan, in which he asked for the capture of slaves. (5) It being impermissible for Muslims to enslave Muslims, the raids for slaves had to be directed to the pagan hinterlands of the Nuba Mountains and the White Nile.

In an address to the notables of Sennar who gathered to meet Mohamed Ali, the Viceroy informed his audience that peoples in other parts of the world were formerly « savages », who by instruction, labour and perseverance civilized and enriched themselves. The people of Sennar, too, could do just that . ‘Nothing is wanting for this purpose,’ he assured them; ‘you have a great quantity of land, cattle and wood : your population is numerous , the men strong and the women faithful. Up to the present time you have had no guide. You have one now: it is I.’ (6)

But despite the above indication of good intention, most of the sixty years of Egyptian rule amounted to inefficient administration because of the inferior quality of the administrative officers posted to the Sudan . This personnel was a mixture of Circassian, Turkish, European and Armenian officers of the Ottoman – Egyptian Army who were helped, at the lower levels of administration, by Sudanese *Sheikhs* and tribal leaders. Some of these officers were in effect sent to the Sudan as a punishment to crimes committed in Egypt, or for incompetence at home; they lacked ‘public spirit’. Though the rule of Egypt was unfair; yet it preserved the glorious appearance of imperial domination. Excessive and arbitrary taxes were collected only at the point of the bayonet. If a chief fell into arrears, his neighbours were raised against him. If an Arab tribe were unwilling to pay taxes, a military expedition was dispatched. Under these conditions, the seeds of discontent were thereby sown. Moreover, the ability of the Arab Sudanese to pay depended on their success as slave – hunters when there had been a good catch. Though the Egyptian Government had joined later the International League against the slave trade, they combined, however, indirectly to make money out of it (7). Nonetheless, the Egyptians of today point out that their administration of the Sudan at that time was not so bad as it is often represented by British critics. They say that the Egyptians were no more cruel and no less kind than most Europeans at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. They say that they, too, fought slavery, maintained law and order and did well enough in the Sudan to attract the attention of Samuel Baker who wrote in 1861 ; ‘ European tourists can now travel alone throughout the vast expanse of the Sudan with the same feeling of safety as Londoners have in Hyde Park in the evening .’ (8)

Judged by the standard of the British administration of the Sudan in the 20th century, when selected men from Oxford and Cambridge were sent out, the Egyptian administration under Mohamed Ali might have been worse. Egyptian inefficiency at that time was probably due to the fact that the Sudan colonial experiment was the first embarked upon by Modern Egypt. The first wind of rebellion which swept the Sudan in 1882 was partly due to this inefficiency and to the unpopularity of the Turko – Egyptian officials. « Under their leadership », according to Churchill, « the finest soldiery would have degenerated». (9) The Egyptians in the Sudan were not fine soldiers; they were the worst part of the khedivial army. They had been driven to the South; their training was imperfect and their discipline was lax.

Religious inspirations were also the source of this rebellion. The Muslims of the Sudan had been waiting for a ‘Saviour’ – the ‘Mahdi’ – that is the ‘Guided’ , to deliver them from political domination by foreigners from the North , and to preserve their religion from European intruders, whose ambition in Africa was beginning to manifest itself. A powerful force of Sudanese riflemen started to spread and began to regard the alien garrisons with growing fear and increasing hate. Goaded by suffering and injustice and inspired by the Mohammedan faith, those Arabs of the desert, and blacks of the forests thought they were fighting for the ‘glory of God’. They proclaimed the foreigners were the cause of all their woes.

Mohamed Ahmed, who could recite the Koran at the age of twelve, was the ‘Mahdi’ and the Man of this revolt. He was born by the banks of the Nile, not very far from Dongola, and he asserted that he was of the *Ashraf*, the descendants of the Prophet. He defeated all the forces sent against him, and became the ruler of the country. He was acknowledged as the elect who was to



eradicate evil and corruption not only from the Sudan but from the face of the earth . The Mahdi showed remarkable skill in manoeuvre and organization; and under his able leadership, the apparently minor rebellion was rapidly transformed into a « *Jihad* » and a ‘nation – wide revolution’. The consequences, both for Egypt and the Sudan, were great.

Pressed by the Mahdists forces, the British who had occupied Egypt since 1882 asked Egypt, through Sir Evelyn Baring, later Lord Cromer (10), to withdraw from the Sudan. The Egyptian Prime Minister, Sherif Pasha declined to comply for several reasons. The most important ones were that such a step would strengthen the prestige of the ‘false prophet’ and undermine loyalty to Egypt. It would also strip Egypt of her natural frontiers; the Sudan had to remain Egyptian. Add to this, despite alleged Egyptian inefficient administration, this territory had become part of ‘the civilized world’ thanks to Egyptian efforts which had enabled European firms to operate in the Sudan. These efforts also helped Christian missions to settle in the Sudan. But Sir Evelyn Baring was determined and warned the Khedive that Ministers who refused the instructions of Her Majesty’s Government had to resign. Sherif Pasha preferred giving up his office to yielding; however, the succeeding cabinet ordered the withdrawal of Egypt from the Sudan. For about ten years, therefore, the Sudan was administered by the Mahdi until the country came, after the conquest in 1898, under the Anglo – Egyptian Condominium of 1899.

## **2 . Britain's Involvement in Egypt**

The period for British action in Egypt, and later in the Sudan, had been set by the mood which overtook Britain before the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Following the Tudor period of great ambition and grand adventures, when men dreamed great dreams for England and set out to realize them; the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries were an era of British expansion and consolidation overseas. The 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the European scramble for Africa, with Britain, France and Germany as the chief contestants, and the Anglo – French intrigue for control over Egypt and the Sudan. At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, weak and bankrupt, Egypt lay at the mercy of any power strong and enterprising enough to seize it from Turkey, its weak master. The history of the British occupation of Egypt, and eventually of the Sudan, will be considered against this background.

The British realized that the French occupation of Egypt was a threat greater to themselves than to the Turks. Bonaparte's colonial interests in Egypt were well assessed in Britain, as he could not take India, the great spring of British wealth. Henry Dundas, the British Minister of War wrote to Lord Granville, then Foreign Secretary, warning him that the possession of Egypt by any independent power would be fatal to the interests of Britain.

With this evaluation of the situation in mind, British diplomacy and military planning went into immediate action. Nearly a week after the French occupation of Cairo, a British squadron under Sir Horatio Nelson was despatched; it attacked and destroyed the French fleet in Abuquir Bay. In December 1798, a Russo – Turkish Alliance, encouraged by Britain, was

concluded, and in January 1799 an Anglo -Turkish Alliance followed as part of the grand strategy of war against the French. The forces of the allied powers rendered the French position hopeless, and the French Commander – in – chief Menou surrendered in 1801, after three years of French occupation of Egypt. France having evacuated Egypt, the British Government set up a kind of native administration but as the Anglo – Turkish negotiations about this problem broke down, the British forces, like those of the French, had to be withdrawn in March 1803 – after two years of occupation. As a result, Turkey made another effort to reassert her sovereignty over Egypt though her Empire was becoming too weak to carry on with effective vitality .The Turkish domination of Egypt was clearly drawing to an end, but the British were gone from Egypt only to be back again.

As it often happens during a critical period in the life of a nation, a suitable saviour emerged .During the American War of Independence , George Washington was the man. For the Soviet revolution, Lenin rose to the stage, and during the Second World War , Winston Churchill became the man of the hour in Britain . Similarly, during that time in Egypt, Mohammed Ali Pasha was the man who endeavoured to rescue the Egyptians. He was an illiterate, but in the words of Lt-Col. Elgood , himself a high British official , for about fifty years the history of Egypt is the history of Mohamed Ali , ‘one of those commanding figures who from time to time pass across the World’s stage ....Such was the natural genius that he would have established a reputation in any environment ....He had repelled the Englishman, he had ousted the Turk and there remained but the remnants of the *Mamelukes* to contest his supremacy in Egypt’. (11) As was already mentioned, he therefore became the undisputed ruler of Egypt, and he, too, became possessed with territorial ambitions and dreamed of a great empire reaching out far beyond Egypt .

Besides his expedition to the Sudan , he also had imperialistic adventures in the Eastern Mediterranean, which brought him into open conflict with Britain.

Now that Turkey had become weak, Mohamed Ali felt that he had gained enough power to remain loyal and subordinate to the Sultan. He therefore rebelled against Turkey and showed intentions to extend his empire to Asia Minor. This again caused uneasiness to the Great Powers – Britain , France and Russia – who estimated Mohamed Ali 's advance to be against their own position and interests. Britain, in particular, was so alarmed about the territorial ambitions of Mohamed Ali that Col. Campbell was instructed on 28 March 1838 to warn the Pasha of the consequences which would follow any attempt on his part to extend his authority , by force of arms , in any direction. 'You will point out to the Pasha that his talents and energies , great as all the world know them to be , will find ample scope ....in establishing good local administration in Egypt'(12). As a result of British intervention , therefore, Mohamed Ali was forced to withdraw from Syria and relinquish his plans for the creation of an "Afro-Asian Arab state" (13).

Meanwhile, Britain's commercial and strategic interests in Egypt in particular were growing. Because Egypt and South Africa stood prominently on the only two routes to India (where the East India Company had been consolidating the British Empire) and because of their respective strategic locations on the continent of Africa (where the European penetration was taking shape), these territories were the two most important links in the British imperial strategy .It is convenient to add here Britain's later interests at the time of Ismail Pasha, Mohamed Ali's grandson.

Apart from commercial and strategic interests, Britain had within Egypt itself financial stakes. Ismail Pasha inherited a substantial debt when he became the khedive of Egypt, and British speculators raised loans for him in 1862, 1864 and later. He indulged in borrowing without taking thought about the political consequences. A debt of about £ 90, 000 000 was subsequently imposed upon Egypt by European speculators , in consideration of which only£ 45,500,000 was nominally received (14). He became “a dupe of his friends and advisers, Egyptian and European, who turned his good nature, his ambitious purposes, his generosity to their own ends” (15). This perplexing financial situation led to Anglo-French control of the fiscal policy of the Egyptian Government.

Egypt was plunged in misery and ‘shame’. Ismail’s mismanagement of the country’s finances not only cost him his position as Viceroy, and aggravated matters in the empire, it also paved the way for the occupation of Egypt by Britain. So slowly but surely, the Egyptians began to lose control of their own affairs. Harassed by European intervention on the one hand and being unable to solve its internal financial and administrative problems on the other, (16) the Ottoman – Egyptian ‘empire’ began to crumble under its own weight. By a system of treaties called the Capitulations, the most vital privileges were granted to the foreigners in Egypt. These privileges included : (a) exemption from taxation ; (b) inviolability of domicile and protection from arbitrary arrest ; (c) exemption from the jurisdiction of the native courts ; and (d) the Mixed Tribunals, established in 1876 which demanded, in effect, that no legislation applicable to foreigners could be enforced without the consent of the Conciliatory Powers (17).

But in 1882, dissatisfied Egyptians responded, under Arabi Pasha to the cry of 'Egypt for the Egyptians'. The Egyptians' revolt was against the intervention in Egyptian affairs of European powers – principally Britain and France – which followed the establishment of the Dual Control over Egypt's revenues and expenditure with a view to protecting the interests of her creditor - states and their subjects. Many Europeans were massacred in this revolt which was principally against the Khedive, the foreign banks and powers. The French, Germans and Austrians who had previously lent their aid to Egypt in similar circumstances, refused to support the British against this revolt . But as Britain's interests were becoming increasingly considerable and important, especially under the direction of Lord Palmerston (Prime Minister 1855-1959), Britain had to 'go it' all alone . In September 1882, the British Government sent a force to Egypt and broke the nationalist resistance, while Turkey stood aside and watched. Egypt was thus brought under British military occupation; and Britain became its absolute and undisputed possessor .At first , this was assumed to be temporary, but in fact it continued until 1922, when Egypt was granted formal independence as a monarchy under Fouad I, Ismail Pasha's sixth son .

With the occupation of Egypt, Britain later maintained her interests in the Sudan and in the Suez Canal: the two strategic requirements of the Empire. In fact, the foremost British interest in Egypt was always because of its strategic position. Egypt lay between Britain and India which made it so vitally important for the British to control it. This aspiration was clearly established by Granville in a memorandum , dated 6 January 1882 , in which he stated :

Should the occupation of Egypt be necessary to secure our highway to the east the question at once presents itself, via.the occupation of the entire

Delta – Lower Egypt , and the occupation of such points as would give us command of the Canal, for the real way of quartering the Canal is to hold Lower Egypt and Cairo .(18)

By a system known in British Colonial Organization as ‘Native Administration’, the Khedive of Egypt and his Cabinet continued to function , while the ultimate ruler of the country became the British Government in London , through its agent in Cairo . A gradual advance beyond Egyptian borders was in perspective as time went on , and in fact , British control was extended to reach Egypt’s dominion – the Sudan. This brings us to a presentation of Anglo – Sudanese relations.

### **3 . Britain’s Penetration into the Sudan**

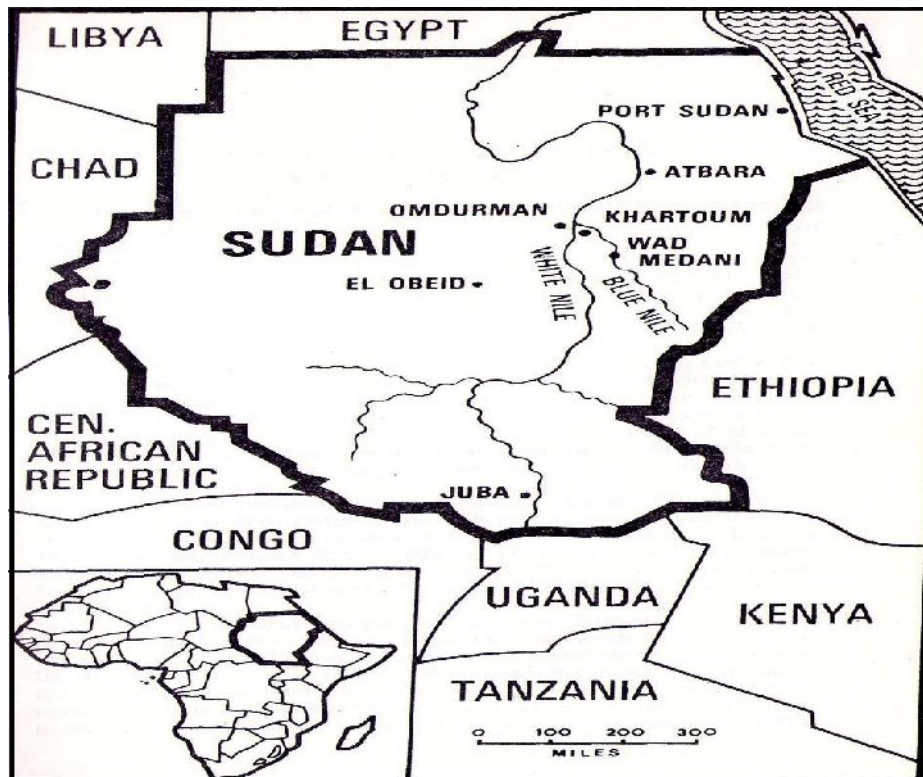
Before the occupation of Egypt, Britain had no direct political or commercial dealings with the Sudan. In the 18th century, the British people and Government had no specific knowledge of that country which was to them just a part of ‘darkest Africa’. But once in Egypt, the British Government could not avoid taking interest in whatever was happening in the Sudan. Some reports written in 1819, caused British nationals in Egypt to begin collecting information on the Sudan from European traders and officials in the service of Mohamed Ali Pasha. These reports , particularly about the slave trade, captured the attention of the British Government and the British Anti – Slavery Societies. Although the Egyptian Government loudly proclaimed their detestation of slavery, their behaviour in the Sudan was viewed with suspicion by the European Powers, and particularly by Great Britain. To express concern and good will, Ismail Pasha, Mohamed Ali’s second successor, publicized a proclamation to abolish the slave trade in the Sudan , and in 1869

he appointed a British explorer ,Sir Samuel Baker, as Governor of Equatoria Province of the Sudan. On 4 August 1877, Britain and Egypt signed a convention repudiating slavery and the slave trade.

According to Ismail's instructions, Baker was to extend Egyptian annexation as far as the Equator, suppress the slave trade, introduce a system of regular commerce, open to navigation the Great Lakes of the Equator, and establish a chain of military stations of about three days' march throughout Central Africa (19). Baker wrote about his motivation and purpose in Egypt: 'My chief endeavour was to work for the interest of Egypt, at the same time that I sustained and advanced the influence of England. General Gordon, who succeeded me, was actuated by the same desire and died in the hope that England would reach Khartoum' (20). Having accomplished much of his mission, Baker left the Sudan in 1873. The following map shows Sudan's borders and its most important towns.



### General Map of the Sudan



Source: O. Beshir, *Revolution and Nationalism in the Sudan*, London, Rex Collings, 1974, p. XIII

The Egyptians of that period have apparently pursued the policy of choosing unique ‘men of character’ from abroad, to help them administer their local affairs. They sought to retain the services of trusted Europeans, with a political outlook compatible with their ‘national aspirations’. Nubar Pasha, (a rival of Sherif Pasha, Prime Minister of Egypt at that time), had met General Charles Gordon in Constantinople . The name of the General was a sufficient guarantee that the slave trade was being ‘earnestly attacked by the Egyptian Government’. As a result of this meeting, Gordon was appointed in 1874 by the Khedive Ismail to be Governor of Equatoria Province in succession to

Samuel Baker. He arrived in the Sudan with Colonel Charles Chaillé-Long, an American already employed by the Khedive. In 1876, Gordon was promoted Governor General of the Sudan, but he had to resign three years later in protest against the deposition of Ismail Pasha, his chief employer and friend. Gordon wrote about him in a private letter: 'It pains me what sufferings my poor Khedive has had to go through' (21). Although Gordon did not succeed in improving the Egyptian administration overmuch, he left the Sudan nominally an Egyptian territory much larger than what came to be the Anglo – Egyptian Sudan; at that time, it included Massawa (now in Eritrea), Berbera and Zeila (both now part of British Somaliland ), Tadjoura (now in French Somaliland), and Harra and Bogos ( now Ethiopian provinces).

In 1881, two years after the resignation of Gordon, the Mahdi – who emerged in the Sudan – led the revolt already referred to. His rebellion succeeded against all the feeble Egyptian attempts to suppress it, and he became virtually master in the Sudan.

Britain preferred to adopt the policy of « wait and see » as far as the situation in the Sudan was concerned. Though Egypt called for help and decisive action against the Mahdi , Britain refused to accept any responsibility for the military operations in the Sudan which were undertaken by the Egyptian Government and its agents. Lord Granville made it clear that Her Majesty's Government did not want to be associated with that quarter. Thus by the end of 1883, the British Agent and Consul – General in Egypt , Sir Evelyn Baring 's instructions were still: not to interfere in the Sudan matters, and under no circumstances send troops there ( 22). Egypt, therefore, had to use what was left – the mere shadow of power – to resist alone the Mahdists' revolt.

However, a series of happenings soon followed and completely transformed British strategy both in Egypt and the Sudan. The first of these was the news, confirmed in Cairo on 22 November, that an Anglo-Egyptian battalion, under the command of General Hicks, had been almost completely annihilated by the Mahdists' forces near El Obeid in Kordofan. From then on it became quite clear that the fall of Khartoum to the Mahdi was only a matter of time, and that Egypt had lost to Britain the essence of her own power, both at home and abroad. The Mahdists' revolt had brought the Egyptian regime into serious doubt. Colonel Stewart reported to Sir Baring from the Sudan that "he was firmly convinced that the Egyptians are quite unfit in every way to undertake such a task as the government of so vast a country. The fact of their incompetence to rule is so generally acknowledged that it is unnecessary to discuss the matter" (23). Henceforth, Baring was in complete agreement with Col. Stewart to abandon large portions of the Sudan. Sherif Pasha, the Egyptian Prime Minister, pleaded with the British against abandonment; Britain's reaction to his appeal was a directive to the British Representative in Egypt, Sir Evelyn Baring, to the effect that British policy must prevail during the occupation of Egypt, and that only those Egyptians who would co-operate with the British in this respect must be appointed to office (24). The Egyptian Prime Minister was informed that the British Government insisted on that course, and that it was essential in matters affecting the administration and safety of Egypt that the advice of Her Majesty's Government should be followed. In brief, he was recommended to abandon all territory south of Assouan, or at least Wadi Halfa.

By now, the new situation needs explanation. Apart from the heavy blow which the abandonment of large portions of the Sudan would inflict upon the

authority of the Khedive, which had been badly shaken by the Arabi revolt (25), the presence on the Egyptian borders of a population motivated with religious inspirations and military success would endanger Egypt itself. The Egyptian Government was quite afraid of a pro – Mahdi uprising in its southern provinces. Sherif Pasha was determined to re – establish Egypt’s authority in the Sudan, at least as far as Khartoum, and to turn Mahdi’s victories into defeat. Nevertheless, he was convinced of his government inability to undertake such a task. His proposal of borrowing 10,000 men (26) from a foreign power, and re-establishing the authority of the Khedive in the Sudan could best be adopted than that of abandonment. The established fact was that it was impossible for Egypt to get out of so serious a situation alone.

The Khedive threw his weight behind the Prime Minister Sherif Pasha in this trial of strength. However, Sherif Pasha refused to be a mere stooge. Rather than accept the British orders to withdraw from the Sudan, he resigned. In doing this, he was much moved with the danger he saw to the future independence of Egypt without the Sudan. Besides, Sherif Pasha pointed out that the Khedive was forbidden by the firman of 7 August 1879 to cede any territory entrusted to him by the Sultan. The recommendation of the British Government, therefore, was both ‘unwise and unconstitutional’, according to him. (27) But as the British Government had estimated, it was possible to find pliable, collaborative Egyptians. Nubar Pasha, the new Prime Minister, agreed with the British Government to form an Egyptian Cabinet pledged to the abandonment of the Sudan. He even wanted to have one or more English ministers in his Cabinet.(28)

The British officials, both in Cairo and London, were obliged – as circumstances developed – to reconsider some portions of their policy in

Egypt. In London, the British Government realized that the revolt in the Sudan could not be contained by Egypt alone. This time Lord Granville informed Baring that ‘Her Majesty’s Government have no objection to offer to the employment of Turkish troops provided they were paid by the Egyptian Government and that such employment be restricted exclusively to the Sudan, with their base at Suakin’(29). The recruitment of these soldiers was meant to secure the safe retreat of Egyptian and European troops still holding position in the Sudan.

In addition to the British Representative and his staff in Cairo, the British Government required an able and qualified British official with ‘full military and civil powers’ to conduct the Sudan evacuation scheme. Sir Baring, influenced by personal knowledge and urged by press opinion in England, many Europeans were massacred., regarded General Gordon as the best man for the job. And in a letter to *The Times*, Samuel Baker, ex-Governor of Equatoria Province, explained that there was no ‘man living’ who would be more capable or so well fitted to represent the ‘justice’ which Great Britain would establish in the Sudan .But the « heroic », « saint », « eccentric »and other worldly genius (30) appeared too independent for a British Government used to well-disciplined , conventional civil and military servants. While the British Government aimed at subduing the natives of Africa and Asia through the self-proclaimed process of ‘civilizing’ them , Gordon was convinced that his dear Great Britain had no right to do so. In a letter to Florence Nightingale (his close friend), Gordon said: ‘To me they (the British Government) are utterly wrong in the government of the subject races; they know nothing of the hearts of these people’(31).

It was quite understandable that the Cabinet considered him as a risk, as he was more a humanitarian than a soldier. But none of them had as much knowledge about the Sudan as Gordon, and the press was campaigning for him. The Cabinet decided to appoint him in the Sudan, but with restricted powers. He was to go to Suakin, report on the military situation in the Sudan with a view to evacuating the remaining Egyptian garrisons and return immediately. Gordon accepted the British appointment in January 1884 and returned to the Sudan as the Governor General.

It is now necessary to look, for a moment, to what was happening in the Sudan. Looking from a purely political standpoint, there rarely existed a better case for rebellion than the one presented by the Sudanese. The reasons which forced the peoples of the Sudan to revolt were stronger than the defence which their oppressors could offer. Their country was being ruined, their property plundered, their women ravished, their liberties curtailed; even their lives were threatened. Aliens ruled the inhabitants, and the few oppressed the many. Here were some sufficient reasons. Since any armed movement can be justified only by success, strength remains an important revolutionary virtue. The Mahdists were indeed far stronger than their persecutors. Mohamed Mahdi managed to gather adherents and began to extend his influence in all parts of the country. He also received promises of support from all classes, and even the most distant tribes sent assurances of devotion and reverence, and what was of more importance, of armed assistance (32).

Soon after Gordon's arrival in Khartoum, the Mahdist rebellion spread as far as north of that city; and it was becoming so strong as to alter the character of Gordon's mission from mere reporting to military defence. Gordon knew the task could not be fulfilled without more aid and succour from the British

Government. Consequently, both the British and the Egyptian Commanders – in – chief , with Sir Evelyn Baring (Consul General in Egypt), recommended that the force under General Graham , which was then in the Eastern Sudan , should be instructed to aid Gordon in driving away the Mahdist pressure on the north of Khartoum . The British Government declined. Gordon’s difficulties were increased by the silence of the Foreign Office as if his humanitarian principles and sincerity appeared too much for those dedicated to the intrigues of empire building. Gordon complained against the Foreign Office in a private letter to Lady Burton. He wrote:

...I must say I was surprised to see such a thing. A Government like ours governed by men who dare not call their souls their own ...I have written letters to the Foreign Office that would raise a corpse ; it is no good. I have threatened to go to the French Government about the Sudan; it is no good.... (33)

However , when the regular communication between Cairo and Khartoum was blockaded by the Mahdist forces , isolating Gordon and some Europeans in Khartoum , the British Government thought, this time, it was necessary to despatch a force to rescue them . Furthermore, the press, and principally *The Times*, denounced ‘that the incapacity displayed by the Cabinet in its external relations is becoming a national danger.’(34) Both the strong campaign in the press and the opposition in Parliament forced the hand of the Government to too late action. Gordon’s news spread in all parts of the British Empire, and the Government used the Colonial Office to mobilize the Colonies. On 20 August 1884, the Governor of Canada (Lord Landowne ) received a telegram from the Colonial Office in London requesting a supply of manpower to assist in the Nile ( Sudan ) expedition . Canada immediately mobilized five hundred men. Before sailing, Lord Baring explained that the expedition was for the

rescue of a religious man – General Gordon and not for aggression or conquest.

Thus by the end of 1884 , Australian , Canadian , English , East Indian and other colonial troops were ordered to rescue General Gordon and save Khartoum . All these colonial forces participated in the Sudan campaign; but meanwhile, the Mahdists were gaining more ground and Gordon was making heroic efforts to hold out until the arrival of the British Empire troops. The British expedition having embarked too late found it impossible to reach Khartoum in time to save Gordon . At about 3.30 a.m. , on 26 January 1885 , a determined attack reached Khartoum , and soon the town was at the mercy of the Mahdist forces . Gordon himself was killed, decapitated , and his head carried to the Mahdi . Gordon had been waiting , till the last moment , for some help , however little , to reach him. Gordon's death caused a great outcry in Britain and left a deep impression on the minds of its people.

With the capture of the city and the death of the Imperial envoy, the reason for the expedition disappeared. It remained only to withdraw the troops sent to save Gordon. The battered streamers, which had waited so long to intervene , were hurriedly dismantled . The Camel corps marched back on foot to Korti .Their retreat was pressed by the triumphant enemy. The whole expeditionary force trooped back desperately over the desert sands while the Mahdists advanced gloriously. For several months, the garrison of Kassala under an Egyptian Officer maintained a hopeless resistance, but at last famine forced them to surrender .

Such was, in brief, the story of the fall of Khartoum and of the death of Gordon. The Mahdi became the absolute master of the Sudan since then. He



left Khartoum into ruins, deserted and 'solitary', and decided to build on the western bank of the White Nile a new capital called Omdurman. But in the middle of the month of June, scarcely five months after the completion of his victorious campaigns, the Mahdi fell sick. All those who had shared his fortunes, the chief priests of the religion he had reformed, the leaders of the armies who had followed him to victory, filled with alarm, feared to lose their sovereign and spiritual leader. The Mahdi died in the rosy glow of victory. His death was a relief to the British Government as they would rule Egypt with less difficulty. But Britain's expectation for lesser difficulties in Egypt and the Sudan after the death of the Mahdi did not immediately occur. The Mahdi's best friend and faithful follower, the *Khalifa* Abdullah, was selected to continue the *Jihad*.

The general European reaction to the fall of Khartoum was mixed with, and overshadowed by, the death of Gordon. In Germany and in France, the news was received with 'indignation'. In Britain, the Cabinet was accused of indecision, the War Office for having reduced men and materials, and the British Government in Cairo for having acted too late. The British people averted their eyes with shame and vexation from the Nile Valley. Besides the pain produced by the death of Gordon, what added to the bitterness and grandeur of the tragedy, was the heavy losses in officers and men and the serious expenditure of public money. The nation smarted under failure and disappointment, and felt deeply humiliated before the whole world. *The Times* summed up in an editorial the British people's reaction, saying that 'the shock caused by the news of the fall of Khartoum had no parallel in the experience of that generation' (35).

But no change of policy was effected as far as the Sudan was concerned; and for the next decade, Britain remained in Egypt and watched events in the Sudan. The British Government pursued a policy of non – intervention because it wanted to avoid great military costs and risks. It was, therefore, the duty of the Government to think about the economic interests, the blood and honour of Britain in connection with the conditions of the time. The Cabinet, conscious of their obligations, tried to act in the best interests of Britain, and would continue to do so, in spite of criticisms.

Britain remained cautious not to undertake, for the time being, any military venture in the Sudan. There were certainly reasons for such a position. Britain had previously advised Egypt to withdraw from the Sudan, but Egypt did not comply. The Army under General Hicks was defeated by the Mahdists, and the British Government was probably careful not to incur a similar loss of prestige through a British commander. Furthermore, when Turkey was expressing uneasiness about British intentions in Egypt and the Sudan, Earl Granville, Palmerston's successor (1880-1885), told the Turkish Ambassador in London that 'Britain had no intention of sending troops to undertake the reconquest of the Sudan'(36). The British Government depended much on the reports and the recommendations of their official representatives in Cairo . But the latter were thought (by the public opinion) to have misled and deceived their Home Government as to the real existence of national feeling. The British in London wanted to avenge Gordon by a military campaign against the Sudanese, but the Government maintained the policy of evacuation for the reasons already referred to.

Lord Baring, the ruler of Egypt, maintained this line of policy till 1895 . He could defend and convince the succeeding British Governments on the

basis of the following arguments..The first of these was that as long as the British forces – to be precise Egyptian forces under British officers – were available , the Mahdist regime in the Sudan could not represent a serious threat to Egypt . The second was as far as Egypt’s security could be safeguarded (by Britain), no attempt could be made to conquer the Sudan until Egypt’s military and financial resources could afford the conquest. The British Government was, in a sense, reassured as long as the Mahdists (and not a European Power) were in control of the Sudan. They believed the latter possessed neither the resources nor the engineering skill to do any real harm to Egypt. With this argument in mind, the British Government decided in 1895 to give priority to the construction of the Aswan Dam, in Egypt, whose revenue could, in due time, provide funds to make possible the reconquest . (37)

The Government which appeared to have been immune to pressure or criticism, found it politically desirable to give the ‘impression of making posthumous compensation’ to what looked to the British public to be the betrayal of Gordon. The public regard for Gordon, particularly among Christians, was shown through the various memorial services held on 13 March 1885 at nearly every church in England - at St Paul’s Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, Canterbury, Durham, Winchester, etc. Thirteen years later, even the Government paid tribute to him by establishing the Gordon Memorial College at Khartoum, with a fund raised largely in England in response to Lord Kitchener ‘s appeal ( the Sudan’s conqueror) soon after the battle of Omdurman . This conquest will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter.

In 1886 , the victory of the Conservatives in the Government ushered in a new outlook in Britain for the growing passion for empire, which was taking

forms sometimes 'criminal , often ridiculous and always disgusting '(38). This epoch intensified the European scramble for Africa, and the Nile Valley was in « the diplomatic market » with France, Belgium and of course Britain being the main bidders. Furthermore, the American tradition of neutrality to European power politics had begun to lose its hold on Americans. At that time, a desire in America to have a 'place in the sun' together with the Old World began to manifest itself. During that period, the Americans , whether they liked or not, were forced to compete for the markets of international exchanges or, in other words, for the seat of empire. As previously mentioned, Chaillé-Long, the American (who was later to become American Ambassador in Korea), had been in the Sudan with Gordon in the service of the Khedive. Britain started to feel uneasiness about the rise of America as a competing power; subsequently, the British decision to reconquer the Sudan could no more be delayed. It became quite clear, therefore, that the Sudan would not remain for long independent; yet, the situation there under the Mahdi's successor and before the reconquest needs to be revisited.

The Sudan after the Mahdi's death remained strong and invincible. It was under the rule of *Khalifa* Abdullah, who had been declared by the Mahdi's latest breath as his successor. During the thirteen years of his reign , Abdullah, from the Baqqara Arabs of the Sudan, displayed high ability and obtained great military successes. He was determined both to put a finishing touch to the Mahdi's victory and to push ahead his own schemes. Most of the Egyptian garrisons in the Sudan had either surrendered or been destroyed. But his greatest triumph was the Abyssinian war, in March 1889, where King John himself was killed(39). During the progress of the struggle with Abyssinia (Ethiopia now), the war against Egypt languished. The Mahdi , counting upon the support of the population, had always declared that he would free the Delta

from 'the Turks', and he was planning its invasion when he was interrupted by death. His successor inherited all the engagement and the grievance. He could not conquer Egypt – his predecessor's dream. However, throughout the Sudan, Abyssinia was regarded as a far greater power than Egypt. The *Khalifa's* victorious army could make the Abyssinian warriors ( amounting to 130,000 foot and 20,000 horsemen ) retreat (40). But the *Khalifa* was too clever to believe that Egypt could be conquered by the five thousand men his army possessed (41). He knew for certain that besides the Egyptians, there were the strong British.

On 12 March 1896, the British Government suddenly decided to embark on the re-conquest of the Sudan. The decision of the British Government came as a surprise to the authorities in Cairo, who were waiting for the best moment for the re – conquest. The British in London thought the moment was a good one, but not the best. The immediate cause of this decision (and reversal of policy) was the humiliating and unexpected defeat of the Italians - who were present in the Horn of Africa - by the Abyssinians (Ethiopians) at Adwa, near the Sudan frontier, on 1 March 1896 .It was rumoured at that time that the Abyssinians were seeking an alliance with the *Khalifa* , who was also preparing to attack the Italians at Kasala , in eastern Sudan .The Italian Ambassador appealed to the British Government to intervene . It was decided, therefore, to embark on the re-conquest.

Almost a year before the Cabinet's decision, Lord Cromer, then Consul – General of Egypt, had warned the British Government of the consequences of maintaining a purely passive attitude towards the Sudan while France was already pushing her way from Central Africa towards the Nile. Britain had to choose between two courses: either leave the French make their way and

tolerate the consequences; or she could, at the risk of going to war with France, attempt to establish her own authority throughout the Nile Valley. Cromer preferred the second course, and with the intention of reducing the possibility of war with France, he suggested that Britain should place herself on the grounds of strict international right while conducting the reconquest of the Sudan . It was therefore decided that the Sudan should be conquered in the name of Egypt, under English guidance. The military campaign was, thus , to be manned by English and Egyptian troops and to be conducted by Lord Kitchener. Cromer's suggestions became official policy, and his views with regard to the diplomatic position Britain should take were also accepted.

But before the conquest (or reconquest as it was then called) could be conducted, the British Government felt that two conditions had to be fulfilled. The first was that the Egyptian Army had to be made efficient. The second was that the Egyptian Treasury should assure the funds to provide for the 'extraordinary' military expenditure. Therefore, as far as the expedition was a joint Anglo – Egyptian undertaking Egypt provided about two- thirds of the armies , and paid by far the greater share of the expenses . Britain provided the leadership, about one-third of the army and an insignificant part of the funds. (42)

The Egyptian nationalists, as it was correctly predicted, opposed the British expedition which was, it seemed to them, planned in the interests of the Italians. They were, in fact, reluctant to 're – enter' into possession of the Sudan under these circumstances , and the Sultan was not prepared to give his blessings without further question. These nationalists also condemned it even more vigorously by not being dictated for the interests of Egypt. The crux of the matter, as presented by the British when they decided to enter the Sudan, was how to secure the independent development of the Sudan while

safeguarding the vital interests of Egypt in the waters of the Nile. Again in the eyes of the Egyptian nationalists, however, Egypt's vital interests went beyond the simple matter of safeguarding a fair share of the waters of the Nile. They were conscious they were seriously compromised. All this led to anti – European feeling in general, and ‘Anglophobia’ in particular.

The reigning Khedive, Abbas II, was a ‘confirmed Anglophobe’ (43), unlike his father, and he disliked European intervention in Egypt. He strongly disapproved of the Dongola Campaign as he understood it mainly in Italian interests. And when it was decided that the Campaign should not stop at Dongola, but that it should be extended into a full attack on the *Khalifa* , the Khedive realised that any advantage gained in the Sudan represented an English rather than an Egyptian success . But despite his feelings, the Khedive knew he could not take any decisive step against the wishes of the British Government. On their part, the Egyptian nationalists viewed their Khedive with hostility, and even regarded Kitchener ‘s victories as disasters to Islam . They hoped that the Egyptian Army, under Kitchener, would be defeated, and that the Mahdists would occupy Cairo (44).

The British Government embarked on the preparations to the military campaign. The greatest disadvantage the British Officers had suffered was the general ignorance of the Sudan and its peoples. During their training, the British soldiers had to learn about the history, climate, geography and the inhabitants of the Sudan . They had also to learn the details of the dervishes’ fighting. Once the experience gained , the Intelligence Branch of the Egyptian Army under the direction of Colonel (later Sir Reginald) Wingate rose to an ‘extraordinary’ efficiency. Furthermore, the reports and the information collected by spies and secret agents of the government ( disguised as traders ,

as warriors or as women ) who could get within the great wall of Omdurman, into the arsenal, in the treasury, in the mosque and in the *Khalifa's* house itself helped the Intelligence Service for the exact planning of their mission (45). Slatin, the Austrian soldier and administrator who escaped from the *Khalifa's* clutches , confirmed , with his accurate knowledge, the belief of the Egyptian authorities that the Dervish power was declining.

Now that the preparations for the re – conquest of the Sudan were initiated, the British Government simply ignored Turkish rights on the Sudan. The shady claims of Turkish sovereignty were practically swept by the stroke of a pen. French opposition, however, was bound to be stronger and a far real one than that of Egypt or Turkey. In fact, the French penetration in Africa made the British uneasy. Partly in order to stop this foreseeable French opposition, but also with a view to gratifying the Egyptians in whose name and whose material support the reconquest was being undertaken, Kitchener was instructed – when Khartoum had fallen to him – to hoist the British and the Egyptian flags side by side. Under an Egyptian flag of ‘convenience’, British control could be exercised , and this would be a clear indication to the French that the control of the Nile was more an English than an Egyptian question (46).

This first chapter was , to a certain extent , an attempt to survey the major events and forces which led to the reconquest of the Sudan .The British Government , which was in military occupation of Egypt , decided to annex the Sudan despite the hostility of France , Turkey and eventually Egypt .Under these circumstances, Lord Cromer had to think about a fresh policy which would enable Britain to become the *de facto* ruler of the country .The establishment of the « Anglo – Egyptian Condominium » and the Sudanese reaction to it are the main subject of discussion in the next chapter .



## NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE:

1. The Hyksos were an Asiatic people who took over the eastern Nile Delta during the twelfth dynasty. In Egyptian, Hyksos means “ruler (s) of foreign countries”. They appeared in Egypt during the eleventh century, and began their climb to power in the thirteenth dynasty. By the fifteenth dynasty, they ruled Lower Egypt, and at the end of the seventeenth dynasty, they were expelled. John Albert Wilson, *The Culture of Ancient Egypt*, United States, University of Chicago Press, 1956, p. 160
2. Assyrian people are most commonly known as Assyrians, such as Syriacs, Achuriyun, Assouri. They trace their ancestry back to Sumero-Akkadian civilization that emerged in Mesopotamia around 3500 B.C. The Assyrian nation existed as an independent state and was a powerful empire from 23<sup>rd</sup> century B.C. until the end of 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Today that ancient territory is part of several nations: Iraq, Syria, south eastern Anatolia (a region of Turkey). *Brief History of Assyrians*, www. AINA. Org
3. Agence France Presse , *Information et Documentation* ,Paris , 14 and 21 June 1947 p. 4
4. Antonius George , *The Arab Awakening* , London , 1961 , pp. 23-7
5. Fabumni ,A.,L., *The Sudan in Anglo-Egyptian Relations; a Case Study in Power Politics , 1800-1956* , London , Longmans ,Green and Co . Ltd., 1960 , pp. 22-3
6. Agence Presse , op. cit.
7. Ibid.
8. Fabumni , op.cit., p. 24
9. [www.Ebook](#) .W.Churchill , *The River War ,an Account of the Reconquest 1902* , date of release January 2004
10. Sir Evelyn Baring Cromer (1841-1917) was the first diplomatic and consular agent in Cairo in 1883. He was the architect of the hybrid Anglo-Egyptian Agreement through which the Sudan was ruled by both Egypt and Britain. Encyclopaedia Britannica, CD Rom, 2004
11. Elgood , P., G., *The Transit of Egypt* , London , 1928, p. 45-7
12. *Communications with Mehemet Ali, 1838*, in Parliamentary Papers, Vol. 1, London, 1839, p.316
13. Antonius , op., cit.
14. Fabumni, op.cit., p.29
15. Keasy Seymour J., *Spoiling the Egyptians, a Tale of Shame*, from the Blue Books, 4th ed., London, 1882, p.1
16. Fabumni, op.cit.
17. Ibid.

18. Despatch N° .2, dated 6 January 1882, from Granville to Malet : P.R.O.F.O.141 /152.
19. Fabumni ; op.cit., p.31
20. Murray, T.D., and Silva, A., *Samuel Baker, A Memoir*, London and New York , 1895, p. 353
21. Lord Elton, *General Gordon*, London,1954, p.262
22. From Granville to Baring: Despatch N°.99 of 7 May 1883 in P.R.O.F.O.78/3550
23. Muddathir , A., *Imperialism and Nationalism in the Sudan ,a Study in Constitutional and Political Development 1899-1956* , Great Britain, Oxford University Press , 1969 , p. 20
24. Fabumni, op., cit., p.33
25. Ahmed Arabi Pasha (1841-1911) was an Egyptian army general and nationalist who led a revolt in 1879 against Tewfik Pasha, the Khedive of Egypt and the Sudan, and the increasing European domination of the country. The revolt was ultimately crushed in 1882 when Britain invaded at the request of the Khedive, thereby commencing the British occupation of Egypt. Encyclopaedia Britannica, CD-ROM, Great Britain, 2001
26. Muddathir, Abdel Rahim, op.cit.,p. 22
27. Ibid
28. Ibid
29. Ibid., p.21
30. Churchill, *The River War...*op.cit.
31. Lord Elton ,op.cit .,p.367
32. Churchill, *The River War...*, op., cit.
33. Elton op.cit., p. 36
34. *The Times*, London, 1884 , p. 9
35. Fabumni, op.cit.,p.42
36. Muddathir, op.cit., p. 23
37. Ibid
38. Fabumni, op.,cit.p.46
39. Churchill, *The River War...*, op. cit.
40. Ibid
41. Ibid
42. Fabumni, op.cit.,p.50
43. Muddathir, op.cit.p.25
44. Ibid.,p.26
45. Churchill, *The River War...*, op. cit.
46. Muddathir, op.cit.p.27

## CHAPTER TWO

### The Foundations of the Anglo –Egyptian Condominium (1899-1919)

The Sudan had just been conquered. Anglo – Egyptian forces, comprising Egyptian *fellaheen* and ‘blacks’, under General Herbert Kitchener,(1) captured Dongola in 1896. In 1898, Kitchener crushed the followers of the Mahdist movement in Omdurman , and later in the same year , he scared away, at Fashoda, the French forces led by Major Marchand.(2) ‘Kitchener of Khartoum’ – as he was often named – was to represent in the Sudan a rock-solid, permanent, unshakable British Government.

The present chapter tends to explain and analyse how Kitchener destroyed the Mahdists’ state in the battle of Omdurman, and how the Anglo – Egyptian Sudan rose out of its ruins. It also presents how the Agreement of 1899, which was named ‘Condominium’, made the Sudan constitutionally a slave with two masters: Britain and Egypt.

In the Sudan, foreign rule was opposed from the very beginning of the conquest. To establish law and order, government action suppressed all forms of desperate, occasional, popular resistance. But the resistance of the Southern peoples was of a different nature. Was this resistance a symptom of the Government’s failure to rule?

From its establishment, the colonial regime was conscious that it would be compared with its predecessors, and it deliberately set out to win Sudanese acquiescence and support. Did it deserve it? Verily, Sudan's history during the years of colonial administration was largely a history of conflicts in which the principal participants were Egypt, Britain, the Intelligentsia and the mass of the people in the north and in the south. In all, this chapter attempts to analyse how the occupation saw the end of certain of these conflicts and the beginning of others.

## **1 . The reconquest of the Sudan and the Agreement of 1899**

In the ruins of the Governor – General's palace at Khartoum, Sir Herbert Kitchener, the conqueror, held a ceremony. At his sign, the band of the Grenadier Guards played the National Anthem on the staircase where Gordon had fallen on January 20, 1885. Two British officers hoisted the British flag, an instant after, the Egyptian flag was raised to symbolise that the conquest had been accomplished by the joint efforts of Britain and Egypt. When these preliminaries were completed, and an « undefined » regime inaugurated, a religious service began. The Roman Catholic chaplain prayed that God would 'look down ....with eyes of pity and compassion on this land so loved by that heroic soul' whose memory they now honoured. Charles George Gordon - Gordon Pasha of Khartoum – (3) died there almost fourteen years before. The assembled Officials were very affected by the poignancy of the scene, and Kitchener himself broke into sobs (4). When the service was concluded, the

soldiers strolled in the ruins, examining the spot where Gordon had fallen, then they returned, with Kitchener, to Omdurman.

The Mahdists' city of Omdurman had been largely destroyed after the defeat of the *Khalifa*'s army on September 2, 1898 at Karari, seven miles to the North. Sudanese casualties from the battle were enormous as the gunboats of the invaders had pelted Omdurman with shell-fire during and after the battle. The dead counted on the field at Karari alone amounted to 12,000, and the number of wounded, according to official reports, was around sixteen thousand (5). The number of the dead, however, was certainly higher than the official figure, which did not include soldiers who died away from the battlefield. Civilian victims of the shelling and of sporadic street-fighting could not be known, but eyewitnesses gave evidence of numerous civilian casualties (6).

The long – delayed 'duty', which England owed to one of her noblest sons, had been done; Gordon had been avenged. But controversy surrounds several aspects of Kitchener's and his army's conduct during and soon after the battle. As the idea of « avenging Gordon » laboriously circulated among the British soldiers, their passion to massacre the Mahdists' army was inflamed (7). In reply to criticism, Kitchener 'categorically' denied in February 1899 that he had ordered or allowed Mahdists' wounded to be massacred, or that his troops had carried out such a massacre. He also refused to admit that Omdurman was pillaged, and that civilian fugitives in the city were deliberately fired upon. Among Kitchener's critics was Winston Churchill, who then participated in the reconquest of the Sudan as a soldier. In *The River War*, Churchill showed strongly his disapproval of Kitchener's treatment of the battle wounded, « who, seen as enemies, were simply regarded unfit to

live » .The killing of wounded soldiers on the day of the battle paled in comparison with the shocking neglect, related by Churchill and others, of the wounded left on the battlefield .Three days after the battle , Churchill revisited the site: “The scenes were pathetic,” he wrote. “Where there was a shady bush four men had crawled to die. Someone had spread a rag on the thorns to increase the shade. Legless and armless men had dragged themselves unaided for miles to the river. Even a week after the battle “there was still a few wounded who had neither died nor crawled away, but continued to suffer”(8). Churchill went even further and wrote, “the victory at Omdurman was disgraced by the inhuman slaughter of the wounded and Kitchener was responsible for this’(9).

The most controversial incident during the battle was the destruction of the Mahdi’s tomb and the desecration of his remains. The tomb had been built over the spot where the Mahdi had died , and his high dome dominated the city of Omdurman .It had become the object of veneration , and its location made it the focal point of the religious and political life of the capital .During the bombardment of the city, the dome had been severely damaged, and it was claimed that this had rendered the structure unsafe . But the justification for its destruction was rather political .Kitchener said that he considered it ‘politically advisable ....that the Mahdi’s tomb, which was the centre of pilgrimage and fanatical feeling , should be destroyed’(8). Lord Cromer supported him in this. Cromer wrote to Salisbury, the prime minister, that the destruction of the tomb ‘was not only justifiable, but very necessary’. The officer charged to blow up the tomb was Lt-Colonel W.S Gordon, General Gordon’s nephew. Concerning the remains of the Mahdi’s body, with the exception of the skull , they were thrown into the Nile , on Kitchener’s order. Here again political necessity was

the reason proposed, and again Cromer agreed . The skull was offered to Kitchener as ‘a trophy’, which was an insensitive and politically incorrect act.

Whatever Kitchener’s apprehensions about the Mahdi’s tomb were, there was little sign of popular resistance in Omdurman after 2 September . Despite the escape of *Khalifa* Abdellah , the far superior capabilities of the Anglo – Egyptian forces , especially their mobility , allowed a rapid occupation of the riverain territories east and south of Omdurman . The lands north of the capital along the Nile were all in their hands before Karari, as were the Berber – Suakin road, Kassala, and the northern Butana . Now the main tasks of the Anglo – Egyptian forces were the assertion of authority in the Southern Sudan, and the elimination of the *Khalifa*’s and other hostile forces. Among these forces were the French at Fashoda.

When the British knew for certain the presence and nationality of these ‘whites’, a policy had been decided in June for dealing with any French found in the Upper Nile . Cromer had then proposed to Salisbury the despatch of ‘flotillas’ up the Blue and White Niles to establish a claim to outlying territories. In August Salisbury authorised the flotillas, and specified that Kitchener should personally command the White Nile fleet, in anticipation of an encounter with the French. An account of how the French Government did have intentions to seize and hold an obscure swamp on the Upper Nile needs a brief description.

Towards the end of 1896 a French expedition was despatched from the Atlantic into the heart of Africa under the command of Major Marchand . The re-occupation of Dongola was then practically complete, and the British Government was earnestly considering a desirable further advance. At the

beginning of 1898, after the reconquest of Khartoum, an Anglo – Egyptian force was already concentrating at Berber. Lastly, the Marchand Mission was known to be moving towards the Upper Nile, and it would probably arrive at its destination within a few months. It was therefore evident that the line of advance of the powerful army moving south from the Mediterranean and the tiny expedition moving east from the Atlantic must intersect before the end of the year , and that intersection would involve a collision between the Powers of Great Britain and France . But the vast superiority of the Anglo – Egyptian force made the outcome of any hostility with the French a foregone conclusion. According to Wingate, the Director of Intelligence of the Egyptian Army, Kitchener had ‘some private letters which pointed to there being no fighting and .....he intended to go as near force as possible without actually exercising it’(9). He seemed to have express instructions not to « have corpses ».

Kitchener and Wingate left Omdurman on 10 September on the steamer *Dal* , accompanied by a mixed force aboard the gunboats *Sultan* , *Fateh* , and *Nasir* . A fifth boat , the *Abu Klea* , joined the flotilla on the 15th . At Renk they met the steamer *Safia* and eleven sailing boats , which had just encountered the French at Fashoda . From Fabiu, fifteen miles north of Fashoda, on the 18th, Kitchener dispatched his first message to the French, confidently addressing it to the chief of the ‘European Expedition’, and announcing his capture of Omdurman and arrival at Fashoda .

On the morning of the 19<sup>th</sup>, a boat flying a large French flag approached the anchored *Dal*, and Marchand’s reply was handed over. This welcomed Kitchener to Fashoda, ‘in the name of France’. The *Dal* steamed to Fashoda where Marchand and his deputy came aboard. Supported by Wingate,



Kitchener made it clear that he had orders to raise the Egyptian flag at Fashoda. Would Marchand attempt to resist this? The action of hoisting only the Egyptian flag was Wingate's as it allowed the British to assert their control behind a façade of Egyptian sovereignty. Marchand offered no resistance, and the Egyptian flag was raised over a ruined wall of the old fort. After a brief ceremony where the British and French officers toasted each other with champagne, Kitchener delivered a formal protest to Marchand, referring explicitly to the rights of Britain as well as of Egypt, and the flotilla proceeded up the White Nile. Another flag-raising was staged at the mouth of the Sobat and Bahr al-Ghazal. The diplomatic contest between Britain and France that followed the Fashoda meeting does not directly concern the history of the Sudan. The eventual retirement of the French, via Ethiopia, marked the end of this incident. By now, the dispute between France and England over the valley of the Upper Nile was terminated by an agreement signed in London on the 21st of March, 1899 by Lord Salisbury and M. Cambon. The declaration limited the respective spheres of influence of the two powers, and its effect was to reserve the whole drainage system of the Nile to England and Egypt, and to engage that France shall have a free hand in the rest of North Africa, west of the Nile Valley not yet occupied by Europeans.

While the whites at Fashoda were the problem of most concern to the authorities in London, and had therefore required Kitchener's personal attention, they were undoubtedly not the most dangerous forces to be dealt with after Karari.

East of the Blue Nile the Emir Ahmed Fadil remained unsubdued, in command of a considerable force. He had been en route to assist in Omdurman defence when word reached him of the *Khalifa's* defeat. An

Egyptian force under Colonel Parsons had , in the meanwhile, been despatched from Kassala to Gedaref , which was occupied after three hours of fierce fighting on 22 September . A second flotilla , under General Hunter , departed from Omdurman on 19 September to Roseires first , then to Sennar . British and Egyptian flags were raised at both regions , while a force of 220 men (10) was arranged to remain at Sennar to watch for Ahmed Fadil . On 18 September the *Emir* , having at last been convinced of the *Khalifa's* defeat at Omdurman, and yet refusing to surrender , attacked Gedaref in force and was driven off with heavy losses . On 26 December , he was confronted near Roseires while his men were attempting to cross the Blue Nile to the Gezira . Fierce fighting ensued and resulted in heavy losses in both sides . Ahmed Fadil escaped and eventually joined the *Khalifa* Abdellah in Kordofan , but his army was totally defeated . Until mid – November, the eastern region was in ‘great confusion’ as a large number of dervishes were still roaring about , pillaging and killing the natives , and looting the cattle which belonged to the *Khalifa* and other Baggara *Emirs* .

With the *Khalifa* free in Kordofan , and the Anglo – Egyptian forces rapidly reducing – as British troops had begun to be evacuated to Egypt shortly after the battle of Omdurman – the Western Sudan remained out of control. Even the parts of Dongola , west of the Nile , were said to be in a state of anarchy in late 1898 .The Egyptian garrison of *Kababish* was withdrawn because it was not ‘strong enough to keep order .’ In the far west , in Darfur , the British had allowed Ali Dinar , a grandson of Sultan Mohamed El – Fadl , to install himself at El Fasher where , after eliminating rival claimants , he succeeded in consolidating his position as an independent ruler . El Obeid, the capital of Kordofan was not occupied until December 1899. The following map illustrates the Sultanate of Darfour in eastern Sudan.

## Darfur Sultanate



Source: [www.worldatlas.com](http://www.worldatlas.com)

After the battle of Omdurman , when it was discovered that the *Khalifa* Abdellah had fled, a cavalry force under Slatin was sent in pursuit but failed to intercept him . In January 1899 the Kordofan Field Force under the commander – in – chief ‘s brother Lt – Colonel Walter Kitchener was sent against the *Khalifa* . When it was seen that Abdellah possessed a force far in excess of what reports had indicated , Walter Kitchener soon retired . Another expedition in October 1899 failed to bring him to battle. And finally, in

November 1899 , a force under Wingate tracked him down and the decisive battle was fought south – west of Kosti , in Umm Diwaykarat on the 24th . The number of Mahdists dead was estimated to one thousand , with 9 , 400 prisoners taken (11). Among the dead was the *Khalifa* Abdellah .

### **a ) The Agreement by the Co – domini**

The Anglo – Egyptian agreement of January 19, 1899 , a hybrid arrangement which lasted for nearly sixty years , gave Britain a trusteeship over the country based on the right of conquest .In fact , the decision to adopt this agreement - which in theory would be a novel form of government - was not hastily taken after the battle of Omdurman , but it was the result of many consultations between Lord Cromer and London . Lord Cromer , the architect of this creation , thought it was neither possible to annex the Sudan to Britain nor feasible to let it be administered by Egypt alone . Though during the Sudan campaign it was accepted that the territory won from the Mahdists would be restored to Egypt, Britain viewed no urgent necessity to reach final decision in the matter. This solution was intended to overcome Egyptian opposition to what was seen as a campaign undertaken in pursuit of British rather than Egyptian interests. According to Cromer, it was essential that British influence should be permanent in the Sudan so that the Egyptians should not confer freedom on the Sudanese and repeat the misgovernment of the past . In the first place, the simple incorporation of the Sudan with Egypt would have been unacceptable to the public opinion in Britain, as the majority of the British people were quite pleased with their military success in the Sudan. In the second place, to avoid any form of European criticism of British

expansionism, Cromer thought the reconquest of the Sudan had to be internationally « justifiable ». It was manifest, then, that these requirements could be satisfied only with the creation of some new hybrid form of government, and the idea of a co-domini originated.

Before outlining the terms of such an agreement, Cromer raised the question of whether or not it would have any international validity, since Egypt was still nominally a part of the Ottoman Empire. To ignore Ottoman rights was easier done than said. Cromer suggested that the involvement of British troops, officers and money had brought about the conquest, and therefore invested Britain with 'predominant rights' in the Sudan. He made it clear in the following quotation:

England, not Egypt had in reality conquered this country. It is true that the Egyptian treasury had borne the greater part of the cost and that Egyptian troops officered however by Englishmen had taken a less honourable part in the campaign. But alike during the period of the preparation and of the execution of the policy, the guiding hand had been that of England. It is absurd to suggest that without British assistance in the form of men, money and general guidance the Egyptian Government could have reconquered the Sudan. From this point of view the annexation of the reconquered territories by England would have been partially justified (12).

Cromer's essential assertion of the principle of British predominance had been made, while at the same time, he promised to maintain Egyptian « rights » over the Sudan so that reference could be made to either, or to both, as convenience dictated. He decided, therefore, to create a 'hybrid form of government' without having to shoulder the cost of its administration, and which would at the same time give the Egyptians the satisfaction of seeing themselves as the co-governors in the Sudan. The results of Cromer's considerations were the Agreement between Her Britannic Majesty's

Government and the Government of His Highness the Khedive of Egypt relative to the future administration of the Sudan, which was signed in Cairo, on 19 January 1899. This form of agreement and administrative machinery, seldom used, if at all, in international jurisprudence, was called Condominium.

But before summarizing the terms of the Agreement, it is essential to reconsider at least some essential points. The Condominium Agreement implied the establishment of a regime which, in fact, ignored the question of sovereignty as such. No reference, in the Agreement, was made to the Ottoman Sultan in whom, theoretically speaking, sovereignty over the Sudan was still vested. Instead, as stated above, the Agreement was concluded with the Khedive who, from the legal point of view, was merely a vassal of the Sultan and was as such forbidden by the Imperial Firmans to conclude Treaties with any foreign power other than commercial conventions. It was a true fact that the Ottoman Empire had long been 'the sick man of Europe'. It also was another real fact that Egypt was a British 'sphere of influence', and Cromer was 'naturally' convinced that British authority should be 'firmly' established in the Sudan. These convictions were given formal expression in the preamble as well as in the main body of the agreement.

In the preamble, allusion was made to the rights of the Khedive in the Sudan – before the Mahdists' revolution; but no mention was made of such rights after the reconquest. The fact that the military expedition was conducted in the name of the Khedive was similarly ignored; and the reconquest was described as the result of joint military and financial efforts of the British and Egyptian Governments without any reference as to the exact proportions in which the total costs of the campaigns had been divided between the two Governments. In contrast, the claims presented by Britain by virtue of her role

in the reconquest were explicitly stated in this preamble , and the desire to give effect to these claims was presented as one of the objectives of the Agreement . The next statement added that Her Britannic Majesty ‘s Government was entitled ‘by right of conquest’ to share in the present and future working and development of the Sudan’s system of administration and legislation (10).

Article I defined the frontiers of the Sudan. This seemed to be necessary because Wadi Halfa and Suakin remained under Egyptian hands throughout the Mahdists’ administration. But leaving those two areas from the new Condominium Administration to Egypt might create problems sooner or later, as Cromer thought. Consequently, the Sudan was divided into three territories. First, those territories which remained permanently under Egyptian administration since 1882, second, those under Egyptian administration before the Mahdists’ insurrection, but not re-conquered jointly by Britain and Egypt, third , those that might be conquered at any subsequent time jointly by Britain and Egypt , but excluding any extensions from any part of the adjacent British territories ( e.g. Uganda). Other boundaries to the east, west, or south were not fixed for the time being with anything approaching the exactitude, not to say the « arbitrariness » with which the Sudanese – Egyptian border was thus determined.

Article II concerned the hoisting of the British and the Egyptian flags .The British and Egyptian flags would be used together, both on land and water, throughout the Sudan except in the town of Suakin in which locality the Egyptian flag alone shall be used.

Article III stated that the Sudan should be headed by one officer termed the ‘Governor General’ of the Sudan in whom was to be vested the supreme

military and civil command of the country. He was to be an Egyptian official , appointed and dismissed only by Khedivial Decree, with the recommendation of the British Government. This meant that although the Governor General of the Sudan was nominally and formally an Egyptian official, he was, in fact, a British agent. The Agreement was silent as to his nationality; but in the light of what has already been said, those who held the office of Governor General during the Anglo – Egyptian Administration were, without exception, all British .

In accordance with the provisions of Article III, which vested the supreme military and civil command of the Sudan in the Governor-General, Article IV empowered him to make, alter or abrogate, by proclamation, all laws, orders, and regulations with the full force of law, for the good government of the Sudan. The only limitation imposed on him was that he was required to notify such proclamations to Her Majesty's Government through the British Agent and Consul – General in Cairo, and to the President of the Council of Ministers of His Highness the Khedive. But as Cromer wanted the Governor-General to appear absolutely 'supreme' in the eyes of the population in the Sudan, and in the interest of efficiency (he was after all the trusted man of the two governments) , he was given a free hand in governing the country. Thus the condition of prior consent on proclamations was dropped from the final text of the Agreement (13 ). In fact, Article III and IV formed the core of the Agreement.

Article V specified that no Egyptian law, decree, ministerial *arrêté* or other enactment could, in future, apply to the Sudan, except where the Governor General's approval had been granted. This Article was to ensure the Governor General's complete freedom from the shackles of international



(including Egyptian) interference in the execution of his work. Article VI explained that Europeans were to be at liberty to trade with or reside in the Sudan , or to hold property within its limits .Cromer offered free trade and British justice to all foreigners wishing to reside in the Sudan .

Article VII gave to Egypt preferential treatment about import duties which should not be payable on goods coming from Egyptian territories. Article VIII provided that the jurisdiction of the Mixed Tribunals (in which civil cases involving Egyptians and Europeans were tried in Egypt) should not extend nor be recognized for any purpose in any part of the Sudan , except in the town of Suakin, where the Mixed Courts in Egypt had been exercising authority for many years. Suakin continued to have this special status until July 1899. So this Article removed the Sudan from the jurisdiction applied in Egypt.

With the exception of Suakin, Article IX put the whole Sudan under martial law. This Article gave the Governor General ample powers of maintaining 'law and order' .Article X conceded to Britain alone the right to grant or withdraw recognition to any accredited representative of any nation. The Article which gave expression to one of the cherished reasons for British participation in the conquest is Article XI. It stated that the importation of slaves into the Sudan, as also their exportation, was absolutely prohibited. The abolition of the slave trade had been one of Gordon's principal objects in the Sudan. But the Article was worded precisely to prohibit trade in slave, not slavery itself. Article XII put the manufacture or importation of arms and alcoholic drinks under the Brussels Act of 2 July 1890 (14).

The Agreement was signed on 19 January 1899 , by Boutros Ghali Pasha, then Minister of Foreign Affairs for Egypt, and Lord Cromer, for Britain . The Condominium Agreement remained in force until the Sudan regained its independence in 1956 .Kitchener was appointed as the first Governor General of the Sudan, on the same day the Agreement was signed . Soon afterwards , however , a supplemental Agreement was signed again – on 10 July 1899 – abrogating all the provisions of the January Agreement by which the town of Suakin was excepted from the regime of the Sudan. Thus Suakin ( formerly under the jurisdiction of the Mixed Courts ) became absorbed into the Sudan.

Thus the Condominium Agreement of 1899 established the Anglo – Egyptian Sudan over which each of the co-domini had, in theory, an equal right of control. But, in practice, the partnership was unequal. At the beginning of the issue, Egypt herself was under Turkish suzerainty, and from about 1882 to 1898 Britain gave the impression of acting merely as Egypt’s adviser and guardian. Eventually, under the Condominium Agreement, it became clear that Britain was in fact determined to be permanent master not only in the Sudan, but even in Egypt as well .

In the Sudan, the reconstruction of Khartoum on the right bank of the Blue Nile was Kitchener’s personal choice. As early as 21 November, he ordered work to be begun on rebuilding the city, starting with the palace. Kitchener’s idea of rebuilding Khartoum might have been inspired by the need to impress the Sudanese with the permanence of the new regime. Anyway, it was in Khartoum that he would found a seat of learning for the Sudanese, in Gordon’s name.

## **b ) International Reactions to the Conquest**

When the Agreement was published, it naturally attracted much attention. Foreign diplomats who were used to conventionalities were somewhat puzzled at the creation of a political status hitherto unknown to the law of Europe. Addressing Lord Cromer, they remarked that they understood what British territory meant, as also what Ottoman territory meant, but that they found it difficult to understand the new status of the Sudan, which became now neither British nor Ottoman. In response, Cromer said that the most 'precise definition of the new political status of the Sudan could be found in the Agreement of January 1899, and that he could give no more precise or epigrammatic definition' (15). Cromer did not seem to be worried about the anomalies of the Agreement. The Sultan of Turkey, the nominal owner and absent landlord, protested, but in vain. He was probably aware of his helplessness. The British Government was certainly aware of the feeling of Turkey in this matter. For many decades, Britain, France and Turkey had competed with vigour; but Turkey had become relatively powerless. Britain's share in her succession would be the undisputed possession of Egypt, and through Egypt the Sudan. But as is usually the case, the big amazement and general indignation caused by the Agreement soon died away among all the Powers as they found compensations elsewhere.

But the salient point of the whole Agreement was that Britain had gained control of the Sudan, and while her policies and plans there would often have to take account of Egypt, that control was maintained by force, not by the Condominium Agreement. Most Egyptian Officials felt cheated because of their minor role in the administration of the Sudan. Egyptian nationalists opposed from the beginning the Agreement on the grounds that the Sudan was

part of Egypt, and that any arrangement which included Britain as partner was in the long run detrimental to the interest of Egypt. They continued to be discontented and, understandably, considered the recommendations of the “Condominium” as humiliating as they were prejudicial to the interests of their country. Moreover, they thought the Agreement was an illegal practice, and that the *Khedive* had no right to sign a document relinquishing sovereignty over the Sudan.

The Sudanese looked upon the new arrangement with mixed feelings .The Mahdists and their allies – the defeated ones – were not in a position to do much. The enemies of the Mahdists came into the open and offered their co-operation and assistance. Both groups, however, opposed Egypt having a free hand in the Sudan. Memories of the misgovernment during the Turco – Egyptian regime and the hard life under the *Khalifa* were still alive. Thus with the exception of a small hard core of Mahdists the new arrangement was not defied or straightforwardly opposed. In fact, the religious leaders were more or less relieved because it gave the British administrators the upper hand.

Thus, the agreement was of necessity, « the child of opportunism », (16) and its authors were aware of this, and also of the fact that it could at any time be replaced by a more ‘realistic’ agreement as a result of new political situations. However, it stood the test of more than half a century .But both in Egypt and the Sudan the weapons of opposition were simply stored, not buried. The inhabitants became more conscious of the injustice done to them. The Sudanese, in particular, who had no voice in the matter, felt that they were regarded as a mere commodity for ‘bartering’. They fought tooth and nail for 54 years to undo it, until the Anglo – Egyptian Agreement of 1953, and until January 1956, when the Sudan became an independent republic.

It is essential, by now, to discuss the validity of the Condominium Agreement. The British would, naturally, retain its validity, just as the Egyptians and the Sudanese would oppose it. Mekki Abbas, a Sudanese writer, suggests that 'any attempt to give a ruling on the validity or otherwise of the Condominium is engaging in a sterile discussion'. Even so, he puts that 'it was valid', and his reasons are: 'it was not questioned by the Sultan; it has never been denounced by the various foreign governments having intercourse with the Sudan Government, to which the Agreement gave birth; and it was recognized by the Mixed Tribunal in Cairo on 2 April 1910'. This quotation needs, in fact, to be debated (17).

It is difficult to agree totally with Abbas on the first point. The Sultan did protest. But Britain ignored his protests as the Sultan was not in a position to « shout », but he could only « murmur » few words of objection. As to the second point about the foreign Governments which dealt with the Government in the Sudan without denouncing it, it is important to say that once a form of government has been established '*de facto*' in a nation, other foreign Governments consider it 'desirable' to recognize (whether or not they approve) such a form of government. There is in fact a difference between recognition for the purposes of trade and other forms of beneficial relations and approval. But it must be remembered that, in any case, most of the Powers, despite their jealousy and rivalry, were in accord with Britain, as they all agreed not to interfere destructively in each other's spheres of influence.

Among the Agreements reached at in this sense, the International Convention of The Hague (which was signed during the various Berlin Conferences on the scramble for Africa) recognized 'the solidarity which

united the members of the society of civilizations' (18). The Convention was ratified by 23 nations (including the U.S.A. and Russia but not Turkey) on 29 July 1899, just within six months after the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement. Furthermore, the Anglo – French Agreement of 1904 provided 'for French recognition of the British position in Egypt (and of course the Sudan) in return for British recognition of the special position of France in Morocco' (19). So the Foreign Powers were recommended not to question these 'rights', so vital to them. Lloyd George, as Secretary of State for the Colonies said emphatically: « We will regard as an unfriendly act any attempt at interference in the affairs of Egypt (and the Sudan) by another power » (20).

As for Mekki's third argument which concerned the recognition of the Condominium by the Mixed Tribunal, here again, the Mixed Courts could recognize without approving (as indicated above). The Mixed Courts included the same Powers, i.e. 'Great Britain, France, U.S.A., Germany, Austria-Hungary, Belgium, Denmark, Russia, Italy, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Sweden and later Norway' (21). In view of the Hague Convention, and with Britain as the leading member, it should not be difficult to imagine how the Mixed Tribunal would accept the Condominium Convention without further questioning.

Besides, the validity of the Condominium Agreement can be questioned mainly because the Ottoman Sultan had expressly 'forbidden the Egyptian Khedive from entering into political arrangements with foreign powers'(22). This is true; but if this point is to be focussed on, Egypt would also seem to have violated the rules of her status with the Sultan by asking for and accepting military aid from Britain. If the Egyptians' claims that the Agreement was nothing but a legal screen to conceal British imperialism, their

involvement in the military campaign with the British against the Sudanese should have been dealt with a lot of caution, regardless of their own imperialistic adventure in the Sudan . As Machiavelli says in the *Prince* : ‘Only those defences are good , certain and durable , which depend on yourself alone and on your own ability’. The British military aid to the Egyptians was a carefully calculated manoeuvre, what the ruling Egyptians of the time unhappily disregarded.

## **2 .The Establishment of the Condominium and Early Administration (1899-1919)**

Once the main force of the Mahdists had been destroyed on 2 September 1898, Kitchener and his lieutenants ( Wingate and Slatin ), working under the general direction of Lord Cromer, turned their attention to the establishment of the new Sudan administration. Cromer’s view was not to attempt to do too many things at once. He believed that a ‘ light system of taxation, some very simple powers for the administration of civil and commercial justice and the appointment of a few competently selected officers with somewhat discretionary powers to deal with local affairs, were all that for the time being were necessary’ (23). These views were accepted by Kitchener as guidelines, but it was his personality which helped from the beginning in the independent nature of the Sudan government, as will be described later.

As early as 1899, Kitchener, who was a soldier and a practical man of results, not a philosopher, issued a memorandum to the Government where he defined the purposes of his administration. He stated:

.....The necessary laws and regulations will be carefully considered and issued as required , but it is not mainly to the framing and publishing of laws that we must look for the improvement and good government of the country .....The task before us all is to acquire the confidence of the people, to develop their resources , and to raise them to a higher level ...This can only be effected by the District Officers being thoroughly in touch with the better class of natives , through whom we may hope gradually to influence the whole population. Mudirs and inspectors should learn to know personally all the principal men of their districts and should then by friendly dealings and the interest taken in their individual concerns show that our object is to increase their prosperity..... (24)

To Kitchener, it was only natural to enlist in the task of governing the « principal men » of the land who were the accepted leaders of the community. His problem in 1899 was how to control a vast land with insufficient troops and a limited number of British officers. His solution to use the traditional authorities was neither original nor a brilliant discovery. To rule indirectly through indigenous authorities was as old a practice as empire. Kitchener stated that the religion of the people should be respected, and that slavery should be stopped. Additionally, in a letter addressed to the *mamurs* – the majority of whom were Egyptians – Kitchener continued:

You should always bear in mind that you are the recognized agent in your district of a just and merciful government and as such you should do all in your power to gain the confidence and respect of the inhabitants who should in their turn be made to look to and respect the government of which you are the representative ... Every effort should be made to induce the inhabitants to feel that an era of justice and kindly treatment has come with at the same time a vigorous repression of crime and determination to put down with a strong hand any attempt to evildoers to carry on the practices which it is hoped have disappeared with the fight of the dervishes (25).

This last warning to the Egyptian *mamurs* was important and necessary. Many of the Sudanese remembered the treatment they had received at the



hands of the Egyptians in the old days and still hated the *mamurs* or were frightened by them. Now that these Egyptian *mamurs* had more contact with the public by virtue of their position as administrators, it was important that their behaviour with the Sudanese should not lead them to trouble.

The people who were to carry out this policy were British officers attached to the Egyptian army, and the top ranks of the administration were, in fact, mostly military. Egyptians, a few Syrians and Lebanese were recruited in the junior ranks. Some of the ex – Mahdists were also employed, but under strict supervision. Indeed, these early years in the conduct of administration were mostly devoted in the search for security and the establishment of law and order.

Kitchener's personally directed administration enabled him to go ahead with a number of tasks, which would not have been possible in different circumstances. By the first week of February 1899, for example, 5,000 men of the Egyptian army under the direction of British and Egyptian officers were employed on the hard task of rebuilding Khartoum. New roads were laid out on a military plan and Kitchener ordered 7,000 trees to be planted. (26) Kitchener proceeded in the reconstruction of the Palace ( previously Gordon's Palace) , and the Government building. In Cromer's view, the enormous palace was no more than a prodigious waste of money. He found it 'large, expensive and very unnecessary' (27). As for the British officers on the scene, important work was being sacrificed for the sake of Khartoum, and at Khartoum, the Palace was the focus of effort. Although Kitchener was strongly criticized in Cairo and London, he took an almost persistent interest in the restoration of Khartoum. On 5 January 1899, he invited Cromer in the presence of a large and distinguished gathering to lay the foundation stone of the Gordon

Memorial College, the centrepiece of his achievements in Khartoum. He also ordered the mosques of Khartoum to be rebuilt and recognized Friday – the Muslim holy day – to be the day of rest.

But according to Cromer, Kitchener was better at the military than he was at the civil and political part of the business. Kitchener was on many occasions at loggerheads with Cromer, whom he disliked consulting and was never willing to keep informed. Cromer, in his turn did not like Kitchener's methods of administration and the way he treated his subordinates, who complained to Cromer that 'they could not stand his way of doing things'(28). Cromer also expressed his unease at Kitchener's expenditure in the Sudan, but he had to agree to most of the measures Kitchener wanted to enforce. Kitchener's governor – generalship lasted only eleven months; but it was not because of failure in office that he left the Sudan. In reality, since the battle of Omdurman, if not before, he had made known his desire to leave the Sudan. Kitchener was appointed as chief of staff in the South African (Boer) war. He was succeeded by Sir Reginald Wingate, who was approved by *Khedivial* decree on 23 December 1899.

British military officers could not be regarded as permanent staff as they were subject to recall by the War Office at any time to meet Britain's needs elsewhere. Indeed, immediately after the establishment of the Condominium, the outbreak of the South African War instantly removed from the Egyptian army many British officers who had begun administrative duties in the Sudan. Continuity of administration required the creation of a corps of civilian administrators who could devote themselves solely to the task of governing the Sudan free from the commitments and loyalties of British army officers.

In order to carry out British imperial rule in the Sudan, Lord Cromer – the Architect of British policy in the Sudan – sought to recruit civilian administrators with high character and fair abilities. Cromer turned for these men to the British universities, particularly Oxford and Cambridge. He offered good pay, good pension, and mostly attractive, an annual leave of three months to recover from the Sudan's debilitating climate. These civilians were approximately one hundred and fifty officials, appointed to form the nucleus of the Sudan Political Service (29). The young British recruits were expected to spend the big part of their working lives in the Sudan, mostly in the rural areas. The most successful might become province governors, or even rise to the position of civil secretary. Therefore, until 1952, from four to twelve graduates were recruited annually, according to the need and availability of funds.

After Kitchener, the appointment of Sir Francis Reginald Wingate was in some respects a reward for sixteen years of diligent and tactful work in the Egyptian army. As director of military intelligence, he had shown big care and attention in such a sensitive and useful department's work. At the same time, Lord Cromer saw in him the competent, compliant successor. Unlike Kitchener, he could take orders as well as give them (30). It would seem that Kitchener's brief rule had taught a great deal to Cromer who was determined to have a fresh start with Wingate. In other words, Cromer wanted to keep a direct and constant control over the big questions of the Sudan's Government early policies on land, taxation, slavery, religion, trade and so forth. Explicitly, Wingate's subordination was suitable to Cromer.

In general, it is quite clear that foreign powers do not declare openly their real objectives and interests in their colonial territories. In the case of the Sudan, the Anglo – Egyptian Condominium of 1899 was silent about the

objectives of the two countries in the Sudan. It is, therefore, convenient to pause here and indicate both Egypt's and Britain's immediate interests in the Sudan. It seems that Egypt's primary interests were the waters of the Nile, upon which she depends. Moreover, the Sudan was a relief for her surplus population, and her need for external markets and capital investments. But to the Sudan, also, the waters of the Nile are of vital importance. While the Southern part of the country has an annual rainfall sufficient for the cultivation of crops, the North is practically without rain. As for Britain – the dominant partner in the Condominium – the interests were commercial, political and strategic; in fact, all these interests were closely interwoven and expressed through the nice words of «protecting the Sudan from imperialism, and working for its development» (31). From the British point of view, their paramountcy was justified in order to ensure British ideas of humanity, equity, and justice.

As a matter of fact, the need for a rapid establishment of an effective administration in the Sudan owed much to the threat posed by the religious character of the north. The most direct threat lay with the *Ansar*, or followers of the Mahdi and his successor the *Khalifa* Abdellah. In the name of Mahdism that gave rise to the rebellion which overthrew the Turco – Egyptian administration in 1885, thousands of Sudanese had died endeavouring to prevent the reconquest. The British had, therefore, cause to be suspicious of many of the peoples of the Sudan, but there were those who were ready to collaborate either because of their sense of suffering under Mahdism, or because of their desire to benefit from opportunities created by the Condominium.

The *Khatmyia* sect (*tariqa*) was within the category which suffered during Mahdism. This *tariqa* was established in the Sudan in the early nineteenth century, and was centred on the eastern and northern parts of the country. It enjoyed official support under the Turco – Egyptian administration, and consequently found itself under attack during Mahdism. The character of Sudanese Islam, with its stress on holy families, gave great significance to the personality and ambitions of religious leaders. The leader of the *Khatmyia* during the Condominium was Sayid Ali Al Mirghani, who was vigorously opposed to any possibility of the resurrection of a “fanatical” Mahdist state in the Sudan. For this reason, he was ready to collaborate with the Sudan Government. The latter welcomed the support, trusted the *Khatmyia* on its record during the Turco – Egyptian administration, and was therefore prepared to make an exception to its general rule of suspecting all *tariqas*.

The other collaborators were essentially men who found an opportunity to pursue their various interests in the stable conditions created by the Condominium. Among these were orthodox religious appointees, substantial landowners, wealthy traders and major tribal leaders. Together with Sayid Ali Al Mirghani, they were to become what was termed ‘the Sudanese establishment’. But immediately after the reconquest, British reliability and trust on Sudanese collaborators took time to be established. It was actually on the presence and help of the Egyptian soldiers that the British mostly depended (32).

As did the Turkish and Mahdist precedents, the Sudan was thus divided into a number of provinces, which were in turn sub-divided into districts; and these were further split into smaller units. All the districts and provinces had to be answerable to the general headquarters in Khartoum. Wide authority and

freedom of judgement were left to the British governors, inspectors and district administrators who found themselves entrusted with large districts, and with not sufficiently trained administrative and clerical staff. The lack of knowledge of the Arabic language was also another handicap. Henceforth, Cromer's and Wingate's technique of working through the 'better class' of Sudanese helped to bridge the gap between the rulers and the ruled. The religious leaders, especially Sayid Ali Al Mirghani, played an important role by giving advice and continually interpreting the feelings of the people to the administration.

One of the first tasks the administration had to start with was the problem of the Sudan's frontiers. This had become a matter of urgency since the Fashoda incident with the French. During the next few years a series of agreements and treaties were drawn up defining the frontiers: between 1899 and 1902 the boundary with Eritrea was fixed; a treaty between Abyssinia and Britain in 1902 established the boundary with Abyssinia; in 1906 the boundary with the Congo Free State was agreed upon, and in 1913 the boundary with Uganda was settled.

The second important task the administration tackled early on was what Kitchener called the 'industrial regeneration of the Sudan'. But Lord Cromer did not want this "regeneration" to be hastened. In his first report in 1898, he wrote,

'The Sudan is in a far more backward condition than was the case with Egypt when the work of reform was taken seriously in hand . The work of introducing civilization into the Sudan may not improbably present somewhat similar features .Time is above all things required . The main condition of ultimate success is , I venture to think , that whatever measures are taken should be deliberate and that the work of reform should not be hurried' (33).

In his report for 1900 , Cromer stated that the most urgent and pressing need was for expenditure of capital on railways and irrigation . In the report of 1902, he gave further explanation in the following terms:

What the Sudan mainly requires is the outlay of capital on a large scale , noticeably to improve the very defective means of communication which at present exist. It is quite hopeless to expect that unaided private enterprise will supply this want ...To obtain the necessary funds at the expense of the British taxpayer , even were such a course possible , would not in any opinion be either just or desirable . It is equally clear that the government of the Sudan cannot on its own unaided credit raise money , for its expenditure is already largely in excess of its outcome. To impose additional taxation in Egypt in order to meet Sudanese requirements is a proposal which cannot for one moment be entertained (34).

Cromer's report for 1903 stressed that the future of the Sudan would appear to depend on good administration, an increase in the population and the improvement of its communications, water supply and cotton cultivation, and cheap fuel. In 1909, Wingate confirmed this five – points programme and added a sixth one: the inauguration of a simple educational system.

But the obstacle to carrying out such a programme was finance. The general conditions of the Sudan were to be taken into consideration altogether with the desirability not to levy high taxes. At the beginning of administration, only land, herds, and date palms were taxed. In the Sudan, economy was essentially a subsistence one, as the people were self – sufficient in essential foodstuffs. There was very little production offered to the external markets, and trade did not go beyond local barter except in few commodities destined for export. Industry was strictly limited to the handcrafts manufacture of articles in wood, metal and earth. There was a small domestic production of rough woven articles.

Soon after the reconquest in 1898, some British businessmen began to apply to the Foreign Office for permission to invest their capital in the Sudan. Lord Cromer indicated, at this period, that he had to deal not only with Sudanese, but also with numerous demands received from Europeans who wished to reside, invest, trade with and acquire real property in the country. He submitted that it would be undesirable to exclude them because British capital and assistance were needed for real progress in the Sudan. Consequently, investors lent the Sudan over £15,000,000 for the construction of dams (principally the Sennar dam), canals and certain railways (35). A portion of the loan was redeemed in 1939, but another at a lower rate of interest was made, and the Sudan continued to pay a debt service until 1957.

Sudan finance was controlled by Egypt, and subject to the approval of the Egyptian Council of Ministers. No taxes could be levied, altered, or abolished without ministry approval. The ministry had a constant right of supervision, audit or inspection of the whole of the financial arrangement of the Sudan Government. For Britain, it was obvious that Egypt should bear Sudan's financial aid and support. In 1899, expenditure in the Sudan was £E 467,272 and revenue £E 51,500. The balance was paid by Egypt. From 1899 to 1913 Egypt granted more than £E 6 million to meet the budget deficit and finance capital works (36). These included houses, offices and a variety of development projects such as railways' extensions and equipment, river steamers, telegraphic equipment and lines, the construction of Port Sudan and a number of lesser but important substance. It was estimated that £E 5 million were used to finance development projects (37).



The sums were certainly generous, especially when the payments were made at a period when foreign bondholders were making repeated claims on Egypt's revenue. Egypt's generosity was remarkable when one should not forget that the other partner in responsibility for the Sudan, and its real master, took no share in the financial contributions to its administration and financial development. Wingate attempted, in many occasions, to arrange British loans for Sudan development, at least, as he suggested, to effectively assert England's claim to run the Anglo – Egyptian Sudan. But during Cromer's tenure the loans (from the British Government) were refused.

The argument by which Egyptian financial assistance was justified – indeed demanded as a right – was that Egypt alone was responsible for the prosperity and welfare of the Sudan. Actually, Cromer considered that Egypt and the Sudan constituted one single country, and he disagreed with any suggestion that they were not. He also tried to justify the hoisting of the British flag next to the Egyptian's as a mere international convenience. « The only reason why the British flag is flying; why the Sudan has a Governor General and special laws, is to avoid the capitulations and the rest of the international paraphernalia .... » (38) Cromer made it clear to his subordinates that the Sudan development would redound to the credit of the Egyptians. Hence it was to the advantage of Egypt to build up – alone – the Sudan administration and economy as quickly as possible, at least until 1913. This argument was made clear in Cromer's report for 1905 where he wrote:

The British Government would certainly not have assisted in the reconquest of the Sudan on behalf of Egypt unless it had been known that Egyptian resources would eventually be used in its development. It would be morally quite indefensible to leave the large Moslem population of the Sudan in their present condition without every effort to assist them...The Sudan is a priceless possession to Egypt...guarding the Nile on which the whole future development of

Egypt depends.....The main utility of the Sudan in so far as Egypt is concerned is derived from the fact that the Nile runs through the country and that complete control over that river throughout its course is a matter of vital importance to the Egyptians (39).

With the British Government excluded as a source of capital, Sir Eldon Gorst (Cromer's successor in 1907) and Wingate had no choice but to continue Egyptian subventions despite the Egyptian nationalists' major complaint of Sudan's continuing financial dependence. As has been already indicated, these nationalists did not approve of the new regime in the Sudan, and were far from satisfied with this arrangement. In trying to justify this policy to them, and to the world in general, Gorst – who pursued Cromer's policy – explained that since the Sudan was an Egyptian possession it was only fair that the cost of its administration should be borne by the Egyptian Treasury. Seeing that this argument by itself was not sufficient to reconcile the nationalists, some of whom were not likely to be convinced, he put forward the point that it was in Egypt's interest that the Sudan had been conquered, and was gradually being developed. Had it not been for the reconquest, he argued, Egypt would have had to pay for the maintenance of a large and permanent force in order to guard her southern frontier against Mahdist invasion; and more importantly, her water supply would not have been safeguarded. Not feeling concerned and adding a moral dimension to Egypt, he also insisted that it would be inexcusable to leave the large Moslem population of the Sudan without making an effort to assist them. Accordingly, the Egyptian Treasury which, of course, was itself under British control, met the deficit in the Sudan budget until 1913. This is illustrated in the following table.

**Table I: The Revenue and Expenditure of the Sudan Government for the years 1899 – 1913**

	Revenue £	Expenditure £
1899	126,569	230,238
1900	156,888	331,918
1901	242,309	407,335
1902	270,226	516 ,945
1903	462,605	616,361
1904	579,013	628,931
1905	665,411	681,881
1906	817,921	827,961
1907	975,973	1,012,357
1908	979,343	1,163,657
1909	1,104,599	1,153,519
1910	1,171,007	1,214,676
1911	1,311,218	1,350,854
1912	1,428,605	1,490,668
1913	1,654,149	1,614,007

Source: Muddathir , A., *Imperialism and Nationalism in the Sudan ,a Study in Constitutional and Political Development 1899-1956*, Oxford University Press , Great Britain, 1969, p. 55

In addition Egypt also provided the capital, interest free, which was necessary for public works; so her total contribution until 1913 was £5,354,000. In the meantime the only British commitment was one battalion and a battery of artillery stationed at Khartoum. Apart from that England spent not a penny on the administration or the restoration of the Sudan before 1913. Even though it was quite understood that Egypt would always meet the deficit in the Sudan budget, she practically got nothing in return except its nominal share in the government of the Sudan (40).

## **a) Basic Economic Development**

When the programme of economic development was initiated, attention was first directed to improving communications. The first railway line from Wadi Halfa to Khartoum North was completed by the end of 1899. The Suakin – Berber line was completed in 1906. This was a major development since it was suggested that it achieved for the Sudan what the Suez Canal achieved for the east. In 1909 the railway was extended to Wad Medani to serve the rich and heavily populated Gezira area. In 1911 the line reached El Obeid in Kordofan, and as a result of this, the gum trade developed. The Karima-Abu Hamed line had been built in 1906 with the object of developing basin irrigation in Dongola Province.

So an entire network connecting the provincial regions with the sea outlet was completed before any large scale economic programme was initiated. In 1913, when the question of growing cotton in the Gezira was considered, the British Cotton Growing Association stated that there was ‘no single other colony in tropical Africa which can boast of such excellent transport facilities’ (41). The second phase of railways construction had to wait until after the First World War; the Suakin – Tokar line was completed in 1921; the Kassala – Halfa line in 1924; the Kassala – Gedaref line in 1928; and the Gedaref – Sennar line in 1929. Railways’ construction influenced economic and social development and led to the emergence of a business class. That was the class of pioneers who emigrated from the northern regions of the country and settled as businessmen, and as agents of change.

The other major development connected with the extension of the railways was the opening of Port Sudan in 1909 which led to the diversion of trade from Egypt to the Sudan, and the establishment by foreign firms of their own offices to handle goods at the new port. A community of foreign merchants and agents, particularly Indians, opened offices and shops at Port Sudan, and a number of Sudanese traders mostly from the northern provinces came to settle there.

The Sudan Government's Steamers' and Boats' Department was another achievement. Because of terrain, climate and economic demand, steamers remained the main form of transport between Khartoum and the far South, and in the North, along the Donqola Reach and between Shellal and Wadi Halfa. A government dockyard was established in Omdurman in 1898, and in 1902, it was moved to Khartoum North. The southern provinces relied much on the steamer services not only for moving people but also for supplies and postal communication. By the beginning of the war regular services operated between Wadi Halfa and Shellal; along the Donqola Reach; between Khartoum and Rejaf; between Khartoum and Mashra' al Riqq in winter (and on to Wau in summer). The following map illustrates the River Nile (crossing the Sudan from South to North) and its tributaries. It explains how the far southern regions could be reached thanks to the steamers' services.

## Map of the Nile River and its Tributaries



Source: worldatlas.com

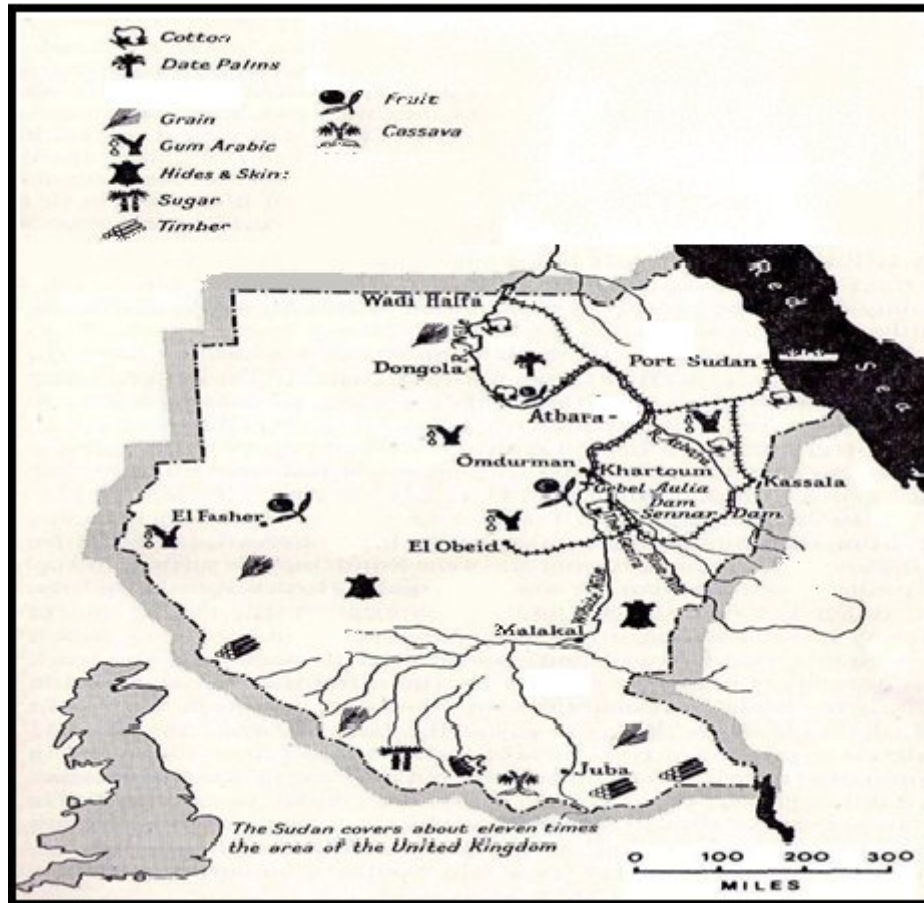
The development of road transport was negligible, as determined by great distances, low population density, difficult conditions (especially in Southern Sudan), and above all, the concentration of government finance on the railways. Though the need for road – building was especially urgent in the Southern Sudan, it was not before 1927 that Juba developed as a centre of a network of roads which connected the three Southern Provinces of the Sudan and its neighbours to the south.

During the first two decades of the Condominium rule, the construction of a telegraph system proceeded rapidly. As was the case with the railways and the steamers, this development was initially undertaken for military reasons,

during and after the conquest. Early in 1899, it was extended to include a line between Wadi Halfa and the Atbara, along the railway; a loop from Wadi Halfa along the Nile through Donqola and Merowe to Abu Hamed ; lines from the south of the Atbara up the left bank of the Nile to Omdurman, where it connected with the old link with Khartoum; from Berber to Suakin; and from Suakin to Kassala via Tokar . Wireless telegraphy was introduced in 1914, and the first communication was inaugurated between Gambeila and Malakal , with an intervening station in Nassir, in 1915. This was followed by the establishment of a station at Port Sudan to communicate with shipping in the Red Sea.

From the very start, the question of land settlement and agricultural development occupied the attention of the new administration. The Sudanese main occupation was agriculture and livestock, and agricultural lands were plentiful. The Land Settlement and Registration Ordinance of 1925 declared all lands to be government owned while the Land Acquisition Ordinance of 1930 gave the Governor General the power to acquire any land for utilization in the public interest. These land ordinances, however, did not interfere with the traditional rights (of ownership) of individuals, tribes or communities but in view of agricultural expansion in the Gezira and elsewhere, Egyptian *fellaheen* were encouraged to immigrate from upper Egypt. The Sudanese did feel suspicion on giving the Egyptians land. They felt ‘alarmed’ at the idea that the Egyptians would get too strong an influence on their land. The following map is about the main products the Sudan could offer.

## The Sudan Main Products



Source: Fabumni, op.cit. p., 5

The main sources of import remained Egypt and Britain, and these imports included cotton, cloth, timber, coal, coffee, tea, tobacco and soap. The value increased from £1,993,000 in 1908 to £2,111,000 in 1913. The value of imports from Egypt increased from £96,000 in 1908 to £949,000 in 1913, and those from Britain increased from £613,000 in 1908 to £616,000 in 1913. India was the third source of imports (42).



**Table 2: Import and export trade in the Sudan (1908-1913)**

	Imports : £	Private £	Government £	Exports (expressed as percentage)
1908	1,183	710	516	27,2%
1909	1,119	657	674	38,0%
1910	1,214	718	978	50,6%
1911	1,569	765	1,377	60,0%
1912	1,471	496	1,373	69,0%
1913	1,606	564	1,185	56,2%

**Table 3: The chief export market and destination of exports (in thousands of pounds)**

	£ 1908	£ 1911	£ 1913
Egypt	319	757	509
Britain	55	226	268
India and Aden	2	6	5
Turkey	6	6	12
United States of America	15	49	88
Germany	16	93	80
Belgium	13	27	32
France	46	136	107
Austria	16	20	23
Italy	4	19	16
Eritrea	11	7	16
Abyssinia	5	3	1
Other countries	8	19	28
Total	516	1,377	1,1

Note: the exports for Egypt alone as percentage of total exports were as follows: in 1908, 62%; in 1911, 55% and in 1913, 43%.

**Table 4: Exports of principal products from 1908 to 1913**

Exports of principal products	1908	1913
Gum	175,300	371,600
Cotton	80,600	152,500
Millet	58,200	21,700
Cattle	16,000	74,700
Sheep and goats	32,100	97,100
Honey	39,700	113,200
Hides and skins	64,000	54,800
Sesame	25,100	194,900
Dates	33,200	31,900
Ostrich Feathers	5,800	5,500
Others	58,000	157,000
Total exports	516,000	1,185,000

Source : Beshir, op.cit., pp.37-8

But this slow and steady development in the Northern Sudan was not paralleled in the southern regions of the country. There, the British Government was more concerned with establishing law and order as the unchallenged southern peoples were still resisting foreign domination. Moreover, the frequent inter-tribal raids made the South unpacified and unready for planning any development scheme. Thus in the Southern Sudan, the question of development did not rise yet. The Southern Sudanese prolonged resistance – and pacification – will be discussed in the next section of this chapter.

## **b) Education and Health Services**

In Northern Sudan, educational requirements were, in Cromer's opinion, the creation of a native artisan class, the spread of an education among the masses sufficient to enable them to understand the simplest elements of the government machinery, and the creation of a small native administrative class who would ultimately fill minor posts. In this list of priorities, there was obviously no room for education for its own sake; the idea if expressed would seem absurd to British Officials.

Both Cromer and Currie , the first Director of Education , believed that it was literary and academic education which had led to revolutionary unrest in India, and the Sudan Government was anxious to develop a system of education which would suit only its immediate needs within its financial limitations. Actually, in the minds of British political officers, the business of education, health, social welfare, economic development, and so forth was secondary, to be left to others. Illiteracy, disease and poverty were less a constant challenge than a perpetual reminder of the « ruler's cultural and racial superiority ».

Nevertheless, however simple the educational facilities Britain could offer the Sudanese, they could contribute to the emergence of an elite who would ask for more say on how things were run, and would take a leading role in the management of their country.

Kitchener's appeal for a Gordon Memorial College, undertaken in 1898-9 was enormously successful. In fact, the College was officially opened – by Kitchener – on 8 November 1902. At first, it accommodated the Khartoum primary school, training courses for elementary school teachers and *qadis* (who had been instructed in Omdurman since 1901), a technical – training course, and industrial workshops, which had commenced in 1901.

The first two primary schools were established in Omdurman and Khartoum. Although in 1899 Cromer had written 'no youth of the Sudan will be capable of receiving higher education' (43), later changed his mind and proposed to extend the curricula of Gordon College to include (a) an ordinary secondary school with general education and (b) a small engineering school. These proposals were carried out in 1905 when students were admitted in the technical secondary section of the Gordon College. Cromer's change of mind occurred because of the government's need for local, cheaper staff.

In addition, a military school for training Sudanese officers was established in 1904. Until then the few Sudanese officers had been trained in Egypt, and were thought to be influenced by Egyptian nationalist ideas. On the other hand, the Egyptian officers working in the Sudan were considered politically dangerous. To stop Egyptian nationalism contamination, the school was established and was the first of its kind in Britain's African colonies. Whatever the motives behind its founding it was a welcome addition to the general educational system in the Sudan. Moreover, the school was responsible for producing the officer class which played such an important and significant role in the history of the Sudan – mainly for its independence.

The problem of the supply of teachers led the government to establish a teacher training college: the *Sheikh's* Training College. The aim was to instruct a few Sudanese *Sheikhs* in reading, writing and arithmetics, and give them a little practice in teaching . Besides, the Sudan Government appointed a board of *Ulama* to develop religious teaching at the Omdurman Mosque. This was Wingate's initiative as – for political reasons – he found it safer not to send young Sudanese to the *Azhar* Mosque, in Cairo , so that they would not absorb ideas which would be 'prejudicial' to the Sudan Government . Teaching started as early as 1901 , and the principles of the school were drawn up by 1912 . The Omdurman *Maahad al – Mashiqa al – Almia* became a centre for training Sudanese '*ulama*'.

Education for girls had, in reality, no place in the practical plans Currie had made (44). But in 1906, a girls' school at Rufa' was given permission despite some local opposition. In addition to elementary instruction in academic subjects, the girls were taught sewing and embroidery and their manufactures were sold .The school was a success, and by 1921, there were five elementary girls' schools, at Rufa', Kamlin , Merowe , Dongola and El Obeid .

Under Currie the education system had expanded despite the meagre resources available to him. The endowment of Gordon's College had provided important facilities financed from external sources .The education budget had risen from nothing at all in 1899-1900 to £E58, 057 in 1913, when it represented 3.7 per cent of government expenditure. Thereafter its percentage of the government's budget declined until 1922 (45).

One feature of education which caused controversy was missionary education and the function of the Christian missionary societies. Since the newly established administration was concerned above all with law and order, it naturally opposed any activity which would annoy the Muslim population of the North. Christian missionary societies were, however, particularly interested in the Sudan because they saw Gordon as a Christian hero killed in the cause of Christianity. Their purpose in the Sudan was to stop Islam from spreading through the Nile Valley into the heart of Africa. When General Gordon – Governor of Equatoria – called upon the Church Missionary Society and the Roman Catholics in 1878, Cromer, during his first visit to the Sudan in 1899, promised the Sudanese leaders not to allow or encourage proselytism in the Muslim North. In one of his speeches he referred to the duty of the new administration to maintain the ‘sacred law’, that is the law of Islam, not out of devotion to Islam itself, but from concern with internal security. Kitchener, Wingate and the new administration supported Cromer’s attitude towards missionaries.

The missionaries were allowed freedom of action in the south, whereas in the north they were restricted and closely supervised. This policy enabled the Sudan Government to use its limited financial resources in the North, paying no attention to the South. In reality, no one in the Political Service worried very much about education in the Southern Sudan during the first two decades of their rule. The rulers were much too busy establishing and securing their authority to inaugurate schemes of education. Money, what little was available from the Northern Sudanese or Egyptians, was required to conquer peoples and not to liberate their minds. Thus the educational policy of the Sudan Government was naively simple: leave it to the missionaries, as far as they would provide schools and teachers without charge to the government. So long

as the missionaries were willing to satisfy the limited educational requirements of the government in the South at their own expense, British officials would welcome such teaching of their own religion in English, which permitted them to concentrate on more important matters.

### The Southern Sudan Big Towns



Source: [www.graphicmaps.com](http://www.graphicmaps.com)

But despite the missionaries' limited resources, and little interest in education and training as such, they took responsibility for education in the

South. The educational policy for the missions was civilization through learning and work. This meant, also, to prepare the way to the Christian religion. In the South, the educational development took a completely different course. It reflected the different conditions the British found: no tradition for education as was the case in the North and no religious impetus for literacy. The immediate economic expectation seemed to demand no urgency in creating a literate 'class', or to justify expenditure on education. Educational work undertaken before the end of the First World War was therefore left entirely in the hands of voluntary agencies. The result, as will be seen later, was a growing gap between Northern and Southern Sudan in educational institutions and also in the type and quality of education.

Like the educational services, the health services received particular attention. The Sudan, at the time of the reconquest, could provide no doctors or health workers. The available doctors either belonged to the Egyptian army or were mostly Syrians – products of the Syrian Protestant College (46). They were, first of all, mainly concerned with the health of the troops, but could not however be indifferent to the health of the population. By 1904 hospitals were established in Omdurman, Khartoum, Berber, Dongola, Suakin and Kassala, in addition to the one in Wadi Halfa. By 1914, hospitals had been added in Atbara, Port Sudan, Merowe and Duweim. The first three doctors were recruited in 1901, and were attached to the army (47). The creation of a separate civil medical department (1904) did not end the role of the Egyptian Army Medical Corps. It continued to have responsibility for all health matters south of Khartoum, where its work was, to some extent, supplemented by medical missionaries.



That the Sudan had made some material progress could not be questioned. When the First World War broke out in 1914, the era of laying the foundations for further economic and social development was coming to an end. The British Government had agreed in 1913 to guarantee a loan of £ 3 million to be spent on developing the potentialities of the Sudan as a cotton growing country and work was begun in 1914. With the outbreak of the war, it was impossible to carry on with the project. Egypt had contributed to this economic development – until 1913 – through its grants and loans, and through the upkeep of the army in the Sudan. Despite all this, the actual government of the country remained in British hands. Egyptians were employed as *mamurs*, and sub-*mamurs* and clerks under the ‘strict’ supervision of British Governors and District Commissioners.

As the Sudan was moving from pacification to construction, from the state of emergency of the earlier days to something approaching normality, the Governor General - in whom all authority was invested - was finding it more and more difficult to ensure that the policy initiated was effectively carried on. An informal consultation committee consisting of the Financial Secretary, the Civil Secretary, the Inspector General, the Legal Secretary and the Agent General had existed since 1905 to assist and advise the Governor General. In 1908 a step further was taken when the Central Government Board was formed to prepare for the transfer of the supreme authority in the Sudan to the Governor General in Council. Therefore, the Governor General’s Council was formed in 1910 to be the first constitutional organ of the country.

This new system was formally approved by the British and Egyptian Governments early in January 1910, and the first meeting of the Council was held in Khartoum on the 27<sup>th</sup>. The Governor General was to appoint not less

than two and not more than four members as he saw fit. Each one of these additional members was to hold office for three years and was eligible for reappointment. Decisions were to be taken according to majority opinion, but the Governor General was empowered to overrule majority decisions.

There was no place for the Sudanese point of view in the administration of their country. Though private consultations between religious leaders (such as Sayed Ali Mirghani, Sherif Youcef Al Hindi, Sheikh Mohamed Al Badawi) and the Governor General with his advisers did happen from time to time, it could not be totally assumed that the confidence of the population was really won. The real fact was that the new administration was there to stay but the biggest challenge it had to face was the continued Sudanese resistance. Though sporadic and disorganized, it remained a constant reminder of Sudanese opposition to foreign domination.

### **3 . Sudanese Resistance to Condominium Rule**

It was often thought that the reconquest of the Sudan by the Anglo – Egyptian Army put an end to all forms of opposition and resistance and launched the Sudan into a period of peaceful development and tranquillity, which remained undisturbed until the First World War and, later, the 1924 revolt. This is far from true. In fact, opposition to the new administration sprang up from the very beginning in different quarters and for different reasons and motives. In the first two decades of the Condominium, one may notice that the Sudan Government relied on a reputation for achievement won by guns and reinforced by the absence of serious revolt. Indeed, the

determination of the Sudan Government to resort to massive military campaigns was a remarkable feature of its policy towards the peoples of the Sudan.

The biggest opposition movement was led by Ali Dinnar, Sultan of Darfur. He had opposed the new administration from the beginning but his defeat was not finally achieved until 1916; only then did Darfur become part of the Sudan.

Darfur, an old sultanate in Western Sudan, (an area as large as France) was founded in the fifteenth century and continued for about four hundred years as an independent state ruled by the descendants of Sultan Suliman until it was annexed to the other parts of the Sudan during the Turko-Egyptian regime by Zubeir Pasha . It later surrendered to the Mahdi's armies in 1884 . Ali Dinnar , descendant of the Fur (48) kings and sultans had at first kept aloof from the Mahdists . He was, however, made to go to Omdurman in 1897 and participate in the battle of Karari (49). After the defeat at Karari, Ali Dinnar collected his men and returned to Darfur . There he drove the *Khalifa's* agent out and proclaimed himself Sultan of Darfur . The map below shows the borders of Darfur Sultanate.

Conflict between Ali Dinnar and the Sudan Government became acute with the outbreak of the First World War. The leading Muslim state, at the time Turkey, entered the war on the side of Germany and Austria, who thereupon called on the Muslims to revolt against the British. When the propaganda reached the Sudan, the Sudan Government was afraid that this would affect its relations with its Muslim subjects. Sayid Ali Al Mirghani and Sherif Yousif Al Hindi, together with other tribal and religious leaders

proclaimed themselves on the side of the British Government, and called on their followers to support Britain and the Sudan Government.

Ali Dinnar took a different stand from the Sudan religious leaders. To him the Sudan Government belonged to the enemies of Islam who had declared war on Turkey, and deposed the Khedive of Egypt. Therefore, as part of his great *Jihad*, it was his duty to oppose and fight the Sudan Government, what he openly expressed in his letters to the government and to Sayid Ali Al Mirghani (50). In 1915 Ali Dinnar declared his independence, and the only way open to the Sudan Government was to conquer Darfur in May 1916. Ali Dinnar was killed by a group of Sudanese soldiers led by Huddleston, later Governor General of the Sudan. Once the government's main enemy was removed from the scene, Darfur became a province of the Anglo – Egyptian Sudan on January 1, 1917.

The conquest of Darfur brought once again the British and the French, who were advancing from the west, face to face. Boundary problems were finally settled in 1919, and in 1924 the western frontiers of the Sudan were defined in a protocol signed by the French and British governments.

But Ali Dinnar had not been the only opposing force; a number of tribes in the Southern Sudan and in the Nuba Mountains continued to resist the invading forces of the Anglo – Egyptian administration. The Nuba Mountains is the wild frontier region between the Northern, Arab Muslim Sudan and the African, non Muslim South. There the British encountered steadfast resistance and employed fiercely repressive measures of pacification before some semblance of government authority could be imposed. The Nuba of Kordofan took to the hills in the eighteenth century in self-defence against nomadic Arab

tribes, who drove them to retreat to the mountains where no outside authority was able to reach them. Some groups among them were well armed and powerful, confident in their ability to defend their land and stimulated by a strong distrust to all external interference.

The Sudan Government's aim in the Nuba Mountains was the establishment of the new administration with the least possible disturbances. But it must be remembered that these mountaineers were never submissive. Their desire to pursue their own way of life, which included inter-tribal raids, and their wish to remain independent were so strong that they opposed all forms of foreign authority. This inevitably conflicted with the government's policy to establish law and order. In 1904, for example, a patrol was sent to punish the Nuba of Jabal Shatt and Jabal Dayer for non – payment of tribute and for raiding . Another patrol, led by the governor of Kordofan, was sent the same year against Jabal Mandal but had to retire, leaving a psychological victory to the Nuba and a shameful defeat to the government. In May 1906, a serious incident occurred at Talodi. The notables arranged a feast, at which the invited officers, officials and soldiers were attacked. Forty six people, including the *ma'mur* were killed. The rebels were eventually besieged by a strong government force in June, and about 400 rebels were killed (51).

Nuba resistance continued throughout the First World War. In 1915, the Miri Nuba organized a revolt against a government post stationed at Kadugli . The leader of the revolt was captured and hanged. Subsequent risings in the Jabals were characterized by the desperate ferocity of Nuba resistance and the brutal government methods of suppressing it. In 1917-18 operations were launched against the population of the Hills, with the objective to cease their tribal raids. To accomplish this, a massive force, led by 2,875 men and

soldiers, eight artillery pieces and eighteen machine guns, was despatched (52). On 6 June 1917, six villages were burnt, four more on the 19th, and several on the 27<sup>th</sup> (53). The water supply was cut to the villagers, and most of the surviving Nuba surrendered because of thirst; some simply died out of thirst rather than come down from the mountains.

Indeed the decision of the Sudan Government to resort to massive military campaigns of deliberate ferocity was the remarkable feature of its policy towards the resistant peoples of the Southern Sudan and the Nuba Mountains. By giving ‘nothing but taking taxes’, the government relied on force of arms alone to impose its will. Weapons existed to be used; if the total subjection of an entire people was required to win acceptance of government authority, so be it. But despite Britain’s material superiority, the various risings against the Sudan Government were not hopeless acts of desperate men. Instead, they were viewed as glorious acts of intractable courage that History never forgets to mention.

In fact, the common factor of these revolts and outbreaks in the Southern Sudan – as was the case in the Nuba Mountains – was again the opposition to outsiders and taxation. Their experiences under the Turco-Egyptian regime and under the slave traders had led these tribes to suspect and resist the imposition of any alien rule. In 1901 the Agar Dinka murdered a British officer, Scott Barbour, and a force was sent against them. The villages which had any hand in the matter were burnt, the *Sheikhs* shot and their cattle confiscated (54). Tribal and inter-tribal disturbances and local incidents required a rapid and ruthless suppression by the Egyptian Army under British officers. In 1903 an expedition was dispatched to quell the revolt of Awot Dinka on Lau River. Additional expeditions were sent in 1907 and 1910, but

the rebels were never completely subdued. They continued to resist the new regime whenever they could until 1917 when finally an armed force was able to restore peace.

### The dominant tribes in the Sudan



Source: [www.geology.com](http://www.geology.com)

The Nyam Nyam tribe revolted in 1903 and attacked an army patrol under Captain Wood. The Sultan Yambio himself led his people against the government troops in 1905 but he was defeated and died of his wounds. His son; however, continued to be hostile to the British and it was not until 1914 that he was arrested and deported to Khartoum where he died in 1916.

In the Southern Sudan as a whole, inter – tribal raids prevailed for a long time and it was necessary to send punitive expeditions against the Dinka, Nuer,

Annuak and Beir tribes . From 1907 to 1912 the Beir of Mongalla Province launched a series of attacks against the Dinka , and in 1914 there were raids by the Dinka on other tribes . The Beir caused trouble in 1916 and 1917. There were Shilluk disturbances in 1915 and Nuer disturbances in 1913, 1914 and 1917. An expedition against the Annuak in 1912 cost the lives of three British and three Sudanese officers and forty-two soldiers (55). Annuak villages were destroyed but the Annuak were not subdued. A second armed force was planned to invade their land in 1914, but the operations were concealed at the outbreak of war in Europe. It was not until 1926 that the last of the rebellious southern tribes – the Topossa – was brought under control.

Along the first twenty – five years of British rule in the Southern Sudan, resistance to government authority was widespread and persistent .The defeated Annuak became far better armed than the Nuer, who continued to defy the outsiders. British attempts at control could hardly pass for administration in these areas of insecurity. Yet, though conditions for unrest existed, the British officials were completely confident that their weapons were sufficiently powerful to defend their presence. But it is essential to note that this primary resistance could not be interpreted as ‘nationalistic’. It was tribal resistance motivated by tribal beliefs and conceptions. These uprisings were directed to an outsider who tried to impose its own laws and values, a feature common with the nationalist movements which emerged in the Sudan later on.

Away from the Nuba Mountains and the Southern Sudan , opposition to the new administration was linked to religious inspiration and the cult of *Nebi Eisa* (prophet Jesus). Although Mahdism was defeated in the battlefields, its ideology remained and outbursts of neo-Mahdist movements continued for a long time. A number of self-styled *Nebi Eisas* appealed to tribal discontents by



preaching that after the defeat of the Mahdi, Jesus Christ would descend from Heaven and lead the faithful *Ansar* (followers) against the anti-Christ, with whom the British were identified.

The first of these neo-Mahdists' manifestations occurred in 1900, in Omdurman. Ali Abd al-Karim (one of the first *Nebi Eisas* to appear) and several followers were arrested and brought before a religious court, which convicted them of preaching Mahdism and inciting the people to revolt. The leader and five disciples were imprisoned at Wadi Halfa. The second of these religious movements took place in August 1904 when Mohamed Wad Adam, from Dongola, proclaimed himself the *Nebi Eisa* in Sennar. He and nine followers were killed in a skirmish in which the *mamur* of Singa also lost his life. In January 1906 a Jaali tailor at Wad Madani, Suliman Wad al Bashir, was arrested for declaring himself another *Nabi Eisa*. A native of Borgu, Moussa Ahmed, was imprisoned at Kassala in December 1906 after having made the same claim. Two more claimants appeared in 1907; both were exiled.

The most important rising with Mahdist overtones to occur was that of Abdel Qader Wad Habuba, on the Blue Nile, in April 1908. Abdel Qader belonged to an influential family of the Halaween tribe in the Gezira, and had been a devoted partisan of the Mahdi . After the Anglo-Egyptian conquest, he returned to his home to find that his family's loyalties had been divided. One of his brothers had led a few Halaween and fought with Kitchener's army in the battle of Omdurman. An uncle, Abdullah Musad , *Umda* of Katfia was among the first to welcome the new administration when it occupied the Gezira . Besides, he found that his land had been settled by relatives who had supported the invaders. This family antagonism reinforced Abdel Qader's

Mahdists' beliefs by the evident injustice of the new regime, and he secretly started sowing the seeds of rebellion in the Gezira.

When news was received that Abdel Qader was collecting followers near Wad Shenania , the deputy inspector at Rufa'a, Scott Moncrieff , went with the *mamur* of Kamlin to investigate, but were murdered by Abdel Qader and some followers. Within a few days, Abdel Qader was captured by villagers and delivered to the government. He was tried at Kamlin and publicly executed at Hillat Mustafa, the market town of Halloween, on 17 May.

This last rebellion showed that the death of the Mahdi and the defeat of the *Khalifa* had not resulted in the total extinction of the Mahdists' faith. Even after the execution of Abdel Qader Wad Haboba , the spirit of Mahdism was very alive, and many religious uprisings occurred in different places. For the British, this latent Mahdism needed to be closely watched out before it could develop into a general revolt. Again in 1908, a Mahdist, Abdel Wahab of Tengassi Island, was intending to raise a rebellion, and praying for the return of Mahdism. He and several of his followers were arrested in Dongola . In August 1910 Sherif Mokhtar Wad Al Sharif Hashim from Al Damer proclaimed himself a prophet. A small police force was sent to arrest him, but two policemen were killed. He was finally arrested and hanged (56).

Other disturbances with religious overtones may be briefly summarized. In June 1909 Abdallah Fadlallah, a Nubawi, proclaimed himself the Mahdi, and was imprisoned in Khartoum. In 1912 Fiki Akasha Ahmed, who was disturbing the peace in southern Kordofan, was killed with eight followers by the Anglo-Egyptian Army. In 1915 Ahmed Omar claimed in Darfur to be the *Nebi Eisa* . A police force was sent against him and, like the other claimants , he was killed .

More serious than all these outbreaks and small revolts was, perhaps, the spirit of discontent and hostility shown by the Sudanese troops straight after the re-conquest. The history of the Sudanese units of the Egyptian Army went back to 1898 where six Sudanese battalions were raised mostly from deserters or prisoners from the *Khalifa's* armies. Together with twelve Egyptian battalions they formed the bulk of Kitchener's army which conquered the Sudan. As has been mentioned earlier, the senior officers in all units , Egyptian and Sudanese , were British . The colonial policy was that no British officer would serve under an Egyptian superior. In all the Sudanese battalions, the junior officers were Egyptians who had been trained in the military school of Cairo, and a few Sudanese who were promoted from the ranks.

When Kitchener departed for South Africa, the Fourteenth Sudanese battalion raised the banner of revolt in January 1900. To express their discontent under Kitchener's harsh treatment, they arrested their British officers and seized a large quantity of ammunition .Arrests were made and the mutiny was broken .In a private letter Cromer gave his explanation of the mutiny:

...A potent cause has been the discontent occasioned by the very harsh rule of the late Sirdar. Kitchener's sole idea was to rule by inspiring fear and the fear he inspired was such that it is conceivable that the present trouble would have not occurred had he remained in the Sudan...Certain other causes may be added such as the numerous charges which have recently taken place amongst English officers ,injudicious treatment of the native troops by some of the English officers ....the construction by military labour of a large, expensive and very unnecessary palace at Khartoum for the Governor General and the neglect of the military school (57).

Colonel Jackson was sent to Omdurman to investigate the trouble and render a report on the cause of the mutiny. His report confirmed what Cromer said, but he added a new piece of information. Some of the Egyptian officers, who had secretly founded a patriotic club or society with headquarters in Cairo, were suspected to incite Sudanese officers and men against their British superiors.

The Egyptian Army, visible guarantor of rule, was mistrusted by the government it was supposed to protect. In fact, Wingate and his military staff were preoccupied with the possibility of Egyptian insubordination. Whether British suspicion created Egyptian disloyalty, or Egyptian resentment engendered British suspicion, there was no doubt that suspicion and resentment existed. It was therefore Wingate's policy to separate the Sudanese and Egyptian elements of the army, and to foster an identity of interests with the Sudanese. Unreliability of the Egyptian army necessitated not only a British garrison at Khartoum to guard the Sudan Government, but also the recruitment and training of Sudanese troops to enforce its authority in the provinces. Thus the 14th Sudanese battalion, disbanded in 1902, was reformed in 1906 with new recruits from the Southern Sudan and the Nuba Mountains. And in order to avoid trouble in the future, the military school was established in 1905 at Khartoum. Sudanese cadets, mostly black Sudanese since non-black Sudanese preferred to enter the Gordon Memorial College, were recruited and an officer class began to appear in the Sudan from 1908 onwards. This new officer class was destined to play an important role in the history of the Sudan, first in the 1929 revolution, and later after the Sudan became independent in 1956.

The outbreak of the First World War raised anew the question of Egypt's status, which technically remained that of an Ottoman province. The Ottoman entry into the war rendered the problem acute, and in December 1914 Britain declared a protectorate over Egypt. The next day, Abbas Hilmi , who was in Istanbul, was deposed and an uncle, Hussain Kamel, was installed with the title of Sultan. Wingate saw the declaration of a protectorate over Egypt as a good opportunity to advance Sudan's independence (from Egypt). He wrote that « the present status of Egypt makes the Sudan more British than ever, and I am inclined to think that the time is not far distant when it may be possible to have a Sudan army » (58).

Thus Turkey entered the war against Britain, and the Sudan, with its reputation for Islamic fanaticism was expected to react. But except in Darfur with Ali Dinnar, nothing happened in the Sudan. Ali Dinnar's revolt had no direct connection with the war. As already mentioned, the relations between Ali Dinnar and the Sudan Government had been deteriorating for a long time, and the war provided only a British pretext to invade Darfur, the plans of which were made long before. It must be remembered that the Sudan suffered under the Turco-Egyptian regime and memories under those unhappy times were still alive in the minds of many people. The Mahdists who were expected to seize the opportunity created by the war and rise against the British did not do so. In fact, the Mahdists were the traditional enemies not only of the Turks but also of the Egyptians. Both, in the eyes of the *Ansar* (the Mahdists' followers), were corrupt and decadent. They were held responsible for the general decline of Islam in recent times and for numerous iniquities in the treatment of their Sudanese subjects during the Turco-Egyptian regime of Mohamed Ali and his son Ismail. Therefore, there was no reason for them to co-operate with the Turks in the name of Islam.

The response to Wingate's appeal in 1914 to the *ulamas* and notables in the Sudan to support Britain was remarkable. Subscriptions were made to the Red Cross Fund and the Prince of Wales Fund, and though the collected sums might not have been very large, they indicated the extent of the support and enthusiasm of a more or less poor population. The urban notables together with the religious leaders demonstrated their support to the Governor General. Wingate seemed to be genuinely surprised and was clearly relieved by such a support, and more, from important elements of the population. By 1914 these notables, who undoubtedly commanded wide influence, were vehemently pro-British as vivid memories of the Turco-Egyptian maladministration were still alive. Their enmity of the Turks made them meet the Government on common ground.

The outbreak of the war was, in a sense, a turning point for the leaders of the *Tariqas*, especially the *Ansars*. Until then, Sayid Ali Al Mirghani stood alone as the only great religious leader in whom the Government placed confidence. Sayid Abdel Rahman, son of the Mahdi, who was living obscurely in Omdurman, came forward to render his services. He was sent for the first time to the Gezira – where his father's revolt had started – to obtain the loyalty of the *Sheikhs* and *umdas* to the Sudan Government. This was done with enormous success, and Abdel Rahman al Mahdi emerged as the undisputed leader of the Mahdist family. In return, close supervision and restrictions imposed by the Sudan Government were lightened on him. The rehabilitation of Sayid Abdel Rahman was a chance for his advancement, which made him and his followers be convinced that they had been 'officially recognized', and that the government needed them. Their active role in the future of the Sudan is very determinant. It is discussed in our next chapters.

On the whole, with regard to the Sudan, Britain had given the impression of acting as Egypt's adviser and trustee. But after some years, it became clear to the Egyptians that Britain was in fact determined to be permanent master not only in the Sudan but in Egypt as well. In fact, to Cromer, hoisting the British and Egyptian flags jointly after the reconquest served three main purposes: it emphasized the point that the *Khedive* could not act in the Sudan without the consent of his senior partner in London; it served as a clear warning to the Sultan in Turkey; and it indicated to the French and to the entire world that the Sudan had become an English possession.

The periodical resistance movements and outbursts in the army, in the South and the Nuba Mountains served as a reminder to the British that the spirit of revolt existed and was still latent in certain groups and regions of the country. All risings, after the fall of Omdurman, were contained with strong force of arms. The end of the First World War marked the end of a phase in the history of the Sudan and introduced a new phase which was to see the growth of a new type of political activity whose orientations and objectives differed from those of the resistance movements of the early years.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. Marshal Horatio Herbert Kitchener (1850-1916) won fame in 1899 winning the battle of Omdurman and securing British control of the Sudan. He was appointed the first Governor General. Henty , G.A., *With Kitchener in the Sudan , A Story of Atbara and Omdurman* , London, 2007,p. 204
2. Jean Batiste Marchand (1863-1934) was a French military officer and explorer in Africa. He was best known for commanding the French expeditionary force during the Fashoda incident. Ibid., p. 100
3. Major General Charles George Gordon (28 January 1833-26 January 1885) was known as Gordon Pasha and Gordon of Khartoum. He was a British army officer of the corps of Royal Engineers. In 1876 he was appointed Governor of the Sudan. The Mahdists' revolt was gaining more ground and Gordon was making heroic efforts to hold out until the arrival of the British Empire Troops. The imperial expedition, having set out too late, found it impossible to reach Khartoum in time to save Khartoum. Gordon was killed by the Mahdists, and later avenged by Kitchener's Army. Fabumni, op.cit., pp. 38-39
4. Daly, M.W., *Empire on the Nile, The Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, 1898-1934*, United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, 1986, p.1
5. Henty , op.cit., p. 554
6. Ibid. ,p. 556
7. Ibid p. 579
8. [www.Ebook](#). W. Churchill, *The River War*, op. cit.
9. Ibid
10. Daly, op.cit.,p.5
11. Ibid., p. 8
12. Ibid., p. 9
13. Ibid., pp. 10-11
14. Beshir, O., Mohamed, *Revolution and Nationalism in the Sudan* , London, Rex Collins Ltd ., 1974 , p. 20
15. Daly, op.,cit., p. 15
16. Ibid., p. 17
17. Fabumni, op.cit.,p.56
18. Ibid
19. Beshir, op.cit.,p. 21
20. Abbas , Mekki, *The Sudan Question* , London , 1952, pp.55-6



21. The political context for Britain's claims over the Sudan are amply discussed in Muddathir, op. cit., pp. 13-22
22. Ibid
23. Marlowe , John, *Anglo-Egyptians Relations 1800-1953*, London, 1954, p.109
24. Fabumni,op.cit., pp. 56-60
25. Ibid., p.60
26. Beshir, op.cit., p. 22
27. Ibid. ,p. 23
28. Ibid., p. 24
29. Daly, op.cit., p. 26-27
30. Ibid., p. 27
31. United Nations Department of Economic Affairs, Financial Division, Lake Success, 1947, p. 7
32. Woodward, Peter,*Condominium and Sudanese Nationalism* , London , Rex Collings, 1979, p. 3
33. Ibid., p. 42
34. Fabumni, op.cit., p. 182
35. Beshir, op.cit., p. 26
36. Ibid
37. Fabumni, op.cit., p. 183
38. Beshir, op.cit., p. 27
39. Ibid
40. Muddathir, op.cit., p. 52
41. Ibid., p. 28
42. Fabumni, op.cit., p 179
43. Daly, op.cit., pp. 112-114
44. Fabumni, op.cit., p. 32
45. Ibid., pp. 37-38
46. Daly, op.cit., p. 247
47. Sir James Currie (1868-1937) was nominated by Lord Cromer as first director of education as early as 1900. He was an official in the Egyptian education ministry who had worked in educational administration in Scotland. As director he was *ex-officio* principal of the Gordon College, although its first 'headmaster' was an Egyptian Ahmad Effendi Hadayat, appointed in November 1900. Collins, p. 204
48. Daly, op.cit., p. 248
49. Beshir, op.cit., p.43 , see also Daly , p. 160
50. Daly, op.cit., pp. 160-161
51. Beshir, op.cit., pp. 8-9
52. Ibid., p. 48
53. Ibid

54. Daly, op.cit., p. 132
55. Ibid
56. Ibid
57. Daly, op.cit., p. 119
58. In Wingate's view, Egypt's protectorate status made the Sudan more British than ever. In fact, Wingate was planning for a Sudanese army within a separate and independent Sudan Government, more or less unconnected with Egypt. Though few shared this view at that time, this policy was later carried on by his successors. Daly, *Empire on the Nile*, pp. 45-47 and p.155

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **The Evolution of Political Consciousness in the Sudan (1919-1933)**

After the First World War, the British Government encountered the first stirrings of an opposition based not on millenarian beliefs but on ideas of national rights. At first, the government did not know how to combat that form of nationalism, and to prevent the growth of a Sudanese ‘effendi’ class likely to develop anti – British sentiments. This embryonic Sudanese nationalist movement was condemned as an initiative; it was derided as a collection of ‘detrribalized, insignificant merchants and pretentious half – literate graduates who parroted Egyptian slogan for Egyptian money’ (1). The truth was not so simple. The movement was initiative, but it had Sudanese as well as Egyptian roots.

Since the reconquest, Egypt had played no major role in the Sudan, and the Egyptian nationalists concluded that the Condominium was merely a word, Egyptian participation having been reduced to financial support. Their position – that of a mere tool in the Sudan venture – was a wound to their pride and a great disappointment to their expectations. National feeling against the Agreement became so strong that Boutros Ghali, the Foreign Minister who

signed it with Cromer, was assassinated on Sunday 20 February 1910. But once Egypt won independence, the issue of the Sudan's status remained unresolved, indeed virtually unmentioned. Did the British intend to remain solely in firm control in Khartoum? Was it not politically easier for the British to blame Egypt for stirring up trouble than to admit Sudanese grievances?

Inevitably, the status of the Sudan became a major issue in Anglo-Egyptian relations in the immediate post-war period and it was over that issue that most disagreements occurred. How did Egypt and Britain respectively react over that issue?

Towards the end of the war, the foundations of a new administrative and economic policy were laid and paved the way for native administration and the Gezira Scheme. But administration in the South was different from that of the North. In fact, it was initiated to reduce contacts between the Southern Sudan and the remainder of the Condominium. The 'Southern Policy', vigorously pursued by the British administration until 1947 had serious consequences for the whole country. What were the colonial interests behind such policy?

The troubles of 1924, the evacuation of the Egyptian Army and its replacement by an all-Sudanese force whose loyalties were still subject to suspicion, the rupture of Anglo-Egyptian relations, and the Sudan's place in them: all these will be part of our discussion in this present chapter.

## **1 .The Egyptian Nationalism and the Sudan Question (1919-24)**

The British declaration of a protectorate over Egypt in 1914 was never accepted by the Egyptian nationalists as the end of the story. To all Egyptians, actually, the word protectorate had an unpleasant connotation. Locally, protection meant *Himaya*, derisively used to describe the status of Christian minorities protected by some European power. The idea of a protectorate was therefore humiliating to the Egyptians. As to the War, they considered themselves no party to the quarrel or to the jealousies and rivalries which had caused its outbreak .Had it been left to the Egyptian Prime Minister, he – with all Egypt – would have proclaimed neutrality. But there was no way out. Before the insistence of Great Britain, Rushdi Pasha yielded and signed on 5 August a decree that committed his country irrevocably to war (2).

Egyptian nationalism grew during the war years and when in November 1918 an Anglo – French manifesto was published offering self – determination to the peoples under Turkish rule, the nationalists found further encouragement. From this Press release, they derived a conviction that they would have a free choice in questions wider perhaps than the intentions behind it. Nonetheless, the Anglo-French manifesto stimulated the spirit of Egyptian nationalism and made them convinced that the long-expected hour of independence had arrived.

Moreover, President Wilson’s hopeful words to the small nations of the world as embodied in his famous ‘ Fourteen Points’ brought further good cheer to Egypt (3). Wilson’s ideals of national freedom and self-determination were

discussed among the educated elements, and there was great optimism for the dawn of brighter days.

Saad Zaghloul, a fervent nationalist (4) organized his *Wafd* (or delegation, the first national political party in Egypt) to plead the cause of Egyptian independence before the peace conference, but he was arrested and deported to Malta. A period of strife and confrontation between Egyptian nationalists and Great Britain ensued and, owing to the manifestations of violence and general disorder in Egypt, Milner, the Colonial Secretary, sent a commission to inquire into the causes of the unrest. The Commission arrived in Egypt in December 1919 to report on the existing situation in the country and to suggest the form of Constitution which, under the Protectorate, will be best calculated to promote its peace and prosperity. This was followed by a series of negotiations and consultations with the nationalists, but the Commission deliberately excluded any reference to the Sudan Question.

It would seem, however, that the Egyptian people, if not their delegates to the Commission, had in their minds that the scope of discussions included, or should include, the status of the Sudan. In any case, Lord Milner confirmed in a letter to the Prime Minister Adli Pasha on 18 August 1920 that the Sudan Question lay outside the proposed agreement with Egypt. Negotiations between British and Egyptian Governments continually failed until February 1922 when Britain declared the termination of the Protectorate and the independence of Egypt subject to four reservations, one of which was the future of the Sudan. The other three matters retained by Britain were : the security of the communications of the British Empire; the defence of Egypt against all foreign aggression or interference, direct or indirect; and the

protection of foreign interests in Egypt and the protection of minorities (5). The Sudan status was the matter on which there was absolute reservation.

In March 1922, Sultan Fuad formally expressed the new international status of Egypt by assuming a new title – ‘King’ (*Malik*) instead of ‘Sultan’. In April, a commission was appointed to draft a new parliamentary constitution for Egypt. In May, Rushdi Pasha announced the Drafting Commission, an Egyptian scheme for a new Anglo – Egyptian Convention, which would, in effect, greatly increase the Egyptian and diminish the British control over the Sudan. The Egyptian Constitution for the Sudan became, at this stage, the subject of a question in the House of Commons in London.

The Egyptian Constitution Commission had clearly declared the Sudan to be an inseparable part of Egypt, and the Prime Minister, Tewfik Pasha, wondered what attitude the British Government planned to take in regard to the matter. In reply, Sir Austen Chamberlain, then Secretary of Foreign Affairs, (6) informed the House that Lord Allenby, British High Commissioner, had warned the Egyptian Prime Minister about the impropriety on the part of Egypt of incorporating in her own constitution any clause dealing with the Sudan. The draft Constitution, however, contained two articles about the Sudan – which was one of the specially ‘reserved subjects’. The first provided that the titular head in Egypt should be styled “King of Egypt and the Sudan”, and the second that the Constitution was inapplicable to the Sudan which would have a separate regime although it formed an integral part of the Egyptian Kingdom. Lord Allenby demanded that ‘the Egyptian Government should consent, within twenty – four hours, to delete all reference to the Sudan from the draft’(7). The Egyptian Government seemed to have

obeyed only to complain later, and the Prime Minister – Tewfik Nessim Pasha, this time – resigned before any agreement could be reached.

What seemed to be the main obstacle to agreement at this stage was the fact that the terms of the Declaration of the Independence of Egypt contained covert contradictions. The ‘sovereign’ independence granted in the first clause was potentially denied by the other reservations which followed. One must note, however, that an agreement on the reserved points, of which the Sudan was one, was not inherently impossible. But the British Government wanted to assert its unquestioned supremacy in the country. The Egyptians were shocked when the British turned down their claims, and the British annoyed by the Egyptians’ militant way to claim for the Sudan. Thus there existed on both sides elements of misunderstanding and bitterness which matured to produce violent and tragic consequences in 1924, when Sir Lee Stack was assassinated.

For Egyptian nationalists, the Sudan had to be now an Egyptian territory, and Britain had no legal rights to stay in it. They felt they were seriously discredited by the existence of a British – controlled Sudan over which Egyptian sovereignty was not recognized. But for British Officials, the *status quo* in the Sudan was to remain intact.

Egyptian fears and resentment increased, and their anxieties were the greater since the prosperity and very existence of their country depended on the Nile waters. The development of irrigation in the Gezira and the cotton plantation planned before the War had been resumed in 1919. The experiments of the Sudan Plantation Syndicate, which was to carry out cotton growing in



the Gezira on behalf of the Sudan Government, were successful. In 1919, Britain's loan increased to £6 million, and a further £3.5 million was added the same year (8). This plan for economic development naturally aroused the fears of Egypt. The Egyptians' point of view was that economic development in Egypt should take precedence over that in the Sudan. They also feared their share in the Nile waters would be reduced. Although the Milner Report of 1920 assured Egypt's indisputable right to an ample supply of water for the land under cultivation, and that the land to be irrigated in the Gezira should not exceed a maximum of 3000,000 acres (*feddans*), (9) Egyptian fears and mistrust about British designs on the Nile waters could not be removed. Naturally, Egypt was faced as never before in her history with the prospect of a territory under the protection of a great power exploiting the Nile waters which were a necessity of life to her.

While Egypt was pressing claims to Egyptian authority over the Sudan, the Sudanese notables and *sheikhs* expressed hopes for a new and independent order from Egypt. The Sudan government, which was active in its efforts to win the confidence of the Sudanese, enlisted the support of those sections of the population with whom it had been co – operating since the beginning of the century. Some religious leaders were prominent on its list and were the first to come out with a petition in which Egyptian nationalism was condemned. In July 1919, a Sudanese delegation was sent to England, the declared intention being to congratulate the King on winning the War. It consisted of the three religious leaders , Sayid Ali Al Mirghani , Sherif Yussif Al Hindi, and Sayid Abdel Rahmane Al Mahdi ; the three leading *Ulema* of the Sudan, Sheikh Ali Tayeb Al Hashim (*Mufti* of the Sudan), *Sheikh* Abu Al Gasim Ahmed Hashim (President of the Board of *Ulema*) and *Sheikh* Ismail Al Azhari (Kadi of Darfur), and four tribal leaders , Ali Al Tom (of the Kabbabish tribe), Ibrahim

Musa (of the Hadendowa tribe), Awad Al Karim (of the Shukria tribe) and Ibrahim Mohamed Farah (of the Jaalin tribe). With the exception of Sayid Abdel Rahmane Al Mahdi, all members were signatories to *The Book of Loyalty*. The four tribal leaders were from those who opposed the Mahdiya. The educated Sudanese, products of the Gordon College and the Military School were excluded and without representation in the delegation (10).

Once in London, the delegates expressed their mistrust of Egyptian intentions, their opposition to the continuation of Egyptian influence in the Sudan and their desire to be ruled by Britain. In fact, through this they were voicing the wishes and policies of the Sudan administration. The same sentiments were expressed in 1922 in two other letters , the first signed by a number of tribal leaders from the provinces and the other by members of the 1919 delegation. In the first letter, the tribal leaders expressed their wishes to get separated from Egypt and remain under British control and guidance. They explained their case as follows:

As far as we are concerned, and if we have the right to express an opinion ...we beg to state that we do not wish to be separated in any way from the British government. The benefits that have resulted to us from your administration are countless, benefits which we ourselves have never been able to achieve and which the Egyptians have likewise failed to obtain . We beg therefore to your Excellency an assurance to your future intentions . If the British government intends to grant to Egypt its independence and wishes to include us also under the terms of that independence , please let us know because we firmly believe that our interests, the interests of our country and our rights and conditions in general differ vastly from those of Egypt and we should like to be prepared to safeguard these interests in the event of our wishing to leave the matter in the hands of the Egyptians (11).

The second letter was even more emphatic in its support for the Sudan government. The members of the 1919 delegation praised the merits of the British Government and their achievements in the Sudan as follows:

“All natives of the Sudan are conscious of the benefits conferred by the British government upon the Sudan, and desire to continue its work of developing the Sudan, of guiding her and of assisting her along the path of national progress, until she reaches the standard which she hopes for among the cultivated nations of the world” (12).

There were other letters of support from individuals and tribal leaders. The Sudanese wishes were met and the declaration in the British Parliament on February 28, 1922, confirmed that the *status quo* in the Sudan would never be allowed to change. The Sudan Government was well aware that any compromise with Egyptian claims would inevitably be interpreted by the Sudanese as a prelude to gradual withdrawal of British control from the Sudan.

The British administrators felt a moral responsibility for the Sudanese and believed that their wishes and welfare should be the primary factor in any settlement between Egypt and Britain. There were three alternatives open to the Sudan: first, the removal of British control and inclusion of the Sudan in Egypt, as demanded by Egypt as a consequence of its attainment of independence; second, the maintenance of the *status quo* as advocated by the British Government in its negotiations with Egypt; third, the strengthening of British influence and control in the Sudan as a result to the removal of British rule in Egypt. The British administration in the Sudan worked hard to achieve the last of these alternatives. In their opinion, neither Sudanese interests nor the predominance of British control could be secured by maintaining the *status quo*. Anyway, Britain, as the power of the greater force, was able to implement

its new policies – not only in the Sudan but also in the formally independent Egypt – just as it had done before.

In the Sudan, the policy of replacing the Egyptian personnel of the administration by Sudanese was, vigorously pursued from 1919 onwards. This policy seemed likely to precipitate the Anglo – Egyptian crisis and bring the clash head on. First, the proposals for administrative reforms which aimed at de – Egyptianizing the government , at strengthening the hold of British officers, at bringing the Sudanese junior officers in to replace Egyptians, and at drawing traditional leaders into local administration were proposals discussed between 1919 and early 1921. Against the background of Egyptian claims in the Sudan, the desire to remove Egyptian influence was a major factor in their implementation. The proposed reforms are clearly stated in the following note written by the Legal Secretary, E. Bonham Carter, in 1917.

..It seems to me that the time has come when some further steps should be taken towards associating the natives of the country with the government in the work of administration....The policy of entrusting natives of British protectorates with political and administrative power so soon as and to the extent that they are competent to exercise them, is so sanctioned by British tradition that it is advisable for the government of a subject race to be early rather than late in making concessions of this kind ...(13)

Thus as early as 1919, a special course was introduced for the training of Sudanese *Sub-Mamurs* and the number of recruits was increased to about ten per annum (14). Within five years, there were 102 Sudanese *sub-mamurs* as against 35 Egyptians and one Syrian. The training of Sudanese medical assistants was started in 1922 and two years later, the Kitchener School of Medicine was opened (15).The military college increased its intake of

Sudanese cadets. Artisans, engineers, agriculturists, and telegraphists were also trained in greater numbers. In the three towns of Khartoum, Khartoum North, and Omdurman a consultative municipal council was constituted in 1921 with a number of Sudanese sitting as nominated members. A similar council was also constituted in Port Sudan, one third of whose members were Sudanese. In other provincial towns, Sudanese notables were appointed as third-class magistrates as from 1920 onwards (16).

As a theory, Indirect Rule came late to the Northern Sudan; in practice, it had been adopted informally since the beginning of the Condominium. In his 'Memorandum to *Mudirs*', Kitchener had discussed the necessity to gain the trust of the 'principal men', and through them to influence the whole population (See Appendix 3). The attractions of the policy were many: it should be cheaper than direct rule by trained and salaried servants; it should combat, by strengthening tribal authority, the evils of individualism, nationalism or even Mahdism; it would free British officials from routine work and allow their concentration on duties they alone could perform; and it would render unnecessary the expansion of the distrusted Sudanese official class.

Indirect Rule or Native Administration (as it was called later), meant government through *Sheikhs* and chiefs of tribes. It was, therefore, looked upon as an alternative to the employment of educated Sudanese in the government bureaucracy and, as such, it was vigorously pursued. As the Milner Mission recommended, this local administration would strengthen the fabric of the native organization, and at the same time maintain the British supervisory staff at proper strength. However, as the Milner Report of 1919 explained, with the rise of a new generation, and under the impulse of new

ideas, tribal organization, tribal sanctions, and old traditions tended to disintegrate unless they were fortified betimes

Thus the Powers of Nomad Sheikhs Ordinance was introduced in 1922. A tribal *Sheikh* was duly recognised and empowered, either solely or in a council or court of tribal elders, to deal with most criminal offences. By 1923, three hundred Sheikhs of nomadic and semi – nomadic tribes were enjoying powers with the full support of Government authority (17). At the same time, the possibility of creating village courts among the sedentary population of the Northern Sudan was considered, but nothing was done until after the rising of 1924.

From 1899 to 1924, the policy of the British Government in the Southern Sudan provinces was – apart from the maintenance of law and order and the provision of different forms of assistance to Christian missionary societies – largely passive or *laissez faire*. Anyway, with regard to the early days of the Anglo – Egyptian regime, Lord Cromer was firmly convinced that the first requirement of the peoples who inhabit this region was law and order, and that this could best be maintained by means of strong and direct military rule. He also maintained that the adoption of a civilized system of government would only result in the creation of quite serious risks for all concerned (18). This being so, and as far as the Sudan Government was, in any case, short of money and dependent on the Egyptian Treasury, no “serious” work of construction or service could be provided to the South, apart from what was necessary for the maintenance of government personnel. It is preferable to see, later, in a separate section what administration the British Officials found workable for the remote, backward South, and how the Permit Ordinance of 1922, a creation of Southern Sudan Administrators, made the South a huge ‘Closed District’.

In the Northern Sudan, the campaign against the government in the Egyptian press was countered by a campaign (directed by the Intelligence Department of the Sudan Government) in *Hadarat Al Sudan*, the Sudan's only Arabic newspaper. Owned by the three sayids, Ali Al Mirghani, Sherif Yussuf Al Hindi, and Abdel Rahmane Al Mahdi, it had been established in 1920 and it was under the editorship of Hussein Sherif, a relative of Abdel Rahmane Al Mahdi.

The editor, Hussein Sherif, was among the first Sudanese contributors to the Sudanese press. *Hadarat Al Sudan* was a national newspaper in which educated Sudanese could express their views to influence public opinion and where Sherif emerged as a leading advocate of a moderate Sudanese line. Thus the newspaper became the organ of both the Sudan Government and its three owners. During August and September 1920, Sherif wrote pieces in *Al Hadara* favouring the continued separation of the Sudan from Egypt and a continuation of British 'guidance'(19). Hussein's articles were a landmark in the Sudan's political history. They were not only outspoken in their opposition to Egyptian claims of sovereignty over the Sudan, but they were also frank and emphatic in their support for the continuation of British rule. Anyway, it is worth reminding at this stage that the Milner Report had already defined the Sudan status and the provision for it of a separate Government which would enable the Sudanese to develop on their own lines under the guidance of the British Government.

Nevertheless, the articles provoked opposition from a group of Sudanese who had been ignored by the Sudan Government in its attempts to win supporters and sympathizers. This new group of Sudanese was mostly

graduates of the Gordon College and the Military School. Under the influence of their Egyptian teachers' nationalism, these graduates came to recognize themselves more and more with Egyptian culture and opinion. Their common language and religion helped to bring them together. The officers, products of the Military School, were part of the Egyptian Army, and like all other Egyptian officers, their loyalty was to the King of Egypt. As both groups were in daily contact with their Egyptian counterparts, it was inevitable that they would be sympathetic to Egyptian point of view. In a sense, Egyptian nationalism was to them a source of inspiration.

This new educated class, being in the government service, could not join or form political parties through which they could express their views. The only way open to them in post war Sudan was to organize illegal, underground associations, circulate political pamphlets and publish articles in Egyptian newspapers under pseudonyms. Their fields of action were Khartoum, Port Sudan, Wad Madani and Atbara, and their meeting place the Graduates' Club in Omdurman. In November 1920 a circular signed by an unknown writer (who called himself an honest, sincere patriot) was sent to all prominent personalities in the Khartoum – Omdurman areas and provinces. A poor translation of the letter was sent by the Governor, Lee Stack, to Lord Allenby (the British Consul in Egypt) and thence to Britain. It made the following points: a) British policy in the Sudan was based on divide and rule; b) the British had alleged that their conquest of the Sudan was made to suppress the slave trade. This was not true since there was no slave trade but a mission of civilization by the Turco-Egyptian administration; c) the Sudanese were better treated under the Turco-Egyptian administration as they were associated with the administration of the country; d) the Sudanese were compelled by the British to pay high taxes. The sons of Sudanese Muslims were made to study



Christianity and the pagan southerners were forced to become Christians. (20) Finally there was an appeal to the Sudanese to unite with the Egyptians in order to liberate the two countries.

The message reflected the opinion of pro-Egyptian elements among the educated class, and it revealed a strong pro-Egyptian feeling and little respect for the religious and tribal leaders among the educated. It would seem that this new educated class had no memory of the Egyptian 'atrocities' during the Turco-Egyptian regime, nor had they a vested interest in the continuation of British rule. Anonymous articles expressing similar views and sentiments were secretly smuggled into Egypt, where they were published in the daily press. *Al Hadara* took up the challenge and came to defend both the religious leaders and the British Government. Sherif Yussuf Al Hindi, one of the three eminent religious leaders in Northern Sudan, wrote an article where he cited 'justice, freedom, security and prosperity' as the merits of British administration in the Sudan which could not be equalled, as he said, by any other regime (21).

The Sudanese were thus divided into two groups: those who advocated British rule and guidance in the Sudan to prepare the Sudanese for independence and those who advocated withdrawal of British rule and unity with Egypt for the achievement of independence. The first group comprised the traditional, the religious and the tribal leaders, while the second consisted of the modern educated elements. There were grievances and seeds of discontent among the younger Sudanese which the peaceful tone of their elders (religious and tribal leaders) could not appropriately voice. For these young nationalists, siding with Egypt was important as she remained their symbolic counterpoint to the British presence and their source of encouragement for more resistance to colonial domination.

The years 1920 to 1923 witnessed the growth of political consciousness among the Sudanese. This first phase of political propaganda by leaflets shifted into a second phase of political organizations and associations. Egyptian nationalism and Egyptian parties set an example.

The first political organization – the Sudanese Union Society – was founded in 1920 in Omdurman. Some of its founding members were: Obeid Hag Al Amin (leader of the Society), Tewfik Salih Gibril , Abdullah Khalil (Prime Minister of the Sudan in 1956) , Mohamed Salih Shingeiti (Juge of the High Court and later first speaker of Parliament) , and Khalafallah Khalid (first Minister of Defence). Their political activity took the form of sending out leaflets and circulars attacking the British administration, the religious leaders and *Al Hadara*. Obeid Hag Al Amin declared that the Sudanese nationalists supported the Egyptian people, and opposed the partition of Egypt and the Sudan . The Society agitation continued until 1923, when dissatisfied with the simple war of words , Obeid Hag Al Amin, with the more radical members left to join Ali Abdel Latif , the founder of the White Flag League (22).

Organized in Khartoum, the White Flag League was founded with the aim of uniting the whole Valley of the Nile with Egypt as a single, independent state. In 1922 Ali Abdel Latif asked the editor of *Al Hadara* to publish an article demanding self-determination for the Sudan, and stressing the Sudanese' right to choose whoever they wanted to guide them towards independence, whether Sudanese or Egyptians. It also asked for more education and higher posts for Sudanese in the civil service. The article was never published and Abdel Latif was arrested and sentenced to one year imprisonment. Once released, he was already a national hero both to the graduates and to the officers. The Egyptian press applauded his stand while *Al*

*Hadara* continued to take a hostile attitude towards him and those who supported him. But this attitude was to change afterwards.

The League, like the Sudanese Society was a genuine Sudanese movement working for Sudanese interests in alliance with Egyptian nationalists. Whether these movements called for union with Egypt as a matter of conviction, or they did so for tactical reasons to win the support of Egypt and attract the attention of the Sudan Government remains for discussion. The movements did voice a great deal of Sudanese grievances against the British, this is indisputable.

The League found it essential to broaden its Sudanese base, just as it was for the government to show the League's lack of public support. In the end the government was far from successful than the League in this competition. Although the League's members were described by British officials as "insignificant persons, disgruntled employees with unsatisfactory records or with grievances, low- class merchants, negro ex-officers without employment, ex-convicts and vagabonds". This was indeed a deceiving oversimplification . Of 104 members identified in one list only, 23 were officers, 39 junior officials, 2 *sub-mamurs*, 2 *qadis* and the *Imam* of Khartoum Mosque. (23), Hussein Sherif began shifting his position from an outright opponent to both the League and to Egypt and moving to a moderate stand. In one of his articles he commented on the situation in the Sudan as follows:

All the educated and enlightened classes have begun to have national aspirations. They formerly asked for internal reforms such as establishment of conservative assemblies , improvement of the policy on education, administration, finances and Gezira Scheme...etc...and removal of the restrictions on the press...The government had not given any attention to this spirit nor have they dealt with it in a proper way.. People understood that the English do not intend any good for this country and would not

encourage any action for its welfare however moderate and loyal it may be and would not favour except persons who followed them blindly ...and would not approve anything unless it conforms with a certain secret policy for the realization of their imperialistic and exploiting aims (24).

Hussein Sherif even went so far as to declare his support for self-government and union with Egypt. Thus the traditional pro-British front was showing signs of a split in the face of the League's activities and propaganda. In the middle of 1924, a meeting was held in Omdurman at the house of the *Mufti* and attended by some of the 'traditionalists'. They intended to sign a petition requesting the government to reduce taxes, to abolish the sugar monopoly, to modify the Gezira Scheme and to admit natives to the Governor – General councils. Though Sayid Ali Al Mirghani could persuade them not to go further with the idea, this act showed that the League's propaganda was even reaching the pro – British 'traditionalists' (25).

The events which happened in the months of June, July and August 1924 showed the confrontations which occurred between the 'pro-traditionalists' and the 'pro-Egyptians'. The latter organized a petition of loyalty to Egypt, but the petition never reached Cairo since the two men entrusted with it, Mohamed Al Mahdi Khalifa (son of the Khalifa Abdullah) and Zein Al Abdin Abdel Tom (an army officer), were arrested in Wadi Halfa . The demonstration prepared by the League to welcome the two men at the Khartoum railway station on June, 17, 1924, did not materialize as they were taken off the train in Khartoum North. Their arrest triggered off the first political demonstration in the history of the Sudan. A series of demonstrations, constantly fed and popularized through anti-British speeches in the mosques, took place in the following weeks. On 4 July Ali Abdel Latif was once more arrested and, after another trial, during which he was defended by an Egyptian lawyer, was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

The imprisonment of Abdel Latif and the passing of the leadership into the hands of Obeid Hag Al Amin marked the end of the period of petitions, peaceful protests and demonstrations by civilians. A general climate of defiance, challenge and confrontation in which many sections of the population were involved made the Sudan Government realize that this influential elite could no more be underestimated

## **2 . The Revolt of 1924: Challenge and Response**

Unlike the army mutiny of 1900 and the primary resistance movements during the twenty – five years of Condominium Administration, the events of 1924 could be seen as one explosive episode in the Sudan history where the army found itself drawn into politics on the side of the extreme nationalists. This section shows how the military took part in the 1924 revolt, a decisive episode in Sudan’s political history.

British policy since the mutiny of 1900 had been to encourage the emergence of a class of Sudanese officers who would in time replace the Egyptian officers. The Military School was created for that purpose. When, after the reconquest, most of the Egyptian Army units were sent back to their stations in Egypt, the Sudanese formed the bulk of the army. An Equatorial Battalion was recruited in 1916 from the Southern Sudanese for service in that area. An Eastern Arab Corps was formed when the Italians handed back Kassala, and a Western Arab Corps was also formed after the occupation of Darfur in 1916. But though the number of Sudanese officers grew, British and Egyptian officers remained in sole command, and Sudanese officers held junior positions in the Sudanese battalions. Their loyalty and allegiance was

first to the Khedive and later, when Egypt became independent, to the King Fuad of Egypt. Many Sudanese officers and ex-officers became members of the Sudanese Union Society and the White Flag League. With the exception of Abdulla Khalil, Hamid Salih and Ali Abdel Latif, their membership was not publicly known and thus they managed until then to avoid arrest.

Throughout the summer of 1924 there had been clear signs of hostility in the Sudanese battalions against the British officers. In July Willis (Director of the Intelligence Department since 1916) noted the suspicious political activities of some Sudanese officers, and it was thought that about twenty officers and men of the 11<sup>th</sup> battalion had joined the White Flag League (26). The general excitement which followed the trial and imprisonment of Abdel Latif (who was an ex-officer) induced the cadets of the Military College to join the growing wave of demonstrations. On 9 July they held arms and ammunitions and marched with the Egyptian flag to Ali Abdel Latif's house where they presented arms. The performance was afterwards repeated outside the prison where Abdel Latif and other members of the League were kept. The cadets, fifty – one in number (27), were eventually arrested and sent to prisons where further demonstrations finally led to a mutiny of the prisoners. In the meanwhile, outside the prison walls, the members of the White Flag League spread the news and the spirit of revolt throughout the Sudan as far as Talodi and Al Fashir in the West and Wau and Malakal in the South.

But an even more serious situation was precipitated when, on 19 November, Sir Lee Stack, the Governor General of the Sudan and Commander – in – chief of the Egyptian Army (and also personal friend of Lord Allenby, then the British Consul in Egypt) was shot and fatally wounded in Cairo. The assassination of Sir Lee Stack was a surprise, a shock to the

British rulers and to the British public. Sir Lee Stack was an enormously popular figure in the Sudan, Egypt and London. His assassination was regarded as a colossal miscalculation on the part of the Egyptian nationalists who sought to remove the British presence in the Sudan. In fact, it was the presence of the hundreds of Egyptian officers and officials serving in the Sudan which was eliminated without any excuse. Egyptians' claims to the Sudan vanished as rapidly as the British response to Stack's murder was pronounced.

The British High Commissioner to Egypt, Lord Allenby, delivered a strongly worded ultimatum to the Egyptian Government on November 22, the day he buried Sir Lee Stack. He required them among other things to 'order within twenty four hours the withdrawal from the Sudan of all Egyptian officers and the purely Egyptian units' (28), and to note that the Sudan Government will increase the area to be irrigated in the Gezira from 300,000 *feddans* to an unlimited figure as need may arise .... The ultimatum concluded that His Majesty's Government will at once take appropriate action to safeguard their interests in Egypt and the Sudan.

Many British officials in the Nile had long been waiting for the proper moment to move against the Egyptians, particularly in the Sudan. This was the moment for which the British officials at Khartoum had been waiting and preparing (29). Tension gripped Khartoum as no one knew if the Egyptians would placidly obey orders and leave quietly for Cairo, or if the Sudanese battalions, under their Egyptian officers, would remain loyal. Would an all-out fight explode between British and Egyptian units? An uneasy sense of expectation settled over Khartoum. The Egyptian troops were still waiting for the order to leave the Sudan to come from their Minister of War in Cai

Under the leadership of Saad Zaghloul, the Egyptian Government refused to order the withdrawal of the troops from the Sudan, and on their part, the troops refused to obey orders to evacuate the country unless they were issued from the Egyptian Government. The following day orders were issued by Lord Allenby to the Commander-in-Chief of the Egyptian Army, Colonel Hubert Huddleston, to begin the evacuation of the Egyptian troops from the Sudan. To express their solidarity with the Egyptian troops, the Sudanese battalions also refused to obey orders and mutinied with the Egyptian battalions. The mutiny involved many other battalions all over the country, including Wau and Talodi. But it was in Khartoum, while on their way to join the Egyptian units in Khartoum North on 27 November that Sudanese troops were involved in a direct clash with British forces who wanted to prevent them from crossing the Blue Nile Bridge to Khartoum North. Many officers were killed from both sides and the Khartoum Military Hospital, where some of the mutineers took refuge during the night and continued to fight to the last man, was shelled and partly destroyed. The role of the British troops with their machine guns was to establish order at any rate. Even civilians in Khartoum were shot at and had the same fate as the Sudanese soldiers.

Rifa'at Bey, the Commander of the Egyptian battalion in Khartoum North, had promised to open fire on the British troops if they prevented the Sudanese units from crossing the bridge to Khartoum North. However, this promise was not honoured as the Egyptian units began to entrain for the North under 'special' orders issued by a new Government in Cairo. The Sudanese officers and civilians felt bitterly disappointed at having been let down by their friends and fellow men – in – arms. They specifically accused Rifa'at Bey of the Artillery of letting down the Sudanese lines by not opening fire at the



crucial moment as promised. Bitterness and disappointment prevailed, and anti – Egyptian feeling was on the increase .On December 4 the last unit of the Egyptian Army had left the Sudan.

Behind in Khartoum the remnants of the Sudanese battalions, with broken morale and their units disbanded (to be later re-formed into a Sudan Defence Force), remained without their Egyptian officers. There was also the Sudan Political Service, their confidence in the Sudanese and in their mission deeply shaken. Those who remained loyal in their eyes were not the educated from the schools and military academies in the Sudan but the traditional leaders, who did not need ideas of nationalism to rule their people.

However, it is impossible not to stop for a while and attempt to explain the Sudanese officers' confusion in establishing where their duty lay. Their oath of allegiance to the King of Egypt was a difficulty of a serious dimension. This oath, sworn by all Sudanese officers, was very clearly expressed to the King of Egypt:

I hereby swear by God thrice and by His Holy Books, Apostles, Conscience, Honour and Belief to be faithful and trustful to His Highness's Government. To obey all his orders and all other lawful orders that may be given me from my superiors, complying with His Highness's wishes on land and sea and in and out of Egypt. To be the enemy of his enemies and peaceful to his friends, defending the rights of his country, protecting my arms and will never leave them to an enemy until the point of death and so help me God (30).

The Sudanese officers did not know how to express their loyalty to the King of Egypt who had spoken openly and repeatedly of his sovereignty over the Sudan. Who were the enemies of the King, and who his friends? Did the

Sudanese officers defend the rights of his country by complying with the evacuation of his army? The dilemma was very obvious then. This army had sworn allegiance to a ruler that had openly declared his hostility to the presence of the British governing the Sudan. How could they, therefore, be called disloyal as they were loyal to King Fuad to whom they had taken an oath? Were the Sudanese who marched down Khedive Avenue, to die in the ruins of the Military Hospital or to be executed later, guilty of mutiny? Or, were they only trapped in the uncertainties of the Anglo – Egyptian war of words? Those Sudanese, agonizing over their oaths, simply did what oath and conscience demanded; they marched to join their comrades-in-arms. They, in fact, owed no loyalty to the Sudan Government. On December 1 the army revolt was crushed. Instructions from the Egyptian Ministry of War to comply with orders were received. British forces were in control and the evacuation of the Egyptian officers and troops from the Sudan was almost completed.

In general, the failure of the army revolt of 1924 has been attributed to the failure of the Egyptian officers and units to align themselves with the Sudanese officers and soldiers. The Egyptian officers could not provide the Sudanese units with armed support. This can be a valid reason, but even if the Egyptian units in Khartoum had come to support the Sudanese, the chances for success would have been very slim. British troops, though smaller in number, were superior in arms. Moreover, the main cause for failure was the absence of mass support. Indeed, support came only from the few urban centres and the small group of the educated. The religious leaders were not only hostile to the movement but essentially in opposition. They succeeded in making their followers antagonistic towards the League and in neutralizing their participation in the revolt.

The League was paralyzed when the few political leaders and their supporters were arrested and imprisoned. Ali Abdel Latif , Obeid Hag Al Amin , Ali Al Banna , Mohamed Al Mahdi Al Khalifa and Mohamed Bakheit were transferred from Khartoum North prison to Wau in the South. (31) Some other leaders took refuge in Egypt .The nationalists who remained in the Sudan were disappointed at the turn of events. The Sudan Government, after having been humiliated by the Sudanese military revolt, took steps to increase the Sudan separation from Egypt. Being deeply mistrusted, the Sudanese battalions were, from now on, put under strict British observation.

### **3 . The Sudan from the 1924 Crisis to 1933**

For the British the great gains resulting from the events of 1924 were the withdrawal of the Egyptian troops and units and the removal of the militant nationalists. Lord Allenby's demands were met, and the Sudan was effectively purged of all Egyptian military cadres. This paved the way for co-operation with the moderate group of Sudanese and the execution of projects connected with the army, economic development and native administration.

Finding themselves at the mercy of a powerful and hostile government, the Sudanese nationalists found it convenient to lay low for the time being. The departure of the Egyptian officers and civilians had deprived them of their strong allies and supporters and their chief means of communication with the outside world. For these nationalists, Egyptians' presence had acted as a check on British designs and once the Egyptians had gone, the Sudanese feared that the British would be free to enforce any policy they desired. British action during the revolt had confirmed that British imperialism was neither weak nor compromising. It was ready to fight when its interests in the Sudan were

challenged. On their part, the Sudanese recognized that they had to rely on their own resources in their confrontation with the British administration. They decided to accept the dramatic happenings of the recent past and to try to make the best of things under British rule and with British guidance. Their activities were limited to the Graduates' Clubs and the literary associations.

It was during this period that the moderate group among the nationalists adopted the slogan "the Sudan for the Sudanese" (32). But the slogan was quite clear for the disillusioned nationalists; it meant that the Sudan was actually under British control and without interference from Egypt. Since organized political and military action were out of the question, they believed they would gain nothing – and might lose much – for a good many years to come if they adopted an openly hostile attitude to the British. The 'Sudan for the Sudanese' attitude marked that the Sudanese still had nationalist aspirations that the British would not condemn as far as they implied a denial of Egyptian claims. By adopting this stand, these moderate nationalists hoped to assert the claim for ultimate independence. They wanted the British to agree to this aim and adopt a policy that would lead the country to self-government.

In the same period, the British administrators avoided to mention two important matters: the future direction of administrative policy and the place of educated Sudanese in it. In other words, would the administrative posts, functions or duties previously fulfilled by Egyptians remain as they had been, or would they be diluted or reassigned? The Sudanese knew that there were now more opportunities for employment and the chances for advancement were greater. The British also knew that the Sudanese officers and officials would be disappointed if the most palpable result of the Egyptian evacuation was more British officers and more English and Syrian clerks. But with the

introduction of Indirect Rule this is exactly what happened. The British Government had already proven that Sudanese suspicions were justified. Lord Milner himself recognized that any retreat in Egypt must correspond with a strengthening of British control and presence in the Sudan, which would be impossible if the Sudan service was full of people in open or secret sympathy with Egyptian nationalism. Lord Milner speculated that the solution would be to devolve authority upon the traditional Sudanese leaders, thereby avoiding the necessity to create a class of western – educated Sudanese who could be a fertile source for the growth of a nationalism which could be only hostile to British rule.

Harold Mac Michael, Civil Secretary in the Intelligence Department in 1919, could not change the fact that the future of the country, as the Sudan Government saw it, and in so far could shape it, belonged to the tribal leaders of the past. Indirect Rule and Native Administration became accepted administrative policy. Native administration reflected the Government's disappointment with the Western-educated Sudanese and its wish to prevent their growth and influence. Indirect Rule, tribal authorities and Native Administration became a weapon with which the Sudan Government tried to protect itself against the educated class and any possible revival of nationalism.

The British had lost confidence in the educated class, the only group besides the religious leaders on whom they could rely were the tribal leaders, a newly 'civilized' generation who 'could talk' politics in clubs and cafes. Although these were not men of intellectual subtlety who could recognize the unspoken rules of the political game, they were the men the British administration wanted and needed. The unwanted educated Sudanese, bitterly

disillusioned by the course of events of 1924 and not satisfied with the present run of things, wished to stand for a new order where they would rely on their own efforts. Clearly-minded, they wished to see the young enlightened generation - and not their traditional elders - take an active part in the affairs of their country.

But the educated class was still disorganized and apathetic. They looked upon native administration as backward, unsuited to the present conditions of the country. To restore authorities which had long been 'dead' was, they thought, an attempt to put the clock backward. They were aware the British were creating a new group of collaborators who would unite with the religious leaders to stand against them. Besides, Indirect Rule – or native administration as it was called later – was to bar the 'intelligentsia' from jobs to which they would have looked forward. They found themselves isolated and powerless, their organizations destroyed and their revolution crushed. But their hope for an independent Sudan remained their constant driving force.

The British administrator was therefore suspicious and hostile to the Sudanese intelligentsia, or '*effendia*'. He was conscious of the consequences for the British regime in the Sudan of repeating the mistakes made in India and Egypt by creating an educated and, almost by definition, dissatisfied class of Sudanese people. When the Ewarts Report of 1925 pleaded, 'It must be recognized that there is now a class in the Sudan , small but vocal and inevitably possessing influence out of all proportion to its numbers , which has ideas and aspirations', this plea, like others , fell on deaf ears . The British administration, after the 1924 revolt, was not prepared to meet any of the demands of the educated class but was ready to crush them out. It was evident that measures were already taken to stop their advance and influence.

After 1924, education in the Sudan became dominated by the hostile political outlook of the government. The Egyptian teachers had been expelled. The school curriculum was re-examined. The Gordon College was allowed to stagnate. By 1924 the members of the Political Service regarded the college as a 'breeding ground' for discontented, half-educated youths. The college was not closed, but the selection of students was made with greater care and the curriculum shaped to meet the political aspirations of the colonial administration. Against this background, one question remains pertinent: was the Sudanese educated class distrusted as wreckers or as rivals?

The Sudan Government's main concern was to restrict education and diminish the educated class' hopes and expectations for new opportunities and promotions. The Military School in Khartoum was considered, by British administrators, an unfortunate experiment and was therefore closed; in future officers would be promoted from the ranks. The *Sub-Mamurs'* School would close in 1927 despite the desperate need for junior administration to take the place of the missing Egyptians. At Gordon College 'technical' education was to be advanced, 'literary' or general education was to be retarded. The courses for training Sudanese administrators were discontinued. The sending of students to Beirut – as an alternative to Cairo – which had been started in 1922 had stopped. Most important, the senior officials of the Gordon College were seconded from the Political Service, and teacher- trainers were brought into the Political Service under strict supervision until judged safe to turn among fertile Sudanese minds thirsting for knowledge. Actually, Gordon College had long been seen as a hotbed of anti-government sentiment, and as a training ground for the type of Sudanese who had caused trouble in 1924.

With the exception to the Kitchener School of medicine , not a single school was opened during the decade following 1924 .The case was different in the three Southern Provinces, where the prevention of the growth of a common Arab nationalism necessitated the opening of many non-Arabic and non-Muslim schools.

The only educational institutions which developed after 1924 were the *Khalwa* or Koran schools. These schools provided a rudimentary type of traditional education and were looked upon as the logical type of education of a society that was developing its traditional institutions. Administration through religious leaders and tribal chiefs became accepted policy at a time when the Sudan Government was trying to create a modern economy and institutions: the Gezira Scheme, the new railway lines and the Kitchener School of Medicine. Instead of developing and promoting modern institutions which could go with the modern economy, traditional institutions based on tribal loyalties were being re-established. Verily, the colonial policy of extending traditional authorities justified, or indeed, enforced a lack of social and economic progress. In the long run, Native Administration proved to be sterile and riddled with contradictions.

The main issue to confront Sir Geoffrey Archer, the fourth Governor General, (1924-26) on his arrival in Khartoum was the future of the Sudanese battalions of the Egyptian Army and the unresolved issue of their oath of allegiance. His immediate task was the establishment of a corps of trusted troops to maintain security. Thus on January 17, 1925, Archer announced the establishment of a Sudan Defence Force of Sudanese to replace the Egyptian army units. The country remained divided into military areas : a Northern Area with headquarters at Khartoum, a Central Area (Kordofan , the Nuba



Mountains , and part of the Upper Nile Province) with headquarters at El Obeid, an Eastern Area (Kassala and Funj) headquartered at Gedaref, a Western Area consisting of Darfur, with headquarters at El Fasher, and a Southern Area ( Mongalla, Bahr Al Ghazal, and the remainder of Upper Nile Province ) with stations at Wau and Mangalla . Each area had its special corps and a highly mobile force with the characteristics of a powerful military police rather than a regular army. It owed its allegiance to the Governor-General, but many of the officers were previously part of the Egyptian Army and had already taken the oath of loyalty to the King of Egypt. But the problem was solved by the *Mufti Sheikh* Ismail Al Azhari who issued a *fatwa* prescribing the dissolving of the oath to King Ahmed Fuad.

The question of the cost of maintaining the new force was a subject of negotiation between Britain and Egypt. Although against the British action compelling the Egyptian troops to withdraw from the Sudan, the Egyptian Government was willing to pay the bill so as to prove to the public opinion that a connection still existed between Egypt and the Sudan. From a purely British point of view, it was quite natural that Egypt should pay for a force whose primary task was to insure peace in the Sudan and the supply of water for Egypt. Egypt's agreement to make the payment was, in Britain's view, an obligation imposed by the Condominium Agreement. As a partner, Britain was already maintaining and paying for a small garrison. It was therefore agreed that Egypt should contribute annually the sum of £750,000 to the Sudan Government for the upkeep of the Sudan Defence Force. Egypt continued to pay that sum until 1937. It was reduced to £562,500 in 1938, to £312,500 in 1939 and to £62,500 in 1940. From this date the subvention was abolished (33).

Egypt's fears that Britain did have intentions to interfere with the Nile waters supply were confirmed in the ultimatum of November 1924. According to one British authority the item about cotton was included in the ultimatum 'to impress on Egypt the power we (Britain) could wield if necessary by our (British) control of the Sudan' (34). However, in 1929, an agreement between Britain and Egypt guaranteed Egypt's irrigation interests and paved the way for the economic development in the Sudan based on the Gezira cotton scheme.

The Gezira scheme represented, after the army, the second priority in the reform activities of the Sudan Government. The latter's determination to undertake such ambitious programme was the result of extraordinary coincidence of interests and events: the Sudan Government's desire for economic development and financial independence from Egypt; the British textile industry's demand for sources of cheap cotton; and the Sudanese cultivators' acceptance of arrangements that promised prosperity.

Work on the Gezira cotton scheme which began in 1914 was stopped on the outbreak of the war. The 1919 loan of the British Government (which was £3 million in 1913, as mentioned in the previous chapter) was increased to £6 million. Two further loans amounting to £7 million were made in 1922 and 1924, thus bringing the total loan to £13 million. The Sudan Plantations Syndicate (35) took responsibility for the management and partial financing of the scheme. Construction of the Sennar Dam began in 1921; in July 1925 work and canalization on the dam were completed and irrigation could begin. By 1927 300,000 acres were under cultivation. In 1929 this area was extended to 526,484 acres, and for the first time in its history the Sudan witnessed economic prosperity, mainly as a result of cotton cultivation. The country's

revenue increased from £4,866,883 in 1925 to £6,646,883 in 1928. Expenditure over the same period rose from £4,375,670 to £6,045,286 (36).

By 1927, the Sudan's expenditure on education dropped from 3.9 percent of total expenditure in 1915 to 1.9 percent at a time when the Sudan was experiencing unprecedented economic prosperity (37). Even to such a committed imperialist as Kitchener, education and the Gordon College had been the hope for revival and modernization in the Sudan. But the Sudan Government's experience with the 1924 events led by the graduates and the military could not encourage any educational enterprise. During this crisis of confidence in the Western educated Sudanese, what further proof of loyalty and gratitude could the British Government await for? In their eyes the loyal ones were not the product of Gordon College or the military academies, but they were the tribal sheikhs and religious leaders who remained inert and demonstrably supportive during the 1924 crisis.

Having survived this inquisitive period, the officials in Khartoum could now return to the task of governing the Sudanese. The events of 1924 were viewed much more seriously now. Since the British could not satisfy the educated Sudanese' wishes, they devised a system under which they could ignore him.

Sir John Maffey, who became Governor – General (1926 – 1934), emphasized the political role of the Native Administration when he wrote that the latter would provide 'a shield between the agitator and the bureaucracy' and serve as 'protective glands against the septic germs (of nationalism) which (would) inevitably be passed on the Khartoum of the future...nothing stands still and in Khartoum we are already in touch with the outposts of new political

forces' (38). Time was short. Before old traditions died, extension and expansion in every direction were needed. Therefore, native authorities were to be developed to stop and localize the political germs which spread from the lower Nile to Khartoum.

The other weapon was to give implicit encouragement to the moderate group among the nationalists whose slogan was 'the Sudan for the Sudanese' in the hope that, one day, they would unite with the tribal and religious leaders. But the moderates were conscious that the British officials looked on Native Administration as a ploy to maintain imperialism.

Thus the Sudanese nationalists turned to their Graduates' Clubs and the formation of literary societies. A new Graduates' Club was established in Khartoum and formally opened in 1931. The Omdurman Merchants' Club and a club in Wadi Halfa were established in the same year. Together with the Officers' Club and the Graduates' Club at Omdurman they provided meeting places for political discussion, but the outward manifestations of nationalistic thinking took a predominantly literary form. Arabic literature gave educated Northern nationalists an outlet for their frustrations as well as space for debating the meaning of Sudanese "identity". Their literary works reflected the way they lived with and struggled against colonialism in their own minds. The short-lived but lively journals which this elite pioneered, under difficult circumstances such as *Al Sudan*, *Al Nahda* (The Renaissance) and *Al Fadjr* (Dawn) testified to the vigour and earnestness of that generation to stand again and wait for the ultimate moment to shout publicly their grievances. The spirit of these journals was certainly nationalist, but broadly intellectual rather than narrowly political. Their aim was to create a basis for enlightened national consciousness transcending tribes, parties and personal motives.

To the Northern educated elite, if colonialism evoked repression, nationalism evoked nobility and pride. To these nationalists, the colony was Britain's but the nation was their own. They imagined their nation to take its territorial form from the colony but its cultural character from themselves. The Northerners had always looked to Egypt and revelled in the glories of Islam and Arabism of which they deemed themselves a part. Arab blood is claimed by most of them; being an Arab is an article of faith and an index of distinctiveness from the African further south. However, the Northerner nationalists developed a sense of the Sudan as a unitary whole, with Khartoum as its metropolis and the provinces and districts as its hinterlands. Their nationalist ideology thus conceived, they identified the Sudanese nation in their own image.

But this Northerners' vision to define the Sudanese nation fuelled, unfortunately, a civil war which erupted even before independence was officially declared in 1956. The Southerner, Christian and African, had already formed his national identity in the mission schools under the Southern Policy. He therefore embarked on an endless struggle to claim for federation or independence.

In the early 1930's the Northern intelligentsia cast their eyes to Egypt, to many of them still the hope for rescue. After all Egypt was a neighbour and a Muslim – Arab country which, despite its formal independence since 1922 was, like the Sudan, still under the effective and humiliating control of British imperialism. It was, therefore, a natural ally against the common enemy; it was, in fact, the only possible ally with whom the Sudanese could associate themselves with any hope of effective support. Up to 1930 some elements of

the educated class were, to some extent, still pro – Egypt, although they had no close contacts with the Egyptian nationalists. Nevertheless, they did not feel prepared for any organized action with the Egyptians and were somewhat a little frightened of offending the Sudan Government.

The Sudan question remained one of the essential points discussed in negotiations held in London between Britain and Egypt. Actually the first six years (1925-30) following the 1924 incident witnessed certain efforts to lessen the tensions between the two parties. Though on the part of Britain the Ultimatum of 1924 had been successful in the sense that she had got what she wanted in Egypt and in the Sudan, for Egypt, she had been out-maneuvred and overwhelmed by Britain who had ‘knocked her down unconscious’ with a blow from the reprisals following the assassination of Sir Lee Stack. Fearing further punitive measures, Egypt had no choice but to assume a conciliatory attitude in her negotiations with Britain over the Sudan.

Between 1927 and 1930, some attempts were made to reach an agreement, but they all failed. One of these was on 13 July 1927, when Sarwat Pasha, (then Prime Minister) who had accompanied King Fuad to London, called on Sir Austen Chamberlain, the British Foreign Secretary, at the Foreign Office . Some of the suggestions included the partition of the Sudan between Egypt and the Sudan, the appointment of an Egyptian deputy governor-general and the return of the Egyptian Army. But none of these was accepted by the British Government. Nahas Pasha’s short-lived government, which succeeded Sarwat Pasha’s in 1928, was too busy with its internal problems to be interested in the Sudan. Mohamed Mahmoud (Sarwat Pasha’s successor) Pasha’s government, however, took an active interest in the Sudan question. In 1929 he visited England where a Labour Party Government was elected and he

tried to persuade the British Government to agree in principle to the return of Egyptian troops to the Sudan. The agreement remained in vague terms and once again the negotiations failed in 1930. Till then Egypt tried to press on her demands for a share in the administration of the Sudan, but she remained cautious to avoid any further clash. For Britain, the situation had to remain unchanged now that she was alone in firm control of the Sudan. Sir Austen Chamberlain was very clear when he stated the real essential British objective: “Unless we can harden our hearts and turn a deaf ear to demands which, however persistent, are clearly unreasonable, we shall lose our empire” (39).

Once this was known in the Sudan, the educated elite became excited. They felt helpless and humiliated because the future of their country was being settled over their heads. Their anger grew even stronger as they were drawn into a struggle for power between the ‘mighty’ Egypt and the ‘mightier’ Britain.

While there was no collective expression of opinion, a few individuals did express their views. The editor of *Al Hadara*, Sheikh Sid Ahmed Osman El Qadi, wrote a series of articles in which he denied the validity of Egypt’s pretended rights in the Sudan and he expressed the opinion that the Sudan could not be better off than it was under British tutelage. Sherif Yussuf Al Hindi, who had always strongly disliked the Egyptians, also wrote an article in *Al Hadara* attacking the Egyptians and refuting their claims on the Sudan. Sayid Ali Al Mirghani and Sayid Abdel Rahmane Al Mahdi adopted an attitude of indifference. Neither of them was known to have pro-Egyptian sympathies; in fact, the memories of 1924 were still alive and anti – Egyptian propaganda was strong.

The Sudan Government, although very aware of the situation, was occupied with its internal domestic problems, mainly those arising from the European economic crisis of 1929. The prices of agricultural produce, especially cotton, fell, and bad climatic conditions resulted in a great reduction in the quantity. Imports fell in 1930 by about £679,000 and exports by more than £1,550,000 ; again in 1931 imports were down by about £2.5 million and exports by about £3 million (40).

As the crisis was very serious, the government was forced in 1932 to follow a policy of retrenchment in the hope that expenditure would be reduced. Government departments were asked to cut down on their staff and services. About 1,095 officials were dismissed, of whom 271 were British, 520 Egyptians, 69 Sudanese, and the rest Syrians or other non – Sudanese. The salaries of the graduates of the Gordon College, who were employed in the Government Departments, were reduced from £8 to £5.5 per month – a cut of 30 per cent. But the starting salaries of the British and non - Sudanese officials (all fixed at higher rates than those of Sudanese staff) were not concerned by the retrenchments (41). On October 24, 1931, the students of the Gordon College, feeling that the Government's decision was both severe and unfair, decided to go on strike in protest. In addition, they suspected that this decision had not been dictated by purely administrative considerations, but was aimed at reducing their status as a class *vis-à-vis* the class of tribal *Sheikhs* and Chiefs, who were then considered by the Government as important agents in the execution of its new policy of Native Administration .

Since they were the leaders of the nationalist movement, the Graduates also felt the Government's retrenchments scheme was a blow to Sudanese nationalism in general. What started as a relatively minor issue soon turned



into a political question of national importance. Sayid Ali Abdel Rahmane, among others, tried to persuade the students to end the strike and return to their classrooms. But they refused to accept what was, in their opinion, a defeatist suggestion.

The Graduates reacted by sending a petition to the Governor – General in which they voiced their opposition to the retrenchment policy. The petition, which was written in very cautious terms, was the first organized action by the Graduates since 1924. A committee of ten was formed from among the Graduates in order to mediate between the Government and the students. Negotiations eventually led to the acceptance of a compromise solution whereby the starting salary of newly appointed graduates in Government Departments was to be £6.500 instead of £5.500 per month. The students went back to their classes, convinced that they had succeeded in their action. On the other side, the Government was disturbed as its unpopular decisions would now no longer pass without opposition.

It would be inaccurate to view the Gordon College strike as merely a schoolboy action. Actually, the fact that the Government had to compromise made the Graduates – including the moderate group – more confident. It was an impetus for the educated elements to take action in mass and through organizations.. But on the other hand, they realized that if they had to make more achievements, they needed to revise their methods and strengthen these organizations. Anyway, within a few years , this minor trouble of the early 1930's would be thoughtfully remembered by British officials who witnessed the beginnings of nationalist politics, a movement that would lead, within two short decades, to the end of the Condominium and the independence of the Sudan.

#### **4. The Separate Administration of the Southern Sudan (1920-1933)**

As a matter of fact, many educated Sudanese questioned whether there ever existed a coherent and comprehensive British policy toward the Sudan as a whole and toward its Southern Regions in particular. There was actually no room in Sudanese nationalism for continuing domination of the traditional leaders, and as Native Administration came under increasing attacks by the nationalists, so too did its resultant “Southern Policy”, with all its implications for separatism. Ten years after its promulgation, the Southern Policy was regarded by the nationalists as the very symbol of the British imperial dictum of Divide and Rule, intended to continue British control in the Sudan by perpetuating the separation of the country into two regions. Sudanese nationalists viewed the Southern Policy as part of a system which sought to search for the past not to look for the future, and to emphasize diversity not to encourage unity. Moreover, the language policy adopted in the South did not aim specifically at the exclusion of Islam and Arabic but more at the encouragement of English as a lingua franca. This created or intensified linguistic division, which still complicates North – South relations today. Sudanese nationalists continued to condemn the Southern Policy because its implementation, they considered, allowed the ultimate political arrangements of a unified Sudan to be indefinitely postponed. This section is reserved to the birth and execution of the Southern Policy, the factor most responsible for the Sudan’s present disunity.

By the end of the First World War, Khartoum viewed the South, when it was forced to view it at all, with bewilderment, even despair. In fact, as

mentioned in chapter two, the first two decades of British rule were marked by increasing local opposition and official violence. 'Pacification', not administration, was the inevitable resort of a government ignorant of local languages and cultures and unwilling to expend the financial and human resources needed to consolidate its rule. Locally, the Sudan Government was seen as the latest in a series of foreign intruders who raided and taxed, plundered and killed, promised security and did not provide it. There was very little economic development, and also very little administration. Education was left to missionaries as a bone to a dog. In 1920, British Officials in Khartoum judged administration in the South a 'failure', a conclusion they drew from the frequency of their military operations. What was therefore to be done? The answer was not so simple. After the War it became clear that the system of administration functioning in the North was unworkable in the South. The communications were poor, distances so great, languages unknown, staff insufficient and local hostility always threatening. Reliance on local chiefs was impossible where there were no chiefs, or where leaders seemed to emerge only to organize resistance against the British.

The changes in attitude noted in the preceding section which had affected Anglo – Egyptian relations after 1924 caused the Foreign Office to devote more attention to sub-Egyptian Africa. In fact, British Officials in the Sudan began to enforce policies that they thought suitable and coherent to the Southern Sudan, without Egyptian embarrassments and presence. Thus the Southern Policy, conceived by the Financial Secretary Sir George Schuster in 1924, was a programme of action with specific means to achieve desired ends. At that time, every British Official was concerned with neutralizing increasing Egyptian intrigue and anti – British propaganda throughout the Sudan, including the South .Through his programme, Schuster brought the South into

the campaign against the Egyptians: ‘if we act now in the South by taking a definite line of action , we may achieve something and leave the government more free to deal with larger problems’(42).

Schuster’s policy programme with regard to the ‘black savages who inhabit’(43) the Southern Provinces (including Mangalla , Bahr-al-Ghazal , and Upper Nile) was still unclear by the early 1920’s , but decisions to control the scope of Northern Muslim penetration in the southern areas were already taken. Actually, as a result of the British reaction to the upheavals of Egyptian nationalism complemented by the White Flag League disturbances and capped by Lee Stack’s assassination, the beginnings of a distinctly separate approach to the administration of the Southern Sudan emerged. As early as 1922, The Passport and Permits Ordinance declared the entire South ‘closed districts’. The enacted Ordinance made the South a huge Closed District, increasingly reserved to the native community and insulated from the world around it. It gave the Governor – General the power to close a district. Thus entire districts could be “absolutely closed” and no Northern Sudanese or foreigners could enter the district without official permission. Entry was only permitted subject to conditions and for purposes specified by the Governor – General. These entry permits could be refused without reason or cancelled without notice. Nonrenewal or cancellation obliged the affected persons to close out their affairs and depart the district. That Darfur and parts of Kassala and the White Nile provinces were also thus ‘closed’ indicated the general concern for security underlying the ordinance, and indeed as great a concern about the movement of Mahdists in the North as about the Northerners in the South.

Given a commanding position in the Sudan, the doyen of the Sudan Political Service, Harold Mac Michael, realized that the time had come for the

“right” definition of administrative policy in the South to support Native Administration. His decisive and unquestioned opinions, convinced him that the South should have a separate policy, which he endeavoured to implement, and, anyway, no one in Khartoum was prepared to argue with him (44). Mac Michael, supported by the Governor General Sir John Maffey, revived then Schuster’s programme and promulgated it to implement his conviction. In the following quotation, Mac Michael’s policy was to design the development of the Southern Sudan tribes with structure and organization based on the solid rock of local traditions and beliefs. The policy was also to create a solid barrier against the insidious political intrigues of the Muslim North. He wrote his “Memorandum on Southern Policy” in 1928 where he stated:

The problem is whether to encourage the spread of Arabic in the South as a lingua franca and medium between the governing class and the governed, or to resist it on political grounds. The former alternative appears to be basically unsound, the latter to be demanded as the right aim and object of our policy.... There has been no freedom for the mind and conscience, no intellectual future for this race....These Arabs of the North and the intelligentsia of the towns would not fail to assume a pose of sympathy and interest which might become a serious embarrassment.... Surely it is wiser and better and safer to take the long view and to encourage our officials by every possible means to acquire a fuller and more intimate knowledge of all that pertains to the great negro tribes and denote a whole- hearted enthusiasm to the cultivation of their languages, conservation and sublimation of all that is of value in their customs and institutions , frank recognition of the measure of truth contained in their religion (45).

Mac Michael’s memorandum on Southern Policy was used by the Sudan Government much as the Milner Report (1919) had been. Both commended lines of policy that advanced the principle of developing powers to both trained local staff and traditional rulers. However, in both cases the role of an educated elite was quietly circumscribed, while that of ‘native authorities’ was

emphasized and the functions of British Officials were increased. Unlike the North, the South had its own particular problems. The South suffered more because its educated class was only embryonic and the scope of its employment severely restricted. There was nothing in the South that could be compared to the Gezira Scheme, nor were there any concerted attempts at economic development. Some local efforts withered in the blast of world depression and were never revived. As a British Official put it as early as 1924, while the British might in due course be 'in a position to grant' self-government in the North, 'the difficulty' would be 'to safeguard the very large negroid element, which has never progressed, and presumably never will' (46). But the relative economic backwardness of the region was, as most Northern nationalists strongly argued, reinforced by government policy and even extolled by British administrators.

However, the promulgation of the Southern Policy was greeted with great enthusiasm by the governors and District Commissioners in the Southern Sudan. They were asked to implement the Policy with discretion but vigor and to monitor its progress annually (47). They all clearly understood the instructions which emphasized the importance of everything which, in the smallest degree, may contribute to encourage tribal consciousness, English, and the suppression of Arabic. The British Officials did not seem to be concerned about northern susceptibilities to overt anti-Muslim and anti-Arab measures in the South. Even the sensitive issues –such as the destruction of mosques, the elimination of Muslim traders, and the open discouragement of Arab names, speech and clothing – did not appear to matter to them. The orders of Mac Michael were quite clear: the isolation of the South from harmful Muslim contacts and the elimination of the "unwanted". Furthermore, the administrators in Khartoum did not really care about how official orders

for the implementation of the Southern Policy were carried out by the governors of the South, as long as they did it quietly.

British Officials in the South were interventionists in their dealings with Native Courts as the precepts of Indirect Rule were ambiguous. Courts of one type or another had been introduced towards the end of the First World War without Khartoum's knowledge (48). A resolution of the 1921 Southern Governors' meeting noted the necessity of limiting courts to the administration of 'tribal law', but ignorance of that law left jurisdiction a matter for the district commissioner to settle, as was the composition of the Court itself. Until the late 1920's, no legislation to standardize or even generalize courts' powers was promulgated until The Chiefs' Courts Ordinance of 1931. Although both Maffey and Mac Michael emphasized the importance of the British official's abandoning his role as 'Father of the People', the District Commissioner's effacement was not evident. Still very concerned with establishing law and order and fearing local uprisings against their native authorities, Brock (Wheatley's successor as District Commissioner of Bahr al-Ghazal) argued that 'a very thorough control of Chiefs Courts' would be necessary 'for some time'. Chiefs without 'pre-Government prestige' could not 'exert much authority without considerable assistance from their District Commissioners' (49).

The partial co-operation of chiefs into the judicial system, and the full British control of it, naturally tended towards the identification of the courts with the Government rather than with the 'traditional institutions' from which they were supposed to have stemmed. In some places in the Southern Sudan, unofficial courts sprang up in competition with the approved chiefs' courts. Some unofficial chiefs drew popular support away from those recognized by

the Government. After disturbances in Bor, the Sudan Government realized that the system of courts prevailing was deeply unpopular. Though it was inconvenient and unrepresentative in propping up a chief who was unsupported by his people, yet, the deposed head chief was succeeded by another who remained in office only with government support.

It is essential to return to the essence of the Southern Policy and how it officially made the North and the South two different regions. It seemed legitimate to the British Administration to enforce restrictions that were thought necessary in all circumstances and particularly in respect of security. The South had to remain safe from Arab, Muslim and Northern Sudanese nationalist influences. It is however difficult to defend the whole of this policy and the way it was executed. The prohibition of Arabic, the abolition of Arab names, the wholesale accusations against all Northerners of being slave dealers, and the advantage given to Christian missionaries over Muslim preachers: all these provisions, in reality, marred the essential merits of the policy which were, as assumed by the British Officials, the attempt to preserve the cultures of the people of the Southern Sudan. Even more important, a boundary between Northern and Southern policy and all that entails was in perspective. As an adopted child, the South was allowed to develop along its own lines, freed from the contamination of Arabic and Islam. This Southern Policy, which became a charter for 'institutionalizing' backwardness as will be discussed later, was a serious failure of the Condominium regime for which the Sudan would pay dearly.

The Southern Policy had several aspects, none more important than education. As referred to earlier, no one in the Political Service worried very much about education in the Southern Sudan during the first two decades of



their rule. In fact, the central government still saw southern education as a nuisance as the South as a whole was a mysterious and unexplored region. During that period, the British rulers were too busy establishing and consolidating their authority to inaugurate schemes of education. Money, what little was available from the Northern Sudanese or Egyptians, was required to conquer people not to liberate their minds. Moreover, Native Administration, with its fundamental principle of involving the ruled as rulers, was only an imprecise concept in these years. Thus the educational policy of the Sudan Government in the South was plainly simple: leave it to the missionaries. This seemingly satisfactory and economical solution, however, obscured the fundamental issues of education, which was left in the hands of missionaries urging the conversion of the Southern peoples to Christianity.

The missions and consequently their educational and religious efforts were regulated by the “Sphere System”. From the very beginning of the Condominium, Cromer and Wingate had foreseen the possibilities of religious conflict if Christian denominations were turned loose in the Southern Sudan. Thus each missionary society seeking to work in the Southern Sudan – the Italian Catholics, the Verona Fathers, the Anglicans, the Church Missionary Society, and the American Presbyterians – were given a sphere within which to carry out their educational and evangelistic activities. In general, the British desire for the exclusion of Arabic and Islam from the South, their encouragement of Christianity and English were fully expressed in the mission schools. The Catholic Verona Fathers were the most successful; in the late 1920’s they had about 1,900 students in elementary schools, two trade schools at Wau and Rejaf, two intermediate schools at Wau and Okaru, and Torrit. The Church Missionary society taught about 600 students at the elementary level and in a high school and intermediate school at Loka (50). In all, thirty two

elementary schools functioned under missionary auspices, including the American Presbyterians at Doleib Hill and Nassir, all with some degree of government assistance. Thus by this period, the Sudan Government still saw missionary education as more appropriate for the South than government schools.

Once the administrative objectives of the Sudan Government became more sophisticated than simple security, British officials could no longer regard education in the Southern Sudan with indifference. The policy of Native Administration which began to unfold from the Civil Secretariat under the guidance of Mac Michael predicated the participation of the Southern Sudanese in their own governance. But the Sudan Government was determined to create a distinct Southern Sudanese who would not disturb Khartoum the way the Northern one did. Thus the insulation of the South from Arabic and Islam had become an important political consideration, and the British officials wondered whether mission education alone could be effective in meeting these needs.

Thus the system of education which finally emerged in the South was based on two types of schools – elementary vernacular schools with four-year courses which were simple and directly linked with the practical needs of the people, and intermediate schools, in which English was the language of instruction, and the courses of study, extending for six years, were aimed at producing teachers, clerks, and other minor officials (51). The problem presented by ‘the infinite variety of local languages and their orthography’ (52) was tackled at the Language Conference held at Rejaf in April 1928, in which the Sudan Government recorded its decision against Arabic as a *Lingua Franca*. Of course, the missionaries did not want the Sudan Government to

encourage Arabic and Islam in the South but they contributed virtually nothing to the decision to adopt English as the official language there. That decision was made in Khartoum, Cairo, and London by secular authorities (53). By now, Wingate's hesitant beginnings over a decade before were clarified. In the South, English would substitute Arabic as the language of administration, and English-speaking, mission-trained southern clerks would replace those communicating in Arabic (54).

More importantly, recommendations were accepted to develop local languages. Bari, Dinka, Latuka, Nuer, Shilluk, and Azande were chosen as 'group languages' to be fostered. Matthew, then Secretary of Education and Health, viewed the standard of Arabic in the South as in any case very low, and he and others evinced a distaste for it quite beyond political objections (55). After the conference, he wrote, "I saw a good deal of Nilotic so-called Arabic. It was worse even than possible and seemed...to be almost incapable of improvement". He added in objection of the use of Arabic, "It was wrong to adopt a language which is neither that of the ruling or the ruled". Matthew decided and Mac Michael shared this view.

Now that the missionaries were equipped with money, they proceeded with their work under the general guidance of the government. Several schools were opened in subsequent years and, in 1930, there were three intermediate schools with 117 boys (in addition to 15 at the Stack Memorial College at Wau) and 32 elementary vernacular schools with 2,024 pupils (56). By the mid 1930's, the number of pupils at the intermediate schools rose to 246; and the number of elementary schools for boys was 36 with an attendance of 2,977. In addition, there were 18 girls' schools with 760 pupils and three trade schools with 100 boys (57). Textbooks were already being produced in the

vernacular languages as well as in English and the general standard of education was being raised (58). In the meantime, Islam and Arabic were not only totally excluded from the schools, but were also being systematically erased throughout the Southern Provinces. By the mid thirties, then, the Southern Policy was in full flood and Native Administration, its counterpart in the North, was still thriving.

Now one needs to re-examine the most important issue concerning educational objectives advanced by the Southern Policy. The policy of the Government in the South, as Mac Michael stated in his memorandum, was to build up a series of self-contained racial or tribal units with structure and organization based upon traditional customs and beliefs (59). But in 1930 the pattern of administration prevented the necessity for creating a southern literate class at all, and therefore allowed abandonment of that aspect of Southern Policy that called for educational advance. As one district commissioner put it, by educating boys the missions made them unsuitable for the declared aim of fostering native institutions (60). Even the Education Department, under Winter (from 1932-1936), reflected in its attitude towards southern education the dominant line of northern administrative policy: an educated class is inevitably hostile to traditional tribal rule (and to the British).

Not entirely hostile to education, British Officials sought to promote education, but education for a separate South. In the Sudan, these officials saw no contradiction in seeking to institute a system of education that was practical, not intended to train minds to rule, but to train subjects to serve loyally and conscientiously. The half-educated Sudanese would be enough. In line with this view, increasing attention was paid to sub-elementary 'bush schools', to practical education in agriculture and to enrolment in intermediate

schools, which was tied to an estimate of the government's staff needs. Therefore, at the 1932 and 1933 southern education conferences, the Government forcefully expressed its view that education should emphasize the practical as opposed to the literary and thus avoid tendencies towards detribalization.

Winter, the Director of Education, raised what proved to be an unsolvable problem: how to educate "boys" but keep them integrated into a tribal society which either rejected their new values or found them inappropriate and useless in the tribal context. Winter and his successor were consistently emphasizing to the mission educators the policy aspects of their service. Winter stated: "I raised the question and emphasized the desirability of checking the inevitable tendency of education to disintegrate the tribe and of avoiding the danger of an educated class in rivalry with the accepted rulers of the people" (61).

Winter was one of the more perceptive members of the Political Service who saw instability in the future if more effective policy control over the missions was not maintained. Fear that the British Government might quickly build a class of aggrieved and detribalized Southerners was justified. Thus the whole educational policy developed into an emphasis on separation and conservation. Separate the North from the South, preserve the tribal societies from any modern influences, conserve the Government's resources by educating only those required to replace subordinate staff, and then educate only to the minimum degree necessary for competence – these were the goals. These goals might have been possible, but as will be seen later, none of them was totally achieved.

Nonetheless, in the South, a more serious issue needs to be revealed. After the reconquest, the South was a wreck: entire tribes had been decimated, enslaved and stripped of all leadership. The Mahdi's revolt had left a vivid and negative impression of reactionary Islam on the English public. The murder of Gordon could not be forgotten. The British missions in the South, therefore, aimed at erasing the horrors of the immediate past and re-establishing the Southern Sudanese image prior to the Mahdiyya. The South's chaotic conditions tended to emphasize the Southerner's hatred and fear of the Northerner, and leave a lasting sense of grievance and mistrust. As missionary education was to reinforce the separatist policy of the Sudan Government, it turned its role to perpetuating the differences and strengthening North – South suspicion and hostilities. The seeds of separation, sown in mission schools, flourished later and were a factor contributing to the North – South conflict that erupted into a civil war in 1955, even before independence was officially declared.

The Northern Sudanese became more suspicious and critical of the Southern Policy and its supporters: the missionaries. They were conscious that the education promoted in the South was giving birth to Christian educated Southerners who would represent a barrier against their own political or cultural influences. Moreover, they thought the whole Southern Policy was designed to divide the cultural, religious and ethnic components of the country and set them against one another to facilitate their subjection.

To conclude, signals of opposition against the British had already begun to appear, and the British officials, although confident, were at the same time uneasy with the new class of Western-educated Sudanese. This small but influential Sudanese intelligentsia did not believe in the British mission in the

Sudan adopting the loyalty of the tribal and religious leaders. The *Sayids* made every effort to demonstrate their support to the British, who in turn encouraged their views as an influential weapon in the never – ending struggle to eliminate the Egyptian presence in the Sudan. More subversive were the handful of educated Sudanese who founded The League of the Sudan Union, which devoted most of its efforts to organizing literary festivals but was unostentatiously anti-British and pro-Egyptian. And more disturbing were the activities of Ali Abdel Latif who came to prominence calling for Sudanese self-determination. More serious of all was the rebellion of the 11<sup>th</sup> battalion against the British superiors. This Sudanese agitation was contained by force of British arms.

Now that confidence had been checked in 1924, all British Officials continued to embrace Native Administration as government policy ( and defensive strategy) throughout the length and breadth of the Sudan. In the North, the nationalists were convinced that they were in need of new methods and new organizations if their cause was to be advanced. In the remote backward South a separatist policy was enforced. The Southern Policy aimed at the elimination of all traces of Muslim and Arabic culture in the South, the substitution of Christianity and the English language, and, above all, the revival of tribalism as an instrument of government.

From Kitchener's palace on the Blue Nile the Governor General, Sir John Maffey, viewed, probably, with satisfaction the accomplishments of his tenure. He left in 1933 while the Sudan was entering a new phase. Our next chapter analyses a new and decisive period in the political history of the Sudan with the appointment of Sir Stewart Symes as Governor General.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

1. The emergence of a Sudanese *effendi* class would press for more participation in the administration of their country. They were scornfully derided by the British as “half-literate”, and “pro-Egyptians” to marginalise them and make them lose the support of the “collaborationists”. Daly, *Imperial Sudan*, op.cit., pp. 76-83
2. Elgood, op.cit., pp.208-209
3. Thomas Woodrow Wilson, (1856-1924) U.S. Democratic statesman and the 28<sup>th</sup> president of the United States (1913-21). He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1919. Collins York Concise Dictionary, Lebanon, York Press, Harper Collins Publishers, 1999, p. 1705
4. Beshir, op.cit., pp. 62-63
5. Saad Zaghloul Pasha (1859-1927) was an Egyptian revolutionary and statesman. Increasingly active in nationalist movement, he led an official Egyptian delegation (*Wafd*) to the Paris Peace Conference demanding Britain to recognise formally the independence and unity of Egypt with the Sudan. The British in turn demanded that Zaghloul end his political agitation. When he refused, he was deported to Malta. His absence caused disturbances in Egypt, ultimately leading to the Egyptian Revolution of 1919. Upon his return from exile, Zaghloul led the Egyptian nationalist forces. His elections of January 12, 1924 gave the *Wafd* Party an overwhelming majority, and two weeks later, Zaghloul formed his first *Wafdist* government. He was considered by the Egyptians as the “uncompromising national hero”. Encyclopaedia Britannica, CD Rom, 2000
6. Sir Joseph Austin Chamberlain (1863-1937) was a British Conservative statesman and Foreign Secretary from 1924 to 1929. *Collins York Concise Dictionary*, Lebanon, York Press, Harper Collins Publishers, 2000, p.243
7. Mc. Michael, Sir Harold, *Anglo-Egyptian Sudan*, London, 1961, p.150
8. Fabumni op.cit., pp.78-79
9. Beshir, *Revolution and Nationalism in the Sudan*, p.66
10. Daly op. cit.,p. 307
11. These educated Sudanese were excluded and without representation in the delegation because they openly expressed their support for Egyptian independence, calling all Sudanese to unite with Egyptians and drive out the British. Beshir, op.cit., p.67
12. Ibid
13. Ibid., p.68
14. Beshir, op.cit., p.64-65



15. Muddathir, op.cit., p. 64
16. The medicine school was generously endowed by Abdel Latif Bey Al Baghdadi, an Iraqi philanthropist who had settled in the Sudan. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
18. In fact, from 1899 to 1919, the Sudan Government adopted a passive policy towards the remote, backward South. Following the Egyptian Revolution, on the other hand, the Government became increasingly active and interventionist, especially after the rising of 1924 which was itself led by an officer of Dinka, i.e. Southern, origin. Ibid., p.71
19. Beshir, op.cit., p.69
20. Ibid., p.71
21. Ibid.
22. Ali Abdel Latif was a Sudanese ex-officer of Dinka origin who had been dismissed from the Army following a personal clash with an English officer, who he felt, had treated him arrogantly. He served in the Thirteenth and the Fifteenth Sudanese Battalions .Muddathir, op.cit., p. 104. See also Beshir, op.cit., p.71
23. For all its numerical and organizational weakness, and its political and practical deficiencies, the opposition was based neither on tribe nor sect, and the stage for its activity was urban, not rural: altogether an unprecedented combination. Daly, op.cit., p.293
24. Beshir, op.cit., p. 77
25. Ibid., p. 78
26. Daly, op.cit., p. 309
27. Muddathir, op.cit., p. 107, quoted in J. Marlowe's: *Anglo-Egyptian Relations 1800-1953*, London , 1954, pp.268-9
28. Collins, *Shadows in the Grass, Britain in the Southern Sudan 1918-1956*, p. 42 and p.73
29. Daly, op.cit., p.310
30. Beshir, op.cit., p. 102
31. Ibid., p. 105 and see Daly, op.cit., p.344
32. Today, "The Sudan for the Sudanese" is, naturally taken for granted. But in 1920 it was the subject of controversy, both in Egypt, where it was strongly felt that the Sudan was an inseparable part of Egypt and in the Sudan itself. In so far as the Sudanese were concerned there were two main reasons for doubt and controversy. The first was that most graduates (both of the Gordon College and the Military School) were convinced that "The Sudan for the Sudanese" was not a genuine nationalist motto, but one inspired by the British to exclude the Egyptians from the Sudan and leave Britain a free hand in running the country for her own ends. The very fact that the Sudan Government had allowed the propaganda of this view, while suppressing or opposing propaganda for the opposite

- view, was enough to condemn it in the eyes of the majority of enlightened sections of the population for some of whom suspicion of everything official or favoured by the Government, was a first principle of a sound nationalist thinking. Ahmed Khair, *Kifah Jil*, Cairo, 1948, p. 22
33. The Sudan Government's reaction against the Sudanese intelligentsia after the events of 1924 and the devolution of authority to the traditional leaders were a source of frustration to the educated Sudanese. Fabumni, op.cit., p.326
  34. Daly, op.cit.,p.344
  35. The most important agricultural concession taken up in the pre-war period was at Zeidab, south of al Damer on the Nile. Leigh Hunt, an American businessman, organized the Sudan Experimental Plantations Syndicate in 1904, was granted a concession of 10,000 *feddans*, and by early 1906 had begun to grow cotton and wheat using mostly Egyptian labour; The company was reorganized in 1907 as the Sudan Plantations Syndicate Ltd., with D.P. MacGillivray as managing director. Daly, op.cit.; *Empire on the Nile*, pp. 220-21
  36. Ibid., p. 106
  37. Collins, op.cit., p.82
  38. Beshir, op.cit., p.110
  39. Fabumni, op.cit., p.103
  40. Beshir, op.cit., p.114
  41. Muddathir, op.cit., p.118
  42. Collins, op.cit., p.170
  43. Annual report for 1904,Egypt , no.1 (1905), Cd.2409, p.140
  44. Collins, op. cit., p. 172
  45. Mac Michael,memorandum , 10 August 1928, FO 141/624/19768. A draft , with Mac Michael's memorandum, is at SAD G/s 469, Daly, op.cit., p.410
  46. Johnston, 'Handing over notes'; Patrick, Residency minute to Notables to GG1, 10 June 1924, FO 141/806/8100 , see Daly, op.cit., p.417
  47. Collins, op.cit., p.175
  48. Ibid
  49. Wheatley to CS, 20 April 1927, CIVSEC1/13/43; Brock to CS, 4 July 1929, CIVSEC 1/11/36
  50. Daly, op.cit., p. 409
  51. Annual Report for 1927, Sudan, no.1 (1929), Cmd, 3284, p.80
  52. Annual Report for 1927, Sudan, no.1 (1929), Cmd, 3284, p.81
  53. Collins, op.cit., p.218

54. In addition, every effort was made to encourage the mission schools to train an English-speaking clerical staff to be of more immediate benefit to the government. Ibid., p. 168
55. Daly, op.cit., p.410
56. Muddathir, op.cit., p.83
57. Ibid.
58. Annual Report for 1936, Sudan, no.1 (1937), Cmd, 5575, p.90
59. Memorandum encl. in CS to Southern Governors, 25 January 1930, repr. In Muddathir, *Imperialism*, pp. 245-249
60. Daly, op.cit., p.414
61. SGA Equatoria 1/5/19. April 16,1932

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **Sudanese Nationalism and the Road to Independence (1934-1956)**

The roots of a Sudanese nationalist movement may be traced as far as the First World War, but were most clearly discernible in the literary societies which sprang up in the late twenties. External stimulus played an important part in reshaping that movement: the actions of the co-dominion in 1924, the policies adopted by Stewart Symes, and the changing international situation leading to an Anglo-Egyptian Treaty, all reacted with a growing sense of Sudanese identity to produce a new dimension in Sudanese politics. How was then the nature of Sudanese politics? Was the interference of both co-dominion in Sudanese local affairs an intended policy to prevent the emergence of a strong, unified secular nationalist movement?

By 1934 the Sudan had experienced thirty-five years of Anglo-Egyptian administration, long enough for its rule to remain 'unquestioned and secure'. Two decades later, it lay on the verge of independence. In the world – wide process of decolonization, the Sudan stood out because it was a Condominium,

a status which complicated most aspects of political life. A feature of Condominium was uncertainty, how did the Sudanese struggle to put an end to the Condominium's uncertainties and proceed to its liquidation? Was Egypt inclined to forget about the Unity of the Nile Valley and allow the Sudanese to plan for outright independence?

In fact, this last chapter is an attempt to discuss the major forces which shaped Sudanese politics between 1934, arguably the high point of British imperialism in the Nile Valley, and 1956, probably its nadir. How was this colonial period, precisely, so rich in contradiction? Why did the Political Service simply decide to terminate the Southern Policy and all that it stood for? How could this separatist policy, however brief, deeply affect post-colonial Sudan?

## **1. The development of Sudanese Nationalist Politics (1934-1945)**

In 1935, the rise of Nazism and Fascism were becoming increasingly threatening to the world at large and to Britain and Egypt in particular. Italian longing for expansion was a threat to the security of Egypt and to Britain's territorial interests in Africa. The invasion of Abyssinia by the Italians (who had been in Libya since 1911) in 1935, and the consequent threat to British interests in East Africa on the one hand, and to Egyptian interests in the Nile on the other, made agreement an immediate requirement of both. This inclined the British and Egyptian Governments to look for an acceptable form of accommodation with each other. An immediate agreement was required and talks preceding a treaty took place in Cairo. The Treaty of Alliance, signed in

London on 26 August and ratified in Cairo on 22 December 1936, provided for:

1. Recognition of Egypt as a sovereign state, with all the international rights accorded to a free state (e.g. exchange of Ambassadors between the two countries).
2. Termination of the military occupation of Egypt, with the exception of the Suez Canal Zone.
3. Conclusion of an Alliance requiring both parties to establish no relations with a third party which might be inconsistent with this Alliance.
4. Limitation of the number of British troops which should be on the left bank of the Nile at the Suez Canal, and ensuring that Egypt was to pay a good deal of the necessary cost. This arrangement was to be for the transitional period leading to a return of the guardianship of the Canal to Egypt. The Treaty was to be reviewed at the end of 20 years (i.e. in 1956) and in the case of difference about the revised Treaty this should be submitted to the League of Nations (1).

The Sudan was dealt with in Article II of the Treaty, but the question of Egyptian sovereignty over the country, which had constantly bedevilled Anglo-Egyptian relations in the past, was not mentioned. It was agreed that the existing administration in the Sudan should continue as before with no specific reference to Egyptian participation. However, to make Egypt satisfied, it was provided that Egyptian troops might, once more, be stationed in the Sudan under the responsibility of the Sudan Administration. Egyptian immigration into the country was again to be unrestricted except for reasons of public order and health, while posts in the administrative service were to be open to Egyptians according to qualifications, but only where qualified Sudanese were not available. In either case, all appointments remained vested in the British Governor – General.

A Note which was joined to the Treaty allowed an Egyptian Economic Expert to serve in Khartoum and also provided that the Inspector-General of the Egyptian Irrigation Service in the Sudan be invited to attend the Governor-General's Council when matters related to his department were brought before the Council.

It was quite clear that none of these provisions of the Treaty constituted a considerable gain for Egypt. Nothing in the Article prejudiced the question of sovereignty in the Sudan. The Treaty not only shelved that question, but it assured British control of Suez Canal and pre-eminence in the Sudan. But in the circumstances, and especially after the humiliations of 1924, the Treaty was greeted in Egypt as a great national victory.

But in the Sudan, where the negotiations leading to the conclusion of the Treaty had been watched 'with keen interest and some apprehension' (2), a totally different attitude prevailed. The Sudanese felt they should have been consulted about matters that concerned them. The only reference which was made to them was that Britain and Egypt agreed that the primary aim of their administration must be the welfare of the Sudanese. This was greatly resented by the Nationalists, the pro Egyptians and their opponents alike. In their eyes, this was a most insensitive offence because it appeared to treat them as less than human and certainly not as responsible adults. The nationalists were saddened to see the Egyptian Government publicly announce their approval of the existing regime in the Sudan. Still even more disappointing to them was the fact that Egypt, far from behaving like an ally, was only too pleased to be re-admitted as a nominal co-ruler of the Sudan, and to that end, sent a token force to be stationed there.

The Treaty, with its paternalistic reference to the welfare of the Sudanese, was, in a sense, a catalyst to a new sense of Sudanese independence. The Sudanese' feelings of resentment and discontent were mixed with a certain delight in the relative freedom and increased opportunities which followed the restoration of Egypt's position in the country and the return of the old rivalry. Thus commenting on the fraternization which took place between the Egyptians and the Sudanese during the first year of the 'New Era', the Director of Intelligence wrote:

The Egyptians have seized every opportunity not only for entertaining, but for honouring and flattering the Sudanese in a manner which, in English eyes at least, must seem crudely fulsome. I refer particularly to the treatment accorded to the party sent to Cairo to attend King Farouk's Accession celebration, and more still to the entertainment by the Egyptian Government of the London Coronation party on their way back through Egypt....(3)

The Director's assessment of the situation and his further comments on it are quite interesting. He proposed to give the Sudanese frequent opportunities of visiting and forming contacts with England. The common bonds of religion and language, as he noted, between the Egyptians and the Sudanese, might be at a British disadvantage. Thus he made some proposals to impress the Sudanese and gain their admiration. This is what he said:

...In Egypt the Sudanese are overwhelmed with flattery, but they see little in Egyptian life that impresses them. They enjoy themselves; some of them may even have their heads turned; they may feel really grateful to their hosts ....With regard to England, it is quite different. The results of the Coronation party's visit to England were most gratifying. The members of this party were profoundly impressed by England and the English people; they were impressed not only by the outward manifestations of material progress, but also, and more deeply, by the moral qualities which they were able to see behind this progress. ....(4)



Obviously, when the Egyptians returned to the Sudan, the British were conscious that they were at a disadvantage. Differences of race, language and religion separated them from the Sudanese and the Egyptians. But the Sudanese were fully aware of the advantages which the new situation could offer. They tried, with varying degrees of subtlety and success, to play off Egypt and the Sudan Government against each other to attain more social and educational advance, for the moment.

Therefore, in an article dated 19 October 1937, and entitled “The Need for Sending Educational Missions Abroad”, the editor of *Al Sudan* eulogized the Egyptian Government for accepting forty-four Sudanese students free in its schools and then went on to say that the Sudanese hoped that England, as the other partner in the dual administration, would do something similar for the Sudan. He added that the Gordon College was no doubt a useful institution but unless Sudanese students were given a chance of receiving higher education in England itself their theoretical priority for Government employment given them in the Treaty would not be realized.

The Sudanese wanted the Co-domini rulers to do more for the welfare of the Sudanese. In its issue of 5 October 1937, *al – Nil* published an article pointing out that ‘England had already raised several monuments in the Sudan....The Gordon College, the Kitchener Medical School, the Stack Laboratories....from all these a large number of trained Sudanese leave every year to serve the country’. Egypt had done a lot but mostly of a general and temporary nature. They asked for a more significant Egyptian contribution. ‘The Egyptians should also raise in the Sudan a permanent visible monument; a Farouk Institute, a Nahas College... ’ (5)

Under these conditions of more or less open rivalry between Egypt and the Sudan Government and at a time when the Axis powers were increasing their efforts to woo the Muslim subjects of the British Empire, it was quite natural that the British administration should change some of its established policies. Besides, unlike Maffey, Sir George Stewart Symes' liberal ideas and definite views about the need for reform offered the right climate for Sudanese nationalists to advance surely and confidently.

Sudanese' relief was soon pronounced during Sir George Stewart Symes' governor-generalship (1934-1940). Lieutenant Colonel Symes, a colonial administrator already familiar with the Sudan (6) had realized that Maffey's administration could no more work in the Sudan. Native Administration, according to him, could deal with local affairs, but as an administrative device, it could never lead the Sudan into the world of the future. That world was not going to be built by the natural evolution of the traditional authorities but by cadres of technicians operating from properly equipped centres to inaugurate economic development. In fact, modernization was Symes' objective. He referred to necessary reforms, relevant to the changing conditions of the Sudan, to produce qualified Sudanese capable of shouldering the new administrative responsibilities. He therefore provided for better facilities for technical training of Sudanese candidates for appointment in more responsible posts. His following declaration revealed a new attitude and outlook previously unknown to the Sudan administration: "Administration policy shall be concerned with practical measures to improve the welfare of local populations" (7).

Symes had hardly settled into the palace when he informed his subordinates that their days were numbered, perhaps to fifteen years (8). Time

was not on their side. Symes was aware that war lay in the future. The Sudan could no more remain indefinitely under British control. To the Sudan Political Service, Symes was a man 'before his time' who came with a message no one wanted to hear. Ambitious in conception and determined in execution, Symes started the reforms the Sudanese most needed.

Educational reforms were entrusted to Christopher Cox. He was Dean of New College, Oxford, and he was the first Director of Education to be appointed from outside the Sudan Political Service, itself an innovation. Being an outsider, he was able to tackle the problem with an open and unprejudiced mind. The Gordon College, which had been so far a secondary school, was transformed into a group of higher schools. The Gordon College started to teach Law for the first time in the history of the Sudan. Elementary education was prolonged and the intermediate and secondary system was improved. It was decided in 1936 to establish schools of agriculture, veterinary science and engineering. These new schools were to provide trained Sudanese personnel.

In the judicial reforms, the publication of the three Local Government (Municipalities, Townships, and Rural Areas) Ordinances, in 1937, showed that Native Administration was no longer the dogma that it had become since 1924. The creation of the post of Assistant District Commissioner (A.D.C.) especially for the Sudanese (though the A.D.C. was an executive officer who did not share in the political duties of his seniors) proved that the government was, slowly, beginning to move from traditional 'paternalism' to the more flexible idea of 'partnership' in colonial rule.

Symes's practical and realistic line was to utilise the traditional authorities after they had been reformed, and to create for the educated Sudanese

opportunities which would enable them to acquire proficiency in the higher branches of the public service. In other words, Symes advocated the reform of Native Administration which, as he thought, had left educated Sudanese in positions fewer in number and diminished in responsibility (9). Symes held that British personnel should be appointed to responsible posts only to a view to their gradual elimination, except where they were considered to be indispensable. The number of British 'executive staff' rose from 436 to 493 in March 1938, during which period the number of Sudanese so classified rose from 2 to 10; including Egyptians and others, this meant that Sudanese accounted for less than 2 per cent of the category. In the 'supervisory' class, the number of British was static (341 in 1934, 342 in 1938), while that of Sudanese rose from 148 to 274, or more than one third of the total. In the subordinate category, there were 14 British and 2,911 Sudanese in 1934, as against 18 British and 2,992 Sudanese in 1938. Therefore according to the government's own classification, Sudanese in 1938 accounted for less than 2 per cent in executive posts, about one third of supervisory positions, and 82 per cent of subordinate staff (10). The Sudanese intelligentsia responded all the more favourably when they actually saw the number of Sudanese promoted to responsible posts steadily increasing while British personnel declined.

The other important objectives in Symes's policy, besides the reforms in the system of justice and education, were the promotion of economic development through the substitution of ordinary commercial for government trading enterprises, the broadening of the basis of the export trade, and the accumulation and maintenance of adequate reserve funds to guard against bad years in prices or yields.

There was no place for Southern Policy in Symes's concept for modernization. Symes and his officials did not seem to appreciate fully the government policy of defending Southern peoples and protecting their customs from Northern culture. This policy of Care and Maintenance could not produce economic growth and development. He was convinced that this policy became not a means to modernization and development but a doctrine of neglect. It was under his governor-generalship that the beginnings of modernization in the Southern Sudan took place. Yet development in economy and education were soon frustrated by the outbreak of the Second World War. Certainly, in the later years of his governor-generalship there emerged an acute awareness in Khartoum that the neglect of the South was not only unprincipled, but dangerous. He recognized that the encouragement of Christian Missions and the exclusion of northern Sudanese from the South were bound to create antagonism in Egypt and in the North. Maffey's policy of separate development for the South was rejected and instead a new policy of rapprochement between the North and the South was set in motion (11).

On the whole, a positive change in British attitude was reflected through Symes's policy, warmly approved by the Sudanese intelligentsia. Indeed, by his words and deeds, he won the praise of the educated Sudanese. But he was more fortunate than his predecessor, for assignment of any role to *effendis* was bound to appear generous after Maffey's treatment of them as 'germs' and 'cancers'. According to Northern nationalists, Symes was the 'far-sighted man' who struck the right note with the Sudanese intelligentsia who felt that he was on their side (12).

From the mid-1930's changes in British thinking towards colonial subjects encouraged new developments in Sudanese politics. This was reflected in the

government publication in 1936 of *Sudan Courtesy Customs*, a small book designed by its authors, V.L. Griffiths and Abdel Rahman Ali Taha (both of the Education Department) to ease social relations with the Sudanese and promote better understanding. It was observed that the great move to foster social relations proved a British desire to ‘counteract Egyptian influence’. Another motive was the Sudan Cultural Centre designed as a forum for ‘free and informal interchange of ideas’ through lectures, debates and conversation. Thus in their hidden hope for a new and independent order, the nationalists expressed, in their discussions, the way they lived – and tried to live with – colonialism.

These advanced thoughts created the right climate for the development of the nationalist movement. The intelligentsia became ambitious and was no longer hesitant to communicate with the British administration. They were anxious to make use of the new liberal attitude and policies. While they realized that Symes’s policy did not have the full support of all the British administrators, they understood that the situation meant action from their part. They were eager to take steps to further their national objectives as an era of confidence and co-operation opened up. Symes was believed, and in their belief in him, the intelligentsia began to respond. The literary groupings turned now into organizations with definite nationalist aspirations. In fact, neo-Mahdism and the Graduates’ Congress are the two nationalist movements the Sudan knew in its modern history.

## a) Neo – Mahdism

The Graduates were committed to a liberal anti-sectarianist policy. They looked upon the main religious sects, the *Khatmiya* and the *Ansar*, as contributors to the divisions and disunity in the nationalist front. *Sayid* Ali Al Mirghani and *Sayid* Abdel Rahman Al Mahdi were, in their opinion, responsible for these divisions.

The two *Sayids* had been trying for years to increase their support among the graduates and the general public. *Sayid* Ali considered himself a supporter of government policies and as such had expected the government to curb the growing economic and political influence of *Sayid* Abdel Rahman. To him Mahdism was a menace which should not be allowed to grow, and he therefore made repeated appeals to the government against *Sayid* Abdel Rahman (13). The latter, knowing the efforts of *Sayid* Ali Al Mirghani and the suspicions of the British administrators, worked hard to win the sympathy of the graduates. A group of graduates headed by Mohamed Salih Al Shingeiti rallied around him. This worried *Sayid* Ali and also the administration. But soon after, in 1924, *Sayid* Abdel Rahman proved his usefulness to the British by opposing the pro-Egyptian nationalists' agitations. This stand made him gain religious and political recognition from the Sudan Government.

Government recognition made him gain economic prosperity, also. *Sayid* Abdel Rahman was given additional land on Aba Island. He obtained a lease of about 600 *feddans* of land at Gondal for growing cotton. By 1933 he had some 13,000 *feddans* under cultivation in Aba Island, the Funj, the White Nile and Kassala Provinces. By 1935, he held about 15,000 *feddans* in Aba Island alone. His annual income was estimated at between £15,000 and £40,000. At

Aba Island alone he had a labour force of about 4,500 (14). By 1936 he was, by any standards, economically prosperous and politically important. The *Sayid* often travelled with a large entourage, and entertained constantly in Khartoum and Omdurman all visiting tribal and religious notables. He was, as a British intelligence report put it, a “very impressive figure” (15).

In this as in much else, *Sayid* Abdel Rahman competed with his rival, *Sayid* Ali Al Mirghani. The Mahdi’s son had notable advantages of personality, wealth and apparent success in influencing the government, but *Sayid* Ali, whose financial position was deteriorating, was by no means disarmed by his ambitious rival. If the followers of Abdel Rahman were numerous, they were poorer, less educated, and less influential than those of *Sayid* Ali (16). The *Khatmiya tariqa* was the strongest in the richest and most advanced areas in the country, the northern riverain region, Kassala, the Towns, and the Gezira, while Mahdists were more numerous in impoverished Darfur and northern Kordofan, White Nile and Blue Nile Provinces, and Omdurman. It was to remedy this that Abdel Rahman turned his attention to the educated elite.

*Sayid* Abdel Rahman made donations to charity funds and to schools, which made him popular among the Graduates. Donations included a daily gift of one hundred loaves to the Omdurman Mosque School and £150 to the *Ashraf* School of Sheikh Babikr Bedri. He also gave financial assistance to the head of *Ismailia tariqa*. He made plans for the foundation of a public library in Omdurman and for a lodging house for students at the Omdurman Mosque School. Thus in 1935 *Sayid* Abdel Rahman had more adherents among the educated and politically minded young men than any other prominent Sudanese personality. He was regarded by the *Ansar* as ‘the most suitable man



to lead a national movement' (17). The tribal leaders held him in high esteem and his political supporters hailed him 'as the Muslim liberator of the Sudan from Christian domination' (18).

But the Sudan Government had a different stand on *Sayid* Abdel Rahman Al Mahdi. In reality, both the government and Sayid Ali Al Mirghani, whose loyalty to the government was unquestioned, were alarmed. Sayid Al Mirghani had always seen Mahdism as his major enemy and Al Mahdi as his rival. There were even personal animosities between the two men who never met except on unavoidable occasions. As for the government, Symes thought there was little danger of a Mahdist armed rising but he perceived in the cult a fertile ground for the seeds of Sudanese nationalism. Despite his senior officials' opposition to Mahdism – which was both political and personal – Symes maintained that Mahdism was in any case an administrative embarrassment rather than an imminent political danger. But *Sayid* Abdel Rahman could turn into a potential danger as he became the main subject in the Governors' meeting. A report of the intelligence service in 1935 summarized the position of *Sayid* Abdel Rahman as follows:

*Sayid* Abdel Rahman's ambitions are purely political. He desires both recognition and power. He is the son of the man who united the Sudan and he has similar ultimate ambitions for himself or for his dynasty. His immediate concern is to achieve equality of status with Sayid Ali Al Mirghani and thereafter to displace him and to become in turn a sort of native adviser to His Excellency and finally a paramount native power. He proposes to achieve his ends not by violence but by constitutional methods. It is not part of his plan to promote a rising against the government (19).

The Governors (20) in the Sudan renewed pressure on Khartoum to take action against Sayid Abdel Rahman. At their meeting, in 1936, they drew up the following resolutions and conclusions as recommendations to the Governor General:

1. We feel that the cult of Mahdism is politically dangerous or at least serious embarrassment and that it is potentially subversive everywhere in the Northern Sudan and actively subversive in the West.
2. We urge that action be taken now because (a) the longer that curtailment of Sayid Abdel Rahman's influence is deferred the more difficult will it be especially as the expectation of life of Sayid Ali Al Mirghani is not great and were he to die in the near future Sayid Abdel Rahman would become the Sudan national figurehead. In view of the opinion expressed in part (1) we consider this to be disastrous. (b) Sayid Abdel Rahman has recently committed palpable offence and it is a convenient opportunity to apply a punishment and restriction.
3. We recommend the following: (a) deprivation of his allowance of £180 for a year, as a fine of his sheltering of an outlaw of the Nyalla rising; (b) prohibition of pilgrimage to Aba Island; (c) bestowal of a decoration on Sayid Mohamed Osman, Sayid Ali Al Mirghani's nephew, as a mark of Mirghani's seniority and because he would succeed Sayid Ali in the event of the latter's death; (d) favourable consideration of proposals for financial assistance of Sayid Ali; (e) scrutiny of further agricultural expansion in White Nile province by Sayid Abdel Rahman and favourable consideration of alternative non-Mahdist projects (21).

Some of these recommendations were adopted as the basis of official policy towards Mahdism. As a consequence, *Sayid* Abdel Rahman's influence in Kordofan and Darfur was temporarily checked. But, on the whole, his utility to the Government and his position against Egypt made him a respected and valued leader of Sudanese opinion. In fact, the secret revolutionary was gaining more mass-support from the educated class.

His influence continued to grow among the intelligentsia. *Sayid* Abdel Rahman gave implicit support to the Graduates to establish their General

Congress. His wealth, personality and organization had won him not only the backing of the Graduates, but also of some tribal leaders, such as Hag Mohamed Ibrahim Farah, of the *Jaalin* tribe, which normally supported *Sayid* Ali Al Mirghani. The unwillingness of his rivals to express openly their support to national and public issues and their weak organization helped him to win others to his cause.

By the end of the Second World War, Mahdism was no longer a secret movement looking for legality. It had become part of the stream of the political movement and succeeded in creating its own political party – the *Umma* Party. (22). This political party became the medium through which the aims and objectives of *Sayid* Abdel Rahman and the *Ansar* sect as a whole were expressed. Its formation was the climax of these efforts started by *Sayid* Abdel Rahman after the First World War, sometimes openly and sometimes secretly, to revive Mahdism and give it recognition. This was a personal achievement, a triumph against many odds: the British administration did not cease to look upon Mahdism as a dangerous anti-government dogma until 1946 and the rival *Khatmiya* sect had continued to view it as its principal enemy.

Mahdism was able to come in the open and get public and government recognition only with the support of the Graduates' movement. In fact, the identification of *Sayid* Abdel Rahman with a group of graduates had enabled him to obtain patronage of those social and political groups which appealed to him. By 1946, Mahdism was no longer the puritan, religious, revolutionary movement but a neo-Mahdism with moderate political outlook. In this way, neo-Mahdism fulfilled Symes' prophesy of 1917 when he wrote: 'It would be in the natural order of things if the Mahdists of today became the nationalists of tomorrow' (23).

Sudan's political history was also marked by the establishment of the Graduates' Congress, a movement which worked for the promotion of national consciousness by combating tribal separatism. Its growth and decline are discussed in the next section.

## **b) The Graduates' General Congress**

After 1924 the common interests of the intelligentsia had concentrated on literary and social activities in the Graduates' Clubs of Omdurman and Wad Madani. These were reading and discussion groups consisting mostly of the Graduates of the Gordon College, whose consumption of books and magazines ranged widely from literary criticism to politics. There was a big interest in the Sudanese past and cultural life, from the glories of Meroe to folklore (24).

Needless to say that the spirit of the Graduates' Clubs was national pride and consciousness transcending tribes and personalities. The educated demanded more education, and the recommendations of the De La Warr Commission on Education in the Sudan published in December 1937 fired their enthusiasm (25). The latter's report justified their demands and provided concrete proposals to stimulate the discussion groups. These issues were local, peculiar to the Sudan, and particularly to the Three Towns (Khartoum, Omdurman and Wad Madani). The Graduates' slogan "The Sudan for the Sudanese" was not incompatible with Symes's increased reliance upon educated Sudanese as agents of administration and his general conceptions of modernization.

The literary discussions of the Mac Michael era could not be designed for political action; the Graduates' Clubs were the only institution from which the initiative for a political organization would be likely to appear. In a lecture to the Wad Madani Graduates' Club, Ahmed Kheir called in 1937 for a Graduates' Congress of the educated Sudanese to promote the national interest (26). The idea of such an organization ignited the imagination of the intelligentsia – Ismail al-Azhari and Mekki Shibeika were particularly active – but there was wide divergence as to the pragmatic definition of the national interest. Several discussions, meetings and proposals brought about involvement and finally organization.

The Graduates' Congress was established on February 12, 1938 when some 1,180 Graduates from throughout the Sudan met in Omdurman. The committee was chaired by Ismail al Azhari, the president of the Omdurman Graduates' Club, who stressed that the Congress was founded to serve the interests of the country and of the Graduates. This was an ample definition to which all groups could pledge allegiance (27). Membership was accorded to all graduates from post-elementary schools and the activities of the Congress were guided by an executive committee of fifteen. They officially informed their existence to the Sudan Government in May, emphasizing their interest in public affairs and expressing their wish for cooperation: "It is not our intention", the Congress wrote, "to embarrass the Government, nor is it to pursue lines of activity incompatible with the Government's policy. Most of us are Government officials and are fully conscious of our obligations as such, but we feel that the Government is aware of our peculiar position as the only educated element in this country and of the duties which we...feel to be ours" (28). The Congress specifically renounced representation of the country in the fullest sense. This 'timidity' was the price the Congress had to pay for later.

Symes and the senior officials of the Political Service could foresee the political orientation of the Congress. They could detect evident signs of patriotism in the Congress' formulations and its members' strong desire to participate in the political future of their country (29). Augus Gillan, the Civil Secretary (after Mac Michael's departure) wrote to the provincial governors:

...The acquisition of higher technical qualifications and the assumption of greater administrative responsibilities have very naturally stimulated the desire of the educated class to be taken further into the understanding of the Government. This desire has expressed itself recently in the organization of the Graduates' Congress...Today the Congress movement is in the hands of the more balanced members of the graduate class. That this class is numerically an inconsiderable minority and that its attempt to assert itself may be criticized or even resented by tribal notables or other elements is neither here or there. The Congress movement owes its origins to a genuine desire on the part of the educated class to cooperate with Government in furthering what is sincerely imagined be the best interests of the Sudan as a whole. These aspirations are genuinely patriotic, i.e. in the best sense nationalistic (30).

Much of the energy of the Graduates' Congress was absorbed in organizing itself and in establishing branches in the towns from El Fashir to Malakal. The Congress was popular not only among school graduates but with non graduates as well. It refrained from any active involvement in politics and gave strong support to the government upon the outbreak of the war in 1940. But the spirit of friendly cooperation and obedience could not last: Politics was too tempting, too seductive to be ignored by the Congress.

In fact, the re-election of Ismail al-Azhari marked the beginning of political involvement by Congress. In its first meeting in September 1940, the executive committee discussed a proposal for the submission of a note to the

Governor General on 'projects of national interest which should be implemented at the appropriate time' (31). This Political Note, which included Sudanese political demands and aspirations and the steps the Government should take for their fulfilment did not please the Sudan Government.

The visit of the Egyptian Prime Minister, Ali Mahir, in February 1941 provided the opportunity for the Congress to encourage greater Egyptian activity in the Sudan, including an Islamic mission to the South for conversion and education. Though the principal concerns of the Congress were not yet overtly political, any activity, particularly education invariably brought up the question of the South. This again did not please the Government. Moreover, the Sudan Government was at war; and although it was an imperial war which did not involve the total population of the Sudan, it absorbed all the energies of their rulers and diverted the attention of the intelligentsia.

By 1942 the general atmosphere in the Sudan and outside was one which favoured political action. The Atlantic Charter with its declaration on freedom and democracy, the Cripps Mission to India to discuss Indian independence, and the repeated declarations of the new Wafd Government in Egypt over Egyptian independence were followed in the Sudan with keen interest. When Nahas Pasha was elected Prime Minister, Congress sent their congratulations expressing their hope that the Sudan will not be forgotten or deprived of the benefits of his rule (32).

The Graduates, in both private and public discussions, showed big concern about the future of their country. The new executive committee of 1942 was ready to take political action. Ismail al-Azhari, Abdel Halim Mohamed, Abdullah Mirghani and Ahmed Kheir prepared a memorandum which was

approved by the committee. A sub-committee composed of Ibrahim Ahmed, Ibrahim Osman and Ahmed Yousif was charged with publicizing it in and outside the Sudan. *Sayid* Ali Al Mirghani and *Sayid* Abdel Rahman were consulted (33). The memorandum was submitted on behalf of the Sudanese people; it contained twelve demands tantamount to asking for self-government. These are some of the demands contained in the memorandum:

- (1) At the first possible opportunity the British and Egyptian governments should issue a joint declaration granting the Sudan in its geographical boundaries the right of self-determination directly after the war. This right to be safeguarded by guarantees assuring full liberty of expression in connection with this, as well as guarantees assuring the Sudanese the right to determine their national rights with Egypt in a special agreement between the Egyptian and Sudanese nations;
- (2) the formation of a higher educational council composed of a Sudanese majority, and the devoting of a minimum of 12 per cent of the budget to education;
- (3) the separation of the judiciary from the executive;
- (4) the promulgation of legislation defining Sudanese nationality;;
- (5) the termination of the Sudan Plantation Syndicate contract;
- (6) the Sudanese to have priority to government posts by (a) the appointment of Sudanese in posts of political responsibility in all the main branches of government; and (b) limiting the appointments to government posts to Sudanese;
- (7) the cancellation of subsidies to missionary schools and the unification of syllabuses in the northern and southern Sudan (34).

Indeed, the Congress was asking for self-determination. The association of the Sudanese with the government of their own country had already been recognized by the administration and by the government for some time (35). Demands for reforms in education, the problem of the South, the missionaries and the Gezira were well-founded and had been for a long time a subject for discussion among the educated Sudanese. But the Civil Secretary, Sir Douglas Newbold (1938-45) rejected the memorandum. The Government response was



based on three arguments: first, the Congress memorandum raised issues connected with the political status of the Sudan, which was a matter of the Condominium alone. Secondly, the Congress was being false to its own constitution by trying to make itself into a national political body and by claiming to represent all Sudanese. Thirdly, the Government had been conscious of the national and legitimate desire of the enlightened Sudanese for an increasing participation in the government and development of their country, which was the responsibility of the Sudan Government alone and not of any other body or organization. Douglas Newbold bluntly told the members of the Congress to “renounce any claim, real or implied, to be the mouth-piece of the whole country”(36). When Newbold told Sir Stafford Cripps of the Congress memorandum and the difficulties it created, the latter advised him to form a Sudanese Advisory Council and not wait on events (37).

All the Graduates were shocked by Newbold’s attitude. It was seen as a declaration of no faith in the Congress and the educated class. This sharp rebuff, together with individual consultations which the Civil Secretary held with certain members, precipitated a major crisis between the Congress members. The Congress was thrown into a death throes, as its body disintegrated into the diverse elements held together by success. The Congress ruptured internally into moderates and extremists. Those referred to as moderates (or as ‘reasonable men’) and led by Ibrahim Ahmed, were convinced that despite the Government’s attitude the dialogue must continue. They generally stood for the independence of the Sudan from Egypt as well as from Britain, but through co-operation with Britain. The less moderate group, referred to as extremists (or ‘hotheads’) and led by Ismail al-Azhari, were convinced that negotiations with the government were futile. They preferred

co-operation with Egypt as against Britain, and, generally favoured the cause of the unity of the Nile Valley. What was needed, they thought, was direct and militant action, and this could be achieved if the moderates were removed from the leadership of Congress. In 1943 Ismail al-Azhari was re-elected president and Amin Zaidan became secretary; the few moderates in the executive committee resigned, and the field was open for Azhari's group. Yahia Al Fadli became responsible for the organizational work.

A political committee consisting of Ismail al-Azhari, Amin Zaidan, Ibrahim Al Mufti, Ahmed Yassin and Abdullah Al Fadil was made responsible for following up the 1942 memorandum. An educational and cultural committee drew up a detailed programme dealing with schools, courses abroad, training of teachers, cultural festivals and publishing. A social affairs committee was asked to prepare a programme on labour and working conditions, village affairs and sports; and an economic committee, a programme on co-operatives, local industries, agricultural projects and the Nile Waters. It was hoped that through these committees and their programmes, Congress would be able to increase its influence among all classes and rally popular support for political activities and militant action if needed (38).

On Italy's defeat in 1943, the Congress committee sent a cable to the Governor General congratulating the allies on their victory and expressing their wish that when the war was finally won the demands of the Sudanese would, in the spirit of the Atlantic Charter, be implemented.

In the meantime, the Sudan Government launched its first scheme for associating the Sudanese with the central government. In reality, Newbold was acting on Cripps's advice and plans for an Advisory Council of the Northern

Sudan were made public (see Table 5). The draft's proposals for the Advisory Council were approved by the Governor General's Council in March 1943, and the Advisory Council Legislation was published on September 1, 1943. Ten of its twenty-eight members were appointed by the governor-general, the others, on advice from the provincial governors. Their powers were strictly advisory and the subjects for discussion circumscribed (39). The following table shows how the social structure and actual working of the Advisory Council did not help to win the sympathy of the educated class, but were, on the contrary targets for critics, especially in the towns and larger villages.

Table 5: Ordinary Members of the Advisory Council

	<i>Sudanese</i>											<i>British</i>	
	<i>Tribal leaders</i>						<i>Employees and pensioners of central Government departments</i>						
	Nazirs	Sultans	Maks	Wakil Nazir	Shaikhs		Religious affairs	Civil servants	Army officers	Teachers	Doctors	Merchants	Bank managers
<i>Elected</i>	18	4	1	1	1	4	..	4	..	1	..	2	..
<i>Appointed</i>	10	..	..	..	..	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Total</i>	28					12			12		3		1

Source : Muddathir, op.cit., p.144

These restrictions were excessive for the nationalists and they met strong criticism and even boycott. The Congress immediate reaction was to reject the scheme and warn its members that any who participated in the Council would be dismissed. The reasons given for rejecting the Advisory Council were: it was an advisory council with no legislative powers; it was only for the Northern Sudan and the exclusion of the Southern Sudan was prejudicial to the unity of the country; it was to consist largely of tribal leaders and the leaders of local authorities; and the two seats offered to Congress were not sufficient to counterbalance the domination of these elements (40). But among these, the most visible defect to the nationalists was the exclusion of any representation from the Southern Sudan and the prohibition against council members speaking on Southern Sudan affairs.

It was evident that the Southern Sudan became an open issue fed by years of silent suspicion and morose discussion. The omission of Southern representatives seemed to confirm to the nationalists that the British had long been plotting to sever the Southern Sudan from the North to attach it to their East African possessions. But while the Northern Sudanese were deeply suspicious of British intentions about the future of the Southern Sudan, the opinion of the Southerners remained unclear and puzzling to the Northerners. As far as the Southern Sudanese were concerned, the advent of the Southern Policy meant very little change in the administration and daily life in the South; in fact, the change was more in the minds of the Northern Sudanese intelligentsia who were curious as to its progress and prospects. For the British officials working in the South, the Southern Policy, enshrouded in secrecy, was manifest in less than satisfactory English lessons for the police, vernacular literature in the mission schools which produced a handful of Southerners literate in English. The new governor of Equatoria, L. Skeet,

wrote in 1943 that “Southern Policy” requires a thoughtful revision (41). He was, like the other Southern Governors, seeking clarification of Southern Policy rather than asking for its renewal (42).

To the Northern nationalists, the decision to boycott the Council was again another bone of contention between the moderates and the extremists. The moderates wanted to participate because they thought the Council would give the educated Sudanese the opportunity to discuss the country’s demands. *Sayid* Abdel Rahman supported this view. As a result of the disagreement, the moderates left Congress and, together with *Sayid* Abdel Rahman and the *Ansar*, formed the *Umma* Party in 1945. With the departure of the moderates, the other Graduates had constituted their own political party – the *Ashigga* – and began to implement their political programme. Their distrust of the Sudan Government and its Advisory Council made them turn to the Egyptian government for co-operation. *Sayid* Ali al-Mirghani and his *Khatmiya* sect sided with them.

The nationalists of the Congress never spoke with one voice again. While in 1945 the executive committee of Congress wanted to interpret the demand of self-determination made in 1942 and the formation of a democratic Sudanese government united with Egypt under Egyptian Crown, the moderates and the neo-Mahdists immediately declared their opposition to this interpretation. In September 1945 a memorandum containing this new interpretation of self-determination was sent to the two Condominium governments.

It is necessary to mention here the formation of other numerous parties and factions after the break-up of the Graduates’ Congress. Some were smaller

groups with a handful of members, who (while continuing to hold the same national objectives) broke into factions for personal reasons. But, like the rest, these were satellites of one or other of the two main groups. However, it is important to note that whereas the *Umma* Party, functioning under the patronage of *Sayid* Abdel Rahman al-Mahdi, continued to be supported by the *Ansar*, the alliance of the *Ashigga* and the *Khatmiya* proved to be of a fragile nature. On many occasions – beginning in 1949 -, when the *Khatmiya* formed the National Front (which stood for dominium status with Egypt) , the *Ashigga* broke and gave way to open rivalry and hostility. Later in 1951, another split occurred in the Independence Front when a group of religious leaders broke away to form the Socialist Republican Party. During its short time, this Socialist Party was bitterly hostile to the *Umma* Party accusing it of harbouring secret plans for imposing a Mahdist Monarchy.

The most important development was the emergence of the Southern Sudanese, who after 1947 made their debut in national politics. Finally liberated from the restrictions of the Southern Policy, though still suffering from it, the Southerner, now African and Christian, came to oppose self-determination and independence until ‘the South would reach the standards of the North in civilization’ (43). Being the product of the Southern Policy and made conscious of their differences from the Northerners, the Southern Sudanese, despite their rather narrow educational and occupational foundations, did not remain inert. Under the direction of the Southern Governors, they started to show concern and anxiety as to the political future of the Sudan and its Southern Provinces. Thus the political awareness of the Southerners really took place in the “Political Committees” of the administrative towns (44). These committees were social gatherings dominated by talk and little organization. But in the discussions, everyone, British and

Southern Sudanese alike, followed with attention events in the North. These gatherings did provide an opportunity to the Southerners to learn and discuss, but little more (45).

In the meantime Sudanese students in Egypt, most of whom had been sent under the auspices of the *Ashigga* and the Congress, were being exposed to wider and more diverse influences. The result was the birth of the Sudanese Communist Party in 1946 followed, shortly afterwards, by the Muslim Brotherhood of the Sudan (46). Both parties were destined to play important parts in the history of independent Sudan, but neither was of major political weight before 1956. Until that time the politically conscious Sudanese preoccupation was how to end the Condominium and safeguard the future of the Sudan, its North and its South. These nationalists continued to ask for more representation in the governance of their country, despite their internal clashes and rivalry,

## **2. Nationalism and Constitutional Reforms (1942-48)**

The Graduates' Congress memorandum of 1942 and the British reaction to it had set the chain of political events in motion. While 1942 was a landmark in the development of Sudanese nationalism, it was also a landmark in the development of constitutional institutions. However, the Advisory Council, seen by its sponsors as 'the far-reaching step taken in the government's declared policy of associating the Sudanese with the administration of their country' (47) was criticized because it excluded the South and contained too many restrictions. The Civil Secretary, Newbold, acting as spokesman for the Sudan Government, tried to answer the critics and calm their worries in a broadcast from Radio Omdurman.

The reasons for confining this council to the six northern provinces...are practical and not political reasons. We are not prejudicing the future status of the Southern Sudan. It is simply that the Southern Sudanese have not yet, for historic and natural reasons, reached a degree of enlightenment and cohesion which enables them to send competent representatives to a council of this kind. Nor are there any Northern Sudanese who can fairly claim to be able conscientiously to represent the Southern peoples.... The history and experience of most governments, including this government, prove that a very large part of the constructive part of a government originates in advice and proposals put forward by an advisory committee... (An Advisory State) in a transition phase, a school of self-government, and the quickest way to pass through school is to work hard and learn hard, class by class...The peculiar conditions of the Sudan demand that we should not imitate other territories, whether Arab or African. The government's main desire is that the Sudanese in both town and countryside, officials merchants and country villagers should have a definite voice in managing affairs, and should every day stand more and more on their own feet.....self-government is not a government that you can suddenly put on like a pair of trousers (48).

To the nationalists, the analogy with schoolboys was neither convincing nor pleasing. It was quite natural that those who had worked hard to establish the Graduates' Congress and, later, to submit the memorandum with definite and clear demands, would refuse to co-operate in the establishment and working of the Council. The Advisory Council planned by the Sudan Government was another manoeuvre to frustrate the nationalist movement, to divide their ranks and to separate the North from the South. The Graduates' Congress therefore boycotted the new institution. The Egyptian Government took a similar stand. The pro-Egyptian nationalists saw in the Advisory Council another step in the long process separating the Sudan from Egypt which the British administration had started as early as 1924.



But a section of educated Sudanese, together with the *Umma* Party led by Abdel Rahman Al Mahdi and supported by the *Ansar* sect, took a different view. They agreed to participate in the constitutional developments, though very aware of the restrictions and inherent weaknesses of the Council proposed by the British. Division within the nationalists continued to widen from 1944 to 1956. The other group of educated Sudanese supported by the *Khatmiya*, led by *Sayid* Ali Al Mirghani, and in alliance with Egypt, maintained their opposition to, and non-co-operation with the British Government. Though the members of the Council were able to discuss a number of economic and social questions related to the problems of the country, they could not, however, win the sympathy of all the educated Sudanese, or that of Egypt, the other partner in the Condominium. The section of educated Sudanese altogether with the *Umma* Party continued to sit in the Council and generally continued to favour co-operation with the Sudan Government as the only practical way of breaking the then existing Egyptian Government's determination to make the Sudan a province of Egypt under the Egyptian Crown.

Sudanese politics was of significance for Anglo-Egyptian relations. The Sudan's Government freedom in internal affairs had resulted in a situation in which its primary concern was to consider what should be undertaken for the Sudan rather than the best policy with regard to the improvement of Anglo-Egyptian relations. In spite of the Treaty of 1936 Egypt's frustration in the Sudan increased rather than diminished. In wartime Britain could threaten force to counter the effects of these strained relations, but on peace the reconstruction of her world position would require a measure of Egyptian co-operation which developments in the Sudan had done little to encourage.

Towards the end of 1945 Egypt announced that it was entering into negotiations with Britain to revise the 1936 Treaty. This announcement incited Abdallah Bey Khalil, the Secretary – General of the *Umma* Party, and four other *Umma* members of the Council, to present a letter on 3 September 1945 to the Chairman of the Council asking whether the government intended to consult members of the Council on the future of the Sudan when the treaty negotiations began. The Sudan Government knew for sure that the Graduates' Congress formation had, in part, been a reaction to Sudanese exclusion from the treaty-making of 1936, and they were concerned to try and avoid a repetition of that situation. Thus in reply, the Chairman comforted the Secretary General and the *Umma* members of the Council. He read out the following statement during the fourth session:

Should the question of the future status of the Sudan be raised by the Condominium Powers in any revision of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty, it would be in the intention of the Sudan Government that the Advisory Council of the Northern Sudan should be consulted in order that its views should be at the disposal of the Sudan Government for transmission to the Powers. It is the opinion of the Sudan Government that the views of the Sudanese people should be obtained through constitutional channels in a matter of such vital importance to their future wellbeing (49).

The affirmative reply of the government satisfied members of the Advisory Council but the opposition outside remained unappeased. They moved to act, but this time outside the constitutional framework. The *Ashigga* Party backed by the students' union of the Graduates' College (the Unionists) were able to win the support of the political leadership of the *Umma* Party for a new political formula which compromised the position of them all. It attempted to contain the *Umma* Party which, until then, was co-operating fully in the Advisory Council as well as leading a strong anti-Egyptian and anti-

unity campaign. The statement, which was vague but acceptable, envisaged the creation of a free and democratic Sudanese Government in union with Egypt and in alliance with Britain, the nature of the union and alliance being left for the said Sudanese Government to determine.

The formula clearly contained the elements of its failure as a permanent political agreement. The *Umma* Party, with one foot in the nationalist camp and the other in the Advisory Council, was trying to ride two horses at the same time. But the campaign for unity was so strong that none was able to stand against it. The outcome of this national mood was an agreement to send an all-party delegation to Cairo on March 22, 1946. Once in Egypt, the delegation, confronted by the unwillingness of the Egyptian Government to agree to anything other than the union of Egypt and the Sudan under the Egyptian Crown, was unable to maintain the unity it had reached in Khartoum. The delegation began to disintegrate: members of the *Umma* Party gave up and returned to Khartoum while the *Ashigga* and the representatives of other Unionist parties remained in Cairo. The Anglo-Egyptian negotiations themselves failed, the Sudan Question unsettled and the opposed Anglo-Egyptian interpretations of the 1899 Agreement still undefined.

The *Umma* Party returned to its old methods of co-operating with the Sudan Government and its policies of gradual and constitutional developments, while the Unionists sided with the official and “unofficial” Egyptian union with the Sudan and continued to oppose the schemes proposed by the Sudan Government. The members of the delegation who remained in Cairo continued to press for acceptance by the Egyptian political parties of their position and for participation in the negotiations between Britain and Egypt regarding the 1936 Treaty.

British and Egyptian ideas about the future of the Sudan were so divergent that negotiations were imperative. On 18 October, of the same year, however, a compromise agreement was reached by Sidqi Pasha, then Prime Minister, and the British Foreign Secretary, Earnest Bevin. The Sidqi-Bevin Draft Treaty, as it was called, included a ‘Sudan Protocol’. Through a clever formulation, the Protocol obviously hoped to satisfy the Unionists by specifying unity, the Egyptian Government by its reference to the Egyptian Crown, the *Umma* Party by its right to choose the future status, and the Sudan Government by reference to preparation for self-determination and self-government. The draft protocol referred to:

...The policy which the High Contracting Parties undertake to follow in the Sudan (with the framework of the Unity between the Sudan and Egypt under the common Crown of Egypt) will have for its essential objectives to assure the well-being of the Sudanese, the development of their interests and their active preparation for self-government and consequently the exercise of the right to choose the future status of the Sudan. Until the High Contracting Parties can in full common agreement realize this latter objective after consultation with the Sudanese, the Agreement of 1899 will continue and Article 11 of the Treaty of 1936, together with its Annex....will remain in force. (50)

As the protocol attempted to be ‘all things to all men’ it failed to gain the support of any of the groups it was meant to satisfy. In fact, the ‘Sudan Protocol’ was subjected to different interpretations. Whereas Sidqi Pasha declared, on his arrival in Cairo (on 26<sup>th</sup> October), that – ‘I have returned with sovereignty over the Sudan’, Bevin immediately declared that this was not his understanding of the Protocol. He said in the House of Commons:

After taking ...the highest legal advice, I felt that, for the sake of an agreement which would have been as much in the interest of the Sudan as of either of the other parties, I should be justified in alluding, in the Sudan Protocol to the existence of a symbolic dynastic union between Egypt and the Sudan, provided always that no change was introduced into the existing system of administration. (51)

Under the strain of the ensuing controversy, negotiations were broken off, and the failure to reach an agreement prompted Mahmoud Fahdi al-Naqrashi Pasha, the new Egyptian Prime Minister, to take the dispute to the United Nations Security Council on 26 January 1947. There the Sudan Question was debated during nine sessions extending from 5 August to 10 September. In the course of the prolonged debate, the two governments explained their respective points of view on the 1899 Agreement and the nature of the regime thereby established in the Sudan. In particular Naqrashi Pasha insisted that the so-called Condominium Agreement did not, in fact, create a condominium regime in the Sudan but only an Anglo-Egyptian administration as its official title indicated. Sovereignty over the country, which the Agreement did not mention, therefore, belonged where it had been vested before the Mahdists' rebellion – i.e. in the Egyptian Crown. In addition, he maintained, the Sudanese and the Egyptians were one people, united by history, race, religion, language, and common dependence on the Nile.

Having used Egypt's name, money, and men in order to establish its hold over the Sudan, Britain decided to drive a wedge between the two peoples and was, similarly, scheming in order to sever the Southern provinces from the rest of the Sudan. Sir Alexander Cadogan, the British representative, on the other hand, insisted that the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of 1899 had constituted a condominium regime in which Britain and Egypt were jointly recognized as

the co-rulers of the Sudan; that sovereignty over the country was vested in the Co-Domini, and that the Sudanese people were different from the Egyptians and equally entitled to determine their own destiny. He added that the Government of the Sudan was accordingly training them in the art of self-government, while the Egyptians were only interested in disrupting these efforts and imposing their own will over the Sudanese without consulting them. On 10 September, rival resolutions were finally put to the vote. But none of them gained the requisite majority and the Security Council adjourned, leaving the Anglo-Egyptian dispute unresolved.

Naqrashi Pasha and the Egyptian Government understood that Britain was not genuinely interested in helping the Sudanese to determine their own destiny, but only used the doctrine of self-determination as a pretext for justifying their own imperialistic policies of separating the Sudan from Egypt, then, separating the Southern from the Northern provinces of the Sudan. British promise to self-determination was stronger to the United Nations than Egypt's claims of imperialist victimization and anti-colonialist sentiment. In 1947, Tuck, the United States ambassador in Cairo, told Naqrashi that the U.S. would not support Egypt over Sudanese self-determination.

In the Sudan, those who supported the Egyptian line were deeply disappointed by the Sidqi-Bevin Protocol. The *Umma* Party was also annoyed since it came to realize that the Protocol was an unexpected act of betrayal since it implied the recognition by Britain of Egyptian sovereignty over the Sudan. Meanwhile, big demonstrations and riots occurred in Sudanese towns on 30 October and 1 November after Sidqi's revelation. On the other hand, the clashes which occurred in the towns and countryside between the supporters of the two political groups (the *Ansar* and the Unionists) as a result of the Sidqi-

Bevin protocol caused a great deal of bitterness, and relations between the leaders of the parties grew more strained.

The *Umma* called for ‘holy war’ against the British and Egyptians alike (52). Sidqi’s use of the word ‘*siyada*’ for sovereignty was said to denote the relation of a master to a slave. This is how the Sudanese viewed it. At the same time, relations between the Sudan Government and the *Ansar* were severely tense. The *Umma* threatened to leave the Advisory Council, the sixth session of which had to be twice postponed (53). *Sayid* Abdel Rahman returned to the Khartoum from Aba (his home town), he met the Governor-General and, at the latter’s request, issued a public call to the *Ansar*, who were pouring in the Three Towns, to go home. The inability of the Sudan Government to do more than repeat earlier reassurances led to ever-louder *Umma* demands for immediate independence. Not content with the reassurances of British officials at home, *Sayid* Abdel Rahman Al Mahdi flew to Egypt, and then to Britain, in order to discuss the matter with the leaders of their respective Governments (54). By the 3<sup>rd</sup> November the demonstrations subsided while British reinforcements were on the way.

The British Officials in Khartoum remained painfully aware that their compatriots in Cairo and London had tried to “sell the Sudan”. Both Huddleston (Newbold’s successor) and Robertson (then Deputy Civil Secretary from 1941 to 1945, and Civil Secretary from 1945 to 1953) had retailed their usual arguments against the ‘symbolic sovereignty’ embodied in the draft Sudan Protocol. On 10 November, Huddleston, Governor-General of Khartoum, very annoyed with the Sidqi-Bevin Protocol, went to London with a letter from the two Secretaries, Harold Mac Michael (Civil Secretary from 1926 to 1934) and Sir James Robertson. They confirmed the ‘fanatical

opposition' of the Sudanese, the warning of British resignation, possible risings among tribes resulting in the loss of British lives, and a 'relapse to a police state' if the Protocol were made officially valid. Huddleston explained that the Protocol, if carried out by force, would destroy all the confidence engendered by fifty years of Sudanese co-operation. He used the leverage provided by the riots to press for 'rapid and drastic' steps towards 'immediate and really substantial'... self-governing institutions' (55).

In Khartoum, the Sudan Government moved to conciliate the pro-independence parties and strengthen its own position *vis à vis* the Foreign Office. Replying to criticism, James Robertson revealed that his 'government's responsibility was not to the co-domini at all, but to the Sudanese' (56). The British Officials in Khartoum seemed to sympathize with the anti-Egyptian feeling of the Sudanese. Therefore, under the growing pressure of events at home and abroad (57), the Sudan Government, determined not to let the initiative pass from its hands, decided to take further steps towards closer association of the Sudanese – both Northerners and Southerners – with the government of their country.

Now that Egypt's hand, so strong a year ago, had been played out, Britain, having stepped back from the 'precipice' of the Sidqi-Bevin Protocol, had taken a stand on self-determination and retrieved credibility. Thus the Sudan Government set out to put into effect the plans which it had been drawing up for constitutional development and which had only temporarily been shelved. In fact, these plans had been discussed in the fifth session of the Council on 17 April 1946, immediately after the Sudanese delegation left for Cairo. The Governor General reassured the Advisory Council members that the objects of the Sudan Government, as Bevin had already declared, were to build up the



organs of self-government with the aim of eventual independence. The two organs inaugurated to train Sudanese for self-government were the Legislative Assembly and the Executive Council.

### **a) The Legislative Assembly and the Executive Council**

To clarify British motives for Sudanese participation in the governance of their country at this particular moment, one needs to re-examine the Anglo-Egyptian tension after the Sudan Protocol. In reality, now that Egypt's case at the United Nations faced defeat, the British knew there was no room for compromise. The British government believed any revival of the Sidqi-Bevin formula would 'blow the Sudan wide open', alienating the independence parties and enabling them to turn the whole country against its rulers. If the British were not careful they might lose Egypt and the Sudan, whereas if they left Egypt, they had at all costs to maintain their predominant position in the Sudan.

One means of doing so was early inauguration of the proposed Legislative Assembly and Executive Council. Those bodies were seen by the British – in London, Cairo and Khartoum – as primarily weapons against Egypt (58). In fact, it was Anglo-Egyptian conflict which made them necessary and which gave them significance. Such constitutional devices, concerned with 'training for self-government' were viewed by all as part of the big political, diplomatic, and sectarian struggle for control of the Sudan.

The Sudanese intelligentsia, on their part, found the Advisory Council too restrictive, too unrepresentative, and too advisory to satisfy their demands. Actually, after Newbold's death in March 1945, the insistence for greater participation could not be ignored, and on April 22, 1946, the first meeting of the Sudan Administrative Conference was convened "to assure the next step in associating the Sudanese more closely with the administration of the country" (59).

Working under the direction of the Acting Governor, Sir W. James Robertson, the Conference was essentially a body of Sudan Government employees, of whom eight were British. To these were added sixteen Sudanese members: eight representing the Advisory Council, seven officials and *Sayid* al-Siddiq, the son of Abdel Rahman Al Mahdi. Political parties were invited to nominate representatives to form a Council. Accordingly, the Independence Front (the *Umma* and its minor non-Mahdist allies), to which a majority of the sixteen Sudanese belonged, sent five more representatives (Abdellah Khalil, Mohamed Ahmed Mahjoub, Mohamed Salih Shingiti and *Sayid* al-Siddiq (60). The Graduates' Congress, the *Ashigga*, and other Unionist parties were asked to nominate six, but declined the offer and boycotted the Conference.

The Governor General reassured the Council that the objects of the Sudan Government, as Bevin had recently declared, were to build up the organs of self-government with the aim of eventual independence. 'I wish definitely to deny any suggestion that the Sudan Government is unsympathetic to Sudanese aspirations', he said. 'The Government is aiming at a free independent Sudan which will be able as soon as that independence has been achieved to define for itself its relations with Great Britain and Egypt' (61). The Governor General went further and specified that in twenty years' time the Sudanese will

be governing their own country assisted and advised by a certain number of non-Sudanese specialists and technicians. With regard to the building up of the organs of self-determination with the aim of eventual independence, a Sudanization Committee had already been set up on March 11. A general plan for the progressive Sudanization of the Government Departments to this extent by 1962 was as follows:

Table 6 : **Recommendations of the Sudanization Committee**

	1948	1952	1957	1962
	Per cent			
Division I	15.4	27.4	38.1	55.5
Division II	25.2	37.1	58.7	78.9
Both divisions	18.4	30.3	44.1	62.2

Source: A. Muddathir, *op.cit.*, p. 158

The Sudanese representatives lost no time getting to the heart of the matter. The Southern Sudan problem was still a threat to political union. When Robertson concluded his remarks at the Sudan Administrative Conference, Abbas Mekki asked the first question, the one every Sudanese wanted answered: in his remarks was the Governor General referring to the ‘whole’ Sudan? Robertson waffled, referring to past statements on the Status of the Southern Sudan. The Sudanese pressed. Charles Cummings, the Chief Justice, tried to be helpful by pointing out that there was no legal difference between the North and the South. So the answer was affirmative; legally, there was no other alternative. This is what the Sudanese wanted to hear from the British Government.

The first report of the Sudan Administration Conference was formally submitted in March 1947 and was later debated by the Advisory Council and at the Juba Conference. The report recommended replacing the Council with a Legislative Assembly embracing north and south and chosen mainly by direct election. An Executive Council would replace the Governor General's Council and function as a Cabinet, initiating legislation for the Assembly to debate and amend and the Governor-General to enact. He would have a veto and still the power to enact bills defeated by the Assembly. Matters touching the 'Constitution of the Sudan' were reserved. Sudanese members of the Executive Council would be 'Under-Secretaries' nominated by the Assembly and approved by British heads of departments (62). This is a summary of the Conference's report:

- a) Some of the members of the Executive Council will not be elected by the Assembly. They are members *ex-officio* and cannot resign.
  - b) The Executive Council have no majority in the Assembly whereby they can influence the course of debates and voicing in that body.
  - c) The Executive Council will not have the powers of dissolving the Assembly and of subsequently appealing to the country for approval of their policy.
- 'Under the Constitution of the Sudan', the report continued, 'the ultimate authority is vested in the person of the Governor-General and any conflict between the Executive Council and the Legislative Assembly will have to be resolved by him' (63).

While the proposed system was therefore a step towards representative government, the ultimate authority of the governor-general remained undiminished. Predictably, this was a principal point of criticism raised in the Advisory Council. Others were about the vague role of under-secretaries, who seemed like servants of two masters. To an important section of Sudanese

nationalists, the proposals failed to provide the people with an adequate share in the government of their own country and offered 'too little too late'. But this view was not shared by the *Umma* Party and its allies, nor by certain elements among the Unionists who were advocating a more flexible and more co-operative attitude towards the British administration. The *Ashigga* Party rejected the proposals out of hand. The Egyptian Government, too, rejected the proposals and declared its opposition to their implementation on the grounds that they did not 'allow for the proper and full representation of the Sudanese'(64).

Nonetheless, the Advisory Council went ahead to approve the recommendations, and the ordinance establishing the Legislative Assembly and the Executive Council was published on June 19, 1948, with only a few modifications reported as follows:

. . . We have proposed a system which will ensure the greatest possible synthesis of views between the Assembly and the Executive Council before any measure is submitted to the Governor-General's consent. Given good will and a spirit of give and take, without which no system of Democratic Government can succeed, and given the presence of Under-Secretaries on both sides, we think that the Executive Council and the Assembly should be able to work together in harmony (65).

In fact, the Sudan Government published its draft Executive Council and Legislative Council Ordinance, one of the most important pieces of legislation ever introduced in the Sudan, without informing London or Cairo. (66) The Foreign Office flatly declared that the Sudan Government was now out of control, that there was no longer an essential "buffer" between the British and the Egyptian governments on Sudan questions. In reality, the Sudan Officials' fear of any Anglo-Egyptian settlement (from London), where the Sudan could

be “sold”, urged them to take immediate measures on Sudanese preparation for self-government (67). In the South, other measures were undertaken to suit the political reforms in the North, the most important of these was the termination of the Southern Policy.

## **b) The Abandonment of the Southern Policy**

The “Southern Policy”, with its separatist intentions, raised doubts and uncertainties even in the minds of those entrusted with its execution. To British administrators, it was preferred to ‘interference’. Southern Policy kept out not only Northern Sudanese but also the rest of the world. By the end of 1947, the policy was abandoned not because of shortcomings but as a result of external pressure. The results were very profound.

Northern nationalists had always been considering the South. In fact, neither Unionists nor Independents, neither *Ansar* nor *Khatmiya* could imagine an independent Sudan without its South. In fact, the Graduates Congress had expressed misgivings, and in its 1942 memorandum specific points about closer relations of the two regions were clearly defined. Lack of economic and social development, reliance on missionary education, and exclusion of northerners raised suspicion about British intentions at a time of growing political tension. In the Administrative Conference of April 1946, all Sudanese representatives insisted that any new consultative party (to replace the Advisory Council for the Northern Sudan) had to represent the whole country.

It is difficult not to stop for a while and address the following questions. Was the Sudan Government empowered to divide the South from the North although it did it? Had Southern Governors further reasons to prolong Southern Policy? To Robertson, the real issue which was looming before him with alarming clarity was not 'separatism' itself, but how to associate the Southerners in the governance of their country. Within the next six months, he was (the way some southern governors were) prepared to accept the reality of this fact.

On 16 December 1946, Robertson informed the governor of Equatoria, B.V. Marwood, of his decision that henceforth all planning would be predicated for the union of the South and the North. Since that time the political scene had changed dramatically. The advance of the North towards self-determination and the diminution of British authority would clearly bring the Southern Sudan Question to a point where the British administration would no longer refrain from a policy publicly explained and supported. The policy of Care and Maintenance did not prepare the Southern Provinces for independent Sudan. Very conscious of the Southern Sudanese situation, Robertson wrote: 'Certainly the two million Southern Sudanese must not be abandoned to the immature and ill-informed politicians of the Northern Sudan . . . . and our efforts must therefore now be concentrated on initiating a policy which is not only sound in itself, but which can be made acceptable to, and eventually workable, by patriotic and reasonable Sudanese, Northern and Southern alike' (68).

Robertson had certainly realized that the excision of the South was not practical politics nor in the best interests of the people themselves. In fact neither attachment Southwards nor isolationism was possible. Marwood

thought Robertson was right in his decision, but he pressed for a period of protection and safeguards until the Southerners would be able to stand up by themselves (69). In reply to Robertson's decision, Southern Governors agreed (except very few) that the ultimate future of the South lay with the Northern Sudan. Independence was economically impossible. There was no issue: the Sudan of the future would include the South, and the Southern Governors had to bear this in mind and to plan for it. This is a part of Robertson's correspondence to Southern Governors:

The policy of the Sudan Government regarding the Southern Sudan is to act upon the fact that the peoples of the Southern Sudan are distinctly African and Negroid. Their geography and economics combine so far as can be seen at the present time to render them inextricably bound for future development to the Middle Eastern and Arabized Northern Sudan and therefore to assure that there should be educational and economic development and be equipped to stand up for themselves in the future socially, economically, as equal partners of the Northern Sudan and the Sudan of the future (70).

With this came the end of Mac Michael's Southern Policy.

Most senior British officials had a moral obligation to redeem the inhabitants of the Southern Sudan from ignorance, poverty and backwardness. Progress had been on the whole sporadic compared to the Northern Sudan. In addition, apart from moral and economic reasons, there were strong political reasons to adopt a more positive policy in the South. The eyes of Egypt and Northern Sudan were on the South and on British Southern Policy (or lack of policy). Thus urgency was the essence of the problem and time was short to achieve such a huge development project. After having launched the new policy for the South, the Sudan Government now realized that they had been going too slow and resolved to make up for lost time. Yet they were aware there was no time for intensive economic development to transform the South



into a cornucopia of productivity. There was no time also to provide instant education; there was no such thing. Revisiting the Southern Sudan in April 1947, Robertson realized that the steps needed to promote rapid economic development were not yet taken, and the stage was set for disaster. Large areas, inferior communications, lack of administrative staff, difficult cultural contacts – these were the main reasons for such delay.

Robertson and the Southern Governors could not ‘simply’ hand over the South to the Northerners. They made arrangements for a southern administrative conference where they would press for more safeguards for the Southern peoples. The Juba Conference, convened on 12 and 13 June 1947, was to discuss the recommendations made by the Administration Conference about the South. The fundamental decision about the South’s future in union with the North had been taken in Khartoum long before. The selected southern representatives to attend the Conference were seventeen, including some who were to play an active part in southern affairs – Philemon Majok, Clement Mboro, James Tambura, Buth Diu, Chief Lukk Lado, and Siricio Iro. The Southern Sudan Governors were: Owen in Wau, Marwood at Juba and Kingdon from Malakal. All held briefing sessions with the southern representatives from their provinces before the opening of the conference. This was later seen by the Northerners as an attempt to influence the Southerners. The northern representatives were three, including Ibrahim Badri, who had long experience in the South, Dr. Habid Abdulla, and Judge Mohamed Salih Shingeiti (71) who played a leading role in the discussions.

On the first day of the conference, the southern representatives insisted that the South was not ready for equal participation with the North in the legislature. Quickly the discussion degenerated into argument when

northerners insisted the South was ready for self-government, and Southerners said they were not, one of the most ironical side-step on the march to independence. Aggressively suspicious, Owen (Governor in Wau) told the conference that the South had not forgotten the days of oppression even if the North had done so: the North must prove by their acts, not merely by their words, that they had undergone a change of heart. He was answered at length by Judge Shingeiti, the dominant Northern voice at the conference, who recalled that 'the British had in their time been the biggest slave traders in history'; that even under the Sudan Government the slave trade had continued: he had 'seen it with his own eyes' (72). It appeared that the conference would succeed only in reopening old wounds.

To ensure a different result, Judge Shingeiti worked late into the night. He had been busy turning his persuasive personality on the Southerners, and by the second day he had achieved his objectives. The educated southern delegates revealed a change of heart. They all changed their minds from the previous day and argued that the Southerners could only protect themselves by participating in the Legislative Assembly in Khartoum. James Tambura put it with straightforward realism that Judge Shingeiti had said if they did not participate, they would have no say in the future Government of the Sudan.

After a lengthy discussion, the famous Juba Conference ended. It concluded that it was the wish of the Southern Sudanese to be united with the Northern Sudanese in a united Sudan; that the South should, therefore, be represented in the proposed Legislative Assembly; that the number of Southern representatives should be more than thirteen, as had been recommended by the Sudan Administration Conference; that they should be elected by Provincial Councils in the South and not by an Advisory Council for the Southern Sudan;

that trade and communications should be improved between the two regions, and that steps should be taken towards unification of the educational policy in the North and in the South (73).

The Juba Conference ended with some clear observations. The Southerners expressed sufficiently their fear and suspicion to the North, but they accepted to participate and unite with Northerners. To the Northern Sudanese nationalists, union of the two regions was an unquestioned article of faith. Their overwhelming desire was to see “Unity” established between South and North in the shortest possible time, as if they wanted to eradicate the spirit of division created by the ‘Southern Policy’. But did they really comprehend the Southerners’ stand in the Conference? Were both Northerners and Southerners sharing the same concept of “Unity”? In Sudanese mythology, the Juba Conference remains the symbol of union of the Northern and the Southern Sudan. But could this “union” survive, at least, until the declaration of Sudan independence?

In December 1947, the Sudan Government made its report on the South. Robertson stressed the necessity of ‘safeguarding’ the cultural and social integrity of the South against domination and mismanagement by a government composed mainly of Northern Sudanese. Without protection, he argued, the Southerners would not be able to develop along their lines, would be overwhelmed by the North and would deteriorate into ‘a community drawing water for a supposedly superior Northern aristocracy’ (74). Of course, to the Sudan Government, the ‘ideal’ safeguard would be maintenance of a British controlled administration with British Governors and District Commissioners (75). In the event, all ‘safeguards’ were whittled away under pressure from Northern nationalists who, through the constitutional reforms,

were preparing for an independent, unified Sudan.

### **3. The Path to Self-government (1948-53)**

The institutions created by the Executive and the Legislative Assembly Ordinance had been at the centre of Sudanese political debate from September 1947 until June 1948. Opposition was expected from the *Ashigga* and other unionists; in fact, there was much in the proposals to criticize (as was observed in the previous section). The opponents protested mostly against the establishment of an Assembly which they, not incorrectly, conceived had some of the appearance but none of the substance of democratic institutions because they failed to give the Sudanese an effective share in the government of their country. But the opposition was weakened by its own disunity, by the government's reliance on the *Umma* Party, and by Egyptian disarray. Nonetheless, Robertson thought 'no-one' was satisfied with the new institutions: the British thought they went too far; the educated Sudanese, not far enough; and the 90% of the tribal and illiterate country men found them "something mad the *Ingleez* (English people) are doing" (76).

Egypt's failure to approve the Ordinance and her preoccupation with Palestine helped the Sudan Government to dominate Sudanese Politics once again. In Egypt, the Government took Britain's unilateral action in constitutional reforms as a display of 'contemptuous indifference' to the views and feelings of a joint partner in the Sudan venture. The promulgation of the Ordinance without Egypt's consent was timed to coincide with the fiftieth anniversaries of the Battle of Omdurman and of the Condominium, which were celebrated in London, by pointing to the importance of the Sudan to

Britain. It was no surprise that the promulgation of the Ordinance became one of the Egyptian grievances which culminated in the abrogation of the Anglo-Egyptian agreement of the 1936 Treaty, three years after the Ordinance was passed.

But the Sudan Government's determination to go forward with the constitutional reforms (despite the criticisms of the Graduates' Congress and the Unionists parties) resulted, from 1948 onwards, in a more or less violent resistance to the administration. On November 15, 1948, and again on 15 December – the day on which the assembly met for electing members in the Assembly and the Council – demonstrations occurred in all the principal towns of the Sudan and led to violent clashes with the police. Four thousand people were involved in the demonstrations, hundreds were injured and ten were killed (77). Ismail al-Azhari, the leader of the *Ashigga* was arrested. These demonstrations, led in many cases by students and workers in urban areas, were for outright revolution. They were organized by the Internal Struggle Front (*Jabhat al-Kifah al-Dakhili*), a unionist party which called on traditional political parties to join and to go into action. This new and more militant element of young nationalists was appearing on the scene of Sudanese politics. They were strongly anti-British but not necessarily pro-Egypt. They were hostile to the *Umma* party but not blindly for the Unionists parties whose conception of union with Egypt differed from theirs. To the majority, union with Egypt was more a strategy than an ideal (78).

Nevertheless, election results both justified *Sayid* Ali Al Mirghani's criticism and gave witness to his influence. Of 75 assembly seats, 65 were elective; but 42 of these were filled indirectly, by 'electoral colleges' in the provinces, while 13 seats allotted to the South were filled by province councils

hastily convened solely for the purpose. It could be said that the whole procedure had been influenced by officials and tribal leaders. Thus only 10 seats were filled by direct election. In fact, even the success of the *Umma* candidates testified only to the effectiveness of the boycott, for all knew the preponderance of Unionist strength. Even in smaller towns and rural areas polling was low: at Rufa, 22 per cent, and at Kamlin 13 per cent. In Kassala Province, home of the Mirghanis, all but one of the winning candidates stood unopposed. Overall participation was only 18 per cent (79). Thus while the Independents swept the elections, it was a blessed victory, and the government was unable to pretend that the Assembly was representative. Its legitimacy was therefore questionable from the start.

While the Unionists parties declined on principle to recognize the Legislative Assembly, and called for a boycott of the elections, the *Umma* Party gave it full support and Abdullah Khalil, a former military officer under the British Administration, became the leader of the Legislative Assembly. In consultation with him, the Governor-General named three ministers from the Assembly: Abdel Rahman Ali Taha as minister of education, Abdullah Khalil himself as minister of agriculture, and Dr Ali Bedri as minister of health. The Executive Council was then constituted with the ministers and four ex-officio British members. The Governor-General appointed three other councillors-without-portfolio, two British officials and the vice-principal of the Gordon College, Ibrahim Ahmed. To raise the number of Sudanese to the statutory requirements of at least half, two Sudanese under-secretaries, Abdel Rahman Abdun and Abdel Magid Ahmed (the only *Khatmiya* member) were appointed. Of the remaining under-secretaries, five belonged to the *Umma* and the others were considered non-partisan. By selecting ministers for their competence and neutrality, the government tried to win over the *Khatmiya*.

It is obvious that, compared with the Advisory Council, the Legislative Assembly and the Executive Council represented a considerable advance towards the closer association of the Sudanese with the government of their country. Apart from the budget, the Assembly and the Executive Council discussed and actively participated in the formulation of important laws covering such matters as the nationalization of the Gezira Scheme, labour legislation, the introduction of the Arabic language in the administrative and educational systems of the Southern provinces and, most importantly, the amendment of the constitution with a view to giving the Sudanese self-government in preparation for self-determination.

Nevertheless, the Assembly and the Executive Council fell short of the expectations of the Sudanese. Less than fourteen months after they had been inaugurated, the Civil Secretary showed his dissatisfaction with the Assembly. In November 1949, he complained that some of the nominated members, though they 'fill a gap', did not play a very conspicuous part in the Assembly's proceedings. Also the 'weight and solidity of the tribal country members did not make for rapid comprehension of complicated legislation' (80). The Civil Secretary went as far as declaring that some members of the Assembly did not adequately represent their constituencies (81). These were clear indications that the Sudan Government was not satisfied with the performance of the Assembly and was prepared to look closely into its functions. The group of critics which the government was particularly keen to satisfy was the *Khatmiya* who continued to remain outside the Assembly.

The remarks made by James Robertson were among the most important reasons why all Sudanese political parties (whatever they differed in) were

dissatisfied with the Assembly and the Executive Council. The Unionist parties and the *Khatmiya*, as already seen, had boycotted the new institutions and the *Ashigga*, at any rate, continued their relentless campaign against them. The Independence Front and the *Ansar*, though they did not boycott the Assembly, were also dissatisfied. To soften the opposition, therefore, it was decided that the Ordinance of the Assembly should be amended. A long and arduous process of informal consultations then issued and on 19 March 1950, *Sawt al-Sudan*, the organ of the *Khatmiya*, published an editorial headed 'The Amendments Demanded by Some Prominent *Khatmiya* Leaders and Independents'. The article included some proposals giving the Sudanese a majority in the Executive Council, and revising the number of Ministers from three to four – preferably including a *Khatmi Minister*. The amendments described in the article included the following:

#### Direct Elections

1. All elections to be direct in towns and villages, and in tribes where possible. There will be no objection, when direct elections are difficult, in some few places, for the introduction of the double-stage system, provided that the elections should be free and unrestricted in both stages and by secret ballot, and provided that no pressure is brought to bear on any person, so that the election would fully express the views of the people.
2. The complete abolition of the residence proviso because, apart from being contrary to democratic rules, it prevents capable persons from standing for election outside their zones.
3. Official elements, such as Nazirs, Omdas and Sheikhs, should not stand for election unless they first relinquish their posts.

#### The Powers of the Assembly

1. The Assembly to be granted full legislative and financial powers; its decisions should be binding on the Executive Council.
2. Its Speaker and Leader to be elected.
3. The Leader to be equal to the prime minister and should have the right to select the ministers and under-secretaries.
4. The principle of ministerial responsibility should be applied and the cabinet should be responsible to the Assembly.



5. The Assembly to have the right of forcing the whole cabinet to resign through voting of non-confidence.

The Executive Council

1. A Minister to be selected for every big department.
2. Small departments with similar functions to be amalgamated forming one Ministry.
3. All ministers to be members of the Executive Council and should exercise full ministerial powers in their relevant ministries (82).

The Amendments to the Ordinance setting out the Legislative Assembly were approved on 6 November 1950; but even these did not satisfy the *Khatmiya* who continued to remain outside the Assembly hoping that more amendments would be made (83). They were not willing to do anything against the wishes of Egypt, or against the popular movement in the Sudan. Some leading *Khatmiya* members argued, however, that they had been so long outside the centre of power while their opponents – the *Umma* party – were entrenching themselves and consolidating their position. This argument naturally appealed to the Unionist camp, but the opposition in the large towns and among the educated and the students was so strong that those who wanted to co-operate were not able to do so.

In the meanwhile, the *Ansar* and the Independence Front had been intensifying their campaign for immediate self-government and the termination of the “hateful” Anglo-Egyptian regime. *Sayid* Abdel Rahman and the *Umma* Party realized that unless *Sayid* Ali Al Mirghani and the *Khatmiya* supported them, the issue could not be successfully pursued; but the latter were not prepared to co-operate and the *Umma* leaders were left to campaign on their own. Since all the Ministers and most of the Under-Secretaries were members of the *Umma* Party, the *Ansar* had the advantage to speak within the Assembly, not merely as a political group, but as the Government. Even then, however, they could not hope to persuade the thirteen Southern Sudan representatives to

vote for immediate self-government and independence until 'backward areas. which had been neglected in the last fifty years. . . reached the standard of the North in civilization' (84). Moreover, the Civil Secretary pointed out to all province Governors the significance of the intensive campaign which had been launched, and asked them to make it clear to the country members in their provinces that, although the Ministers and Under-Secretaries supported the proposal for self-determination, the Sudan Government as a whole did not. The Civil Secretary wrote:

It is most important to take the opportunity of the present prorogation of the Assembly to correct the possible misapprehension among the country members. Would you please therefore show this letter to the Senior District Commissioners in your provinces and ask them to explain to the Legislative Assembly members in their districts that in this matter the Ministers and Under-Secretaries are speaking as members of the *Umma* Party and not for the Government as a whole..the country members have no desire to precipitate steps towards self-government at the present time, and that the *Khatmiya* who are not yet fully represented in the Legislative Assembly, are entitled as much as the *Umma* and the *Ansar* to have a say in the matter (85).

The division among the Sudanese then suited the British plans of no immediate self-government very well. It is not surprising therefore that when the Assembly was reconvened in March and several suggestions were made to the effect that the Sudan had reached the stage at which self-government should be assumed, a majority of the members disagreed (86).

When all attempts at reform, or at reaching agreement with the *Khatmiya* failed, the *Umma* Party decided to go ahead with its proposed amendments. In November 1950 the Assembly passed a resolution appointing an electoral commission. The *Umma* Party were by no means certain that they could carry the Assembly on a vote of immediate self-government. By this time, however,

patience was running short and self-government was the subject of everyday talk. On 13 December a motion for self-government was carried in the Assembly by thirty-nine votes to thirty-eight. The Civil Secretary immediately declared that 'it was not yet His Majesty's government's policy that the Sudan should be prepared for self-government' (87). The Governor General Robert George Howe ,(Huddleston's successor) rejected therefore the resolution on the grounds that it was passed by a majority of one vote which indicated that members were more or less evenly divided on the issue. The reaction of the British Government to a proposal for self-government frustrated many members of the *Umma* Party. They came to realize that the backwardness of the Sudan (especially its southern parts), and the keeping of the *Khatmiya* outside the Assembly, were being used by the British administration to discourage all their efforts to establish self-government. Yet the *Umma* Party had no alternative but to continue to sit in the Assembly and to join in the Constitution Amendment Commission formed in March 1951 with heavy heart and misgivings.

The Constitutional Amendment Commission, as it was subsequently known, was, from the start, a subject of much controversy and political bargaining. For the *Umma* Party, whose drive for immediate self-government had recently been frustrated, it was only a second best, which they reluctantly joined. The *Ashigga* boycotted it as another device for prolonging British rule in the Sudan, and the *Khatmiya* refused to participate in it. Membership in the Commission was debated in the beginning, but it was finally agreed that educated men, representing different interests and political opinion, should be strongly represented. In fact the formation of the Constitution Amendment Commission implied automatically the dissolution of the electoral commission. It was formally convened on 29 March 1951. Apart from the Chairman, the

Secretary and an 'Adviser', all members were Sudanese – seventeen, including four members from the dissolved electoral commission. The first meeting of the Commission, held on 22 April, was devoted to the preliminary matter of settling the order of business; it was decided that the constitution should be considered before the electoral rules (88).

The work of this Commission coincided with a period during which the Anglo-Egyptian relations were seriously strained, the Sudan question being a major issue in the conflict. In December 1950, the President of the Egyptian Council of Ministers formally protested against the Governor General's decision to allow the motion on self-government to be debated in the Legislative Assembly without the consent of the Egyptian Government. He demanded the immediate cessation of the debate and asked the British Government to instruct the Governor General to act according to his request. When Britain insisted on the right of the Sudanese to self-determination, Egypt declared that she would not agree to anything less than the unity of the Nile Valley under the Egyptian Crown. Discussions, therefore, were broken off in total disagreement, and, on 8 October 1951, the Egyptian Government unilaterally abrogated the Agreement of 1899 and the Treaty of 1936. On the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup>, King Farouk signed two Acts of Parliament in accordance with which a new constitution for the Sudan was written. Under the new constitution, he was to be called 'The King of Egypt and the Sudan' and the two countries were to be united under the Egyptian monarchy. There was to be a Cabinet in which Ministers would be appointed and dismissed by the King and a House of Representatives which would, with the consent of the King, make laws and approve the budget. Foreign affairs, the armed forces, and currency, however, were to be reserved for the King and he was to have the right to dissolve the House at his will (89).

The abrogation of the treaties was welcomed by all the Sudanese, but the proposed Egyptian constitution was met with a storm of disapproval by all political parties, except the *Ashigga*. The latter felt low and were thereby isolated and embarrassed when the *Ansar* and the *Khatmiya* were brought 'closer than ever before' (90). Their national aspirations were the same and their wish was the same: an independent sovereign Sudan. When on 25 October the Legislative Assembly passed a motion deploring the Egyptian Government's attempt to impose Egyptian Sovereignty on the Sudan without consulting the Sudanese people, no one seemed to disagree.

The announcement of the Egyptian Government with regard to the Agreement of 1899 and the Treaty of 1936 was denounced by the British Government as a unilateral action, which was not valid. For the Sudanese, however, the Egyptian Government's action had undoubtedly destroyed the juridical foundations of the Anglo-Egyptian regime and thus opened the way for full freedom. The political vacuum created by the abrogation of the two treaties prompted the Sudanese members of the Constitutional Commission to propose the appointment of an international commission by the United Nations to replace the Governor General and to prepare the Sudanese for self-determination by the end of 1953 (91). They, therefore, proceeded to make suggestions about the transfer of power. On 15 November, Eden, the Sudan Civil Secretary, tried to re-affirm the position of the Governor-General as the first responsible in the administration of the country, and he stressed the validity of the present Sudan Government. He attempted also to reassure the Sudanese that their Constitution for self-government would be completed very soon. He told the House of Commons:

In view of the uncertainty caused . . . by the Egyptian Government's unilateral action. . . His Majesty's Government finds it necessary to reaffirm that they regard the Governor General and the present Sudan Government as fully responsible for continuing the administration of the Sudan. In their view this progress can and should continue on the lines already laid down. His Majesty's Government will, therefore, give the Governor General their full support for the steps he is taking to bring the Sudanese rapidly to the stage of self-government as a prelude to self-determination...His Majesty's Government are glad to know that a Constitution providing for full self-government may be completed and in operation by the end of 1952 (92).

The words of the Civil Secretary did not satisfy the majority of the Sudanese members of the Commission. In their opinion the abrogation of the Agreement and the Treaty had left the Anglo-Egyptian regime without any legal basis. Thus the Governor General could neither represent Egypt nor Britain, nor the two together but was only the *de facto* ruler of the Sudan. Consequently, neither he nor the British Government were legally entitled to say how and when the Sudanese were to have self-government or exercise their right of self-determination. Now that Egypt had left the political scene, the Sudanese members of the Commission urged Britain that necessary steps should be taken for the termination of the regime and the declaration of the Sudan's independence. Thus a sub-committee of the Commission was appointed on 29 October; its report, which clearly reveals the opinion of the majority about the uncertain future of their country, was as follows:

The Condominium has always been a source of difficulties and grave problems. . . due to the conflicting views of the co-domini. Egypt, on the one hand, claims that the condominium rule has come to an end and the Sudan will be granted self-government under the Egyptian Crown, and Britain, on the other hand, maintains that the condominium rule is still in force... the only alternative is to provide in the draft constitution for an International Commission...a long-term control by the one remaining co-dominus will lay the country open to outside interference and will prejudice

the interests of the Sudanese people and thereby endanger peace and order (93).

The observations made in the report received the support of the *Khatmiya* and the *Ansar*, and both presented a united front against Egypt and Britain. The Sudan Government, realizing that such a united front was not in its best interests, decided to go ahead with its plans for full self-government. The Civil Secretary, who only two years earlier had said that ‘the bulk of the people whom the country members represent have no desire to precipitate steps towards self-government’(94), informed all Governors and District Commissioners that the policy of the Sudan Government was to hasten the plans for self-government. He told them that their duty was to keep the goodwill and trust of the Sudanese people as a whole, educated and uneducated. The stage was thus set for constitutional developments.

The Constitution Amendment Commission was dissolved on 26 November 1951, but its work, however, was not entirely wasted. The Chairman, Judge Stanley Baker, recommended in his report a parliamentary constitution for the Sudan based on self-government, with a cabinet system of government. Key Ministers were to have advisors. In the event of a fundamental disagreement between a Minister and his Advisor, the issue would be referred to the Council of Ministers. If the Governor General does not agree with the decision of the Council, he may refer the matter back to the Council with his views. If these are not accepted, the Governor General should reserve the matter for the decision by the Sovereign Authority – presumably the British Government. There was to be a department of external affairs attached to the Governor General’s office. Responsibility for Defence Policy was to remain with the Governor General, but the Council was to discuss all

major questions of policy. To reassure southern representatives, one of the ministers, himself a southerner, would deal specifically with southern affairs and would be assisted with an Advisory Board.

On 23 January 1952, the report of the Chairman of the Constitution Amendment Commission was laid before the Legislative Assembly. This report was debated in detail in the Assembly throughout February. In the course of the debate various aspects of the report were criticized but most of the criticisms were again about the fundamental issue of the 'special treatment' of the South. The British saw in the Southern Minister the safeguard (which was delegated in 1949), but the Northern Sudanese regarded this whole proposal with the same suspicion and opposed it for the same reasons. They particularly objected to the Southern Advisory Board, whose members were to be appointed by the minister for southern affairs. This, they argued, would undermine the authority of the Prime Minister, create two cabinets and revive the old spectre of "Southern Policy" and separation. The Southern Provinces, moreover, were in no more backward condition than other areas as Darfur, the Beja area, or the Nuba Mountains, which were not granted Ministers for their own affairs. The proposal was, therefore, soundly rejected as it was contrary to the wishes and interests of the Sudanese. It was resolved that there should not be a special Minister for Southern Affairs and to reassure the Southern Sudanese, as was put on the Explanatory Note, the number of Southern members was raised to 'not less than two' in the Draft of the Self-Government Statute.

On April 2, 1952, the Draft of the Self-Government Statute was laid before the Legislative Assembly and it was approved by the British Government later on 21 October. The Draft Statute provided that the



Government should consist of an all-Sudanese Council of Ministers and an all-Sudanese Parliament of two Houses: a Senate and a Chamber of deputies. The Chamber of Deputies was to consist of eighty-one members, of whom twenty-four would be elected by means of direct election in territorial constituencies and fifty-four by means of indirect elections. In addition, three members were to be returned by a Graduates' Constituency, in which persons who had completed fourth-year secondary school and passed final examinations would be qualified to vote. The Senators were to be fifty, of whom twenty were to be appointed by the Governor General and thirty elected by electoral colleges in the provinces. The Prime Minister would be elected by the Chamber of Deputies from among existing members and would thereupon be appointed by the Governor General. The Council of Ministers would be responsible to Parliament for all the executive and administrative functions of internal government. The Draft Self-Government Statute provided that the Governor General should have a special responsibility for the public service and for the Southern Provinces (95). The Governor General would have the right to veto any bill which, in his opinion, would affect the rights of the former or the 'special interests' of the latter. He, moreover, would have an 'exclusive' responsibility for external matters during the transitional period, the way he would have the right to proclaim a constitutional emergency and assume all powers in case of financial collapse or breakdown of law and order.

Inevitably, the powers of the Governor General were strongly criticized inside and outside the Legislative Assembly, and in Egypt, as well. Other criticisms were directed against the fact that the proposed constitution did not refer to the date for self-determination and was equally silent over the question of sovereignty over which the Constitution Amendment Commission had broken down. However, the Sudan Government and the British Government

were not prepared, at this stage, to make any concessions over these points. The Draft of the Self-Government Statute as finally approved by the British Government reaffirmed the 'Supreme Constitutional Authority' of the Governor General.

By abrogating the Agreement and the Treaty, Egypt had forfeited her constitutional right to approve or amend the Draft Self-Government Statute which the Sudan Government sent to the British and the Egyptian Governments in May. However, Egypt was not prepared to see her position in the Sudan, such as it was, undermined. The only way in which this could be avoided, in the altered circumstances, was to reach a political agreement with the Sudanese parties which opposed the policy of the Unity of the Nile Valley under the Egyptian Crown. Thus the new government of Najib al-Hillali (96) invited the Mahdists to negotiate a settlement. If agreement could be reached with the *Ansar*, the Independence Front, the Unionists the Egyptian Government would face the British Government as one front, and the latter would be obliged to make concessions over the powers of the Governor General and the date of self-determination, and a final settlement of the question of sovereignty would thus be possible.

Bearing in mind this possibility and, like the Egyptian Government, hoping that it would be realized in a manner acceptable to them, the Mahdists accepted the invitation. On 27 May *Sayid* Abdel Al Rahman sent a 'personal' mission to start negotiations with Hillali Pasha. The Egyptian Government offered to withdraw the constitution and to declare the Sudan an Egyptian territory under the Egyptian Crown and to accept instead any constitution on which the Sudanese agreed. They would also accept the decision of the Sudanese over the date on which they chose to exercise self-determination by

means of a plebiscite over the subject of union with Egypt or complete independence. In return, Hillali Pasha asked the Mahdi's delegate to accept, temporarily, the nominal sovereignty of King Farouk over the Sudan. This was, of course, to the champions of '*al-Istiqlal al- Tam*' – complete independence, totally unacceptable. The first condition of any agreement, in their opinion, was that no reference should be made to Egyptian sovereignty, nominal or otherwise, over the Sudan. They rather suggested first that a tripartite (Anglo-Egyptian-Sudanese) commission should be formed to act, together with the Governor General, as the supreme constitutional authority during the transitional period; second, that Egypt should approve or suggest amendments to the Draft Self-Government Statute; and third, that the plebiscite over the question of unity or independence be conducted under the supervision of a freely-elected Sudanese Government (97). Quite obviously, Hillali Pasha, as the spokesman of the Royal Egyptian Government, could not give his consent to any agreement which did not grant the sovereignty of the Egyptian Crown over the Sudan. Deadlock thus having been reached, *Sayid Abdel Rahman's* delegate returned to the Sudan on 12 June 1952.

In the meanwhile, on 23 July 1952, General Najib and his service officer Jamal Abdel Nasser staged a coup d'état which eliminated the Egyptian Monarchy and completely altered relations between the British, the Egyptians, and the Sudanese. The new men who came to power in Egypt in July 1952 were far different from the Pashas. Najib himself was half Sudanese and a former student of the Gordon College and his regime brought to the banks of the Nile "a new, refreshing and more flexible attitude" toward the Sudan Question than had the monarchy. First, the new rulers were quite prepared to deal with the Sudan as a separate issue from the thorny question of British troops in the Suez Canal (98). Second, they were quite prepared to encourage

the Sudanese, playing on the ties of language, religion and culture without the superior snobbery of the pashas. Their first diplomatic success was the signing of the agreement with the *Umma* Party which former Egyptian Governments failed to achieve. This certainly paved the way not only for self-government but also for self-determination.

#### **4. The Transfer of Power and the Fate of the South (1953-1956)**

The overthrow of King Farouk and change in Egyptian strategy which ensued were developments of great historical importance to the Sudan. They cleared the path towards unanimity among the Sudanese parties, which in turn brought an end to 'indefinite' British presence and control. The new Egyptian Government was convinced that the more active help Egypt would give towards Sudanese self-government and general progress, the more quickly would British control over the Sudan come to an end. In fact, the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of 1953 was a milestone; its significance was lost to no one, although in its immediate train there was uncertainty about where it would lead.

The period between February 1953 and March 1954 was one of transition, in attitudes as well as in political and constitutional developments. This last section thus explains how the Sudanese embarked on a new phase in their political life with great hopes for an independent, unified Sudan. Despite intense political manoeuvring, internal sectarian politics, anxious doubts about the future, the first elected Sudanese Parliament was a triumph.

The personality of General Najib seemed to impress the Sudanese who had a deep feeling of admiration and respect towards him. His apparent sincerity, good faith and friendliness to the Sudan; his offer of independence to the Sudanese, whether in union with Egypt or not, comforted the Sudanese leaders. In his autobiography, General Najib summarized in a very accurate way the attitude of the new Egyptian Government towards the Sudan:

Our predecessors had always assumed that Great Britain's insistence on protecting Sudan's 'right to self-determination was merely an excuse for depriving Egypt from its right to a say in the determination of Sudan's future. And, indeed, so long as Egypt was ruled by a King whose realm, in theory, included the Sudan as well as Egypt, it was impossible for them to play what they could not but regard as a British game. It seemed to me, however, that having rid ourselves of a King who had been as unpopular in Sudan as he had been in Egypt, we could beat the British at their game simply by calling their bluff (99).

Thus the first step was the resumption, on Egyptian initiative, of negotiations with the *Umma* Party and the Independence Front which had broken off in June 1952, a few weeks before the *coup d'état*. General Najib invited the two parties to Cairo for discussions on how Egypt could best assist the Sudan to achieve self-government and full self-determination. Since the Egyptian Government were prepared to concede the right of the Sudanese to self-determination as a matter of principle and not simply for the purpose of political manoeuvre (100), they had been able, in the short space of six months, to win the solid support of the two rival groups in the Northern Sudan of a common policy of self-determination. This was virtually an unprecedented triumph for Najib and Nasser.

The object of the agreement, which was signed on 12 October 1952, was to enable the Sudanese to exercise their right of self-determination either by

declaring the independence of the Sudan from Egypt and Britain, or by accepting some form of association with Egypt. Self-determination would be preceded by a transitional period during which the Sudanese would have full self-government and the Anglo-Egyptian administration liquidated. During the transitional period the Governor-General would exercise his powers in association with a commission on which a British representative would sit with two Sudanese representatives appointed by an elected Sudanese parliament, an Egyptian, and an Indian or Pakistani (appointed by his own government). Another similar commission would be responsible for conducting and supervising elections. A Sudanization committee would, within three years, complete the Sudanization of the police, the Defence Force and all other government posts. British and Egyptian military forces should be withdrawn from the Sudan at least one year before the elections of the Constituent Assembly. The transitional period should not exceed three years (101).

On the basis of these Agreements, a further document was signed on 10 January 1953 by Major Salah Salim, a member of Najib's military committee, and the leading political parties in the Sudan, including the *Ashigga* (now joined by seven other unionist groups in a single National Unionist Party) (102), the Socialist Republicans, and the *Umma*. It endorsed the provisions of the earlier Agreement between the Independence Front and the Egyptian Government, and added that, should qualified Sudanese not be available at the time of self-determination three years later, all British and Egyptian personnel should be replaced by other neutral nationalities. It was agreed, secondly, that responsibility for the maintenance of internal security would then belong to the Sudanese Armed Forces under the direction of the Sudanese Government. The Governor General would thus cease to be the supreme military authority in the Sudan. Finally the parties unanimously agreed to boycott elections held under

any constitution which was not based on the agreed minutes of their convention (103).

Once the Sudanese parties were, for the first time in their history, able to present a united front to the Sudan Government, there was nothing for the British and the Sudan Political Service to do but to acquiesce. They had no other viable alternative. The change of approach in Cairo made it awkward for the British administrators not to live up to their promises. The British Government, which had always professed the right of the Sudanese to self-government and self-determination as opposed to the Unity of the Nile Valley under the now vanished Egyptian Crown, had no choice but to accept the unanimously agreed Egyptian-Sudanese views on the matter.

On 12 February 1953, the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement was signed and on 21 March, the Self-Government Statute was promulgated in its new form. It provided for the liquidation of the Condominium administration; a commission to advise the Governor General during the transitional period; an electoral commission to supervise elections to a Sudanese Parliament; and a Sudanization commission to arrange for the complete Sudanization of all posts in the police, administration, army and any other institutions in no less than three years. The Self-Government Statute thus became the Constitutional Charter of the country until 31 December 1955, when, with further amendments, it became the Transitional Constitution of the (independent) Sudan.

These were, in fact, exciting times in the Sudan. The years of tedious constitutional arrangements seemed past. A new era appeared as the Northern Sudanese stood united to choose their own destiny. But in the South, a tense

climate prevailed. The Southerners, Anglicized and Christians, were quite opposed to rapid replacement of “trusted” British officials. To delay Sudanization would give them time to catch up with the North in standards of education and economic developments.

In the Northern Sudan, the three commissions were immediately formed in order to implement the provisions of the Agreement. Elections for the first Sudanese Parliament were held in November and in December 1953. On 1 January 1954, the National Unionist Party obtained a clear majority (51 out of 97 seats) in Parliament. Their opponents – the *Umma* Party, had succeeded in obtaining only twenty two seats. Ismail Al Azhari, the veteran nationalist, secretary and president of the Graduates’ Congress for many years, founder of the *Ashigga* Party and leader of the National Unionist Party was elected the first Sudanese Prime Minister. The final results of the Senatorial elections showed that the National Unionist Party won twenty-one of the thirty seats filled by election, the *Umma* four seats, the Southern Party three, the Independents two and the National Republicans none. Twenty additional members were later appointed by the Governor General, after consultation with the Commission. On 9 January 1954, the first Sudanese Cabinet was formed.

The general elections in the Sudan aroused great anxiety in both Britain and Egypt because their respective economic interests and political prestige were at stake. Britain supported the advocates of independence (i.e. separation from Egypt) in the hope that such independence would keep the Sudan more closely attached to Britain and eventually to the British Commonwealth than unity with Egypt would permit. As a result, British feeling leaned towards the *Umma* Party and other pro-British persons during the general elections. (104)



Furthermore, the British, who had consistently maintained, rightly or wrongly, that Egyptian administration in the Sudan at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was corrupt and inefficient, feared that the modern administration that Britain had helped to build up in the Sudan would deteriorate under Egyptian control or influence. In a word, the British did not wish for an Egyptian-Sudanese state which might eventually become too strong to cope with. Such unity of the Nile Valley might be the nucleus for a new Egyptian Empire, already envisaged long ago by Mohamed Ali.

The Egyptians, on the other hand, felt strongly that the British did not mean to grant real independence to the Sudanese; this the Egyptians gathered from their own experience of remaining practically a British Protectorate even after the declaration of 1922; in addition, they feared, too, that a pro-British self-governing Sudan might be a thorn in the flesh of Egypt. They were anxious that the time, money and other efforts which they had put into the Sudan for many decades should not go waste. In other words, the Egyptians felt that Egypt had supplied the means and had contributed to the progress of the Sudan, while Britain took most of the credit. As a result, Egypt did all she could to support the National Unionist Party. Those were some of the speculations in Britain and in Egypt when the Sudanese prepared for elections.

The results of the elections caused much surprise to Britain, chiefly owing to the belief that as the majority of the Sudanese people did not wish for union with Egypt in any form, the National Unionist Party was not likely to win as many seats as the *Umma* Party. Some elements in Britain interpreted the sweeping victory of the pro-Egyptian party as an expression of Sudanese ingratitude for decades of enlightened British administration (105). Indeed the elections' results reflected the strong anti-colonial feeling in the country, and

were recognition of the role of the National Unionist Party (N.U.P.) in the struggle for independence. One of the leaders of the successful Unionists, Mirghani Hamza (subsequently Minister of Education) attempted to define the Sudan's future relations with the Co-dominion. His Party's Government would push on rapidly with Sudanization of the administration as a means of 'liberation' from British control. After self-determination, the next stage would be to determine relations with Egypt.

The proceedings of the Sudanization Committee were in general characterized by the eagerness (of the Sudanese members supported by the Egyptian member) to complete the Sudanization of every branch of the Public Service as soon as possible, while the British member and some of the British officials urged – in the interest of efficiency and continuity – a slower pace of Sudanization, especially with regard to the Judiciary, the Army, certain technical posts, and in the Southern Provinces in general (106). Able and experienced Sudanese, however, were to be found, and arrangements were made to train more. Generous compensations were paid to those whose contracts had to be prematurely terminated as a result of Sudanization or who, for other reasons, wished to resign before the end of the transitional period. The Committee was able to finish its work several months before the deadline. This was formally declared on 2 August 1955 (107).

The Southern Sudanese had hoped that Sudanization would make them gain total control of their own affairs. This belief was partly due to rash election promises by Northern politicians during the 1953 campaigns. In fact the more educated and experienced Northerners had to replace most of the British administrators in the South. The resulting predominance of Northerners spurred a Southern political reaction. The Southern N.U.P. Members of

Parliament met in Juba on 25 September 1954 to send a memorandum to Al Azhari warning of the disaffection there and requesting that Southerners be accelerated in promotions and given appointments to higher posts in the Administration. To this end, they provided a specific list of demands of posts to which Southerners should be appointed, including three governors, three deputy governors, six district commissioners, twelve *mamurs*, and a host of police. They regarded these demands as the absolute minimum, and unless those were met with, there could be no other alternative to solve the Southern problem except more chaos. In response the Sudanization Committee's report promoted four Southerners to the position of Assistant District Commissioner and appointed two *mamurs*.

The results of the Sudanization Committee were anxiously and apprehensively awaited in the South. To the Southerners they were very disappointing. In their minds they confirmed every suspicion, real or imaginary, about the intentions of the Northerners despite the fact that the policy of Azhari's Government was committed to unification, and to programmes of full development for all citizens of the country. Moreover, there were twenty-two representatives of the South in the Sudan Parliament – some in the Government and some in the Opposition. It would seem that educated Southerners feared that once the Northerners would come South and occupy the administrative posts, they themselves would find their future prospects blocked.

In the meantime, the future of the Sudan, whether it should become completely independent from both Britain and Egypt or be linked in some form of association with Egypt, was still being vigorously debated throughout the country. The victory of the N.U.P. in the elections and the subsequent

appointment of Ismail Al Azhari as Prime Minister in January 1954, seemed to suggest that the Sudanese would finally choose union with Egypt. However, for the majority of the Unionists, including the *Khatmiya*, co-operation with Egypt during the lifetime of the Anglo-Egyptian regime was only a means of achieving the independence of the Sudan and not a preliminary step towards the political fusion of the two countries. In fact, they wanted to use Egypt “to whip” the British out of the Sudan. Unionism, furthermore, served the purpose of resisting and counteracting the rumoured plans of the *Ansar* for the creation of a Mahdist monarchy in the Sudan. On 3 August 1953, however, *Sayid* Abdel Rahman Al Mahdi allayed the fears of his political opponents by declaring that he was not interested in the monarchy but favoured the establishment of a democratic republican regime in the Sudan.

Considering these factors, it is not surprising that, with the progressive liquidation of British rule in the Sudan, ‘the Sudan for the Sudanese’ began to gain the support of an ever widening circle of nationalists. The motto was no more seen as an instrument of the Mahdists as such, or of British policy in the country, but as a true expression of Sudanese patriotism. On 1<sup>st</sup> March 1954, moreover, the *Ansar*, already embittered by their unexpected defeat in the elections, violently demonstrated that they would not accept any form of association with Egypt and that the unity of the country would be jeopardized unless the Sudan became independent. The 1<sup>st</sup> of March had been chosen for the ceremonial opening of Parliament. General Najib and a large number of foreign visitors had been invited for the occasion. Determined to let the world and the Egyptians in particular know that the Sudanese wanted only independence, *Ansar* demonstrators clashed with the police and security forces. Hundreds of people were injured and several were killed. The ceremony was cancelled and the guests, including General Najib left the same

day. Even those who were convinced that union with Egypt was the best policy for the Sudan started to wonder whether the realization of this aim would be possible in the near future.

It was clear that a policy of complete independence would not only be expedient, but would also satisfy the nationalist aspirations of the Sudanese. A section of the N.U.P. – significantly led by three prominent *Khatmiya* figures (*Sayid* Mirghani Hamza, Khalafalla Khalid, and Ahmed Jaly) , all of whom were then Ministers and members of the Cabinet – withdrew their support from Prime Minister Ismail Al Azhari because he would not immediately declare himself in favour of independence. With the ‘blessings’ of Ali Al Mirghani duly given on 2 January 1955, they launched a separate Republican Independence Party of their own (108). This was reinforced by an unprecedented personal and political reconciliation between *Sayid* Ali Al Mirghani and *Sayid* Abdel Rahman Al Mahdi. In the joint statement which they issued, the two *Sayids* announced that they were resolved to work together for the ‘welfare, happiness, freedom and complete sovereignty’ of the Sudan and appealed to their followers and all Sudanese people to follow suit (109).

Many other factors contributed to the process of a growing support for independence. Among these was the dismissal by Abdel Nasser of General Najib from the leadership of the Egyptian Government. Najib, who was half-Sudanese and had played an important part in concluding the Agreements of 1952 and 1953, was held in high regard by the Sudanese. The deposition aroused considerable resentment in the Sudan, even among members of the *Umma* Party. Najib’s departure deeply wounded the Sudanese mind. There was also the suppression of the Muslim Brotherhood whose members made an

unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Colonel Nasser on 26 October 1954. Partly for this reason and partly to crush opposition, the military regime took coercive measures against the Brotherhood as a whole (110). Consequently, Egypt's prestige, which was high during the early part of the transitional period of self-government, began to reduce gradually. The Prime Minister, Ismail Al Azhari, explained that he had formerly supported union of an autonomous Sudan under an Egyptian monarchy such as the British Commonwealth's, but that subsequent events in Egypt had altered his views (111).

On 5 August 1955, eleven days before the Sudanese Parliament debated the motion that arrangements for self-determination be put into effect, the Egyptian Government commented that Azhari was elected with the mandate to work for the unity of the Sudan with Egypt; now that he had changed his policy, he should resign and ask the electorate for a new verdict. On Tuesday, 16 August 1955, Azhari announced in Parliament that the longer foreign rule persisted, the harder was the task of those nationals who took over. He therefore asked the two Governments to evacuate their forces from the Sudan. Azhari himself declared that he was in favour of independence. "Those who govern you today", he told an enthusiastic audience, "will not surrender you either to the Egyptians or to the British" (112). The *Umma* Party and the *Ansar* announced their approval of the new policy of the N.U.P. and promised to support Azhari 'both inside and outside of Parliament'. On the same day, Parliament unanimously passed a resolution expressing the desire of the members that arrangements for self-determination be put in motion immediately.

16 August was one of the happiest days in Northern Sudan as the 'nation' was about to celebrate its independence. The Prime Minister addressed a crowd of more than thirty thousand. 'For the first time in recent history of the human race, an evacuation of foreign troops from a conquered land is being effected without bloodshed, without heartaches and I must add with very little ado'said Al Azhari (113). These bright, hopeful words were said before the Southern Sudan's mutiny, which occurred two days later.

While the North was in festive mood about self-determination, the South was in revolt. Almost the entire Southern Corps of the Sudan Defence Force, 1,770 officers and men and a large part of the police force in the South mutinied. A company of the Equatorial Corps at Torit was scheduled for withdrawal to Khartoum on the 18<sup>th</sup> but the troops refused to go North under Northern officers. They rushed arms and shots were fired. The massacre continued on the 19<sup>th</sup>, and some 78 northern officers, merchants, women, and children were killed at Torit alone. Similar outrages occurred at Kateri and Kapoeta. At the end of three days' fighting, about 260 Northern Army officers, traders, administrators, women and children had been killed. About twenty Southern Army officers and men lost their lives (114).

It was in the interest of the Sudanese Government and the British to belittle the August disturbances. Though reactions in Khartoum were confused when information about the southern mutiny arrived, the Sudanese Administration faced the crisis with agility and a humane approach to the rebellious Southern citizens. Any feeling of vindication was muted to prevent Egyptian intervention. Ten weeks after it began, Collin Legum, correspondent of the *Observer*, wrote from Khartoum on 5 November 1955: 'In view of this extraordinarily difficult situation, the achievement of the Northern

administration and troops has been very considerable. The Administration is working again with reasonable efficiency' (115). The correspondent of *The Times* also paid tribute: 'So far the Government in Khartoum has acted with patient moderation, with a calmness that is impressive to watch at so difficult a moment for a young Government' (116). The British Foreign Secretary, Macmillan, stated in the House of Commons on 7 November that, in taking measures to restore order, the Sudanese Government acted 'with restraint and with due regard for legal process'(117).

In a desperate hope to regain control over the Sudan, the Egyptian Government urged the Governor General to declare a constitutional emergency and send a formal request for Anglo-Egyptian troops to be sent to the South in order to restore peace. The British Government, having nothing to gain by such a move, could not consider it. London thus responded with a firm refusal. The mutiny was, by now, a Sudanese problem. The Governor General, Helm, wired to the mutineers his complete support to Al Azhari and asked them to surrender. This the rebels at Torit agreed to do on the 27<sup>th</sup>, but most of the mutineers had absconded to the bush or across international borders.

Trouble had long been brewing in the South but the unrest had its own reasons. Some argued that the seeds of disaster lay in Southern Policy, others that it was inherent in differences between North and South. British officials, especially the "paternalist" ones, had warned of catastrophe as early as 1947, when at Juba they insisted on safeguards for a region whose future was bound to the dominant North. To the educated Southerners, the Arab, Muslim Northerner aroused suspicion. Being the products of the Southern Policy, the national character, conceived by the Northerners, could not fit their aspirations.



They bitterly viewed the end of British colonialism as the beginning of Arab domination, which they virtually refused.

Once Sudanization was complete, Parliament could resolve to set in motion self-determination. Meanwhile withdrawal of foreign troops had begun in September and would be completed by 9 October. The August 29 Resolutions for the holding of a direct plebiscite was quickly negated, mainly because it was likely to be a long process, and in the unsettled conditions of the Southern Provinces, it might even prove impossible. On 19 December therefore another resolution was unanimously approved. The resolution read as follows: ‘We, the members of the House of Representatives in Parliament assembled, declare in the name of the Sudanese people that the Sudan is to become a fully independent sovereign state (118). It was a *fait accompli* which neither Egypt nor Britain could prudently refuse to accept.

On the same day the House of Representatives also unanimously resolved that a committee of five Sudanese be elected by Parliament to exercise the powers of the Head of State under a temporary constitution (119). The Transitional Constitution of the Sudan was approved on 31 December in a joint session of the members of the House and the Senate (120) It was a modified form of the Self-Government Statute on which the existing system was based. Article 2 declared the Sudan “a Sovereign Democratic Republic”. Article 10 provided for the election, by Parliament, of a Supreme Commission which, as Head of State, was, except in some specified cases, to discharge its functions on the advice of the Council of Ministers. Article 67 asserted for the first time the sovereignty of the Sudanese Parliament in international affairs. A number of clauses were also introduced to keep the existing institutions in motion until new legislation was enacted. The Transitional Constitution having

been approved by Parliament on 31 December, independence was formally celebrated on the following day.

On Sunday 1 January 1956, the 57<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Condominium, a new flag was officially hoisted in Khartoum. On that day, Azhari handed to the Speaker of the Sudanese Parliament the letters from the British and the Egyptian Governments, granting recognition to the Sovereign Republic of the Sudan. The Condominium was over, marked by a ceremony as improvisational as the one with which it had begun.

In the Southern regions, independence in a united Sudan inherited from the Condominium seemed impossible. The North and South had evolved along completely different lines. The spirit of division created by the Southern Policy led to the sense of hostility which erupted into civil war even before independence was officially declared. As it happened, however, the Sudan – more than half a century after the achievement of independence – is still engaged in the pursuit of that “illusivive” North-South Union.

To conclude, it can be said that the immediate political objectives of those who in 1924 had organized and led the revolution, of those who in 1931 had established the Graduates’ Congress, and those who had founded the political parties and similar organizations in the following years were achieved. Yet, there had been differences in methods, attitudes and concepts; some had advocated peaceful means, others violence and even armed struggle. It was only when all the nationalists were united that it had become possible to achieve in a comparatively short period the objectives for which they all had worked for so long.

Nationalism had achieved the goals established as far back as 1884 – an independent sovereign country. This was no small achievement, secured with considerable sacrifices under two sectarian parties, two ruling powers, two flags and two Kings. During this Anglo-Egyptian period, surely everyone, Sudanese, Egyptian or British, who was part of the age contributed to it and took from it, however minutely, for good or ill.

Throughout the years of post-independence, the problem of national unity between the North and the South remained unresolved. The Southern regions could no more be pacified after the outbreak of the first civil war in 1955. Another one broke in 1983 and continued ever since. The Southern peoples stood firmly for separation from the North. They claimed that they were ready for “sacrifices” but no one could imagine their magnitude and misery.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1. Quoted from Muddathir, op. cit., p. 84
2. Annual Report for 1936, Sudan, no.1 (1937), Cmd, 5575, p.7
3. Muddathir, op. cit., p.121
4. Ibid
5. Ibid., p.122
6. Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Stewart Symes arrived in Khartoum in January 1934 as Governor-General. He knew the Sudan and its problems as he served under Wingate. Many changes happened during his tenure. In some cases he was critical of the official policies followed. Collins, op.cit.,p.249
7. Ibid., p.251
8. Ibid., p.250
9. Daly, *Imperial Sudan, The Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, 1934-56*, Cambridge University Press, United Kingdom, 1991, p.17
10. Ibid
11. Beshir, op.cit., p.122

12. Bakheit; Gaafar, M. Ali, *British Administration and Sudanese Nationalism, 1919-1939*, Ph.D. Thesis (Cambridge, 1965) pp. 336-8
13. Note on the Recent History of Mahdism SGA/Security Class 6, Box 8, File 270002
14. Beshir, op.cit., p.141; see also Daly, op.cit., p.72
15. Daly, op.cit., p. 72
16. *Al Fajr*, Vol. I, N°.22, pp.1065-6; see also Beshir, op.cit.,p.148
17. *Al Fajr*, Vol. I, N°.21, p.1018
18. Ibid.
19. Beshir, op.cit., p.149
20. The names of the governors are as follows: Reid, Governor of White Nile Province, Purves, Governor of Northern Province, Mayell, Governor of Khartoum Province, Douglas Newbold, Governor of Kordofan Province, and Kennedy Cooke, Governor of Kassala Province. Beshir, op.cit., p. 150
21. Ibid., p.151
22. The *Umma* (nation) Party, or People's Party was founded in 1945, as an off-shoot of the Graduates' General Congress. The spiritual father of the Party is Abdel Rahman Al Mahdi, the posthumous son of the great Mahdi. Ibid., p. 165
23. Letter from Symes to Stack, Cairo, March 4, 1917, Intelligence Class 1/Box18
24. Beshir, op.cit., p.123
25. De La Warr Commission recommended that primary education had to be expanded, *Khalwas* were dismissed. It recommended that secondary education be removed from Gordon College site where, instead, the nucleus of a university college should be formed from existing and planned post-secondary courses. New standards, new courses, more schools: all, the Commission recognized, would involve greatly increased spending. Daly, *Imperial Sudan*, op.cit., pp. 110-111
26. Ahmed Kheir was the moving spirit of the Graduates' Congress. What Ahmed Kheir wanted was a Sudanese national congress on the lines of the Indian Congress with a programme embracing political, economic, social, educational and cultural activities. From the two other outstanding literary groups (from Wad Madani and Omdurman), Ismail Al Azhari, Mekki Shibeika, Mohamed Ahmed Mahgoub, Abdel Halim Mohamed, Abdullah Mirghani, Sayid Al Fil, Dirdiri Mohamed, Mohamad Ali Shawki, Mohamed Salih Shingeiti were prominent and leading members. Beshir, op.cit., pp. 124-133
27. Graduates' General Congress Constitution, Khartoum, 1938
28. Daly, *Imperial Sudan*, op.cit., p. 83

29. The Graduates of the Congress wrote that their intention was not to embarrass the Government, nor was it to pursue lines of activity incompatible with the Government's policy. Collins, op.cit., p.208
30. Gillan to all Governors, March 28, 1938, BaG I/1/1
31. Minutes of Executive Committee 49<sup>th</sup> Meeting, 6.9.1940
32. Minutes of Executive Committee 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting, 13.2.1942
33. Minutes of Executive Committee 25<sup>th</sup> Meeting, 30.3.1942
34. Henderson, op.cit., p. 538, and Ahmed Khair, *Kifah Jil*, Cairo, 1948 p. 79
35. Henderson, K.D.D., *The Making of the Modern Sudan*, London, 1952, pp.539 and 541-2
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid., p. 542
38. Minutes of Executive Committee 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting, 19.1.1943
39. The Advisory Council was amply discussed in Muddathir, op.cit., pp.135-140, and in Woodward p.35 and p.37
40. Collins, op.cit., p.273
41. C.H.L. Skeet Governor, Equatoria, to B.D.Deer, DC, Tonj, August 14, 1943, Equat. I/1/1.
42. Minutes of Executive Committee 33<sup>rd</sup> Meeting, 2.4.1945
43. Benjamin Lwoki in the debate on self-government which took place in the Legislative Assembly in December 1950, Proceedings of the First Assembly, second session, no. 14, 6-16 Dec. 1950, p.610
44. H. Nightingale, Governor of Equatoria, noted perceptible, almost visible changes in his annual report for the Southern Sudan: "The past year has been marked by a rapidly increasing consciousness of the imminence of political change...Speculations and anxiety as to the political future of the Southern Provinces is no longer confined to educated classes, but has spread to some degree to the villages and hamlets...This political consciousness is still largely uncanalized and lacking in leadership but is characterized by a considerable degree of unanimity as to the dangers confronting Southern Sudan and the need for united action against them". Collins, op.cit., p. 443
45. Ibid., pp. 443-444
46. It is interesting to note that the great majority of Sudanese communists and left-wingers are of non-Mahdist, mainly Khatmiya, background. This may, in part, be due to the fact that whereas the Mahdists-mostly concentrated in the Western Sudan and Gezira area- have a more rigid system of religious allegiance and are almost impervious to outside influence, the Khatmiya and non-Mahdists, who are dominant in the Northern Province and the Eastern Sudan - and, especially, in the towns - are less tightly organized and have greater contact with the outside world. It is also partly due to the fact that the non-Mahdists, especially the

- Khatmiya, have historically regarded the dominant Mahdists in a way similar to that in which the Shi'a and non-Muslim minorities have regarded the Sunni Muslim majorities in Syria and Iraq – and just as these (and other religious and racial) minorities have provided the Syrian and Iraqi communist and left-wing parties with the bulk of their following so have the Khatmiya and other non-Madists in the Sudan. Muddathir, op.cit., pp. 133-4
47. Henderson, op.cit., p.562 and Beshir, p.166
  48. Ibid., p.153
  49. Ibid.
  50. *Sawt al Sudan* (Khartoum Daily), 13 Oct. 1945 and 20 Mar. 1946. Also in Taha, p. 33
  51. Ibid., p. 155 ; *The Times*, 28 Jan. 1947, quoted in Mac Michael, *The Sudan*, p.196
  52. Huddleston to FO, 1 November 1946, FO 371/53258.
  53. Annual Report for 1946 p.13
  54. Taha mentions that Sidqi Pasha refused to see Sayid Abdel Rahman in Cairo, while the Egyptian press continued to attack him, describing the Sayid as a rebel against the Crown who, therefore, deserved to be executed. In London, however, Sayid Abdel Rahman was met by Mr. Atlee, who reassured him that Britain would not accept the Egyptian view with regard to sovereignty over the Sudan. Muddathir, op.cit., p.157
  55. Robertson to Mayall, 19 November 1946, SAD 521/5; Huddleston, note, 15 November 1946, FO 800/505
  56. Daly p.228, Copy of a personal letter from Mr. Robertson to Mr. Lascelles, London, dated 23/7/47, SAD 521/8
  57. In his Annual Report for 1947, the Governor General recorded that the events of that year led to an unprecedented external interest in Sudan affairs, which attained world-wide proportions and which was accompanied by a similar growing interest on the part of the Sudanese in world problems (p.9). Quoted from Muddathir, op.cit., p.157
  58. Daly *Imperial*, p.262
  59. Proceedings of the Sudan Administrative Conference, April 24-25, 1946, UNP I/1/3.
  60. Of these five, three represented the *Umma* Party, one the *Qawmiyin* (i.e. National) Party, and another the *Ahrar* (i.e. Liberal) Party. Muddathir, p. 159
  61. Proceedings of the Fifth Session, 17-21 Apr. 1946, pp. 1-2
  62. Robertson, 'Sudan Administration Conference, First Report', 31 March 1947, SAD 408/1. See also Muddathir Abdel Rahim, *Imperialism*, pp. 160-5. The assembly would have 60 elected and 10 nominated

- members. An electoral index would allot seats to each province on the basis of population, education, and wealth.
63. The First Report of the Sudan Administrative Conference, Khartoum, 1947 p.10
  64. Muddathir, op.cit., pp. 173-4 ; Daly *Imperial Sudan*, op.cit.,p.263
  65. The First Report..., op.cit., p.10
  66. Daly, op.cit., p. 250
  67. The Foreign Office appeared at times to be willing to compromise in the Sudan for an acceptable Egyptian agreement over the Suez Canal. Collins, op.cit., p.282
  68. Robertson to Marwood, December 16, 1946, RP.
  69. Robertson. to Govs., 16 December 1946, SAD 485.
  70. Roberson to Marwood, December 16, 1946, BaG I/1/2.
  71. Mohamed Shingeiti was an ardent nationalist from the early days of the Graduates' Congress. A close friend of Sayid Abdel Rahman Al Mahdi, he had only been made a judge of the High Court shortly before the Juba Conference. "A charming articulate man , famous for his hospitality, his passion was collecting rare oriental carpets and books. Well travelled and well read, he left his library to the University of Khartoum upon his death. His performance at Juba, however, was his finest, and history will probably best remember him for that". Collins, op.cit., p. 290
  72. Daly, op.cit., p240
  73. The Record of Discussion of the, Juba Conference (CS/I.C.I., Archives, Khartoum).
  74. Daly, *Imperial*, op.cit., p. 242
  75. Secretariat Central Office, 'Note on situation regarding Southern Sudan', February 1948, SAD 485.
  76. 'Destiny of the Sudan', *The Times*, 3 May, 1948
  77. Fabumni, op.cit., p.272
  78. Beshir, op.cit., p.172
  79. Muddathir, op.cit., pp.178-9 , and G. Kirk, *Survey of International Affairs; the Middle East, 1945-50*, London, 1954, p 142
  80. Muddathir, op.cit., pp.173-4
  81. Ibid. , p.180
  82. Muddathir, op.cit., p183
  83. Ibid., p180
  84. Sayid Benjamin Lwoki (Equatoria) in the debate on self-government in Dec. 1950 (*Proceedings of the First Assembly*, Second Session, no. 14,6-16 Dec. 1950 (Khartoum), p.610. Sayid Benjamin's remarks are typical of those made by other members from the Southern Provinces.
  85. Civil Secretary to all Governors and the Commissioner Port Sudan (SCO/I.A.\*0/9, Archives, Khartoum).

86. Proceedings of the First Assembly, Second session, no. 1,6-14 Mar. 1950, p. 12n.
87. Muddathir, op.cit., p 184
88. Civil Secretary to the Financial and Legal Secretaries, 18 Jan. 1951, SCO/I.A.20/8, Archives, Khartoum, *Report on the Work of the Commission*, p. 3
89. The Arabic text of the negotiations in *al-Sudan: min 13 Fabrayir 1931 ila 12 Fabrayir 1953* (The Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Cairo, 1953), pp. 255-6
90. J.S.R. Duncan, *The Sudan – A Record of Achievement*, London, 1952, p. 248
91. Sayid Al Dirdiri Mohamed Uthman, who was one of the first members to advocate this view, relates that he was subsequently invited to talk the matter over with the Governor General. During the discussion, he refused to be moved ‘a hair’s breath’ from his position. The Governor General then asked him whether in his view the British Government should sign the agreement proposed by the Egyptian Government concerning immediate self-determination for the Sudanese. Dirdiri answered: ‘Yes, you should sign it without any hesitation.’ Sir Robert asked ‘Why?’, and Dirdiri replied: ‘Because when the Sudan question was discussed in the Security Council, your representative , Sir Alexander Cadogan, stood up and said that the Sudanese alone had the right to freshly determine their own future...Why would your position be today if you refused to agree? Quoted from Muddathir, op.cit., p. 193
92. The Civil Secretary, on behalf of the Governor General, read Mr. Eden’s statement to the Legislative Assembly on 19 Nov. Quoted from Muddathir, Ibid.
93. Report on the Work of the Constitution Amendment Commission, p. 5. Quoted from Muddathir, Ibid., p.194
94. Ibid., p.187
95. The Governor General to the Civil Secretary, 2 Mar. 1952 (SCO/I.A.20/9, Archives, Khartoum).
96. Najib al-Hillali was the Egyptian Minister for National Guidance and Sudanese Affairs, (2 March 1952 to 7 July 1952) Fabummi, op.cit., p. 338
97. Taha, op.cit., pp. 91-2
98. Quoted from Mud p. 212 Muhammad Najib, *Egypt’s Destiny*, London, 1955, pp. 241-2
99. John Marlowe, *Anglo-Egyptian Relations 1800 – 1953*, London, 1954, p.393
100. The full text of the Agreement is in Taha, pp.104-107, and also in Muddathir, op.cit., p. 213
101. Muddathir, Ibid



102. The creation of the National Unionist Party was, in large measure, due to General Najib and Major Salah Salim. Muddathir, p. 213
103. The Presidency of the Council of Ministers, *Al Sudan*, Cairo, 1953, pp.297-9; Taha, pp;113-5; Dirdiri, pp. 65-71
104. Fabbumni, op.cit., p336
105. *New Statesman and Nation*, 5 December 1953.
106. Collins, op.cit., p.450
107. *Weekly Digest of Proceedings in the House of Representatives*, no. 8, Third Session, Tuesday, 16 Aug. 1955, p. 397.
108. *Sawt al-Sudan*, 3 Jan. 1955, p. 13
109. The text of the statement is in Taha, p. 120.
110. The Brotherhood's Secretary – General Abdel Kader Auda, an old friend of Nacer's, was hunged with some of the terrorists; its supreme guide, Sheikh Hassan Al Hodeiby, was sent 'in irons to Toura Prison to break stones for the rest of his life'. The shock was too much for the Sudanese who felt that the Egyptian was his brother in Islam. Fabbumni, op.cit., p. 350
111. Numerous complaints had been made about Egyptian interference in the elections during 1953, and soon afterwards the Egyptian radio and press launched a violent and indiscreet campaign for the Unity of the Nile Valley. Egyptian interference, as it was resentfully dubbed by the nationalists irrespective of party allegiance increased, as more Sudanese declared their preference for independence. Muddathir, op. cit., pp. 222-23
112. *Sudan Weekly News*, Khartoum, 16 August 1955, p.5
113. Muddathir, op.cit., p. 224
114. Fabumni, op.cit., pp. 353-6
115. *Observer*, 6 November, 1955, p.1.
116. *The Times*, London, 29 August 1955, p. 7
117. *Hansard*, 7 November 1955, p. 1471. 2B.
118. *Weekly Digest of Proceedings in the House of Representatives*, no. 14, Third Session, 19-24 Dec. 1955, p. 586.
119. *Ibid.*, p. 589
120. *Weekly Digest of Proceedings in the House of Representatives*, no. 14, Third Session, 26 Dec. 1955 to 1 Jan. 1956, p. 668.

## CONCLUSION

On the basis of this study, some conclusions may be reached. At the time of the Anglo-Egyptian conquest, the Sudan was a land in need of rest. The great majority of Sudanese attested to this. However, a generation after its rule began, the Sudan Government still relied on a reputation for achievement won by “guns” and reinforced by the absence of serious revolt. After the battle of Omdurman, resistance to Condominium rule was colourful but desperate, but in the Southern regions, it was of a different nature, probably a symptom of the government’s failure to rule. Condominium success in the Sudan, until the First World War, did not extend beyond “law and order”.

The Sudan inherited from the Turco-Egyptian regime needed more consideration. Administration was a profession, the proper work of “political officers” carefully selected from Oxford and Cambridge , while the business of education , health, development and so forth was secondary, to be left to others. Illiteracy, disease and poverty were less a constant challenge than a perpetual reminder of the rulers’ cultural and racial superiority. If ever it seemed unfair to a British official that his salary was one hundred times higher than that of the Sudanese who helped to pay it, he was silent on the subject.

Condominium status made the Sudan a special case in the history of colonialism and decolonization. The status hampered the smooth

administration of the country, and helped to provide critical attention and constant rivalry. If the Egyptian impact was most of the time negative or in any case passive, it was because the Sudan Government, usually backed by the Foreign Office always refused to give meaning to Condominium. It wanted to remain the sole master in the Sudan. Moreover, the Egyptian Army, visible guarantor of rule, was mistrusted by the government it was supposed to protect. Uncertain of that army's loyalty in the face of continuing British occupation of Egypt and a rising tide of Egyptian nationalism, the British found good reasons, whenever convenient, to break relations with Egypt and oust its army from the Sudan. The Egyptians were removed not simply because they posed a danger of public order, but because they could represent an alternative model of national advance.

The regime established in the Sudan for more than half a century could not remain unquestioned or secure. Native Administration (or Indirect Rule) had allowed the survival of tribal autocracy; it was paralleled, indeed surpassed, by the negative, sterile "Southern Policy". The South was primitive, poor, and particularistic; it could not even pay for the inadequate administration it had. To justify neglect, the Sudan Government declared the South unready for exposure to the forces of modernity. Therefore, it was closed to outsiders and freed from the 'contamination' of Islam and Arabic. Like Indirect Rule, this policy became a major point of discontent among the young Sudanese intelligentsia. In fact, the Southern Policy, a policy of terrible neglect and misunderstanding, did not help the Southerners to stand as equal partners with their Northern counterparts in the future independent Sudan.

The appointment of Sir Stewart Symes as Governor General in 1934 and the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936 coincided with and helped to stimulate Sudanese politics. Nationalism re-emerged in the Sudan and educated

Sudanese wanted to restrict the governor general's power and obtain more participation in the Legislative and Executive Councils. The continued British occupation of Sudan fuelled an increasingly piercing nationalist opposition in Egypt, with Egyptian leaders determined to force Britain to recognise a single Independent union of Egypt and the Sudan. But the British continued to frustrate these efforts and counter them. On their part, irrespective of party allegiance, the Sudanese nationalists declared their preference for outright independence, and this claim gathered momentum despite the growing Egyptian pressure for union.

The Egyptian revolution of 1952 finally heralded the beginning of the march towards Sudanese independence. Having abolished the monarchy in 1953, Egypt's new leaders believed the only way to end British domination in the Sudan was for Egypt to abandon officially its sovereignty over the 'conquered land'. In 1954, the governments of Egypt and Britain signed a treaty guaranteeing Sudanese independence on 1 January 1956, in a special ceremony held at the People's Palace where the Egyptian and British flags were lowered and the new Sudanese flag was raised in their place. Afterwards, Ismail Al-Azhari was elected first Prime Minister and led the first modern Sudanese government.

A year before independence, in 1955, a civil war began between Northern and Southern Sudan. The African Christian southerners, anticipating independence, feared the new nation would be dominated by the Arab Muslim northerners. The North-South divisions, emphasized by the "Southern Policy", laid the seeds of conflict in the years to come. The Southern Sudanese wanted to keep their identity distinct from the Northerners' and, more essentially, they started to claim for the federal status agreed on at the Juba Conference of 1947 within which they could regulate relations with the North.

The Sudan's problems remained after the Condominium. To what extent this series of events should be attributed to the defunct Condominium is rather controversial. But the simple and probably unsatisfying answer is that while Britain and Egypt were co-rulers of the Sudan, neither fully controlled it. Their cross-interests and constant rivalry reacted with the worst features of Sudanese religious and political life to the detriment of all. Internal Sudanese rivalries did exist too. 'They divide and we rule', as Robertson remarked. Indeed from 1942 to 1952 the sectarian rivalry was important in helping the Political Service to survive. It encouraged a determination to compete for power, and if necessary, to form alliances with unlikely partners. On the one hand, the Political Service worked closely with the *Umma* Party, while on the other the young nationalists and the *Khatmiya* allied with Egypt. But the following statement merits attention. As much as the British administration tried to use sectarianism, it had not created it; as seriously as it worsened North-South relations, the breach of division was already there; and as late as it was in setting the Sudan along the path of representative government, its record in this respect bears comparison with its predecessors' and successors'.

The sectarian and party manoeuvres which had preceded independence continued unabated after it. In the post-independence period the deep divisions not only survived but became if anything more apparent. Al Azhari's success in presiding over the transfer of power was indeed a victory, even a significant one, over the two rival Sayids. They soon reasserted themselves. In February 1956 he was forced to enter a coalition and in July he was swept from office by a combination of the *Khatmiya* and *Umma*. The parliamentary regime lasted

another two years and in November 1958 the army took over. Civilian rule was restored in 1964 after a popular uprising, but the second parliamentary regime had learned little from the first, and it too was toppled by a coup d'état in May 1969. The new regime lasted until 1985. Civil war, kindled in 1955, smouldered until the early sixties, then threw the whole South into flames until an uneasy peace was reached in 1972. In 1983 it revived more destructively than ever.

Meanwhile the Sudan suffered floods and famine, bankruptcy and collapse of living standards. Millions were made refugees. The territorial integrity of the state was put in doubt, as old 'particularisms' and new regional identities asserted themselves against Khartoum. Few who had witnessed the Sudan's independence had predicted an uneasy future, but few too had foreseen such a gloomy one. When this research was completed, the Sudan was preparing for Southern secession as agreed upon in 2005 between the rival parties in both North and South.

# APPENDIXES

## APPENDIX 1: Cromer's Original Draft on the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement 1899

Whereas certain provinces in the Sudan which were in rebellion against the authority of H.M. The Khedive have now been reconquered by the joint military and financial efforts of H.B.M.'s Govt. and the Govt. of H.H. The Khedive.

And whereas it has become necessary to decide upon a system for the administration of and for the making of laws for the said conquered provinces under which due allowance may be made for the varying requirements of different localities.

And whereas it is desired to give effect to the claims which have accrued to H.B.M.'s Govt. by right of conquest to share in the present settlement and future working and development of the said system of administration and legislation.

And whereas it is conceived that for many purposes the districts of Wady Halfa and Suakin may be most effectively administered in conjunction with the conquered provinces to which they are respectively adjacent.

Now it is hereby agreed and declared by and between the undersigned duly authorized for that purpose as :

#### Article I

Unless it is otherwise authorized the word 'Soudan' in this agreement meant all the territories south of the 22<sup>nd</sup> parallel of latitude which:

1. have never been evacuated by Egyptian troops since the year 1882,  
or
2. which, having before the late rebellion in the Soudan been administered by the Government of H.H. The Khedive, were temporarily lost to Egypt and have been reconquered by H.B.M.'s Government and the Egyptian Government acting in concert, or
3. which may hereafter be reconquered by the two Governments acting in concert.

#### Article II

The British and Egyptian flags shall be used together, both on land and water, throughout the Soudan except in the town of Suakin in which locality the Egyptian flag alone shall be used.

#### Article III

The supreme military and civil command in the Soudan shall be vested in one officer termed the 'Governor General of the Soudan'. He shall be appointed by khedivial decree on the recommendation of H.B.M.'s Government and shall be removed only by khedivial decree with the consent of H.B.M.'s Government.

#### Article IV

Laws, as also, orders and regulations with the full force of law for the Government of the Soudan and for regulating the holding disposal and devolution of property of every kind herein situate may from time to time be made, altered or abrogated by proclamation of the Governor General. Such laws, orders and regulations may apply to the whole or any named part of the



Soudan and may either explicitly or by necessary implication alter or abrogate any existing law or regulation.

Proclamations of the Governor-General shall be issued only with the prior consent of H.H. The Khedive, acting under the advice of his Council of Ministers, and of H.B.M.'s Agent and Consul General in Cairo.

Nevertheless the parties whose consent is so required may from time to time exempt from the obligation to receive such prior consent proclamations of the Governor-General in respect of any such clauses of administrative or executive matters as may be specified in any instrument conferring such exemption. Proclamations issued without prior consent by virtue of exemption shall be forthwith notified to H.B.M.'s Agent and Consul General in Cairo and the President of the Council of Ministers of H.H. The Khedive within a period of .....from date of issue and shall be subject to such power of revision or rescission as may be reserved by the instrument creating the exemption.

#### Article V

No Egyptian law decree ministerial arrete or other enactment hereafter to be made or promulgated shall apply to the Soudan or any named part thereof save in so far as the same shall be applied by proclamation of the Governor-General in manner hereinbefore provided.

#### Article VI

The whole of the Soudan revenue shall be at the disposal of the Egyptian Government. The Egyptian Government shall be solely responsible for all the civil and ordinary military expenditure in the Soudan but H.B.M.'s Government undertakes to bear the whole cost of any British troops that may be stationed in the Soudan, other than special expeditionary forces. In the event of any extraordinary circumstances occurring which may necessitate the

despatch of a special British expedition to the Soudan the question of the division of cost shall form the subject of a special arrangement between the two Governments.

#### Article VII

In the definition by proclamation of the conditions under which Europeans or whatever nationality shall be at liberty to trade with or reside in the Soudan, or to hold property within its limits, no special privileges shall be accorded to the subjects or any one or more Power.

#### Article VIII

Import duties on entering the Soudan shall not be payable on goods coming from Egyptian territory. Such duties may, however, be levied, on goods coming from elsewhere than Egyptian territory, but in the case of goods entering the Soudan at Suakin or any other port on the Red Sea littoral they shall not exceed the corresponding duties for the time being levied on goods entering Lower Egypt from abroad. Export duties may be levied on goods leaving the Soudan whether for Egyptian territory or elsewhere.

#### Article IX

The jurisdiction of the Mixed Tribunals shall not extend nor be recognized for any purpose whatsoever in any part of the Soudan except in the town of Suakin.

#### Article X

Until and save so far as it shall be otherwise determined by proclamation, the Soudan, with the exception of the town of Suakin, shall be and remain under martial law.

Article XI

No consuls, vice consuls or consular agents shall be accredited in respect of nor allowed to reside in the Soudan without the previous consent of H.B.M.'s Government.

Article XII

The importation of slaves into the Soudan, as also their exportation, is absolutely prohibited. Provisions shall be made by proclamation for the enforcement of this regulation.

Article XIII

It is agreed between the two Governments that special attention shall be paid to the enforcement of the Brussels' Act of July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1890, in respect of the import, sale and manufacture of firearms and their munitions and distilled or spirituous liquors.

Done in Cairo, the 19<sup>th</sup> January 1899,

Signed: Boutros Ghali

Cromer

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**APPENDIX 2 : Supplemental Agreement for the Administration  
of the Soudan, 1899**

Agreement made between the British and the Egyptian Governments Supplemental to the Agreement made between the two Governments on 19<sup>th</sup> January 1899 for the future administration of the Sudan.

Whereas under our Agreement made the 19<sup>th</sup> January 1899, relative to the future administration of the Sudan, it is provided by Article VIII, that the jurisdiction of the Mixed Tribunals shall not extend nor be recognized for any purpose whatsoever in any part of the Sudan except in the town of Suakin:

And whereas no Mixed Tribunal has ever been established at Suakin and it has been found to be inexpedient to establish such tribunal in that locality by reason notably of the expense which the adoption of this measure would occasion:

And whereas grievous injustice is caused in the inhabitants of Suakin by the absence of any local jurisdiction for the settlement of their disputes and it is expedient that the town of Suakin should be placed upon the same footing as the rest of the Sudan:

And whereas we now decided to modify our said Agreement accordingly in manner hereinafter appearing:

Now, it is hereby agreed and declared by and between the undersigned duly authorized for that purpose, as follows:

**ARTICLE 1:**

Those provisions of our Agreement of the 19<sup>th</sup> day of January 1899 by which the town of Suakin was excepted from the general regime established by

the said agreement for the future administration of the Sudan, are hereby abrogated.

Done in Cairo, the 10<sup>th</sup> of July 1899.

Signed: Boutros Ghali

Cromer

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### APPENDIX 3: Kitchener's First Memorandum to 'Mudirs'

The absolute uprootal by the Dervishes of the old system of Government has afforded an opportunity for initiating a new Administration more in harmony with the requirements of the Sudan.

#### *Mudirs*

1. The necessary Laws and Regulations will be carefully considered and issued as required, but it is not mainly to the framing and publishing of laws that we must look for the improvement and the good government of the country.
2. The task before us all, and especially the *Mudirs* and Inspectors, is to acquire the confidence of the people, to develop their resources, and to raise them to a higher level. This can only be effected by the District Officers being thoroughly in touch with the better class of native, through whom we may hope gradually to influence their population. *Mudirs* and Inspectors should learn to know personally all the principal men of their district, and show them, by friendly

dealings and the interest taken in their individual concerns, that our object is to increase their prosperity. Once it is thoroughly realized that our officers have at heart, not only the progress of the country generally, but also the prosperity of each individual with whom they come into contact, their exhortation to industry and improvement will gain redoubled force. Such exhortations, when issued in the shape of Proclamations or Circulars, effect little; it is to the individual action of British officers, working independently, but with a common purpose, on the individual natives whose confidence they have gained that we must look for the moral and industrial regeneration of the Sudan.

3. The people should be taught that the truth is always expected, and will be equally well received whether pleasant or the reverse. By listening to outspoken opinions, when respectfully expressed, and checking liars and flatterers, we may hope in time to effect some improvement in this respect in the country.
4. In the administration of justice in your province you should be very careful to see that legal forms, as laid down, are strictly adhered to, so the the appointed Courts may be thoroughly respected; and you should endeavour, by the careful inquiry given by your Courts to the cases brought before them, to inspire the people with absolute confidence that real justice is being meted out to them. It is very important that the Government should do nothing which could be interpreted as a sign of weakness, and all insubordination must be promptly and severely suppressed. At the same time, a paternal spirit of correction for offences should be your aim in your relation with the people, and clemency should be shown in dealing with first offences, especially when such may be

the result of ignorance, or are openly acknowledged. In the latter case, they should be more than half pardoned in order to induce truthfulness.

5. Be careful to see that religion feelings are not in any way interfered with, and that the Mohamedan religion is respected.
6. Mosques in the principal towns will be rebuilt, but private mosques, takias, zawiyas, sheikh's tombs, etc., cannot be allowed to be re-established, as they generally formed centres of unorthodox fanaticism. Any request for permission on such subjects must be referred to the Central authority.
7. Slavery is not recognized in the Soudan, but as long as service is willing rendered by servants to masters it is unnecessary to interfere in the conditions existing between them. Where, however, any individual is subjected to cruel treatment, and his or her liberty interfered with, the accused can be tried on such charges, which are offences against the law, and in serious cases of cruelty the severest sentences should be imposed.

#### *Inspectors*

You should divide your province into two approximately equal districts, and hold each Inspector responsible for the exact execution of all Orders and Regulations in the district allotted to them.

#### *Duties of Inspectors*

The Inspector is the *Mudir's* Staff Officer in charge of the district to which he is appointed by the *Mudir*. He will be responsible for the execution and enforcement in his district of all Orders and Regulations that are issued for

the administration of the province, and for the smartness and discipline of the police.

He will be careful to strictly carry out the law laid down, and make the Court over which he presides respected, and to see that the *Mamurs* in his district give proper punishments according to their powers.

It will be one of his important duties to supervise the operations of the police and to see that they thoroughly investigate all criminal cases, and are employed in such a manner as to insure the maintenance of public security.

He will not be a channel of communication between *Mamurs* and the *Mudirieh*, that is *Mamurs* will forward direct to the *Mudirieh* all Reports and Returns called for. He will, therefore, have no office staff, but will make himself acquainted with the work of the *Mamurs*, of his district either in his central office or while inspecting the *Mudiriehs*.

He will be most careful to see that there is no oppression nor illegal taxation in his district.

He will report to the *Mudir* any official who fails to set a good example to the district by leading a moral and responsible life, or who shows negligence or incapacity in the performance of his duties.

#### *Mamurs*

Instructions for *Mamurs* are as under. In addition to the duties specified it should be noted that they are responsible for the proper measurement of the land in their *Mudiriehs* and its correct registration.

#### *Instructions to Mamurs*

The new position you are about to take up is an important and responsible one. You should always bear in mind that you are the recognized agent in your district of a just and merciful Government, and as such, you should do all in



your power to gain the confidence and respect of the inhabitants, who should, in their turn, be made to look to and respect the Government of which you are the Representative.

In order to acquire and hold this position, you should bear in mind the following points, which are essential to the good government of your district.

You should recollect that this country has just been relieved from most oppressive and tyrannical rulers, who have plundered and enslaved the population, and engendered in them feelings of moral and physical fear, which it may take long to eradicate; your object should, therefore, be to make the government of your district as great a contrast as possible to that of the Dervishes. Every effort should be made to induce the inhabitants to feel that an era of justice and kindly treatment has come, with, at the same time, a vigorous repression of crime, and a determination to put down with a strong hand any attempt of evil-doers to carry on the practices which, it is hoped, have disappeared with the flight of the Dervishes.

No doubt the local people will offer bribes, in order to try to secure the goodwill of their own rulers; these offers must be resolutely and absolutely refused, and the people made to understand that they can acquire no benefits by such means, but are more likely to be severely punished. In all their dealings with the Government they should be convinced of its unity of purpose and justice; nothing, therefore, should be taken from them without payment, in accordance with the fixed tariff, and every inducement should be given to them to bring their saleable articles and products, to fixed market places, where it is most important the regulation price should be adhered to. You should also endeavour, by all means in your power, to encourage the inhabitants to increase the amount of cultivation in the district. It is especially necessary that the women should be in no way molested, and that the *Mamur* of the district should be not only an example of fairness and justice, but also of morality, by

doing all in his power to improve the moral tone of the inhabitants in his charge, and by instilling into their minds that it is to him they should turn for a redress of grievances, being fully convinced that he will act as is best for their interest and advantage consistently with justice.

Every effort should be made to repress crime, and *Mamurs* have the power of sending offenders to prison for one day; but when, in their opinion, offences are committed which deserve more severe punishment, they should refer the case to the nearest Commandant, who will either deal with it in accordance with the military powers delegated to him, or will refer to the higher authority. Should it be discovered that you or any of your employees have been the recipients of *bakshish* of any kind from the local people, you will be liable to be tried by court-martial, and dismissed from the service.

In any case of difficulty or doubt, you should at once refer to the nearest Military Commandant, under whose general direction and guidance you will act.

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**APPENDIX 4: The Governor-General Council Ordinance, 1910, for  
Creating a Council to Assist the Governor General**

Whereas by virtue of the Agreement dated the 19<sup>th</sup> January, 1899, between the Government of Her late Britannic Majesty and the Government of His Highness the Khedive the Governor General is invested with the supreme military and civil command in the Sudan, with the powers in the said Agreement mentioned.

And whereas with the approval of the two Governments aforesaid it is deemed expedient to associate a Council with the Governor-General in the discharge of his executive and legislative powers:

Now It is Herein Enacted As Follows:

1. The Ordinance may be cited as the Governor-General's Council Ordinance 1910.
2. A Council to be known as the Governor-General's Council shall be created, composed of the Inspector General, the Financial Secretary, the Legal Secretary and the Civil Secretary, as ex-officio members, together with not less than two or more than four additional members to be appointed by the Governor-General.

Every additional member shall be appointed for a period of three years and shall be eligible for re-appointment.

During the absence of an ex-officio member of the Council on leave or in the event of his incapacity through illness he shall be replaced on the Council by any officer who, either by special appointment or by virtue of his office is competent to act for him generally.

During the absence or incapacity through illness of an additional member, any other person may be appointed by the Governor-General to act temporarily as a member of the Council.

3. Meetings of the Council shall be presided over by the Governor-General. If the Governor-General shall not be present, then, subject to the provisions of section 13, the senior member of the Council who is present shall preside.
4. The Governor-General's Council shall in respect of all such things as under this or any other Ordinance are required to be done by the Governor-General in Council, exercise the powers conferred upon it by

the Ordinance in respect of all matters which may be submitted to it shall act as Advisory Council to the Governor-General.

5. All Ordinances, Laws and Regulations to be made by proclamation of the Governor-General by virtue of the provisions of Article IV of the Agreement of the 19<sup>th</sup> January 1899 shall be made by the Governor-General in Council. Provided that this section shall not apply to any Regulations to be issued by the Governor-General in exercise of any power reserved to him independently of the Council of any Ordinance for the time being in force.
6. The annual budget shall be passed and all supplementary credits whether out of reserve or out of current revenues shall be granted by the Governor-General in Council.
7. All such things shall be done by the Governor-General in Council as shall be required so to done by the provisions of any Ordinance for the time being in force or by the rules to be made in that behalf by the Governor-General in Council.
8. Subject to the provisions in sections 9 and 10 all things which require to be done by the Governor-General in Council shall be decided by the vote of the majority of the members present. In case of equality the Governor-General or the presiding member shall have a second or casting vote.

A record shall be kept of the decisions of the Council and of the votes of the individual members with respect thereto and any member dissenting from the decision of the majority may require a minute of the reasons of his dissent to be entered on the record.

9. The Governor-General whether present at a meeting of the Council or not may for reasons to be recorded in the record of the proceedings of the Council, overrule the decisions of the majority of the Council, and

thereupon the decision of the Governor-General shall be deemed for all purposes to be the decision of the Council.

10. The Governor-General whether present at a meeting of a Council or not, may suspend the operation of any decision of the Council pending the reference thereof of the authorities mentioned in paragraph 2 of Article IV of the Agreement of the 19 January, 1899.
11. Rules not in conflict with the provision of this Ordinance may be made by the Governor-General in Council for regulating the proceedings of the Council, as to the places at which the Council may meet, and as to the appointment and duties of officials of the Council.
12. During the absence of the Governor-General on leave or in the event of incapacity through illness to perform his duties, as also during every vacancy in the office of the Governor-General all the power of the Government shall vest in the Governor-General's Council, unless the Governor-General shall have appointed an Acting Governor-General to act for him generally.
13. Whenever the Governor to preside over -General, while continuing to act as Governor-General shall be away from his Council, he may appoint an officer to preside over the Council in his place and to exercise all or any of the powers herein before conferred upon the Governor-General with respect thereto.
14. Whatever the Governor-General shall be away from his Council the Governor-General, if thereto authorized by a decision of the Council may exercise personally all or any of the powers of the Governor-General in Council.
15. Nothing in this Ordinance contained shall be interpreted as conferring upon the Governor-General in Council any power which if vested in the Governor-General in person would be in conflict with the provisions of

the Agreement of the 19<sup>th</sup> January, 1899, or of any Agreement heretofore made between the Egyptians and Sudan Governments.

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**APPENDIX 5: Memorandum on the Future Status of the Sudan**

**Major General Sir Lee Stack to  
Field – Marshall Viscount Allenby**

N° . 69 Secret

Erkowitz, May 25, 1924

My Lord,

In view of the impending negotiations between His Majesty's Government and the Government of Egypt on the reserved questions, of which the Sudan is one, I have the honour to enclose a memorandum embodying the proposals of the Sudan Government for the future status of the country.

I trust your Lordship will appreciate that I have given the subject my full and anxious consideration, and that it is in no spirit of hostility to Egyptian aspirations that I have seen fit to advance proposals which are calculated, in effect, to define to continuance of British predominance in the Sudan in a more emphatic manner. On the contrary, I have no hesitation in acknowledging for assistance which the services of a number of Egyptian officers and officials have, under British direction and guidance, have given to the Administration.

The primary factor in any settlement must, however, be the wishes and welfare of the people themselves, and, in view of the moral responsibility which recent changes in Egypt only bring to greater relief, I am confident that

the necessity of approaching the question from this standpoint will not be lost sight of.

The progress of the Sudan under the shadow of His Majesty's Government during the last twenty-five years has been remarkable in every way, and in my opinion, no political changes should be allowed to jeopardize, at the most critical period of its development, the continuance of the present era of security and peaceful development.

Hitherto, the benefits of a disinterested Administration have been assured by the *de facto* predominance of British control, but the declaration of Egypt as an independent sovereign State and the consequent emancipation of its policy from British direction, introduces a new element into the terms of the present condominium which necessitates a clearer and more emphatic definition of the policy of His Majesty's Government towards the Sudan.

Further, an unequivocal declaration of His Majesty's Government is not only necessary to secure the satisfactory government of the country, which at present rests solely on the moral influence of a few British officials backed by native confidence in the intentions of His Majesty's Government, but is in direct accord with the wishes of the people themselves, who view the possibility of increased Egyptian influence with the liveliest apprehension. No compromise, however innocuous in form, would fail to be interpreted by the people as a prelude to gradual withdrawal of British control from the Sudan in conformity with the progress of recent events in Egypt and its effect would be to destroy the confidence of the people in His Majesty's Government, and, in consequence, seriously endanger the progress but security of the country.

In my memorandum I have endeavoured to analyze the present situation and to show that in the interests of the country no alternative exists to the continuation of British predominance, the maintenance of which necessitates

certain changes in the present relations between the Sudan and Egyptian Governments.

I may summarize the chief points as follows:

1. Apart from legitimate interests the primary duty of a British Government at present is to secure good administration for the Sudan.
2. This can only be secured by the maintenance of British predominance in the Administration.
3. Any compromise or half-measures will be not only unsuccessful but dangerous. No reasonable compromise will satisfy the present Egyptian demand while on the other hand the admission to Egyptians of an increased share in the control will merely afford them opportunities for intrigue against the British of which they would take full advantage.
4. Further, as a result of recent developments in Egypt, British predominance will not be sufficiently secured by the mere maintenance of the *status quo*. While there appears to be no reason to alter the form of the present term of the 1899 Agreement, the financial relations between the two Governments will require revision on the lines indicated, and most important of all the complete control of the military garrison of the Sudan must be in the hands of the Sudan Government.
5. Whatever the outcome of the forthcoming negotiations, in order to retain the confidence of the people and to maintain British authority it is essential that His Majesty's Government should give a clear pronouncement that British control will not be withdrawn from the Sudan.
6. On the other hand the most definite guarantees should be given to Egypt for the preservation of those material advantages to herself for



the sake of which her British advisers led her to join in the reconquest and regeneration of the Sudan.

I trust that my proposals will be endorsed by your Lordship's personal and extensive knowledge of Sudan affairs, and obtain your Lordship's support and recommendation to His Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.

LEE STACK, Major General

Governor General of the Sudan

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**APPENDIX 6: Civil Secretary's Memorandum on**  
**Southern Policy, 1930**

CS/.C.I.

Civil Secretary's Office

Khartoum, 25<sup>th</sup> January, 1930

The Governor, Upper Nile, Malaka 1.

„ „ Mongalla Province, Mongalla

„ „ Bahr el Ghazal Province, Way.

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His Excellency the Governor-General directs that the main features of the approval policy of the Government for the administration of the Southern Provinces should be restated in simple terms.

In the strictly confidential memorandum which accompanies this letter an attempt has been made to do this, though it will of course be seen that innumerable points of detail arising are not dealt with *seriatim*.

1. Your attention is directed to Part II of the memorandum, and I should be obliged if you would forward, as soon as possible, your comments on the criteria suggested and any suggestions you may wish to make for additions to this list.
2. The carrying out of the policy as described may lead from time to time to various financial implications or commitments though it is hoped that these will not be great. It will be convenient that any such foreseen should be notified to the relevant authority without delay for consideration.
3. Application of the policy will obviously vary in detail and in intensity according to locality. It is essential; however, that the ultimate aim should be made clear to all who are responsible for the execution of the policy, and the memorandum should therefore be circulated to and studied by all your District Commissioners. Sufficient copies for this purpose are sent herewith. Copies are also being sent to such Heads of Departments in Khartoum as are concerned.

Civil Secretary

Copies to: Director of Agriculture and Forests

- „ „ Works
- „ „ Sudan Medical Service
- „ „ Education
- „ „ Veterinary Department
- „ „ Surveys
- „ „ Posts & Telegraphs

General Manager, S.G.R.&S.

Financial Secretary

For information and with special  
Reference to paragraph 3 above.  
A special letter on this point addressed  
To Heads of Departments follows from  
Secretary for Education, Health, etc.

C.S/I.C.I

Strictly Confidential

## MEMORANDUM

### Part I

The policy of the Government in the Souther Sudan is to build up a series of contained racial or tribal units with structure and organization based, to whatever extent the requirements of equity and good government permit, upon indigenous customs, traditional usage and beliefs.

The measures already taken or to be taken to promote the above policy are re-stated below.

1. Provision of non-Arabic speaking staff (Administrative, Clerical and Technical)
  - Administrative Staff  
The gradual elimination of the *Mamur*, whether Arab or black. This has already begun, and it is intended that the process of reduction shall continue as opportunity offers.
  - Clerical  
It has been the recognized policy for some years that locally recruited staff should take the place of clerks and accountants drawn

from the North and that the language of Government officers should be English.

In the Bahr El Ghazal Province the change to English had already been made and a large number of local boys are employed.

The process has to be gradual. It is recognized that local boys are not fit at present to fill the higher posts in Government offices, but the supply of educated English speaking-boys depends on the speed with which the two missionary Intermediate schools at Wau can produce them. The missions must retain a certain number of these boys as teachers for their Elementary Schools (which are an integral part of the educational system) but since the employment of local boys in Government offices is a vital feature of the general policy every encouragement should be given to those in charge of mission schools to co-operate in that policy by sending boys into Government Service. Province officials must aim at maintaining a steady supply of boys for the Elementary Vernacular schools which feed the Intermediate schools.

- Technical

Generally speaking, the consideration mentioned above apply also to the supply of boys for the technical departments – Agriculture, Medical, Public Works, etc.; but in certain cases it may not be essential that boys going to these departments should complete the Intermediate school course.

2. Control of Important Traders from the North

It is the aim of the Government to encourage, as far as is possible, Greek and Syrian traders rather than the *Gellaba* type. Permits to the latter should be decreased unobtrusively but progressively, and only the best type of *Gellaba* whose interests are purely commercial and pursued in a legitimate manner should be admitted. The limitation of *Gellaba* trade to towns or established routes is essential.

3. Fundamental Necessity for British Staff to Familiarize themselves with the Beliefs and the Customs and the Languages of the Tribes they Administer

- Beliefs and Customs

The policy of Government requires that officials in the South, especially administrative officials, should be fully informed as to the social structure, beliefs, customs and mental processes of pagan tribes. Study on these lines is of vital importance to the solution of administrative problems and, it is with this fact in view that a highly qualified expert has been detailed to work in the South.

- Language

The Rejaf Language Conference recommended the adoption of certain 'group languages' for use in schools. It is clearly impossible to develop all the languages and dialects of the Southern Sudan and the development of a limited number of them may tend to cause the smaller languages one by one to disappear, and to be supplemented by 'group languages'.

It is of course, true that the adoption of this system carries with it the implication of the gradual adoption of a new, or partly new, language by the population of the areas in which the 'smaller languages' are used at present. Such a result is, indeed, inevitable in the course of time, for 'smaller languages' must always tend to disappear.

It is also recognized that in such places as Wau itself, Arabic is so commonly used that the local languages have been almost completely excluded. Social concessions may be necessary in these places.

The Rejaf Conference did not regard these factors as seriously affecting the policy of 'group languages', and it may held to be a matter of first importance that books for the study of 'group languages' should be available for missionaries and officials and that a specialist should be appointed to study the question. A linguistic expert, Dr. Tucker, has therefore been appointed for a

period of two years, and his chief function will be to advise as to the production of suitable books. The Secretary for Education and Health has already circulated a memorandum on his duties.

The production of grammars and vocabularies will facilitate the study of the local vernaculars. But this will take time and meanwhile it is the duty of our officers to further the policy of the Government without delay. *It cannot be stressed too strongly that to speak the natural language of the people whom he controls is the first duty of the administrator.* Arabic is not that language, and indeed to the bulk of the population of the South it is new or partly new, tongue. Officials should avoid the error of thinking that by speaking Arabic they are in some way conforming to the principle that the administrator should converse with his people in their own language.

#### 4. The Use of English where Communications in the Local Vernacular is Impossible

The time has not yet come for the adoption of general *lingua franca* for the Southern Sudan and it is impossible to foretell what, if ever that time comes, the language would be.

At the same time there are, without doubt occasions when the use of a local vernacular is impossible, as, for instance the case of heterogeneous groupings such as the Sudan Defence Force or the Police.

The recent introduction of English words of command in Equatorial Corps of the Sudan Defence and their use in the Police Forces in the Provinces concerned is a step in the right direction, but more is required. Every effort should be made to make English the means of communication among the men themselves to the complete exclusion of Arabic. This will entail in the various units the opening of classes in which the men would receive instruction in English, and a concentrated effort on the part of those in authority to ensure that English is used by the men when local vernaculars cannot be. It is believed that in a comparatively short time men of these forces could learn as much English as they now know of Arabic.

It is hoped that those in charge of mission schools will assist in providing instructors for the classes referred to above.

Similarly, an official unable to speak the local vernacular should try to use English when speaking to Government employees and servants, and even, if in any way possible, to chiefs and natives. In any case, the use of an interpreter is preferable to the use of Arabic, until the local language can be used.

The initial difficulties are not minimised. Inability to converse freely at first will no doubt result in some loss of efficiency, and the dislike of almost every Englishman to using his own language in conversing with natives is fully recognised; but difficulties and dislikes must be subordinated to the main policy.

Apart from the fact that the restriction of Arabic is an essential feature of the general scheme it must not be forgotten that Arabic, being neither the language of the governing nor the governed, will progressively deteriorate. The type of Arabic at present spoken provides signal proof of this. It cannot be used as a means of communication on anything but the most simple matters, and only if it were first unlearned and then relearned in a less crude form and adopted as the language of instruction in the schools could it fulfil the growing requirements of the future. The local vernaculars and English, on the other hand, will in every case be the language of one or two parties conversing and one party will therefore always be improving the other.

In short, whereas at present Arabic is considered by many natives of the South as the official and, as it were, the fashionable language, the object of should be to counteract this idea by every practical means.

## Part II

### Progress and Policy

His Excellency the High Commissioner in approving this policy has suggested the need for criteria by which progress may be measured.

With this end in view it is intended to tabulate various important features of the policy and to set down the progress made at stated intervals.

It is suggested that the matters to be included in the table should be the following:

1. The number of non-Mohammedans in relation to the total Government staff under headings of administrative, clerical, and technical, with a report on the use of English by Government employees of non-British origin.
2. The number of British officials who have qualified in the local language.
3. Number of immigrant traders of various nationalities from the North.
4. Number of mission schools, elementary, intermediate and technical respectively.
5. Number of Government schools.
6. The amount spent on education including:
  - Subsidies to mission schools.
  - Cost of Government schools.
  - Cost of supervisory educational staff.
7. Introduction of English words of command in military or police forces, with a report as to the extent to which Arabic is disappearing as the language in use among the men of these forces.
8. Notes on the progress of the use of English instead of Arabic where communication in the vernacular is impossible.
9. Progress made in the production of text-books in the group languages for use in the schools, and in grammars and vocabularies for use of missionaries and officials.

It is proposed to give information in the Annual Report under these heads for the years 1924, 1927, and 1930 and for each subsequent year.

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## APPENDIX 7: Anglo-Egyptian Treaty 1936

### Article 11, Annex, and Note (3)

1. While reserving liberty to conclude new conventions in future, modifying the agreements of the 19<sup>th</sup> January and the 10<sup>th</sup> July, 1899, the High Contracting Parties agree that the administration of the Sudan shall continue to be that resulting from the said agreements. The Governor-General shall continue to exercise on the joint behalf of the High Contracting Parties the powers conferred upon him, by the said agreements.  
Nothing in this article prejudices the question of sovereignty over the Sudan.
2. Appointments and promotions of officials in the Sudan will in consequence remain vested in the Governor-General, who, in making new appointments to posts for which qualified Sudanese are not available, will select suitable candidates of British and Egyptian nationality.
3. In addition, to Sudanese troops, both British and Egyptian troops shall be placed at the disposal of the Governor-General for the defence of the Sudan.
4. Egyptian immigration into the Sudan shall be unrestricted except for reasons of public order and health.
5. There shall be no discrimination in the Sudan between British subjects and Egyptian nationals in matters of commerce, immigration or the possession of property.
6. The High Contracting Parties agree on the provisions set out in the Annex to this Article as regards the method by which international conventions are to be made applicable to the Sudan.

## Annex to Article 11

1. Unless and until the High Contracting Parties agree to the contrary in application of paragraph 1 of this Article, the general principle for the future shall be that international conventions shall only become applicable to the Sudan by the joint action of the Governments of the United Kingdom and of Egypt, and that such joint action shall similarly also be required if it is desired to terminate the participation of the Sudan in an international convention which already applies to the territory.
2. Conventions to which it will be desired that the Sudan should be a party will generally be conventions of a technical or humanitarian character. Such conventions almost invariably contain a provision for subsequent accession, and in such cases this method of making the convention applicable to the Sudan will be adopted. Accession will be effected by a joint instrument, signed on behalf of Egypt and the United Kingdom respectively by two persons duly authorized for the purpose. The method of depositing the instruments of accession will be the subject of agreement in each case between the two governments. In the event of its being desired to apply to the Sudan a convention which does not contain an accession clause, the method by which this should be effected will be the subject of consultation and agreement between the two governments.
3. If the Sudan is already a party to a convention, and it is desired to terminate the participation of the Sudan therein, the necessary notice of termination will be given jointly by the United Kingdom and by Egypt.
4. It is understood that the participation of the Sudan in a convention and the termination of such participation can only be effected by joint action specifically taken in respect of the Sudan, and does not follow merely from the fact that the United Kingdom and Egypt are both parties to a convention or have both denounced a convention.

5. At international conferences where such conventions are negotiated, the Egyptian and the United Kingdom delegates would naturally keep in touch with a view to any action which they may agree to be desirable in the interests of the Sudan;

Note 3

Sir Miles Lampson to Mustapha El-Nahas Pasha

The Residency, Ramleh.

August, 12, 1936

Sir,

In the course of discussions on questions of detail, arising out of paragraph 2 of Article (11) the suggestion for the secondment of an Egyptian economic expert for service at Khartoum, and the Governor-General's wish to appoint an Egyptian officer to his personal staff as military secretary, were noted and considered acceptable in principle. It was also considered desirable and acceptable that the Inspector-General of the Egyptian Irrigation Service in the Sudan should be invited to attend the Governor-General's Council when matter relating to his departmental interests were before the Council.

Miles W. Lampson

High Commissioner

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**APPENDIX 8: Note to Council by the Civil Secretary dated**

**September 1942, on further**

**Association of Sudanese with Local and Central**

**Government in the Sudan.**

1. During the five years immediately below the present war the northern Sudan was moving out of what may be called the 'Arcadian Period' of comparatively simple administration into a period of accelerated economic and educational development, accompanied by social and political problems of greater complexity. Factors contributing to it were:
  - The rising of the country after the economic depression of 1931
  - The adoption of the Substitutional Grade for Sudanese in 1936, designed for posts where Sudanese replace British Staff of Division I, and rising to salary maximum of £E.800.
  - The signing of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936 with its emphasis on the welfare of the Sudanese and on the prior claims of the Sudanese to fill any posts in the Sudan Government for which they may be qualified.
  - The passing of three local Government Ordinances in 1937, covering Rural areas, Townships and Municipalities.
  - The publication in 1937 of the educational proposals of De La Warr Commission.
  - The formation of the Sudan Graduates' Congress in 1938
  
2. During the first two years of war, the distractions of threatened and actual invasion, and the mobilization of the Sudan's manpower and resources, followed by the Sudan's vigorous partnership in the imperial conquest of the Italian East African Empire, diverted the minds of nearly all British officials and of most educated Sudanese from the political development of the Sudan. The Graduates' Congress, it is true, founded originally as a sort of Union of educated Sudanese, with a programme ostensibly social and cultural, took on a stronger nationalist and political colour during 1940, but did not until recently, embark on

any definite political agitation or submit formally any wide political demands.

In the Provinces local Government, rural and urban, moved along its stationary paths, at a reasonably fast tempo in the case of what is called 'Native Administration' (tribal federations, native courts, N.A. budgets, etc.), and a regrettably slower pace in towns and municipalities. In early 1940 I tried to hasten the latter in a circular to Governors of the six Northern Provinces but the entry of Italy into the war shortly afterwards, and the depletion of political staff through war releases, prevented any substantial results. Moreover, replies to the circular showed that it was by no means realized in several provinces that urban local government was in a sadly backward state.

3. A strong stimulus, however, to political thinking in the Sudan was applied, in the winter of 1941 and spring of 1942, by
  - The promulgation of the Atlantic Charter in August 1941 with the consequent commentaries in the world's press and broadcasts, and the adherence of the Charter by the 26 Allied Nations proclaimed in January 1942.
  - Sir Stafford Cripps's spectacular mission to India, the effect of which was heightened by his passage through the Sudan, both going and returning, and the brief interview given to him on 15-4-42 to the two editors of the vernacular press in which he said:  
"We are all looking to the future. The Sudan is playing its part in the war effort very well, and this will gain it a place in the new era which we all hope to see in the world when we have finished with the evil forces. There are a lot of things to be done: and we must perhaps do them more quickly than we have in the past."
4. It was obvious that the Sudan, like other African dependencies, could not be oblivious to progressive trends of thought and declarations in Great Britain and the United States, and in February 1942 I began to study further lines of advance in associating the Sudanese (especially the educated Sudanese) with local and central Government, and had begun to draft proposals when three things intervened to delay them:
  - Large increases in the establishment and commitments of the Sudan Defence Force, and the Sudan's obligations to develop still further

our lines of communication to Middle East by air, river, road and rail, threw more urgent war work on my office and I had little spare time to political problems.

- The fall of Malaya and Burma engendered a number of articles in the British, American and Dominion Press, which were highly critical of British colonial administration in those areas and in general. Those articles led to others, which, after the first reaction from defeat, became more objective in analysis of past, and proposals for further policy, and also to a series of valuable debates in the Houses of Lords and Commons. I thought it right to secure these documents (Hansard, press-cuttings, etc.) by air-bag to London Office, and to sift and summarize them, before completing this memorandum.
  - The Graduates' Congress suddenly submitted, on April 3<sup>rd</sup> 1942 their manifesto with its 12 demands, headed by a claim for the Sudanese to exercise self-determination after the war. This led to a rebuff by the Government, and several interviews and subsidiary letters. A certain political agitation in Khartoum and some ill-advised speeches and 'electioneering' in the Provinces accompanied this sequence of events, and raised, in an acute form, not only the undesirability of public servants (who form the great majority of the Graduates' Congress) actively participating in political controversy, but the whole question of relation between Government and the educated classes. It was manifestly impossible to study administrative and political reforms calmly, or to obtain objective British and Sudanese advice, while this Congress sandstorm was blowing and fogging the basic issue, which still lies before us, of how to meet adequately the legitimate and reasonable aspirations of the enlightened Sudanese, both in the towns and in the countryside and including the most progressive tribal leaders and merchants as well as the mainly official class known as 'effendia'.
5. The six months' delay, however, in presenting the proposals outlined below, has actually been valuable not only because we now have a mass of evidence of the future trend of British colonial policy from trusteeship to partnership, but also the episode of the Congress manifesto and succeeding exchanges has thrown into clearer proofs of

our devolutionary aims, and to conceive our trusteeship as that of a guardian for a ward who will eventually come of age. This need is genuine and should not be denied or obscured by the extravagant and ill-considered demands of a section or groups who overstep the political mark and can be dealt with disciplinarily. The Congress itself has received a damaging re-buff. The Administrative Regulations limiting political activities of public servants have been re-affirmed (they are by no means ungenerous). The vernacular press has been warned that, while objective criticism is welcomed, and censorship is sparingly exercised, liberty does not mean licence. But any general policy of repression or even of slowing down of partnership, causing the educated class as whole to suffer for the follies or vanities of young hot-heads, would indeed be visiting the sins of sons upon their fathers; the Sudan Government is a powerful autocracy, independent of the Colonial Office, untrammelled by an electorate or by any unofficial representation on its Council or by an uninfluential Press, but no colonial Government can conduct for long a progressive or happy administration without the co-operation of the educated classes; to deny or delay their effective participation in the various branches of government means that disgruntlement turns into despair, and despair into revolt, of which the end is Amritsar. It therefore behoves the Government to study closely and keep well abreast of progressive opinion both in responsible circles in England and in enlightened Sudanese society here. Recent events in India, Syria, and Iraq do not pass unnoticed by the Sudanese.

6. The article and the debates referred to in paragraph 4 (11) are numerous and impressive. I have listed and summarized the most relevant in the Appendix of this Note.

The main thread running through these articles and debates is the aim of converting 'trusteeship' into 'partnership' and a noticeable point is that these progressive sentiments are not put forward by people or newspapers normally described as 'left-wing idealists' or 'humanitarian cranks'. They come from Colonial Ministers and ex-Ministers, or ex-Governors, and the leading journals, general and professional. They all agree that more concrete plans must be made for association of

Africans with the administration, education and solvency of their countries, that Englishmen must get on more even terms with educated Africans, that colour bar policy, explicit or implicit, are anachronistic, and dangerous, that Indirect Rule must not become frozen, and that good government is no lasting substitute for self-government. This consensus of opinion to examine our colonial conscience is something more than Macaulay termed “the British Public in one of its periodical fits of morality!”

7. It may be argued that, granted all this, the Sudan is at war, has been invaded once and may be invaded again: and that war-time is no time for far-reaching schemes of political or administrative development and we should await the piping times of peace.

But, firstly, the times of peace will not be so piping. There will be a psychological malaise among British officials, a reaction from war-time, an exodus on long leave, a spate of retirements with consequent changes in higher posts, an influx of raw recruits, a restlessness among Sudanese for the removal of economic restrictions (which may well have to be kept on a while) and a probable direction of the central Government on to external affairs (future to Eritria, Lake Tsana, increased attention from Egypt, pan-Arabism, winding up of imperial finance questions). We should begin now to lay the foundations of a full Sudanese share in the Government not only to honour local and imperial pledges but also to present a united front to the outside world. Internal trouble will only weaken our ability to deal with external affairs.

Secondly, it is surely wise to take time (and budgets) by the forelock and plan ‘dilution’ and other progressive reforms of the Government initiative, as matters of pre-declared policy rather than be pushed, or appear to be pushed, into them by pressure from without or blackmail from below. The examples of India, Burma and Ireland are always before us. In spite of Congress and Egyptian claims there is probably no other dependency which is in so far favourable a position to go ahead with a liberal policy of ‘Sudanization!’ We have not the distractions of white settlers (Kenya), racial and community feuds (Palestine and India), poor whites (South Africa), industrial problems (Rhodesia and W. Indies), and so we should lay our foundations while the going is



good. Our very immunity from these distractions is a snare; the temptation to linger in what the author of the Forsyte Saga wistfully called 'the gilt-edged period' is almost overwhelming especially to those of us who have served in the contended country-side. But it is a temptation which must be resisted or the paradise of the Sudan of the Golden Age may be proved a fool's paradise.

8. The submission that I wish to put before the Council are not, at the moment detailed, they are simply, a request that Council should agree with the need for closer association of Sudanese with Government, as argued above and set the ball rolling, as far as war conditions allow, the following resolutions:

- That the system of executive town councils, already begun, be extended, and that financial devolution be an integral part of the system.
- That a system of advisory provinces councils for the Northern provinces of the Blue Nile, Darfour, Kassala, Kordofan be considered. N.B. Khartoum Province already has a joint Municipal Council for Three Towns.
- That a small special committee be instructed to investigate the expediency of forming a central Advisory Council for the Northern Sudan, and if found feasible, to make recommendations about its composition, terms of reference, and approximate date of creation. (For progress of this Committee see letters to R.C.M. dated 30-1-43, 4-3-43, 17-3-43 Chapter XI)
- That Heads of Departments be asked to consider and report on the greater use of Sudanese as members of departmental and inter-departmental committees.
- That the Establishment Committee be instructed to review the progress of 'dilution' since the signing of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty and to make specific recommendations, where desirable, for its acceleration.
- That a special senior Political Officer be temporarily appointed, attached to but not an integral part of the Civil Secretary Office, as special officer in charge of Sudanese relations with terms of reference to be approved by the Governor-General.

## APPENDIX (to Note to Council)

- I. *The Times*, 10/9/41. Mr. Churchill's speech in the House of Commons describing how the Atlantic Charter, although not literally applicable to the Colonial Empire, is entirely in harmony with the British Colonial Policy of 'progressive evolution of self-governing institutions'.
- II. *The International Review of Missions*, October 1941. (This is incomparably the most objective and scholarly mission journal) Mr. J. W. C. Dougall's article 'Colonial policy and the Christian Conscience'. Extracts were circulated to Governors in April 1942. He writes: 'What is needed is not a fresh declaration of rights, but definite steps to adapt and improvise our political systems so that colonial peoples share the responsibility as well as the duty of citizenship.....One obstacle arises from our own preference for the tribal rather than educated native. We often appear reluctant to give to younger and more progressive leaders a share in local and central Government. Indirect rule is admirable as a philosophy....but it must somehow be supplemented or developed if the connection is to be made between local native government and the central legislature.'
- III. *The Times*, 19/2/42. 'Why Singapore Fell.' The Government had no roots in the life of the people...British and Asiatic lived their lives apart.. There was never any fusion. British rule and culture formed no more than a thin and brittle veneer.'
- IV. *The Economist*, 7/3/42 (a refreshingly independent journal). An anonymous article. 'The Colonial Melting Pot', urges the drawing up of a colonial Charter with the help in each colony of 'the most advanced and enthusiastic of the inhabitants of whatever colour or tribe they may be', and states 'There must be a clear definition of British colonial Policy, so that those in the colonies who are politically conscious will know exactly what they stand to gain by a

British victory....There is a danger in the misuse of Indirect rule and that is the sense of frustration it instils in the more politically conscious natives who under another system (e.g. Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Iran,) might rise to be the natural leaders of their refers countrymen. 'It refers again the 'frustration felt by the advanced minorities who see the progress of self-government held up because the great majority are not ready'.

- V. *The Times*, 13/3/42 and 14/3/42. Articles by Margery Perham on 'The Colonial Empire'. A revision of the time factor is needed for all aspects of our colonial policy.... We have established standards of administrative purity that we could not bear to see diluted by too much possibly clumsy and corrupt native participation....We might revise our ideas of the scale and scope in education by study of the measures taken in Russia, China, and Turkey, N.B. one of Mustafa Kamal's first acts after the establishment of the Turkish Republic was to pass a law in 1924 for the unification od educational systems under the Ministry of Public Instruction. They had been divided between the Ministry of Sharia and Waqfs, Health and Natioanl Defence. D.N. The *Times* leader of 14 March in commenting on Miss Perham's articles writes: 'Nothing can in the long run prevent the colonial peoples from acquiring the arts of their masters... The application of the ideals (of emancipation of the ruled and responsibility for their development) has too often been piecemeal, intermittent, and faltering'.
- VI. *Spectator*, 27/3/42. Lord Hailey on 'The Colonial Problem' describes the doctrine trusteeship as valuable but fundamentally static, not progressive, and writes: 'We have of late years begun to feel the need of a more constructive content for it'. He adds that doctrine of equality of status is today at its testing point.
- VII. *Nature* in April 1942 (*Nature* is the leading scientific journal in Britain) had a downright leading article on the need for a new outlook in Colonial Development.

- VIII. Debate in House of Lords, 7/5/42. Viscount Trenchard criticized slowness in Africanization of colonial civil services, due mainly to the British fetish of Efficiency. Lords Moyne and Hailey urged increased political responsibilities for natives.
- IX. Debate in House of Lords, 20/5/42. Discussion on Atlantic Charter and its application to Colonies. Lord Hailey urged more concrete statement of our intentions about representative institutions. 'Common prudence forbids us to disregard the more advanced section of opinion, for it is this element which in the long run will determine the attitude of the people towards our administration.'
- X. Debate in House of Commons, 24/6/42. Mr. MacMillan stressed dilution and 'partnership'.
- XI. *The Times* leader on 'Partnership in Empire', 23/6/42. 'The alienation of the educated native, caused in part by deliberate policy, but mainly by psychological attitudes, is everywhere a serious pitfall of British administration of the so-called backward peoples. It is an error whose consequences, once it is committed, are incalculable and almost ineradicable. There is no room any longer for these attitudes and these mistakes if the British imperial heritage is to be maintained and rebuilt on new and securer foundations.'

N.B. The article in the same issue by a West African correspondent on West African aspirations also expressed the frustration of educated elements at seeing 'the rate of progress determined by the pace of the rural illiterate African'. He also comments on the racial barriers to commissions in the W.A.F.F.

Quoted in Henderson, K.D.D., *The Making of the Modern Sudan*, London, 1953, pp. 553-560

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**APPENDIX 9: Civil Secretary's Memorandum on  
Revision of Southern Policy, 1946**

CS/CSR/I.C.I.

Subject: Southern Sudan Policy

Civil Secretary's Office

SECRET

Khartoum

16 December 1946

Financial Secretary	(2)
Legal Secretary	(2)
Kaid	(3)
Director of Agriculture & Forests	(3)
Director of Economics & Trade	(2)
Director of Education	(3)
Director of Medical Service	(3)
Director Manager, Sudan Railways	(2)
Director Veterinary Province	(2)
Governor Equatoria Service	(12)
Governor, Upper Nile Province	(10)

Will you please refer to Khartoum Secret Despatch N<sup>o</sup>. 89 of 4<sup>th</sup> August 1945, of which copies were sent to you (or to your predecessors in Office) personally under this number.

1. You will see that in paragraph 2 of the despatch there are contemplated three possible political futures for the Southern Sudan. The crucial sentence is:  
'It is only by economic and educational development that these people can be equipped to stand up for themselves in the future, whether their lot be eventually cast with the Northern Sudan or with East Africa (or partly with each)'.

2. Since the despatch was written, and since the decisions on policy which it records were taken not only have further decisions on policy for the South been taken (of which a list is attached) but great changes have taken place in the political outlook for the country as a whole. Whatever may be the final effect, inside the Sudan, of the present treaty negotiations, it is certain that the advance of the Northern Sudan to self-government, involving the progressive reduction of British executive authority, and public canvassing of the Southern Sudan Question, will be accelerated. It is therefore essential that policy for the Southern Sudan should be crystallized as soon as possible and that it should be crystallised in a form which can be publicly explained and supported and which should therefore be based on sound and constructive social and economic principles. These principles must not only bear defence against factious opposition, but must also command the support of Northern Sudanese who are prepared to take logical and liberal points of view: while the relief of doubts now in the minds of British political and departmental staff who have the interests of the South at heart is also pressing and important.
3. You will see from the foregoing paragraph that I do not suggest that the future of the two million inhabitants of the South should be influenced by appeasement of the as yet immature and ill-informed politicians of the Northern Sudan. But it is the Sudanese, northern and southern who will live their lives and direct their affairs in future generations in this country; and our efforts must therefore now be concentrated on initiating a policy which is not only sound in itself, but can be made acceptable to, and eventually workable by patriotic and reasonable Sudanese, northern and southern alike.
4. Apart from the recent rapid political development in the North the following conclusions have further emerged since His Excellency's 1945 despatch and enclosures were written:
  - With reference to Appendix I to the despatch, Section 7 last sentence of penultimate paragraph, East Africa's plans regarding

better communications with the Southern Sudan have been found to be nebulous, and contingent on the Lake Albert Dam. Whatever the possibilities, we have no reason to hesitate between development of trade between the Southern and the Northern Sudan. Our chance of succeeding depends I think upon confining ourselves to the one aim of developing trade in the South, and between the North and the South.

- In Education, I believe that while the South may hope to have secondary schools, it cannot hope to support post-secondary, and I believe that Southerners should get this at the Gordon Memorial College – Arabic is not essential there, but should I think be taught to Southerners as a subject from intermediate school level onwards.
  - The distinction in rates of pay and other conditions of government service, the artificial rules about employment of Southerners in the north attempts at economic separation, and all similar distinctions are becoming more and anomalous as the growing demand for Northerners to be employed in Southern Development Schemes, the rapidly growing communication and travel between North and South, and the very application of the policy of pushing forward in the South, break down the previous isolation Provinces and strain these distinctions further.
5. The preceding paragraphs are an attempt to indicate briefly the reasons which have led me to think that an important decision on Southern policy must now be taken. The biennial report to His Britannic Majesty's Government is due early next year. Subject to your comments on this letter, I propose to advise His Excellency that in His Excellency's next report he asks His Britannic Majesty's Government to approve that two of the alternatives mentioned in paragraph 2 above be ruled out as practical politics at the present time. It may in the future be proved that it would be to the advantage of certain of the most southerly tribes, e.g., of Opari or Kajokaji, to join up with their relatives in Uganda. It may be that the feeling which now exists among a few of the wisest Northern Sudanese, that they should not, when self-government, be asked to shoulder the financial and communal burden which they believe the South will always prove to be, may become an important political

policy among them. But we should now work on the assumption that the Sudan, as at present constituted, with possibility minor boundary adjustments, will remain one; and we should therefore restate our Southern policy and do so publicly as follows:

“The policy of the Sudan Government regarding the Southern Sudan is to act upon the facts that the peoples of the Southern Sudan are distinctively African and Negroid, but that geography and economics combine (so far as can be foreseen at the present time) to render them inextricably bound for future development to the middle-eastern and arabicised Northern Sudan: and therefore to ensure that they shall, by educational and economic development, be equipped to stand up for themselves in the future as socially and economically the equals of their partners of the Northern Sudan of the future.’

6. Certain changes of detail, in each sphere of Government activity in the South, would I think have to follow the approval and publication of a policy so defined. You will wish to suggest briefly the major points.
7. Will you please consider this matter carefully, consult the senior members of your staffs upon it (particularly of course those who have experience of the South), and let me have your views as briefly as possible. Those of any individual member of your staff which you wish to forward separately with your comments will also be welcome.  
The views of Senior Sudanese in whose judgement and discretion you have confidence may also be asked for.
8. Finally I ask you to read again the late Sir Douglas Newbold’s note to Council N°.CS/SCR/I.C.14 of 3.4.44, reproduced as Appendix ‘B’ (1) to the despatch, and to bear in mind that *urgency* is the essence of the problem. We no longer have time to aim at the ideal; we must aim at doing what is the best for the Southern peoples in the present circumstances.

(Sgd.) J.W. Robertson,



Civil Secretary

Copies to: Governors: Blue Nile

Darfour

Kassala

Khartoum – 2 copies each

Kordofan

Northern

Sudan Agent, Cairo (2)

Sudan Agent, London (2)

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